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British Essentialism in Eighteenth-Century British Travel Literature of the West Indies and North America

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**BRITISH ESSENTIALISM IN EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY BRITISH TRAVEL
LITERATURE OF THE WEST INDIES AND NORTH AMERICA**

by

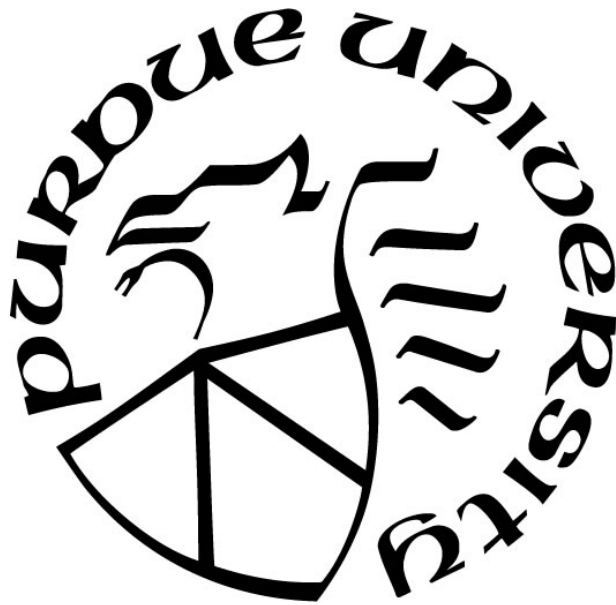
Stephanie Matos-Ayala

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Faculty of Purdue University

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy



Department of History
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ABSTRACT

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Title: British Essentialism in Eighteenth-Century British Travel Literature of the West Indies and North America

Major Professor: Melinda Zook

This dissertation explores issues of representation and cultural negotiation by examining how the white colonial other was depicted in eighteenth-century travel literature, specifically Janet Schaw's *Journal of a Lady of Quality* written during the years 1774 to 1776. Travel narratives and histories speak to many different topics, yet they reveal the most about eighteenth-century British ways of thinking about race and national identity, more so than about the various peoples and cultures they seek to describe. I argue that this literature reveals a hierarchy based on the absorption and consumption of British practices and goods by the colonial subject. Neither physical appearance, ethnicity, nor gender carried as much weight in the mind of the British observer as did the colonial subjects' acceptance or rejection of British customs and consumer goods. While adoption of British deportment did not erase differences in race or class, those individuals that emulated British manners and practices were depicted more favorably than those who did not, regardless of social class, political affiliations, or ethnicity. Thus, this dissertation argues that eighteenth-century British essentialism was not founded on location, or social class, but on shared manners, memories, and connections.

INTRODUCTION

In eighteenth-century Britain, non-fiction travel writing experienced unmatched popularity. British readers relished books about human and natural history as well as exotic peoples and places. Booksellers strove to meet this demand, publishing numerous histories and travelogues. The popularity of travel literature was in part due to its themes and topics, but it was also a result of the Enlightenment. Readers and travelers intrinsically connected themselves to this movement. Travelers expected, as well as were expected by others, to seek out new and useful information to contribute to this new age of discovery and reason. At the beginning of the eighteenth century, travelers were bound to follow specific directions that prescribed the course, as well as the kind of narrative to write. By the end of the century, however, the traveler was able to roam freely and make notes on numerous topics showing the genre's unique capacity to encompass an abundance of experiences, observations, and reflections.

While the histories and travel narratives that resulted from this age touch upon many different topics, providing readers with a general impression of the traveled world, they often reveal much more about the traveler and their culture-specific lens. Travel literature allows us to experience inter-cultural perceptions through means of interpretations and misinterpretations.¹ The accounts explored in this dissertation reveal much more eighteenth-century British ways of thinking about race and national identity than about the various peoples and cultures the travelers sought to describe. I argue that this literature reveals a hierarchy based on the absorption and consumption of British customs and goods by the colonial subject. Neither physical appearance, ethnicity, class, nor gender carried as much weight in the mind of the British observer as did the

¹ Barbara Korte, *English Travel Writing from Pilgrimages to Postcolonial Explorations* (Houndmills, Hampshire: Macmillan, 2000), 5.

colonial subjects' acceptance or rejection of British practices and consumer goods. While adoption of British deportment did not erase differences in race or class, those individuals that emulated British manners and habits were depicted more favorably than those who did not, regardless of social class, political affiliations, or ethnicity.

While I examine numerous travelogues, Janet Schaw's *Journal of a Lady of Quality* is the central focus of this study. Schaw's *Journal* is a detailed account of her travels to the West Indies and North Carolina during the years 1774 to 1776. Her narrative speaks to the manners and customs of the peoples she encountered as well as the food, climate, and scenery of the places she visited. By comparing Schaw's *Journal* to other contemporary narratives, such as John Luffman's *A Brief Account of the Island of Antigua* (1789), William Mylne's *Travels in the Colonies in 1773-1775*, and the anonymous, *A Short Journey in the West Indies* (1790), among others, it is possible to see that Schaw shared many values and perceptions with these fellow authors. While none of these works offer the extent of insight and personality present in Schaw's *Journal*, they too display a sense of British superiority based on behavior and goods.²

This project also explores eighteenth-century histories such as Edward Long's *The History of Jamaica* (1774), Thomas Atwood's *The History of the Island of Dominica* (1791), and Patrick Browne's, *The Civil and Natural History of Jamaica* (1789). These histories are much lengthier and detailed than the narratives often encompassing multiple volumes. While their focus is on the history of the places they visited, they too examine the contemporary customs and

² Janet Schaw, *Journal of a Lady of Quality: Being the Narrative of a Journey from Scotland to the West Indies, North Carolina, and Portugal, in the Years 1774-1776*, eds. Charles McLean Andrews and Evangeline Walker Andrews (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2005). Charles McLean Andrews and Evangeline Walker Andrews discovered Schaw's unpublished and unsigned manuscript in the British Museum in 1903 and published it in 1923 after establishing her as the author and providing the background of individual people and places she visited; William Mylne, *Travels in the Colonies in 1773-1775: Described in the Letters of William Mylne* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1993); *A short journey in the West Indies* (London, 1790); John Luffman, *A Brief Account of the Island of Antigua*, (London, 1789).

manners of the islands' inhabitants reinforcing the practices and views depicted in the narratives. Long's *The History of Jamaica* (1774) is especially useful since many of the practices described in Schaw, Luffman and *A Short Journey* about the island of Antigua are also observed by Long in Jamaica, allowing for a broader view into Creole customs and mentality as well as British worldview.³ First published in 1774, Long's *History of Jamaica* was composed of three volumes. Long not only offers a social, economic, and political history of Jamaica, he also provides detailed accounts of the everyday life and practices of the Creoles.⁴ Long also offers an extensive discourse on slavery, discussing various topics from the cost and uses of African slaves to his opinions of the African race, which he deemed subhuman.

Other sources used in this project are eighteenth-century reference works that discuss America and the West Indies. Reference works are very similar in style to the travel narratives in the sense that the authors openly express their opinions and perceptions; they differ, however, in that they dedicate considerable attention to specific qualities of their studied subjects and places instead of the broader representation found in the narratives and histories. For instance, J.B. Moreton in *West India Customs and Manners* (1793) provides an outsider and sympathetic view of Creole society, but with particular attention to the language behavior of the planter class as well as their servants and slaves, painstakingly recording the syntax and pronunciation of both white and black people.⁵ Reference works also tend to focus on the economic situation of the places they studied as well as their value to British economy. I employed William

Winterbotham's *A geographical, commercial, and philosophical view of the United States of*

³ Edward Long, *The History of Jamaica. Or, general survey of the ancient and modern state of that island: with reflections on its situation, settlements, inhabitants.* (London, 1774).

⁴ In all the travelogues and histories used in this study, "Creole" refers to whites -- persons with unmixed European ancestry-- born in the West Indies.

⁵ J. B. Moreton, *West India customs, and manners: Containing Strictures on the Soil, Cultivation, Produce, Trade, Officers, and Inhabitants: with the Method of Establishing, and Conducting a Sugar Plantation. To which is Added, the Practice of Training New Slaves* (London, 1793).

America (1795), Nathaniel Crouch's *The English Empire in America* (1728), and Bryan Edwards's *The History Civil and Commercial of the British Colonies in the West Indies* (1798), among others. Works like these allow for the exploration of the economic and political value of the colonies to British economy.

The West Indies and America were also prominent topics in London periodicals. Articles focused on numerous subjects such as geography, colonial customs, and farming practices. These magazines had considerable success in the eighteenth century, specifically, *The Critical Review: Or, Annals of Literature*, *The Analytical Review*, *The Gentleman's Magazine* and *The Lady's Magazine*, which dominated the market from their founding until their dissolution, claiming wide readership.⁶ These monthly magazines discussed news alongside commentaries on various topics written by professional and semi-professional writers as well as commentators. *The Lady's Magazine* was the principal surveyor of magazine fiction, and one of its most popular series was titled, "A Sentimental Journey by a Lady," modeled after the Laurence Sterne novel by the same name published in 1768. The serial ran for seven years, and it followed a female narrator traveling throughout the British Isles.⁷ Although this serial was fiction, it displays the readership's interest in travel especially since it also included articles that focused on different facts and customs of other parts of the world, prominently featuring America and the West Indies.

The focus on travel literature allows for an in-depth view of eighteenth-century British racial ideology. The Enlightenment brought new ideas and debates about race and nationality. It influenced new ways of creating hierarchies of people, which the observers could use to place

⁶ Carl Lennart Carlson, *The First Magazine; A History of the Gentleman's Magazine, with an Account of Dr. Johnson's Editorial Activity and of the Notice Given America in the Magazine* (Providence, R.I.: Brown University, 1938); Rosalind Ballaster, *Women's Worlds: Ideology, Femininity and the Woman's Magazine* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1991).

⁷ Ballaster, *Women's Worlds*, 67.

others as well as themselves. These influences are readily apparent in the travel literature. The chosen texts for this study are representative of the genre and themes addressed, countries visited and discourses employed. While keeping in mind that, “no one narrative version adequately conveys the complexity ... of what the West Indies meant for those who wrote and read it,” the parallels in topics, attitudes, and assessments evident in the studied works present an almost homogenous and particularly clear view into eighteenth-century British ideologies of race, gender and nationality.⁸ I focus on the authors’ opinions and representations of colonial customs, religion, food and agricultural practices, slavery and gender roles. These topics were categories employed in the comparison framework the authors used to assess what they were experiencing. Through them, they were able to place others as well as themselves in a social and national hierarchy that inevitably shaped their ideas of identity and consanguinity.

Although travel literature has received noteworthy scholarly attention, there is a significant lack of studies focusing on the British essentialism present in the travel literature of the West Indies and North America. Sara Mills, for example, does explore imperial ideologies within travel narratives but she focuses on narratives about India and Africa.⁹ Similarly, Barbara Korte, Jean Viviès, and Charles Batten trace the history and development of travel writing, though their primary focus is the literary aspect of the genre and Grand Tour narratives.¹⁰ While these works are crucial to my study and discussion on the genre itself, by focusing on the

⁸ Evelyn O’Callaghan, *Women Writing the West Indies, 1804-1939: "A Hot Place, Belonging to Us"* (New York: Routledge, 2006), 174.

⁹ See Sara Mills, *Discourses of Difference: An Analysis of Women's Travel Writing and Colonialism* (London: Routledge, 1991).

¹⁰ Barbara Korte, *English Travel Writing from Pilgrimages to Postcolonial Explorations* (Houndmills, Hampshire: Macmillan, 2000); Jean Viviès, *English Travel Narratives in the Eighteenth Century: Exploring Genres* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002); C. L. Batten, *Pleasurable Instruction: Form and Convention in Eighteenth-Century Travel Literature* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978).

Caribbean and North America, my research expands the study of travel writing beyond the focus on the European travel.

A notable exemption is Roxann Wheeler's *Complexion of Race: Categories of Difference in Eighteenth-Century British Culture*.¹¹ Wheeler primarily focuses on travel literature, and fiction to study the emergence of skin color as a marker of identity throughout the eighteenth century. She, however, mainly focuses on how the Christian and non-Christian system of racialization transformed itself to a system defined by the differences between black and white skin color. Wheeler studies Edward Long in her work but makes no mention of Janet Schaw. While her study is crucial to my discussion on race, I deviate from her analysis by using different markers of identity formation like customs, foods, consumption of British goods, and agricultural practices to determine other systems of racialization used at the time.

Also essential in this study is Mary Louise Pratt's *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation*. Pratt explores how travel and exploration writing "produced the rest of the world." She argues that travel literature by Europeans were key instruments that made people back in the metropole feel part of the "planetary project; a key instrument, in other words, in creating the domestic subject." Particularly relevant is Pratt's discussion of the transculturation that resulted from colonial encounters, which she terms as "contact zones."¹² While Pratt focuses mainly on the nineteenth century and not solely on British writers, her theories and framework on empire and travel literature are used in this study to explore patterns in the genre and the ideological implications of imperialism found within travel literature.

¹¹ Roxann Wheeler, *Complexion of Race: Categories of Difference in Eighteenth-Century British Culture* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000).

¹² Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (London: Routledge, 1992), 5, 3, 6.

Female travel writing has received considerable scholarly attention in recent decades by feminist scholars, who explore how female opinion was articulated and recorded at different times and places. They have also brought attention to the differing perspectives found in women's travelogues in comparison to those of men who visited the same place, which has led scholars to ask whether there were fundamental differences in how men and women traveled as well as differences in how they recorded their experiences. Historian, Jane Robinson, believes this is the case. In her introduction to *Wayward Women: A Guide to Women Travellers* she argues that “men’s travel accounts are to do with the What and Where, and women’s with How and Why.”¹³ Similarly, Mary Morris, in her introduction to *The Virago Book of Women Travellers*, claims that “women...move through the world differently than men.” She also argues that women’s travel accounts share distinct “feminine” qualities that set them apart from men’s. For her, women travelers are more concerned with the “inner landscape” and their own “inner workings” than male travelers.¹⁴

Not all feminist scholars share a separatist position, however. Susan Bassnett in “Travel Writing and Gender,” troubled by such generalizations, insists that “the sheer diversity of women’s travel writing resists simple categorization.” She questions the possibility of truly identifying distinctive “feminine” qualities, which are shared by all female travel authors.¹⁵ Sara Mills and Shirley Forster similarly suggest that gender is but one variable among the many factors that may shape a travelers account. These being: “race, age, class and financial position,

¹³ Jane Robinson, *Wayward Women: A Guide to Women Travellers* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), xiv.

¹⁴ Mary Morris, and Larry O'Connor, *The Virago Book of Women Travellers* (London: Virago, 2007), 9.

¹⁵ Susan Bassnett, “Travel Writing and Gender,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Travel Writing*, eds. Peter Hulme, and Tim Youngs (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 239.

education, political ideas, and historical period.”¹⁶ The similarities between male and female accounts outweigh the differences, and by the same token, there are very few tendencies that can be solely attributed to female authors that cannot be found in men’s accounts as well.

Furthermore, due to the genre's high expectations, female-authored works had to follow the established literary trends. Like the works written by men, women would direct their accounts to a general reader and construct their accounts according to the typical genre expectations.

Presently, there are no studies of either Janet Schaw’s *Journal* or the other travels narratives discussed here that explore the British essentialism.¹⁷ Much of the modern scholarship that discusses Schaw’s *Journal* focuses solely on her depictions of slavery in the West Indies and America.¹⁸ Other recent works, like Verene Shepherd’s *Engendering History: Caribbean Women in Historical Perspective* and Marion Tinling’s *With Women’s Eyes*, compare Schaw's writing style to other contemporary female travel writers with specific focus on their role as female writers and travelers.¹⁹ I seek to expand this research by incorporating Schaw’s work alongside other contemporary travel literature to present a broader understanding of eighteenth-century British essentialism as presented within the genre. Also, since this study follows the inclusion line of thought, a gender approach to the authors is not applicable based on the general similarities between Schaw’s work and the men’s. I instead focus on the gender notions that the authors exhibit when interacting with the Creoles and North American colonials.

¹⁶ Shirley Foster, and Sara Mills. *An Anthology of Women's Travel Writing* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002), 1.

¹⁷ An exception to this is Deirdre Coleman, “Janet Schaw and the Complexions of Empire,” *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 36, no. 2, (2003): 169-193. Coleman only focuses on the importance of “whiteness” for Creole women.

¹⁸ See Moira Ferguson, *Subject to Others: British Women Writers and Colonial Slavery, 1670-1834* (New York: Routledge, 1992).

¹⁹ Verene Shepherd, Bridget Brereton, and Barbara Bailey, *Engendering History: Caribbean Women in Historical Perspective* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995); Marion Tinling, *With Women's Eyes: Visitors to the New World, 1775-1918* (Hamden, Conn: Archon Books, 1993).

This project will address several debates regarding the history of eighteenth-century Britain and its empire. Modern scholars dispute the meaning of terms like “empire” and “imperialism,” “colonization” and “colony.”²⁰ While I will not review or assess all of the uses and opinions, I will rely on the work of scholars to help clarify how I use the terms in this study. According to Catherine Hall, Empire is a “large, diverse, geographically dispersed, and expansionist political entity.”²¹ Frederick Cooper, states that a central feature of this entity is that it “reproduces differentiation and inequality among the people it incorporates.”²² In essence, empire is about power, “usually created by conquest and divided between a dominant center and subordinate, sometimes far distant peripheries.”²³ While these definitions focus on the center of power emerging from inside the metropole, an empire can also be “webs” or “networks.” Where “colonial discourses were made and remade rather than simply transferred or imposed.” Thanks to, and specifically relevant to, travel and travel narratives, the “webs of trade, knowledge, migration, military power and political intervention allowed certain communities to assert their influence...over other groups.”²⁴ Thus, considering this, “imperialism” is the process of building an empire. A process which originates in the metropole and results in domination and control over other lands and peoples.²⁵ Ania Loomba defines colonialism as “what happens in the

²⁰ Catherine Hall, and Sonya O. Rose, *At Home with the Empire: Metropolitan Culture and the Imperial World* (Cambridge, UK; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006); Frederick Cooper, *Colonialism in Question Theory, Knowledge, History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005); Stephen Howe, *Empire: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010); Alan Lester, *Imperial Networks: Creating Identities in Nineteenth-Century South Africa and Britain* (London: Routledge, 2001); Tony Ballantyne, *Orientalism, and Race: Aryanism in the British Empire* (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006); Ania Loomba, *Colonialism/postcolonialism* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2015).

²¹ Hall, *At Home with the Empire*, 6.

²² Cooper, *Colonialism in Question Theory, Knowledge*, 26.

²³ Howe, *Empire*, 30.

²⁴ Lester, *Imperial Networks*, 4; Ballantyne, *Orientalism*, 3.

²⁵ Hall, *At Home with the Empire*, 6.

colonies as a consequence of imperial domination,” and a colony is “is the place that [the metropole] penetrates and controls.”²⁶

Specifically, this project focuses on representations and perceptions of various customs and practices within the West Indies and America. On a broader level, it addresses the relationship between Britain and the rest of the Western world supplementing existing research on eighteenth-century British cosmopolitanism. Eighteenth-century Britain was becoming less and less insular politically and culturally. Kathleen Wilson in *The Island Race* argues that England's different practices and exchanges with the outside world shaped the idea of Britishness. For Wilson, identity depended on where individuals were placed and placed themselves within society and how they internally negotiated both. National identity, in turn, depended on the individual's ability to identify with a collective identity and past.²⁷ Gerard Newman in the *Rise of English Nationalism*, like Wilson, argues that cosmopolitanism and one's placement within social networks defined early eighteenth-century English nationalism.²⁸ For Newman, Englishness in the first half of the eighteenth century was a negotiation and adaptation of European culture, resulting in a cosmopolitan British one. Newman, however, only focuses on English upper classes traveling on the Continent and how their experiences affected their sense of identification and behaviors while abroad and back home. By focusing on the Caribbean and North America, my research will expand the study of negotiation and identification beyond the European Continent.

This project also addresses historical debates on the Enlightenment, specifically the Scottish Enlightenment and the British improvement movement. As Rosalind Carr argues, the

²⁶ Loomba, *Colonialism/postcolonialism*, 12.

²⁷ Kathleen Wilson, *The Island Race: Englishness, Empire, and Gender in the Eighteenth Century* (London: Routledge, 2003), 3.

²⁸ Gerald G. Newman, *The Rise of English Nationalism: A Cultural History, 1740-1830* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1987), 1.

Scottish Enlightenment was a “disparate ideological and cultural movement unified by a discourse of improvement.”²⁹ The binary framework emerging out of this discourse was one of the comparisons between ‘us’ and the ‘other’ in regards to progress. In all the narratives in this study, the authors linked progress to adoption of British practices, consumption of English goods, and norms of behavior. The authors participate in discourses of consumerism, labor, culture, savagery, and slavery to position the societies they visit in relation to each other and Britain.

Chapter One provides the historical context for the period as well as a discussion of the changes and varieties within the genre. While travel writing was not new to the eighteenth century, advances such as improved methods of transportation and lodgings made travel accessible for many instead of just for the rough adventurer. Nor, was it exclusively anymore for the upper-class men, thanks to the opportunities afforded by the ever-expanding reaches of the globe new class of people frequently engaged in travel writing: natural philosophers, tradesmen, merchants, military seamen, and, occasionally, aristocratic women. I explore the eighteenth century’s enthusiasm and thirst for information about foreign countries and humankind brought on by the Scottish Enlightenment and Britain’s imperial activities and how they affected the genre of travel writing.

Chapter Two explores travel accounts of the West Indies with particular focus on Creole customs. The narratives pay close attention to the behaviors, appearances, and practices of the white Creoles and their gender roles. In the authors’ discussions of them, it is apparent how the authors judged and assessed the Creoles’ based on their absorption and consumption of British practices and goods. In this chapter, I also examine the importance of food for the travelers and,

²⁹ Rosalind Carr, *Gender and Enlightenment Culture in Eighteenth-Century Scotland* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2014), 1.

in turn, for the readers back home. Food is one of the most common topics found in the travel literature, yet is a topic least explored by historians studying the genre. I propose a more in-depth study of the travelers' attention to food and food practices. Both the authors of the travel narratives and the histories dedicate numerous letters and sections of their work to the descriptions of the different dishes, fruits, and drinks they consumed on the islands. Their extensive attention to food suggests a connection that went much further than simple European interest in exotic dishes. This chapter also allows for discussion on Creole identity formation and how their desire to be considered equal British subjects governed most of their habits as well as their reception to the visitors.

Chapter Three also explores Britishness and identity formation by focusing on narratives discussing the North American colonies. These accounts provide an in-depth view of the struggle between loyalists and revolutionaries on the eve of the War of Independence. The writers see and present North America and its inhabitants as the “other” due to the differences in agricultural practices as well as customs. For instance, the fact that West Indies food practices resembled more closely British customs than did North American practices was a point of contention to the authors ultimately shaping their opinion of them. Through the authors' comparison of North American practices and colonists to both the Creole and British it is clear that in the authors' hierarchy neither, race, nor class carried as much weight as the adoption of British practices.

Chapter Four examines the travelers' perceptions of slavery. The authors present varying views on slavery that often overlap with the slavery discourses current in the metropole at the time they are writing. Visitors often offered first-hand testimonies to its practice in the West Indian sugar plantations and the colonies, alongside statements condemning it or deeming it necessary as seen in Schaw's and J.B. Moreton's narratives, or even celebrating it as Long's

History of Jamaica does. Since the late seventeenth century, slavery existed in the West Indies, and although by the 1760s anti-slavery ideas were gaining circulation, it was not until the 1780s that major movements started for the abolition of the British slave trade. Luffman and the author of *A Short Journey*, both wrote in the late 1780s and presented a more sympathetic view of slaves in their narratives. Although all the narratives and histories discuss slavery and African slaves, tracts like S. Hollingsworth's *Observations on the present applications to Parliament for abolishing Negroe slavery in the British West Indies*, are especially useful in my discussion of the topic and allow me to make connections between the views expressed by the travelers and the activities occurring back home.³⁰

This project is concerned with several factors of eighteenth-century British history including cultural, economic, and political. While it focuses primarily on perceptions and representations found within travel literature, it also addresses debates both about the sense of identities of the travelers and those observed, but also Britain's broader connection to its overseas territories. This literature detailed the geography, food, nature, wildlife, climate, and, most relevant to this study, customs of the natives, and other inhabitants of the places they visited alongside the authors' own opinions and beliefs regarding the topic under scrutiny. However, these travel narratives and histories are not simple records or chronicles; instead, they are texts where both the journey and its narration are equally important.³¹ By looking at the travelogues as both texts that reveal information about the places visited and as equally revealing (or more so even) of the authors writing them, they function as windows through which it is possible to see

³⁰ S. Hollingsworth, *A dissertation on the manners, governments, and spirit, of Africa. To which is added, observations on the present applications to Parliament for abolishing Negroe slavery in the British West Indies* (Edinburgh, 1788).

³¹ Viviers, *English Travel Narratives*, 110.

the construction of personal, collective and place identities.³² By focusing on travel literature, this project reveals features of the British connections to the outside world at the same time it reveals distinguishing features of British national identity and racial ideologies during the Long Eighteenth Century.

³² Jacqueline Tivers, and Tijana Rakic, eds., *Current Developments in the Geographies of Leisure and Tourism: Narratives of Travel and Tourism* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2012), 1.

CHAPTER 1: TRAVEL AND TRAVEL NARRATIVES IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

He travels and expatiates, as the bee
 From flower to flower, so he from land to land;
 The manners, customs, policy of all
 Pay contribution to the store he gleans;
 He sucks intelligence in every clime,
 And spreads the honey of his deep research
 At his return—a rich repast for me.
 He travels, and I too. I tread his deck,
 Ascend his topmast, through his peering eyes
 Discover countries, with a kindred heart
 Suffer his woes, and share in his escapes;
 While fancy, like the finger of a clock,
 Runs the great circuit, and is still at home.
 ~William Cowper, *The Task* (IV), 1785.

The eighteenth century, according to Percy Adams, was “the silver age of travel and travel literature.”¹ In 1797, the *Critical Review* announced: “This may be called the age of peregrination; for we have reason to believe, that the desire of seeing foreign countries never before so diffusively operated.”² While travel writing was not new to the eighteenth century, it was then that it obtained unparalleled popularity.³ It was also in this century that non-fiction travel accounts were considered of deserving literary merit.

¹ Percy Adams, “Travel Literature of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries: A Review of Recent Approaches,” *Texas Studies in Literature and Language* 20, no. 3, (1978): 488-515, 489.

² William Williams, *Tourism, Landscape, and the Irish Character: British Travel Writers in Pre-Famine Ireland* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2008), 4.

³ See Barbara Korte, *English travel writing from pilgrimages to postcolonial explorations* (Houndmills: Macmillan, 2000), 20-30. For a history of travel writing before the eighteenth century. Although travel writing existed in antiquity and can be considered the precursors of medieval narratives, they combine the “empirically observable *and* the fantastical,” (22). They also commonly did not result solely from experience but intensive reading.

Travel writing records spatial and temporal progress; it speaks to how individuals defined themselves as well as how they defined others. Both on individual and national levels, it builds and defines notions of “you” and “me,” “us,” and “them” in the realms of society, psychology, and the economy. It is because of all these interconnections that Tim Youngs claims that it is the “most socially important of all literary genres.” Notwithstanding, one definition of travel writing fails to encompass all of its elements; in fact, the difficulty of succinctly defining it is what characterizes the genre. “It is a genre,” Youngs argues, “whose intergeneric features constitute its identity.” Youngs, however, attempts a general definition that will be the guiding principle in this study:

Predominately factual, first-person prose accounts of travels that have been undertaken by the author-narrator. It includes discussions of works that some may regard as genres in their own right, such as ethnographies, maritime narratives, memoirs, road, and aviation literature, travel journalism and war reporting, but it distinguishes these from other types of narratives in which travel is narrated by a third party or is imagined. Comparison with these latter narratives aids a clearer understanding of the relationship between forms. The boundary between them is not fixed. The way that texts are read changes over the years. Our understanding of the genres is historically as well as textually determined.⁴

Further proving the interconnectedness of genres is the fact that during the eighteenth century both travel and travel accounts could be categorized either under exploration or tourism accounts. As established, however, the differences between them are not easily discerned. For instance, regardless if they were traveling for leisure or not, or even their destination, all travelers were expected to seek out new and useful information. Moreover, travelers were passionate about the age of Enlightenment. Their accounts were not a disinterested collection of information but an attempt to contribute something of value to the movement.

⁴ Tim Youngs, *The Cambridge Introduction to Travel Writing* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 1, 6, 3.

Comprehensive knowledge of the natural world received further stimulus in 1735 with the publication of *Systema Naturae* by Swedish naturalist Carl Linnaeus (1707-1778). In his work, Linnaeus established a taxonomic system, which he could seemingly apply to the entire natural world, and specifically to the human race. Explorers received his taxonomic system with interest and enthusiasm. During their exploration trips, they annotated their experiences and finds as well as their assessment of the different peoples they met. Noteworthy explorers were Captain Cook, and his three voyages (1768-80), James Bruce, Francois Le Vaillant, and Mungo Park in Africa; Mathew Flinders in Australia and Louis Antoniene de Bougainville in the South Pacific to name a few. Many of these explorers' trips were state-sponsored or financed by organizations; however, the knowledge they brought back was expected to have broad and practical uses.⁵

Tourism was the other form of travel to emerge in the eighteenth century. At the beginning of the century, to be a tourist was considered a mark of conspicuous privilege. Those traveling were usually engaged in what became known as the Grand Tour, a rite of passage for young male aristocrats and gentlemen. The Tour was supposed to enrich the travelers' foreign language skills as well as improve their knowledge of classicism. While the Grand Tour started with the elites, from the 1760s especially, the emerging middle classes increasingly adopted tourism and, in turn, travel writing.

The newfound popularity of travel and travel writing was a consequence of the economic and technological advances that took place in the eighteenth century, giving way to a more commercial and capitalist society. Thanks to the development of print culture as well as the improvements in transportation, a new class of people frequently engaged in travel writing:

⁵ Carl Thompson, *Travel Writing* (London: Routledge, 2011), 45.

natural philosophers, tradesmen, merchants, military seamen, and elite women.⁶ However, the increase in travel literature cannot be solely attributed to the ever-increasing mobility, but also to the eighteenth century's enthusiasm and thirst for information about foreign countries and human diversity brought on by the Scottish Enlightenment and Britain's Imperial activities.

1.1 Imperial Britain and Travel Narratives

Travel, as argued by Murray Pittock, can be “linked to Empire through the cult of orientalism and the colonizing qualities of early archaeology.”⁷ Orientalism, as Edward Said argues, is:

The corporate institution for dealing with the Orient – dealing with it by making statements about it, authorizing views of it, describing it, by teaching it, settling it, ruling over it: in short Orientalism as a Western style for dominating, restructuring and having authority over the Orient.⁸

While the narratives of the West Indies are not “dealing with the Orient,” the same happens in any relationship between a metropole and its territories. The imperial power dominates, restructures and has authority over its domains, which allows it to describe it, settle and rule over it. Travel writing is just one system of many that allows for these descriptions to occur. Pittock argues that with the emergence of the Grand Tour, travel and travel writing became a high cultural representation of identity and played a crucial role in reifications of an earlier stage of imperial expansion. For Pittock, the practice of traveling and travel writing were acts of

⁶ Charles L. Batten, *Pleasurable Instruction: Form and Convention in 18th-Century Travel Literature* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), 1.

⁷ Murray G. H. Pittock, *Inventing and Resisting Britain: Cultural Identities in Britain and Ireland, 1685-1789* (Houndmills: Macmillan, 1997), 150.

⁸ Edward W. Said, *Orientalism*. New York: Vintage Books, 2004, 3.

colonization, “just as imperial arms were in the process of subduing the world, so the touring eye engaged in a more subtle form of colonization as foreign nations coalesced into stereotype beneath its gaze.” Some popular stereotypes found in many accounts during the first half of the century were the portrayal of France and its people as insincere, and Italy, as a country that was never able to recover from the fall of the Roman Empire.⁹

Similarly, Kathleen Wilson argues that England's different practices and exchanges with the outside world shaped their concept of Britishness. Wilson agrees with Linda Colley's argument in *Britons*, that identity is a mode of differentiation against an ‘other,’ but she adds that it is also a result of relating *with* the ‘other.’ According to Wilson, Britain's different categories of identities in the eighteenth century were shaped by its exchanges and experiences as an imperial force. The colonies, she argues, provided a “test case” for the examination of national character.¹⁰ Wilson finds that when Britain was less insular than ever before -- due to its status as an imperial power -- that is when its people stressed the island's uniqueness. In trying to negotiate an insular vision of Britain, people's visions of race, and culture changed. Race was seen no longer as a breed, but as differences and qualities among humankind -- qualities that were inherited and not acquired. Enlightenment thinking promoted the belief that the same set of manners or characters innate to a nation would remain in different parts of the world. In other words, if Britons migrated to another place they would remain British in manners and customs. This belief came into question as travel became more accessible as well as colonization and migration more popular.

⁹ Pittock, *Inventing and Resisting Britain*, 150.

¹⁰ Kathleen Wilson, *The Island Race: Englishness, Empire, and Gender in the Eighteenth Century* (London: Routledge, 2003), 3, 13; Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707-1837* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992).

As a result, travel accounts display an anxiety among Britons that their colonists throughout the Empire were losing the values of their ancestors. Observers were afraid that differences in climate, plus interaction with the local population, especially those they considered “savages,” were degenerating the British residents and causing a cultural regression. Degeneration of the mind and values were not only feared, but the physiological effects of exotic climates were also seen as problematic. Edward Long, for instance, used climate and physiological theories to argue that cultural movement could produce actual physical changes, mostly unfavorable ones, in offspring born abroad.¹¹ This fear of a cultural regression sometimes resulted in a glorifying of Creoles in travel accounts. This glorification is either as a conscious attempt to assuage this concern or an unconscious one that reveals the authors’ own anxiety on the matter. For instance, as discussed in future chapters, some accounts of West Indian men describe them as hyperbolic images of masculinity, despite the many flaws that the authors are unable to ignore. The authors either justify these flaws or blamed others. Their fears display the tentative and contingent nature of a collective identity. Further evidencing that Britain's imperial experiences altered and shaped -- as well as were shaped by -- national identification.

Likewise, Gerard Newman argues that during this time cosmopolitanism is key to understanding eighteenth-century British nationalism. He argues that ideas of cosmopolitanism, especially those arising from Voltaire, helped to rationalize and maintain a sense of Britishness. Cosmopolitanism ideology was deeply rooted in the concept of an underlying unity of humankind and human aspirations.¹² While Enlightenment ideas of cosmopolitanism had a gravitational drift in the direction of a united humanity and international awareness, “a direct

¹¹ Long, *History*, 261. “Their cheeks are remarkably high-boned, and the sockets of their eyes deeper than is commonly observed among the natives of England.”

¹² Gerald G. Newman, *The Rise of English Nationalism: A Cultural History, 1740-1830* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1987), 1.

result of this broader international contact [was] an awakening of national pride.” This pride resulted in “a proliferation of national cultural institutions, an attempt to elaborate specifically national intellectual and moral styles...and define the type of national self.”¹³ Using Wilson’s term, this was evidence of a negotiation of one’s place in the social spectrum. Britishness or British nationalism in the eighteenth century was a negotiation and adaptation of European culture, resulting in a cosmopolitan British one.

Before the eighteenth century, the idea of “nation” referred solely to race, and while the view as a political entity was gaining ascendancy racial connotations still embedded the concept. Nation as a political-territory was still competing with the “biblical and juridical concepts of nation as a people, located in a fixed spatial and cultural terrain.”¹⁴ Dividing human species into different nations was the most popular category of difference. Nonetheless, the eighteenth century brought a renewed interest in humanity’s shared descent and how it resulted in the diversities of the period -- linguistically, culturally and physically. Britons, however, as Wilson argues, always believed that of all “the common arts of life ... Britain enjoyed superior advantages.” As a contemporary extolled: “Hail Britain, happiest of countries! Happy in thy climate, fertility, situation and commerce; but still happier in the peculiar nature of thy laws, and government.” Thus, “nation” for eighteenth-century Britain provided an essential “principle of social organization and taxonomy ... a way of imagining community that tied people together less by physical characteristic (although these played a significant role) than customs, descent, and blood.”¹⁵

While concepts like nationalism and patriotism seem interchangeable, it is essential to understand that nationalism is, in fact, a much more complicated concept than patriotism or

¹³ Newman, *The Rise of English Nationalism*, 50.

¹⁴ Wilson, *Island Race*, 7.

¹⁵ Wilson, *Island Race*, 7.

“mere chauvinistic flag-waving,” as Newman defines it. More in-depth, Leonard W. Doob defines patriotism as “a group-oriented feeling or psychological predisposition, which exists universally, wherever human beings are joined in societies.” Nationalism, instead, is a complicated amplification of patriotism. It is a “programmatically and historically conditioned” elaboration of patriotism into “patterns of demands and actions deeply affecting a group policy.” As Newman argues this is a distinction that rests on the “historic growth of a sense of active participation or citizenship in the individual as he relates himself to his group.” In a much broader sense, nationalism is the intellectual and emotional bonds within societal group identification. It is an ideological fact, which “passes through definable historic stages in its movement towards fulfillment and realization.”¹⁶ An ideological fact intertwined with notions of community, collectivity, and belonging.

Travel accounts were one of the tools that allowed for cultural intermixing and self-fashioning, for both the authors and the readers back home. Mary Louise Pratt in *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation*, examines European travel and travel writing in connection with European political and economic expansion since 1750. Pratt argues that travel literature helped fashion the world to its readers. Travel accounts “written by Europeans ... created the imperial order for Europeans ‘at home’ and gave them their place in it.” She argues that travel books gave its readers a “sense of ownership, entitlement, and familiarity with respect to distant parts of the world that were being explored, invaded, invested in and colonized.” They were key instruments in creating the “domestic subject” of empire due to how they allowed people “at home in Europe feel part of a planetary project.” Thus, travel writing, Pratt argues, “produced the rest of the world” during specific points in Europe's expansionist process. Furthermore, through travel accounts, it is possible to see how the imperial center tends to conceive itself as defining

¹⁶ Newman, *The Rise of English Nationalism*, 52, 55.

the periphery, yet the reverse dynamic is often the result: “empires create in the imperial center of power an obsessive need to present and re-present its peripheries and its others continually to itself. It becomes dependent on its others to know itself.” Travel writing, then, as Pratt asserts, “is heavily organized in the service of this institution.” They produced curiosity, excitement, and “even moral fervor about European expansionism.” Moreover, quite often in the narratives, the authors adopted aesthetic discourse to camouflage and distort imperial injustices. Through aesthetic language the authors presented that which was ugly or inhumane as attractive and humane, further promoting colonial expansion.¹⁷

When visitors and locals interacted in travel accounts, the moment and space of interaction became a “contact zone.” According to Pratt, contact zones are “social spaces where disparate cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in highly asymmetrical relations of domination and subordination.” Through these interactions, it is possible to see how the Creoles were observed and judged according to the observers’ values. It is also evident the author’s distance as well as assertion of dominance over what they are experiencing, “register[ing] degrees of both consanguinity and difference.”¹⁸

It is essential, however, to not overemphasize the travelers’ domination, but take into account as well their vulnerability, especially to tropical diseases or hostiles. Overemphasizing domination, according to Nigel Leask, “exaggerate[s] the historical and geographical reach of European hegemony and its power over different cultures.”¹⁹ As the North American colonies suggest, while Britain was dominant in many of its imperial domains, its hold was not absolute. Thus, when authors expressed fear or discussed threatening situations, as seen when Mylne and

¹⁷ Pratt, *Imperial Eyes*, 3- 4

¹⁸ Pratt, *Imperial Eyes*, 7; Wilson, *Island Race*, 18.

¹⁹ Nigel Leask, *Curiosity and the Aesthetics of Travel Writing, 1770-1840: 'from an Antique Land'* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 17.

Schaw feared imprisonment for espionage in America, it should not be assumed that it was merely feigned or an exaggeration. Whether it was their domination or vulnerability, however, the travelers' influence was felt in both in the places they were visiting as well as back home, where they “helped pave the way for those that followed them, even if the attitudes and methods of those later travelers differed.”²⁰

The colonies, then, became “resources to be visited, talked about, described or appreciated for domestic reasons, for local metropolitan benefit.”²¹ The Creoles, however, were not ignorant of such observation and judgments. As Pratt argues, “subjugated peoples cannot readily control what the dominant culture visits upon them, they do determine to varying extents what they absorb into their own, how they use it and what makes it mean.”²² The Creoles, in a sense, wanted visitors to judge them and find them worthy. In their case, to be worthy meant to be considered proper British subjects, albeit in hybridized forms.

Thus, as Wilson argues, the cultural intermixing that resulted between members of the metropole and colonials became “an instrument of national self-fashioning and definition.” The connection between Britain and its colonies was such that, while not the same, they influenced each other’s form of consumption, labor, freedom, and sense of belonging.²³ Everyday activities, like eating and dressing, had powerful if implicit connections with “patriotism (use of empire goods) and exotic pleasures (the glamour of familiar tropical or oriental products).”²⁴ This movement of products was fundamental to the relationships between metropole and colony, contributing to new forms of culture and consciousness, household, and workplace habits.

²⁰ Youngs, *The Cambridge Introduction to Travel Writing*, 42.

²¹ Catherine Hall, and Sonya O. Rose, *At Home with the Empire: Metropolitan Culture and the Imperial World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 193.

²² Pratt, *Imperial Eyes*, 7.

²³ Wilson, *Island Race*, 15.

²⁴ Hall, *At Home with the Empire*, 170-1.

Culture then was materialized; it was experienced, depicted, and collected in material forms. Travel narratives were one of the tools that made this exchange even more possible.

1.2 The Scottish Enlightenment

During the eighteenth century, Scotland experienced demographic and economic growth. After the Act of Union (1707) access to British markets as well as agricultural modernization allowed for early industrialization. Before 1750, most people lived in the country, but industrialization allowed for urban commercial growth. By 1850, one-third of Scotland's population lived in urban centers. These towns became centers for political, intellectual, and social thought and discussion focused on improvement both as a country and of its people. Because of these developments and the attention to human improvement, it is not surprising that Montesquieu's *Esprit des Lois* published in 1748 would draw as much attention as it did from Scottish intellectuals, like David Hume and Adam Smith. *Esprit des Lois* sparked conversations that would eventually characterize the debate on human diversity, which had a profound effect across Europe on all facets and genres, especially travel literature. Montesquieu showed that societies could be analyzed, compared, and classified according to different factors such as religion, laws, climate, manners, and customs instead of the traditional biblical criticism. He wanted to offer, “scientifically grounded solutions to the moral crisis of French society stemming from the absolutism of Louis XIV,” according to Silvia Sebastiani.²⁵ Montesquieu aimed to explain different forms of government and customs by focusing on society instead of individuals in a supposed state of solitude. He posited a close correlation between how people lived and the

²⁵ Silvia Sebastiani, *The Scottish Enlightenment Race, Gender, and the Limits of Progress* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 23-24.

laws that governed them. For instance, he claimed that usually societies that were more trade-oriented had more concrete set of laws than those who focused on farming or hunting. Division of land and population were a critical factor in the creation of laws; where these were limited, there were very few laws. For any system of government to function, however, Montesquieu argued that it depended on numerous features:

Many things govern men: climate, religion, laws, the maxims of the government, examples of past things, mores, manners; a general spirit is formed as a result. To the extent that, in each nation, one of these causes acts more forcefully, the others yield to it.²⁶

While Montesquieu claimed that numerous factors contributed to a government, he emphasized the role of climate as a factor in the formation of laws. He added a physiological explanation to climate effects on the human body. Heat, for instance, by stretching the body's fibers caused muscle weakness and lack of agility, whereas cold shrunk the fibers and stimulated circulation producing positive effects on musculature and flexibility. As a result, climate also determined variations in people's characters individually and as a community. According to Montesquieu, the populations of warm climates were weak, carnal, and predisposed to subordination; in contrast, those living in cold climates were brave, truthful, resilient, and autonomous. The effects of the climate on a person, however, were not intrinsic to specific nations. For example, as Sebastiani explains: "the peoples of the North, when they moved to the South, never managed to attain achievements equal to the ones they had been capable of in their own climate." Similarly, "the courage of the children of Europeans living in India was much feebler than that of their

²⁶ Charles De Montesquieu, Anne M. Cohler, Basia Carolyn Miller, and Harold Samuel Stone, *The Spirit of the Laws* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 310.

fathers.”²⁷ This concept of inferiority is particularly visible in the travel narratives’ discussion of West Indian customs and social interactions.

Thus, social conditioning was a critical factor in Montesquieu climate theory. People reacted in different ways to the different needs created by different climates. He argued that reactions to the climate effects determine a society's laws, customs, and even religion. For instance, those living in extreme climates were deprived of any desire to change and were thus destined to inactivity. He did, however, allow for human agency since he believed that by understanding the relationship between humans and nature an individual could resist the negative consequences of climate, something he believed all persons in leadership positions should do.²⁸

Montesquieu’s attention to climate was what drew the most attention by the literati. David Hume’s essay, “On National Characters,” published a month after *Esprit des Lois*, sets out the main issues and terms that would characterize the Scottish debate on human diversity. Primarily, Hume’s essay was centered as a criticism to Montesquieu's climate theory. David Hume (1711-1776) was a Scottish philosopher who according to Roger Emerson, possessed philosophical views considered radical and troubling by his contemporaries:

Here was a skeptic who was unwilling to say that anything is certain although most things have probabilities, which can be calculated in some fashion...He held that truth, goodness, rightness, beauty and all the sciences root in human nature and will change over time as our ideas become more adequate and our sensitivities more refined.²⁹

Thus, Hume believed that moral and social causes should be first in any consideration of national character. He argued that social causes such as laws, forms of government, and economy were what produced specific national characters on the people and not climate. National characters

²⁷ Sebastiani, *The Scottish Enlightenment*, 26.

²⁸ Sebastiani, *The Scottish Enlightenment*, 27.

²⁹ Roger L. Emerson, *Essays on David Hume, Medical Men and the Scottish Enlightenment: 'Industry, Knowledge and Humanity'* (London: Taylor and Francis, 2009), 81.

preserved in any climate. According to Hume, stronger than climate was humans' inherent sociability -- something that Montesquieu also highlighted. Hume adds, however, that by people sharing spaces they would inevitably share experiences, sentiments, and dispositions, or as he terms it the "propensity to sympathize with others" which resulted in "the great uniformity we may observe in the humors and turn of thinking of those of the same nation." For Hume, "tis much more probable, that this resemblance arises from sympathy, than from any influence of the soil and climate."³⁰ National characters, then, were based on the uniformity of human nature. Nonetheless, this uniformity, meaning shared passions, temperaments, and predispositions, were not distributed equally. Hume added to this debate a naturalized European superiority over non-Europeans in his discussions of the differences between societies.

Hume follows Carl Linnaeus (1707-1778) theory of the relationship between the human mind and physical characteristics. Linnaeus's *Systema Naturae*, published in 1735, divided humans into four categories: European, American, Asiatic, and African. This classification also led to a debate on different human groups' capacity of progress. Asians were caste as yellow skinned, governed by opinions, psychologically harsh and forlorn. Americans were red, black-haired, stubborn, choleric and governed by customs. Africans were black-skinned, curly-haired, governed by caprice and indolence; and Europeans as white, blue-eyed, light-colored hair, perceptive and governed by laws. For Hume, while sociological influences determined national character, it was these so-called natural differences that lay beneath the different segments of the human race.³¹

According to Hume, the European was superior to any other race, specifically the African.

This line of thought is of particular relevance to the situation in the colonies in the eighteenth

³⁰ David Hume, and Geoffrey Sayre-McCord, *Moral Philosophy* (Indianapolis: Hackett Pub. Co, 2006), 29.

³¹ Sebastiani, *The Scottish Enlightenment*, 35.

century. The locals in the colonies considered European superiority naturalized. However, Hume did not believe that this superiority condoned slavery. In his essay, “Of the Populousness of Ancient Nations,” published in 1752, he argued that slavery was damaging to the colonists' humanity and morals since the exercise of unlimited power created a lack of sympathy, which in civil society meant a loss of humanity.³² However, while he condemned slavery, it was on a moral plane and not a lawful one due to the alleged unequal relationship between the two races. Hume might have supported morality and freedom, but he still followed and promoted a hierarchy among people.

Discussion on human diversity became a turning point in the Scottish Enlightenment. It led intellectuals to focus on civil society, with particular attention to manners, and customs rather than just examining great men and events. Gerard Newman defines it as:

A universalizing system of thought which emphasized the rationality of God, the regularity of natural processes, the oneness of humanity, the value of life and of intellectual freedom; and which implicitly opposed revealed religions, arbitrary governments, national enthusiasm and was as artificial and costly barriers to human understanding and brotherhood.

This turning point explains the newfound interest in travel and the topics discussed in the narratives. In the narratives, the authors linked progress to adoption of British practices, consumption of English goods, and norms of behavior.

1.3 The Grand Tour

"If a young man was ambitious to raise a reputation in the world, or to improve in knowledge and wisdom, he should travel into foreign countries."
~Philostratus, *Life of Apollonius of Tyana* (c. 200 A.D.)³³

³² David. Hume, *Essays, Moral, Political, and Literary*, ed. Eugene F. Miller (Indianapolis, IN: Liberty Fund, Inc. 1987. Library of Economics and Liberty Online), II. XI.

³³ Philostratus, *The life of Apollonius of Tyana* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004), 19.

The Grand Tour was the traditional journey associated with formal education and personal growth undertaken by elite British male youths. This journey took travelers across certain European countries, specifically Italy, France, Germany, Switzerland and the Low Countries. The Tour roughly took place between Restoration in 1660 and the ascension of Queen Victoria in 1837. Usually occurring upon graduation from a university, traveling to these countries, mainly Italy, was believed to complete the education of young men by “exposing them to treasured artifacts and ennobling society of the Continent.”³⁴ The trip could last from one up to five years in the hope that the men would be better prepared to assume the roles expected of them back home. The tour helped shape the travelers' aesthetic tastes in art, music, and architecture, as well as reinforce cosmopolitan manners. The tour also provided the traveler with networking opportunities that could be helpful in their future careers. Initially, the Grand Tour was mostly practiced by aristocratic male youths, but due to the Napoleonic Wars and a safer European stagecoach network, travel in Europe became much more accessible for those of the bourgeois class. Furthermore, since the late eighteenth-century women also participated in the Grand Tour, but usually accompanied by a chaperone or family members.

By the eighteenth century, the tour had a more or less general itinerary. After crossing the Channel, the traveler would go from Calais to the Loire Valley, to work on his French accent, then a lengthy stay in Paris. After Paris, he would travel to Geneva then Florence via Milan or Turin for some months. Venice or Rome would be next. The return home would include stays in Austria, Berlin, and Amsterdam. Sometimes the trip went in reverse, “this latter arrangement

³⁴ Peter Hulme and Tim Youngs, *The Cambridge Companion to Travel Writing* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 38-39.

having the advantage of saving what were seen as the more challenging parts of the traveling education – Italy and socially brilliant Paris – until later in the process.”³⁵

Despite its popularity, the Grand Tour and its purpose were topics of debate regarding possible risks. The two significant risks discussed were brothels and papists. Of the first, John Evelyn, comments in his diary on the abundance of prostitutes he encountered during his visit to Naples in 1644: “the town is so pestered with these cattle, that there needs no small mortification to preserve from their enchantment.”³⁶ The fear of Catholicism was more significant, however, and discussed at more length. In fact, many of the traveling licenses often explicitly barred entry to Catholic regions.³⁷ Another method of trying to prevent any interest in the religion was by only describing the architecture. For instance, classic accounts of Italy, such as Joseph Addison’s *Remarks on Several Parts of Italy* (considered a handbook for travelers) published in 1718, focused entirely on the traces of classical times that it can sometimes appear that Italy was indeed “a land entirely lacking in living inhabitants or post-classical edifices.”³⁸

Another possible risk of the tour was the temptation to wanderlust or to travel just for pleasure or curiosity. A healthy curiosity was encouraged given that curiosity was what made possible a person to be educated in the first place, as Laurence Sterne argues in his essay, “The Prodigal Son.”³⁹ However, excessive curiosity was problematic. The Grand Tour was supposed to refine the travelers' worldview but not destabilize it. He was expected to readopt his manners and British customs upon returning home. Francis Bacon in his essay, “Of Travels” (1625) explains that foreign customs should enhance but not replace English ones:

³⁵ Hulme, *The Cambridge Companion to Travel Writing*, 40

³⁶ John Evelyn, *The Diary of John Evelyn*. Ed. E.S. de Beer, 6 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986), 152.

³⁷ Korte, *English Travel Writing*, 43.

³⁸ Hulme, *The Cambridge Companion to Travel Writing*, 41.

³⁹ Laurence Sterne, *The complete works. With a life of the author, written by himself* (Edinburgh: W.P. Nimmo. 1872), 314.

Let his travel appear rather in his discourse than his apparel or gesture; and in his discourse let him be rather advised in his answers than forward to tell stories; and let it appear that he doth not change his country manners for those of foreign parts; but only prick in some flowers of that he hath learned abroad into the customs of his own country.⁴⁰

Gerard Newman focuses precisely on what Bacon is addressing. As discussed, Newman studies English upperclassmen traveling abroad and how their experiences affected their sense of identification and behaviors while abroad and back home. He examines what he deems a paradox of national identity: while abroad the English refused everything French, but when they arrive in England, they adopted French customs. Newman explains that this was no paradox, but a struggle for status back home. While they may have been seeking status, most travelers who failed to readopt to English ways were met with ridicule instead. An example of this is the “The Macaroni Club” in which only admitted men who had traveled abroad. Members, however, were mocked for their overstated style of dress and exaggerated foreign manners. According to Horace Walpole’s letter to a friend in 1764, members wore “long curls and spying glasses.” Likewise, Mme D’Arblay’s 1783 entry in her diary observed that they “wear two watches” and a “beribbon’d lovelock.”⁴¹ Of the Macaronis, *The Oxford Magazine* in 1770 wrote:

There is indeed a kind of animal, neither male nor female, a thing of the neuter gender, lately started up among us. It is called a Macaroni. It talks without meaning, it smiles without pleasantry, it eats without appetite, it rides without exercise, it wenches without passion.⁴²

The Macaronis were young men who failed to surmount the paradox of the Grand Tour: a form of higher education and social interaction that required extended absence from parental

⁴⁰ Francis Bacon, and Mary A. Scott, *The Essays of Francis Bacon* (New York: C. Scribner's Sons, 1908), 81-2.

⁴¹ William Edward Mead, *The Grand Tour in the Eighteenth Century* (New York: Benjamin Blom, 1972), 397.

⁴² Joseph T. Shipley, *The Origins of English Words: A Discursive Dictionary of Indo-European Roots* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1984), 143.

supervision, but which also provided many temptations that risked undermining the institution's goals.⁴³ As an attempt to limit this issue, youths were recommended to travel with a tutor or a "grave servant" and keep detailed diaries.⁴⁴ If company was not possible, travel manuals addressed explicitly to youths traveling abroad were recommended. Most notable examples were James Howell's *Instructions for Foreign Travel* (1642) and Leopold Graf Berchtold's *An Essay to Direct and Extend the Inquiries of Patriotic Travellers* (1789) the latter, however, was considered to be too excessively detailed and impossible to follow to its totality.⁴⁵ These manuals focused on the proper way to travel, particularly, how to make observations and record their experiences. The style of these manuals was almost devoid of the travelers' subjective opinions. Instead, they favored the objective material, analytically gathered and recorded. They were not interested in the traveler's personal experience, but in that which was supposed to be learned and observed.

Nonetheless, throughout the century, the opinions on the Grand Tour changed and so did the narratives. Traveling abroad for educational purposes became less necessary due to new developments in education, new publications in the forms of books and news-journals, as well as an increase in available French tutors. The Tour increasingly came to be seen as holding more risks than advantages. As a result, the Grand Tour degenerated into a more uncomplicated tour of sites and social visits. Given these changes, in the 1760s travelers began to tour the Continent quite differently than previously prescribed. They would visit new areas far from the standard course and in their writings discuss not just what they saw, but also how they related to the places they visited and people they met. Instead of guidebooks or manuals, travel books were

⁴³ Dennis Porter, *Haunted Journeys: Desire and Transgression in European Travel Writing* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), 51.

⁴⁴ Bacon, *The Essays of Francis Bacon*, 80.

⁴⁵ James Howell, *Instructions for foreign travel* (London, 1642); Leopold, Graf von Berchtold, *An Essay to Direct and Extend the Inquiries of Patriotic Travellers* (London, 1789).

diaries, journals or letters – “autobiographical forms which are particularly suited to the immediate expression of personal experience.”⁴⁶

1.4 Travel Narratives in the Eighteenth Century

From the mid-century on, a noticeable shift towards a more subjective account occurs. In the personal letters of Scottish biographer and diarist, James Boswell (1740-1795) to Jean-Jacques Rousseau in 1765, it is possible to see the newfound emphasis on the subjective. Boswell writes about his Tour to France, Corsica, and Italy, which he made between 1764 and 1766, but instead of discussing the places he visited, he focuses on the effect his travels had on his imagination and awareness. From here on, interest and attention to subject-centered writing were becoming a standard in the genre. Authors began to step away from the merely instructional to a more personal narrative, and they began to fuse together various forms of presentation: intermixing, in varying degrees, exposition, description, and prescription with narration.⁴⁷

By this time, travel accounts were expected to be of literary value and merit; thus, publishers would review them extensively and expected them to follow the specifications of the genre. First, however, is vital to identify the concept of genre. Genres, according to Youngs, are not “merely a descriptive label but a way of making sense of the structures by which we describe our surroundings and perceive meaning in them.” John Frow adds that they “generate and shape knowledge of the world ... they create effects of reality and truth, authority and plausibility.”⁴⁸

These are also “bound up with the exercise of power, where power is understood as being

⁴⁶ Korte, *English Travel Writing*, 53.

⁴⁷ Korte, *English Travel Writing*, 52-55.

⁴⁸ Youngs, *The Cambridge Introduction to Travel Writing*, 2; John Frow, *Genre* (London: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2015), 2.

exercise in the discourse.” However, while there were generic conventions these in no way were invariable literary structures. Travel narratives are texts “strongly shaped by their relation to one or more genres.”⁴⁹ This relationship, in part, explains the century's fascination with the genre; authors could accomplish certain objectives in one literary genre than in any other. These specifications were ever changing as authors explored different approaches. Travel narratives were “uses of genres, performances of or allusions to the norms and conventions which form them and which they may, in turn, transform.”⁵⁰ They shared crossovers with the letter, essays, reports, anecdotes and even poetry and sketches were frequent. Nevertheless, despite the flexibility within the genre, some sense of the rules established by previous authors governed new attempts producing several significant traits found in most of the popular accounts. For instance, while presentation and quantity of description varied depending on the author, general topics and focus were quite universal. Narratives detailed the geography, food, nature, wildlife, climate, trade and land management and customs of the natives, and other inhabitants of the places they visited.

While the variety of topics was an essential feature of the genre, a key element of eighteenth-century travel literature is that it desired to separate itself from its Renaissance ancestors, who according to *The Critical Review: Or, Annals of Literature*, “some of whom were of a romantic turn, whilst others were satisfied with appearances.” In regards to the narratives of previous centuries, *The Critical Review* argued: “Half the pains, therefore, taken by writers ... are employed in correcting or exposing the errors and impositions of preceding travellers.”⁵¹ The eighteenth-century travel account, in contrast, strove to instruct its readers by blending pleasure

⁴⁹ Youngs, *The Cambridge Introduction to Travel Writing*, 2.

⁵⁰ Frow, *Genre*, 26.

⁵¹ *The Critical Review: Or, Annals of Literature*, ed. Tobias George Smollett, Volume 27 (London, 1769), 52-53.

with instruction, also regarded as *utile dulci*, useful and agreeable.⁵² Henry Fielding's *Journal of a Voyage of Lisbon* (1755) was one of the first examples that discussed the genre itself. He argues that a narrative was supposed to amuse and captivate, but without fiction or romance. Supposed to provide moral and political information but without monotony or complexity, because as he states: "the highest instruction we can derive from the tedious tale of a dull fellow scarce ever pays us for our attention"⁵³

Thus, a balance was also essential to consider in the style of the travel accounts. Authors had to maintain a middle ground between colloquial language and studied discourse. The *Critical Review* asserted that the best style was a "plain and unornamented" one that would "impress on the readers' mind" without the use of a too informal or specialized jargon. As a result, authors would proudly proclaim their works free of "ornaments of rhetoric" or scientific terms claiming instead a modest style, which was considered to impart a level of truthfulness to the account. Many narratives struggled with a balance between narration and facts, however. *The Critical Review*, for instance, considered accounts with minimal narratives as "series of reflections ... unconnected with each other." Similarly, *The Analytical Review* classified them as only travel guides instead of "literary."⁵⁴ For this reason, many narratives begin with the authors asserting that they had not intended to publish their accounts but are doing so at the behest of others. Regardless of their statement of intent, most editors would demand numerous stylistic revisions to ensure the account meets the genre's expectations.

Generic expectations and conventions, however, shifted as new authors emerged. Each new writer, explains Johnson, "produces some innovation which, when invented and approved,

⁵² Batten, *Pleasurable Instruction*, 25.

⁵³ Henry Fielding, *A Journal of a Voyage to Lisbon By the Late Henry Fielding, Esq.* (London, 1785), iv.

⁵⁴ Batten, *Pleasurable Instruction*, 36, 44.

subverts the rules which the practice of foregoing authors established.”⁵⁵ As a result, while maintaining a specific awareness of the genre's predecessors, various approaches to writing travel accounts emerged. The most common of these were: “philosophic,” “picturesque,” “sentimental” and even “splenetic.” None of these labels were always mutually exclusive, however. For example, the sentimental and picturesque accounts display highly developed sensibilities, whereas the splenetic and the philosophic ones share a more perceptive approach.⁵⁶

The most common of these approaches was the “philosophical.” According to the *Monthly Review*, the philosophic account contributed to not only general knowledge, but also that specific to science and the arts. In these accounts, the authors strove for a reputation of having the “most accurate observations and unquestionable veracity.”⁵⁷ A common goal of this approach was to study subjects that would undeniably prove beneficial to one's country. According to Count Berchtold, a philosophic traveler must view his own country as “a sick friend, for whose relief he asks advice of all the world.”⁵⁸ Similarly, Voltaire warns travelers to “be busied chiefly in giving faithful accounts of all the useful things and of the extraordinary persons, whom to know, and to imitate, would be a benefit to our Countrymen.”⁵⁹ Consequently, philosophic accounts could focus on specific observations within a single subject or would lean towards a more research-based approach to topics as varied as “the natural consequence of laziness” and different approaches to agronomy.⁶⁰

⁵⁵ Samuel Johnson, *The Rambler* (Edinburgh, 1751), 125.

⁵⁶ Batten, *Pleasurable Instruction*, 72.

⁵⁷ William Forbes, *An Account of the Life and Writings of James Beattie LL. D. In Three volumes* (Edinburgh: A. Constable, 1806), I, 392.

⁵⁸ Leopold Berchtold, *An Essay to Direct and Extend the Inquiries of Patriotic Travellers* (London, 1789). I. 85.

⁵⁹ James Parton, *Life of Voltaire* (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin and Company, 1881), 220.

⁶⁰ Michel Adanson, *A Voyage to Senegal, the Isle of Goree, and the River Gambia* (London, 1759), vii.

Curiously, the splenetic, or bad-tempered approach, was standard enough to be noticed in review magazines during the end of the century. For example, in 1790 the *Analytical Review* complained that current narratives were descriptions with “scrupulous exactness” of the places visited by “vapourish travelers.”⁶¹ Likewise, Johnson in 1778 noted, “a strange turn in travelers to be displeased.”⁶² A melancholy temperament was not a mere display of personality but also exhibited a literary function. Due to the period's distrust of accounts with a “romantic turn” melancholy authors seemed trustworthy. According to Batten, those that suffered from melancholia or the “English malady,” often members of the upper classes, were considered individuals of “acute mental ability.”⁶³ As travelers it was believed that their humor would make them unreceptive to the glamor of outward appearances and would analyze things on a deeper level, therefore were trustworthy.

The sentimental account arose as a response to the splenetic trend and often ridiculed it. Among the ridicule, however, authors attempted to right what they considered wrongs in the information portrayed in melancholic accounts, usually in regards to the people and local food. For instance, Barretti's *Accounts of Manner and Customs in Italy* (1768) warns his readers not to believe the contrary portrayals of Italian people and much less that the “bread and wine are bad throughout Italy.”⁶⁴ Just as all splenetic travelers manage to find something dreadful about the people and place to report, the sentimental travelers always had anecdotes depicting the virtues of those they met. The sentimental tourist sought emotional adventures that would enable them to display their emotional sensitivity and compassion for humankind. This type of account,

⁶¹ *Analytical review: or history of literature, domestic and foreign, on an enlarged plan* (London, 1790), 8.160.

⁶² James Boswell, and George Birkbeck Norman Hill, *Life of Johnson, Volume 3: 1776-1780*, (Project Gutenberg, 2005), 3. 236.

⁶³ Batten, *Pleasurable Instruction*, 74.

⁶⁴ Giuseppe Marco Antonio Baretti, *An Account of the Manners and Customs of Italy with Observations on the Mistakes of Some Travellers, with Regard to That Country* (London, 1768).

according to Carl Thompson, “pioneered new techniques for writing about the self, and for expressing the flux of inner thoughts and feelings.” For instance, even exploratory travelogues began interweaving sentimentalist elements with the adventure narrative. A prime example is Mungo Park’s *Travels in the Interior Districts of Africa*, published in 1799 where alongside descriptions of his adventures, he also recorded his own passionate responses to the situations he experienced.⁶⁵

Whereas the sentimental account would focus on the positive characteristics of the people and food of the places visited, the picturesque traveler would focus on art and nature. Rev. William Gilpin (1724-1804) vigorously promoted this style, publishing various “picturesque tours” in 1781. Gilpin defined *picturesque* as “a term expressive of that peculiar kind of beauty, which is agreeable in a picture.”⁶⁶ These narratives would feature the author contemplating, usually in solitude, and describing different scenic views of the places they visited. The descriptions were as artistic as the scenes that inspired them. More than anything, the picturesque traveler wanted to show that they possessed a cultivated eye and refined taste in art. Because of this objective, their descriptions were often vague, focusing solely on how the scenery coincided with the picturesque rather than its true nature.⁶⁷ These various approaches not only offered authorship possibilities to various peoples but would also attract readers with different interests and preferences and all within the same genre. This injection of the self into the narratives also allowed for the narrative to possess a logical order of events instead of a simple enumeration of facts. Even more so, the autobiographical contribution made for a much more entertaining reading experience, without forsaking the genre’s educational objectives.

⁶⁵ Thompson, *Travel Writing*, 49.

⁶⁶ William Gilpin, *An Essay on Prints By William Gilpin* (London, 1781) xii.

⁶⁷ Batten, *Pleasurable Instruction*, 75-76.

As narrative conventions, descriptive conventions also experienced a gradual change. More detailed focus on local manners and customs started occurring in the mid-century. Travelers would attempt to present a comprehensive image of the habits, laws, manners, religion, and language of the local population- an approach that demanded more thought and ability. Review magazines, like the *Analytical Review*, expected travelers to live among those he or she was observing for an extended period, mix with different ranks on intimate terms, speak the language, have previous knowledge of the history and laws and free of any prejudice. Accounts were also supposed to “promote and facilitate the intercourse of countries remote to each other” dispelling from the readers' minds “unreasonable and gloomy antipathies against those manners, customs, forms of government and religion.”⁶⁸

The gradual changes in the genre’s descriptive and narrative conventions forced travelers to evolve from the encyclopedic narration full of scientific jargon and minutiae to a more engaging description full of character and entertainment, yet still, adhere to the genre’s literary aspirations. Authors were challenged to find a balance between factual and the narrative, to educate without being monotonous and to entertain without frivolity. This change allowed the production of a great variety of works that continuously kept shaping and reshaping the genre. A possible reason behind the demanding eighteenth-century expectations of travel accounts is that they were considered a healthy substitute for novels and romances of which many believed to be a wasteful form of entertainment. Narratives, instead, allowed the reader to improve their understanding and inspire to further studies. In fact, reviewers, alongside editors and clergymen frequently recommended travel narratives especially to the youth in the hope that they not only find entertainment, but also gain experiences, and a

⁶⁸ Batten, *Pleasurable Instruction*, 27.

relish for learning.⁶⁹ Thus, the eighteenth-century desire to appear truthful formed the genre's traditions and particular focus on facts, "making travel for the sake of education, even into the farthest corners of the world, available to any man [or woman] who could afford the price of a book."⁷⁰

1.5 Women and Travel Writing

While female travel writing became fashionable in the nineteenth century, the eighteenth century also enjoyed wide female readership and authorship. As already established, women-authored works have plenty in common with the works of their male contemporaries. A characteristic proper to them, though, is their need to justify their travels. While even the usefulness and reasons behind men traveling were questioned, especially during the Grand Tour, women had even more need to justify their travels. Solitary travel was considered more dangerous for women in regards to their health, chastity, or the women developing "uncontrolled freedom." Since unmarried women would often travel either with other female companions or with only a servant, the risks were seen even greater.⁷¹

A common justification, or alibi, women expressed was traveling for reasons of health. It became increasingly fashionable for women to visit spa towns in Britain and the Continent during a portion of their travels to avert much of the criticism. For instance, Celia Fiennes (1662-1741) who traveled through most of England on horseback between 1684 and 1703 wrote that she did so "to regain my health by variety and change of air and exercise." While health was an alibi, most women, specifically Fiennes, saw travel as escape from the monotony of the upper-class domestic life. Fiennes makes it explicitly clear when she states that travels would spare

⁶⁹ James Boswell, *The Scots Magazine* (Edinburgh, 1777), 39, 258.

⁷⁰ Batten, *Pleasurable Instruction*, 119.

⁷¹ Korte, *English Travel Writing*, 111.

ladies of “uneasy thoughts” about “how to pass away tedious days, and time would not be a burden when not at a card or dice table.”⁷²

Alongside moral dangers, there were arguments against the discomfort and risks women would face on the road. These, however, became less persuasive with the various improvements of traveling condition in throughout the eighteenth century, as was the expansion of the stagecoach network. Moreover, as Barbara Korte argues, general conditions of female life, especially access to education brought women new opportunities for travel. For instance, German painter Maria Sibylla Merian traveled to Surinam in 1699 to observe its natural world, yielding her renowned *Metamorphosis insectorum surinamensium* (1705). Similarly, the emerging movement for women’s emancipation at the wake of the French Revolution gave educated women’s travel a “renewed impetus” as seen in the travels and writings of Ann Radcliffe, Mary Wollstonecraft, and Hester Thrale Piozzi.⁷³

While women sought to write their accounts following the genre’s specifications, a distinctive feature is the fact that most women did not publish their accounts in their lifetime. Most accounts only circulated among friends and family or even to a broader audience in manuscript form. For instance, Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, who wrote between 1716 and 1718 on her travels to Constantinople, only prepared her travelogue them for publication shortly before her death. Similarly, Celia Fiennes’s and Janet Schaw’s accounts were published almost 150 years after they wrote them. A possible reason for this is the fact that while women travelers were becoming more popular, their accounts still generated prejudice. Prejudice derived from the contemporary assumption that the female brain was inferior to the male one, specifically in areas of observation and analysis. As a result, women who did publish their travels would include

⁷² Elizabeth A. Bohls and Ian Duncan, *Travel Writing, 1700-1830: An Anthology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 97-98.

⁷³ Korte, *English Travel Writing*, 112-3.

extensive apologies and justifications of their writings. They would also preface their accounts with claims that they never intended to publish instead only to share their experiences with loved ones. Disclaimers and apologies, such as these, as well as adopting the epistolary or diary format, were meant to forestall the criticism directed at women for crossing into the supposedly male domain. As Carl Thompson argues, if the female traveler “contravenes the patriarchal ideology of separate spheres by quitting her home and venturing out into the world, the female travel writer, or at least the woman who *publishes* a travel account, contravenes the ideology twice over.”⁷⁴ As a result, apologies or disclaimer always accompanied published narratives written by women. Female authors always explained that they originally had not intended to publish and apologized for any error in their accounts.

These apologies, however, would often clash with the self-assured and confident image the text would otherwise project of them. For women, travel represented an opportunity to escape traditional gender boundaries: “she has the time to reflect...to understand herself more fully and perhaps even to experience a new-found freedom.”⁷⁵ This “new-found freedom” was, of course, limited. Women had to face the assumption that travelers were male as well as the “symbolic association of women and home.”⁷⁶ Barbara Korte argues that women caught between traditional gender expectations and a “counter-discourse of emancipation” frequently acquired an awareness of gender ambiguity where women had to fluctuate between a confident record of their achievements and an anxiousness to not come across as manly.⁷⁷

Sometimes, however, the fluctuation could almost be seen as overcompensation, as Thompson states “a psychological need to balance the implicit transgressiveness of their

⁷⁴ Thompson, *Travel Writing*, 180.

⁷⁵ Korte, *English Travel Writing*, 117.

⁷⁶ Amanda Gilroy, *Romantic Geographies: Discourses of Travel, 1775-1844* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), 5.

⁷⁷ Korte, *English Travel Writing*, 118.

remarkable travel achievements with an ostentatious display of conventionally ‘feminine’ attitudes.”⁷⁸ Amanda Gilroy argues that this “engendered particularly ‘feminine’ ways of seeing and writing.” Women, for instance, were usually eager to stress the extent to which they followed the established codes of female propriety. Usually displayed in the clothes they adopted or maintained, regardless if they were constrictive and inconvenient for their travels.⁷⁹

This need to demonstrate and uphold femininity would also often affect the topics the female writer would discuss and the manner in which she discussed them. Topics such as politics, public affairs, science, and economics were typically considered masculine topics and more appropriate for men to discuss. Anthony Trollope, for instance, commented on his mother's, Fanny Trollope, *Domestic Manners of the Americas* (1832), stating that while his mother “with a woman's keen eye” had been able to observe the “social defects and absurdities” of American culture, she had not felt it appropriate to discuss the political arrangements that led to such “social defects.” The political arrangements, he adds would have been topic “fitter for a man than for a woman.”⁸⁰

This negative reception and chauvinism did not stop women writers from discussing these supposedly masculine topics. They, instead, would simply find ways to do so that would elude the criticism. For instance, they would strategically place traditional masculine interests in the footnotes or prelude their political commentaries in terms of acceptable female sensibility, so that they became “affairs of the heart,” as Helena Maria Williams terms it in her *Letters Written in France* (1790).⁸¹ More concentrated readings of these footnotes or “affairs of the heart,”

⁷⁸ Thompson, *Travel Writing*, 181.

⁷⁹ Gilroy, *Romantic Geographies*, 6.

⁸⁰ Anthony Trollope, *North America* (Gloucester: Alan Sutton, 1862), I. 2.

⁸¹ Gilroy, *Romantic Geographies*, 6; Helena Maria Williams, *Letters Written in France, in the Summer 1790, to a Friend in England: Containing Various Anecdotes Relative to the French Revolution*. ed. Neil Fraistat (Peterborough, Ont.: Broadview Press, 2002), 91.

however, often show that these women were well versed in the area they were discussing. Janet Schaw, for instance, is one of these women who while not necessarily shy of writing about what she knew she did use footnotes to point out all the sources she was familiar with of contemporary British works of natural histories and agricultural practices.⁸²

Not all gender norms were in favor of men, however. In most cases, women had more freedom to travel "aimlessly" in contrast to the highly methodological approach men had to engage. As seen with the Grand Tour, during most of its practice men had to visit similar if not the same places. Women could be more original in destinations and focus. For example, a characteristic specific to women's narratives is their focus on the conditions of the women they meet in their travels. The writings of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu present an ideal example. Montagu was proud of her insights on women's culture in the Orient, pointing out alternatives to her own female culture.⁸³ She notes how the lifestyle of Turkish women led to a healthier, natural and beautiful body. Not all women travelers experienced this appreciation for alternative female life, however. Janet Schaw, for example, was very dismissive of the customs practiced by the Creole women she met in her travels.

While there are some differences in female travel writing, these are not so clear-cut as to require differentiation from travel accounts written by men. Women's accounts share many characteristics with the accounts written by men. In fact, they had to in order to fulfill the genre's expectations. The accounts of female travelers, however, suggest that they were much more open to crossing cultural boundaries than men were. While they might not approve of all they experienced or saw, they showed more interest in having a first-hand experience of the local culture, including the customs that most men found trivial.

⁸² Schaw, *Journal*, 151.

⁸³ Korte, *English Travel Writing*, 121.

1.6 Main Authors

Charles McLean Andrews and Evangeline Walker Andrews discovered Schaw's unpublished and unsigned manuscript in the British Museum in 1903 and published it in 1923 after establishing her as the author and providing background of certain people and places she visited.⁸⁴ Little else is known of Janet Schaw (born c. 1740) other than the fact that she was a single upper-class Scottish woman. Between October 25, 1774, and the end of 1776, she sailed to the West Indies and North America on board the small ship, the *Jamaica Packet*. The two reasons for her travels were to visit her brother, Robert Schaw, and his American wife in their plantation in North Carolina, and to accompany her brother, Alexander Schaw, who was appointed Custom Officer of St. Kitts. Traveling with her, in addition to Alexander, were Fanny, Jack, and William Gordon, the children of John Rutherford, a prominent resident of North Carolina. Her maid, Abigail, and Alexander's East Indian servant, Robert, also accompanied her.

Schaw wrote detailed letters to an unnamed male friend in Scotland, describing her experiences during her travels. Her narrative is divided into four parts: her journey from Scotland to the West Indies; life and experiences in Antigua and St. Kitts; life on Cape Fear just before the American War of Independence; and finally, her experiences in Portugal and her way back to Scotland. In her letters, she discussed the climate and scenery as well as the sugar culture and farming. She also wrote extensively of those she met, their houses, and recreations as well as their manners and customs. From the start, she captures readers' attention with her humor, lively descriptions, and interesting points of view. Her narrative provides a rhythmic balance of imagery, humor, emotion, and intimacy. The intimacy of her accounts and her openness suggest that she did not intend to publish the letters. In her first letter, she promised her friend that she:

⁸⁴ Schaw, *Journal*, v.

Will not fail to write whatever can amuse myself; and whatever you find it entertaining or not, I know you will not refuse it a reading. As every subject will be guided by my own immediate feelings, my opinions and descriptions will depend on the health and humour of the moment in which I write; from which cause my sentiments will often appear to differ on the same subject.⁸⁵

Schaw, however, was not just an “observant visitor” as some historians have categorized her.⁸⁶

Her many references to contemporary British works of natural histories and agricultural practices reveal her education regarding the subjects she is observing. For instance, while in America, Schaw admitted to having read “all the descriptions of America that have been published.” She also showed an interest and desire for education since whenever she confronted something unknown or unheard of she would seek instruction from her local companions and continued to write extensively about them.⁸⁷

Not only does Schaw describe in detail the social life and natural scenery of the places she visited, she also provides an in-depth look at the political life in the West Indies and, most importantly, North Carolina. Her accounts of North Carolina during the unsettled pre-revolutionary days offer us with a loyalist point of view shared by many in Britain. From the moment she landed at Brunswick until her sudden departure for Portugal, she provides a running account of the social and political situation and the experiences of those loyalist planters who through violence and threats were being forced to oppose British rule.

Schaw was born in Lauriston, a suburb of Edinburgh, and was probably resided there at the time of her father's death in 1772. At the time of her travels, she may have been between thirty-five or forty years of age. She belonged to an old Scottish family with either blood or marital connections to Murrays, Rutherfords, and Scotts -- herself being a third cousin once

⁸⁵ Schaw, *Journal*, 20.

⁸⁶ See Bernard Baylin, and Barbara DeWolfe, *Voyagers to the West: A Passage in the Peopling of America on the Eve of the Revolution* (New York: Knopf, 1986), 535; Elsa V. Goveia, *Slave Society in the British Leeward Islands at the End of the Eighteenth Century* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1965).

⁸⁷ Schaw, *Journal*, 151.

removed of Sir Walter Scott. Of her life after the narrative, even less is known. She must have resided in Edinburgh, at least for a time, as evidenced by an entry in the Edinburgh directory of 1778-1779, which places her in a northern section of Edinburgh. As far as it is known, she did not marry.⁸⁸

While records provide very little of her life story, her journal offers many insights into her character. She was a well-born Scottish woman, with aristocratic preferences and tastes, and loyal to Britain. Her political, social and religious views show her to be a typical member of the Scottish educated class. While she displays many instances of prejudice, her social class also shared these. Although these prejudices do not undermine her sense of fact, “at times, they warp her judgment and blind her to the real significance of the events in which she plays an important part.” On the whole, however, Schaw presents a tolerance and breadth of view, especially concerning religion and faith. Not entirely surprising given Scotland’s influence in the Enlightenment and on contemporary thought across the intellectual world. It is because of this influence that Schaw quotes and admires many Scottish philosophers throughout her narrative, taking their work as guides to life. She is also able to discuss in details various scientific methods of agriculture and can make poignant comparisons between what she deemed as ineffective and wasteful American method of farming and that of the East Lothian's.⁸⁹

Through her narrative, we can also see that Schaw was well versed in Scripture. While she admitted being unable to feel more than a spectator at West Indian services, she still admired and praised the West Indians on their faith. In politics, she is also well informed and expresses candid opinions. She was shocked by the violence she witnessed in America, specifically because she did not agree with the Revolutionary cause. Socially, she was conservative and

⁸⁸ Schaw, *Journal*, 9-13.

⁸⁹ Schaw, *Journal*, 11, 111, 150.

valued conventions, although she did not blindly follow them. Overall, Schaw seemed to be a friendly, quick-witted, and social woman who enjoyed company; and judging by the warm welcomes she received on her visits, others liked her.⁹⁰

William Mylne (1734–1790) was another Scot who also experienced firsthand the pre-revolutionary fervor present in America. His account is important because, while not as detailed as Schaw, it also provides a glimpse at the mindsets of both revolutionaries and loyalists at the onset of the American Revolution. Mylne lived in America from 1773 to 1775. During which he wrote multiple letters to his sister, Anne, in Edinburgh and his brother, Robert, in London. Back in Edinburgh, Mylne, following the family tradition, was an architect and master mason like his father and grandfather. Both, William and his elder brother, Robert, studied architecture in France and Italy. Upon his return to Edinburgh, he started a business as a mason and general builder and also sold his architectural designs. Mylne had a stable career with many small projects. His brother, on the other hand, won many architectural competitions abroad and was appointed the surveyor for the city of London upon his return.

Mylne most likely left for America to avoid the ongoing persecution from creditors and Edinburgh's town council regarding the Edinburgh Bridge project. He was contracted to build the bridge in 1765, however, after its completion in 1769, parts of it collapsed killing five people. Investigators were never able to conclude why it collapsed or if it indeed was Mylne's fault, but for the next four years, he was involved in the repair work which indebted him to his brother, creditors, and other family members. He hoped to become a planter in America, make his fortune, and return to Scotland a wealthy man. Unfortunately, for Mylne, the upcoming independence movement negatively affected his plans. As a newly arrived and an unknown Brit, Mylne was suspected of espionage and dealt with such suspicions in all his economic endeavors.

⁹⁰ Schaw, *Journal*, 14.

Consequently, Mylne moved from Charlestown to North Carolina and lastly to Georgia, attempting to make his fortune. As hostilities against loyalists grew, Mylne found it dangerous and unprosperous to stay in the colonies and returned to Scotland in 1775 with no significant improvement in his wealth. He moved to Dublin where he was employed for thirteen years, working on water supplies with a fair amount of success. He died in Dublin in March 1790.⁹¹

While John Luffman (d. 1820) was a reputable publisher and bookseller, his career flourished as an engraver. His earliest cartographic works were a series of maps for two road books published in 1776. In 1803, he published *A New Pocket Atlas And Geography Of England And Wales*. His success came from his quick response to political events, producing various maps of regions where popular interest was at its highest.⁹² *A Brief Account of the Island of Antigua* is a series of forty letters written between 1786 and 1788. The letters were printed in 1789 and reprinted in 1790 and 1894. *A Brief Account* presents a comprehensive description of plantation life and of the social conditions in Antigua. Besides plantation life, Luffman describes the climate, natural history, agriculture, and customs of the island. From his accounts, it is clear that Luffman detested slavery and the racism perpetuated against mulattoes.

Edward Long (1734–1813) is undoubtedly the most renowned author in this study. Long was Jamaican planter and slave-owner, historian, and influential member of British society. He was infamous for his controversial work, *The History of Jamaica*, published in 1774. First published in three volumes, the book provides a social, economic, and political account of the island of Jamaica. The book was notorious for its virulent descriptions of Africans and people of mixed race. According to Howard Johnson, *The History* “marked the first occasion on which an extended historical narrative was undertaken by an author with a prolonged association with the

⁹¹ Tedd Ruddock, introduction in Mylne, *Travels in the Colonies*, 1-9.

⁹² “John Luffman,” Geographicus Rare Antique Maps, Accessed September 20, 2017, <https://www.geographicus.com/P/RareMaps/luffman>

island.” While born in Britain, his family had strong connections to the island’s governing planter elite since its occupation in 1655. His great-grandfather, Samuel Long had arrived on the island as a lieutenant in the English army. He was also a secretary to Oliver Cromwell's Commissioners. Long went to Jamaica upon his father's death in 1757 to take over his share of Longville, the family estate on the island. He returned permanently to Britain in 1769 due to health issues. His time and experiences in Jamaica shaped his perspective on the current events and past of the island.⁹³

In his *History*, Long was concerned with attracting permanent white settlers to the colony in order to increase the white population, in hopes that they would be capable of defending the island and themselves from slavery insurrections. In his introduction, he explained that his work was an attempt to replace other “unsatisfactory” accounts of the island:

Several histories have been published of this island; yet none that I have met with affords much more than a general outline, very unsatisfactory to those who intend to settle in it. Having spent some years of my life there, I thought I could not devote my leisure to better purpose, than endeavoring to give an idea of its products, and importance to Great-Britain, beyond what may be conceived from a perusal of those publications.⁹⁴

While Long addressed potential settlers, he was also aware of the popularity of travel narratives, and he also sought to entertain his readers. The subtitle to his work, “Reflections on its Situations, Settlements, Inhabitants, Climate, Products, Commerce, Laws and Government” is evidence that he was trying to capitalize on the travel books’ market as well, given that it follows the structures of contemporary travel narratives. His work, like other travel accounts, is a mixture of genres encompassing the historical narrative, natural history, travel accounts, and planter's guide. Long believed that a complete history “should omit nothing worthy of notice, either in the frame of the

⁹³ Howard Johnson, Introduction in Edward Long, *The History of Jamaica. Volume 1 Reflections on Its Situation, Settlements, Inhabitants, Climate, Products, Commerce, Laws and Government* (Montreal [Que.]: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2003), i–xxv. i–ii.

⁹⁴ Johnson, Introduction, ii–iii.

constitution, the government, laws, manners, commerce, climate, diseases, and natural history.” He admitted to using works of previous authors given that as he argued that no complete history could be “neither be well collected nor digested, by one man.”⁹⁵ Long describes both the political and social institutions of the island, its economy, environment, and society. Inspired by Hume, his views on race (discussed in future chapters) convey a thorough understanding of the race and climate debates during the Enlightenment, particularly insofar as it was relevant to plantation and slave owners. Thus, Long's *History of Jamaica* offers a window to the Jamaican world in the eighteenth century as well as the perspectives of the planter class.

During the eighteenth century, travel writing experienced many changes within its genre. Accounts would differ in amount of narration, description or expository material and techniques. Emphasis while traveling would differ depending on their intention to instruct or entertain. The writer's strategic preference not only depended on their ability, but on the cultural and aesthetic trends to which they wished. While the texts show a general consciousness and tradition, this does not diminish the importance of the observations found within. Regardless if a traveler was observing the same subject as other contemporaries and reached similar conclusions there always existed differences worth noting. In fact, the mere existence of the similarities exhibits a discourse worthy of study, by revealing culture-specific perceptions and misperceptions. Thus, travel accounts, specifically those in this study, rather than the various peoples and cultures the authors sought to describe, they reveal eighteenth-century British ways of thinking about race, belonging, national identity, and consanguinity.

⁹⁵ Johnson, Introduction, iii, iv.

CHAPTER 2: THE BRITISH WEST INDIES

It appears a delightful Vision, a fairy Scene or a peep into Elysium; and surely the first poets that painted those retreats of the blessed and good, must have made some West India Island sit for the picture. ~ Janet Schaw, *Journal* (1775)¹

The British West Indian colonies differed in multiple ways from all other British colonies. Size and climate were critical factors. Compared to the Northern territories where seasons were well defined, weather in the Caribbean varied significantly, often on a day-to-day basis. The length of days and nights, hurricanes or dry spells, high temperatures and humidity levels, all determined essential differences in agricultural practices, demography, health, and society and, even local government from the American colonies.² Sugar plantations were the leading system of profit in the islands. As a result, the West Indies were keenly involved in the slave trade that produced a population of mostly slaves and mulattos and a white minority. For instance, Luffman wrote that of the approximate fifty-five thousand inhabitants of Antigua, forty-five thousand of them were slaves and mulattos.³ Thus, two features that were essential in the shaping of West Indian society were its role as a formal institution of colonial government and its mono-cultural plantation economy dependent on African slaves.⁴ These two qualities are readily apparent in both natural histories and travel narratives.

The narratives' discussion of the West Indian inhabitants and their customs reveal how the absorption and consumption of British practices and goods by the colonial subject were the significant factors in the observers' evaluation of them. The emulation of British ideals (by the

¹ Schaw, *Journal*, 91.

² Michael Craton, "Reluctant Creoles: The Planters' World in the British West Indies" in *Strangers Within the Realm: Cultural Margins of the First British Empire*, eds., Bernard Bailyn and Philip D. Morgan (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1991), 314-362, 314.

³ Luffman, *A Brief Account*, 15.

⁴ Craton, "Reluctant Creoles," 321.

white community) outdid factors of ethnicity, social class, and gender. Given that the West Indians desired to be considered British, they consciously behaved in a perceived British manner. This exchange is complicated when at times, the Creoles' attempts to emulate the British were considered un-British by observers.

2.1 The West Indies

Eighteenth-century travel narratives are particularly rich in their discussion of Antigua. Visitors approved of almost all facets of the island. Schaw, who landed on Antigua on December 12, 1774, called it a "little paradise," stating, that it was not in her "power to paint the beauty and the Novelty of the scene." Luffman, who arrived on May 15, 1786, likewise felt a sense of "astonishment" with everything he saw. Antigua is eighteen miles long and fourteen wide, with one hundred and eight square miles. The island had six parishes and fifteen divisions, and a representative government formed by a Governor, appointed by the English Crown, a Council and an Assembly. In the eighteenth century, it was the headquarters of the Caribbean fleet of British royal navy and had several forts, which Luffman considered adequate.⁵ In the narratives, Antigua's climate, fauna, flora, appearance, and customs of the inhabitants, as well as its economy, are all described in detail. These descriptions reveal not only the many features of Antiguan Creole society but also how these characteristics are compared and assessed according to British customs.

Schaw also spends some time in St. Kitts, also known as St. Christopher. The island produced sugar, coffee, cocoa, and some roots. According to Governor Payne, governor from 1771 to 1775 and reelected again in 1799 until his death in 1807, St. Kitts had no harbors thus

⁵ Schaw, *Journal*, 78; Luffman, *A Brief Account*, 6, 23.

shipping of all sizes and denomination occurred on “open roads and bays.” During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the island alternated between British and French rule due to constant treaties or military actions. Its population during Payne’s first term and Schaw’s visit was approximately 1,900 white inhabitants, 417 free people of color and 23,462 slaves.⁶

Jamaica was the island that was featured the most in the narratives about the West Indies. It is approximately 140 miles from east to west and 50 miles wide, with an area of 4,207 square miles. It is ninety miles south of Cuba and roughly the same distance from the west to Haiti. It is part of the Greater Antilles in the Caribbean. When Columbus arrived at the island in 1494, the Amerindian Arawaks populated the island. By the end of the first century of colonization, enslavement, smallpox, and slaughter all contributed to the annihilation of the Arawaks. West Africans, brought in as slaves, replaced them. The Spaniards were the first to transport the Africans slaves, and the English, who conquered the island in 1655 followed. Both Spaniards and later the English settled, first as small farmers, then mainly as sugar planters, and cattle keepers. They also farmed cotton, ginger, cocoa, and logwood with some coffee.⁷

From 1655 to 1664, the English army managed Jamaica as a conquered territory. The soldiers were also expected to become farmers. Settlers from other West Indian islands as well as convicts and indentured servants from Scotland, Ireland, and England, were sent to supplement the military farmers. In 1664, a representative government formed by Governor, Council, and Assembly replaced Army rule. Between 1677 and 1680, the colonial government prevented the English Crown from establishing a system of direct Crown rule in the colony. Instead, the assembly created a fixed revenue for the Crown for use within the island of £8,000. According to an Assembly document written in 1797, Jamaica’s population consisted of four classes: “whites,

⁶ Schaw, *Journal*, 117.

⁷ Kamau Brathwaite, *The Development of Creole Society in Jamaica, 1770-1820* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), 3.

free people of colour, having special privileges granted by private acts, free people of colour not possessing such privileges, and slaves.” Furthermore, the document states that “all these classes, when employed in public service, have, as far as it has been practicable, been kept separate.” In 1768, there were 17,000 whites (of whom less than 2,000 were men of property) and 166,914 slaves, and by 1820, 339,287 slaves and 35,000 whites.⁸ It is because of this inequality of numbers that the threat of slave insurrections was a constant fear in the island, which, as will be discussed later on in the chapter, shaped many of its social customs and stratifications.

2.2 Creoles: Customs, Clothing, and Religion

Creoles refer to whites -- persons with unmixed European ancestry-- born in the West Indies. Creole society was part of “some kind of colonial arrangement with a metropolitan European power, on the one hand, and a plantation arrangement in the other.” It is also a multi-racial society where the minority, or those of European origins, are the ones who benefit.⁹ Not only were the authors interested in the Creoles due to their interactions with them, but because their manners and practices were also a category of comparison. Creoles were observed and assessed according to eighteenth-century British customs and views on national identity. Of Creoles, Luffman comments: “The good folks of this place are as strangely civil as any people in the world.” Likewise, Schaw assures her friend that the Creoles have “nothing to fear from [her] pen.”¹⁰ Overall, they were considered good looking, clean, well mannered and hospitable.

The authors described the Creoles as fond of dancing, food, smoking, entertaining, and fishing. Most families shared a connection with each other due to early intermarriages in

⁸ Brathwaite, *The Development of Creole Society*, 6, 106, 152.

⁹ Brathwaite, *The Development of Creole Society*, xiv-xv.

¹⁰ Schaw, *Journal*, 111; Luffman, *A Brief Account*, 73.

attempts to increase the island's white population. The women, according to Long, were “irreproachable” given that “they err more in trivial follies, and caprices unrestrained, than in the guilt of real vice.” Likewise, Long considered the men more dedicated to “disinterested charity, philanthropy, and clemency” than any other in Great Britain.¹¹ Similarly, the authors’ described children as healthy, well behaved, and smart from an early age. Bryan Edwards in *The History Civil and Commercial, of the British Colonies in the West Indies* (1798) describes them as presenting an “early display of the mental powers ... whose quick perception, and rapid advances in knowledge, exceed those of European infants of the same age, in a degree that is perfectly unaccountable.” Similarly, Long believed, “no part of the world can show more beautiful children.”¹²

As this chapter explores, while the authors provided more in-depth analysis of both sexes the general conclusions were mostly positive. This overall approval was because most Creoles modeled themselves according to the customs of their British ancestors. They adapted some practices for colonial living, but when the observers saw these as necessary and ingenious, they praised the Creoles even more for their creativity and resilience. They were only frown on when Creole adaptations of English values were seen as excessive or too much altered.

Alongside British practices, the Creoles’ consumption of British goods further placed them in a favorable light with the authors. Clothing, for instance, was an essential category of comparison in the narratives. For Schaw, the West Indians desire to emulate the fashion standards of metropolitan society had a positive impact on her assessment of the inhabitants. Favoring the styles she comments, “the people of Fashion dress as light as possible; worked and plain muslins, painted gauzes or light Lutestrings and Tiffities ...They have the fashions every six

¹¹ Long, *The History of Jamaica*, 283, 269.

¹² Bryan Edwards, *The History Civil, and Commercial, of the British Colonies in the West Indies*, (London, 1798), xxviii; Long, *The History of Jamaica*, 273.

weeks from London.” She, in fact, remarked that she would be happy living in the West Indies after realizing that “London itself cannot boast of more elegant shops.”¹³ Clothing in the eighteenth century, as Roxann Wheeler argues, was “important as residual ideology and refashioned as part of the consumer revolution ... clothing draws on the vectors of Christian tradition and secular subordination. It was key to the constitution of religious, class, national, and personal identity.” Thus, clothing was used to determine and measure wealth, national character, and manners. It functioned as an indicator of character, considered to reflect a person’s quality of mind.¹⁴ To be clothed in what was deemed proper equaled civility whereas the absence of it meant the contrary. This concept is particularly apparent in the narratives extensive focus on slave nakedness. As I will explore in future chapters, only when the slaves dressed in white clothes, did some of the authors described them in a more positive note.

The eighteenth century underwent from what Neil McKendrick termed a “fashion revolution.” He argues, “what were once bought at the dictate of need, were now bought at the dictate of fashion.”¹⁵ Consumers, who had previously dreamt of following London fashion, were now able to do so through advertisements in the press and purchases from the ever-increasing number of consumer outlets dedicated to satisfying demands. The attraction to fashion was not an eighteenth-century phenomenon, but what set it apart was its accessibility. England pioneered the change in material culture that led to mass markets, which resulted in its “domination in the field of style.”¹⁶ London, for instance, was considered by the eighteenth century to be the “radiant centre of the fashion world and conspicuous consumption” thanks to its exhibitions,

¹³ Schaw, *Journal*, 115.

¹⁴ Wheeler, *Complexion of Race*, 17.

¹⁵ Neil McKendrick, *The Birth of a Consumer Society: The Commercialization of Eighteenth-century England* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982), 43, 1.

¹⁶ Jessica Munns, *The Clothes That Wear Us: Essays on Dressing and Transgressing in Eighteenth-Century Culture* (Cranbury, N.J: Associated University Presses, 1999), 11.

shops and trade cards, which created “new patterns of consumption,” more comprehensive than ever before. High fashion was no longer just for the upper class; various groups of people with different socio-economical backgrounds partook of the new styles.¹⁷ Fashion, thus, held a particular importance in England.

Colonial fashion attempted to imitate British styles with minimal modifications fitted to the climate. Creoles enjoyed dressing up, only preferring fashions that were strictly British and not locally produced. This consumption and preference for British styles, and thus goods, was the Creoles way of “seeking metropolitan acceptance as useful subjects of an extended British world.”¹⁸ The fashion-conscious West Indians considered it a matter of pride to display not only their British clothing but also various objects sent over from Britain. This display was not necessarily done to show the item's value, but rather because it symbolized their connection to the metropole.

A prime example of the significance of British fashion in the colonies is the diary of Lady Maria Nugent (1771-1834) who lived in Jamaica from 1801 to 1807. While Nugent wrote in the early nineteenth century, her diary shows that eighteenth-century Creole admiration for British fashion was still constant in the early nineteenth. Nugent was born in New Jersey, to a loyal British family who in 1776 moved back to Britain. There she married Sir George Nugent who went to become Governor-General of Jamaica. Her journal was not intended for mass publication. Family members only published it in 1839 for private circulation. In it, she presents many insights into Jamaican domestic life, focusing on Creole society, slavery, and the impact of empire on a colony.

¹⁷ McKendrick, *The Birth of a Consumer Society*, 38-41.

¹⁸ Christer Petley, “‘Home’ and ‘this Country’: Britishness and Creole Identity in the Letters of a Transatlantic Slaveholder,” *Atlantic Studies* 6, no. 1 (2009): 43-61. 43.

As the wife of the Governor-General, Nugent believed that she had to be a model of proper behavior to the Creoles, which extended to her appearance. She imported her clothes and constantly received outfits from friends in Europe. She was particularly fond of describing her outfits in her journal: “[I] put on my smartest dress, with a gold tiara, and white feathers, and made myself look as magnificent as I could.” Another evening she wore “a pink and silver dress this evening, given me by Madame Le Clerc, and which was the admiration of the whole room.”¹⁹ Nugent is quite clear that she strove to be the head of fashion in Jamaica and to be so was to wear the latest European fashions. Nugent’s fashion-conscious desire can also be considered an act of nationalism, intended to keep the colonial structure in place as well as to create space for an “imagined community” to use Benedict Anderson’s term.²⁰ Not only is she establishing national boundaries by having her clothes imported from Europe, but she is also making an opportunity for the Creoles to identify and emulate her and her national identity.

Striving to meet the fashion standards of London, however, was not entirely practical given the vast differences in climate. Long, for instance, who has an entire section on clothing in his *History*, writes that while he appreciates the consumption of English goods and desire to emulate British society, it was foolish to don such outfits in a primordially hot climate:

Fashion and custom...are two prevailing things, which enslave the greater part of mankind, though often in opposition both to reason and convenience, and particularly in our dress; for no doubt but the loose, cool, easy dress of the Eastern nations, their gown or banyan, is much easier and better fitted for use in a hot climate, than the English dress, which is close and tight.

Long's criticism shows precisely how potent was the desire to emulate British practices. No matter if they were uncomfortable due to the heat, most Creoles would still wear stifling

¹⁹ Maria Nugent, *Lady Nugent's Journal Jamaica One Hundred Years Ago* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 57, 142.

²⁰ Jessica Munns, *The Clothes That Wear Us*, 21.

garments, for as Long writes: “such is the influence of fashion and custom.”²¹ It was not merely due to custom, however. The Creoles self-fashioned identity was entirely dependent on the assertion of a collective British identity. Creoles created their identities by comparing themselves to others, in this case, Britons, rejecting what made them unique or different, and embracing what made them similar.

Alongside clothing, religion was also a category of difference and comparison. Religion has been arguably one of the most critical factors in British national identity and identity formation. According to Linda Colley in *Britons*, British national identity and identity formation were mainly based on Protestantism and the assertion against the Catholic ‘other.’ Colley argues that Protestantism was a major unifying concept in England, regardless of diversity within it. For Colley, Protestantism’s unifying power came as a result of widespread and enduring anti-popery throughout England, justified by both domestic issues as well as European rivalries. Anti-Catholicism was a staple in the nation's history after the Reformation, and one that intensified during the Stuart regime -- and not without reason. The Gunpowder Plot in 1605; the Irish Rebellion in 1641; the antipopery hysteria of Popish Plot in 1678-81; and the Glorious Revolution of 1688/89 brought on by the Romanizing policies of the Catholic James II all contributed to a virulent anti-Catholicism. Regardless if the threats were real or imagined, as Colley argues, in times of crisis -- crises derived by fear of popery-- Protestantism held its unifying sway over England.²²

Although Tony Claydon in *Protestantism and National Identity* acknowledges religion’s central role in British national identity formation, he disagrees with Colley about the influence she gives Protestantism in the process. Claydon argues that religion should be seen as a factor in

²¹ Long, *The History of Jamaica*, 521.

²² Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707-1837* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 1-9.

national identity and not as wholly forming a national identity.²³ This notion is evident in the narratives where alongside religion other factors like food, clothing, and customs interacted with beliefs of race, culture, and exchanges with others. Taking this into consideration, Claydon argues that Protestantism and cosmopolitanism should not be seen as opposing concepts because Protestantism afforded a sense of belonging with other Protestants across Europe. Like Colley, Claydon also believes that the 'other' could have importance in collective identity formation. He argues that concentrating only on the rejection of the 'other' results in a negative and exclusive national identity, and subsequently in a negative and exclusive society. This notion, according to Claydon, attributes an insularity non-existent in Britain during the mid-seventeenth and eighteenth century.²⁴

Similarly, Kathleen Wilson in *The Island Race* agrees with Colley that identity is a mode of differentiation against an 'other,' but she adds that it is also a result of relating *with* the 'other.' For Wilson, identity depended on where individuals were placed and placed themselves within society and how they internally negotiated both.²⁵ Creoles, negotiated their placement in the social spectrum as given to them by the British, at the same time they tackled beliefs of inferiority. Their self-fashioning as equal members of British society shows their identification with a collective identity and shared past, which according to Wilson is what forms a national identity.

Religion offered Europeans rubrics for seeing as well as interpreting the world.²⁶ Bible stories explained human appearances and behaviors, as the account of Creation, which provided

²³ Tony Claydon and Ian McBride. *Protestantism and National Identity: Britain and Ireland, C. 1650-c. 1850* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 9.

²⁴ Claydon, *Protestantism*, 4, 7.

²⁵ Kathleen Wilson, *The Island Race: Englishness, Empire, and Gender in the Eighteenth Century*, (London: Routledge, 2003), 5.

²⁶ Wheeler, *Complexion of Race*, 14.

the theory of monogenesis signaling that all humans shared a single origin. This theory was mostly unchallenged early in the Enlightenment, but by the mid-eighteenth century, polygenist ideas began to arise and supported specifically by slave owners. When it came to slaves, observers linked religion to civility. The authors deemed as savage the slaves' different beliefs and practices. Furthermore, it was because of this connection of religion to civility that the authors' disapproved of the Creoles' lack of devotion or differences in practice. Schaw, for instance, was disappointed when she went to an Anglican service in Antigua since it was an area that she was unable to relate to the Creoles:

You know I am no bigoted Presbyterian, and as the tenets are the same, I was resolved to conform to the ceremonies, but am sorry to find in myself the force of habit too strong, I fear, to be removed. The church was very full, the Audience most devout. I looked at them with pleasure, but found I was a mere Spectator, and that what I now felt had no more to do with me, than when I admired Digges worshipping in the Temple of the Sun.

Schaw was unable to relate; the service “appeared cold and unapropos.” It was delivered by a clerk, who according to Schaw only did it because he was paid to do so.²⁷ She, however, favored a service in St. Kitts which was presented by a Scottish clergyman; here she was able to feel “as a member, and was not to be present as a mere Spectator when my heart was warmed.” It is hardly surprising that a service by a fellow Scot would be more to her liking than one by a Creole. Schaw, however, was not entirely dismissive of the previous service or its followers. She was open to the differences, and while she failed to find any “semblance of presbytery” she did not feel the need to attempt to convert or preach: “’tis not my talent to make proselytes.”²⁸

2.3 West Indian Food and Food Practices

²⁷ Schaw, *Journal*, 93-94. Schaw is possibly referring to West Digges (1720-1786), a British actor, who frequently performed in Edinburgh.

²⁸ Schaw, *Journal*, 129.

These narratives pay a great deal of attention to Antiguan dishes and how the Creole's presented them in comparison to British cuisine and etiquette. All the examined authors dedicate numerous letters to the descriptions of the different meals, fruits, and drinks that they consumed on the island. While eating etiquette in the West Indies was similar to British norms, food and drink had a more significant meaning in Creole culture than in England. Regardless, if the house was relatively small, food was always plentiful and grand. Edwards, for instance, commented: "There are some peculiarities in the habits of life of the White Inhabitants, which cannot fail to catch the eye of an European newly arrived; one of which is the contrast between the general plenty and magnificence of their tables...and the meanness of their houses and apartments." Edwards notes that it was not uncommon to have a dinner of sixteen or twenty different dishes in a home "not superior to an English barn."²⁹ J.B. Moreton's *West India Customs and Manners* (1793) is a prime example, here quoted at length to show the extravagance found in a small gathering where there was more food than he had ever seen even "at any Irish wedding," the following was served:

Two innocent lambs, one brawny barrow, two roasting pigs, two turkeys, two geese, four ducks, four capons, two maiden pullets (as they call them), twenty-four pigeons, and six rabbits...doves of various kinds, partridge, quails, and Guinea hens fell victims; the harmless unwieldy turtle, which had been pampered for months before in a tub, now lost its head, and was dressed into different savoury dishes; also, the jewfish and kingfish, with plenty of delicious oysters ... puddings, tarts, and custards upon custards in abundance, and the ovens were several times little Ætnas. There were a variety of sweetmeats, and the choicest fruit the island produced; also, wines, cordials, &c. &c.³⁰

This same degree of extravagance is in all the narratives. Schaw, for instance, was delighted to find that even for small parties the manner in which foods were prepared and presented matched

²⁹ Edwards, *The history civil and commercial*, 10-11

³⁰ Moreton, *West India Customs and Manners*, 115-6

the fanciest of dinners back in England. “We had a family dinner,” she exclaimed, “which in England might figure away in a newspaper, had it been given by a Lord Mayor or the first Duke in the kingdom.” She was so amazed at the grandiosity of the dinners that she meticulously explained how they were presented:

The method of placing the meal is in three rows the length of the table; six dishes in a row, I observe, is the common number. On the head of the centre row, stands the turtle soup, and at the bottom of the same line the shell. The rest of the middle row is generally made of fishes of various kinds, all exquisite... The two side rows are made up of vast varieties: Guinea fowl, Turkey, Pigeons, Mutton, fricassees of different kinds intermixed with the finest Vegetables in the world, as also pickles of everything the Island produces... The second course contains as many dishes as the first, but are made up of pastry, puddings, jellys, preserved fruits, etc.

The author of *A Short Journey* also commented on the extravagance of the dinners, and how they were an everyday affair for the inhabitants. None of the authors, however, were critical of the lavishness, because as Schaw commented, “Why should we blame these people for their luxury? Since nature holds out her lap, filled with everything that is in her power to bestow, it were sinful in them not to be luxurious.”³¹

Creole generosity and extravagance, however, was much more complicated than mere matter of hospitality. Trevor G. Burnard argues that it was a “cult of hospitality,” created to foster a “white unity.” Creoles prided themselves “on their open dispositions and their generosity toward other whites.”³² In a society where whites were, the minority and slave insurrections were a constant fear, Creoles sought to strengthen their class by uniting. The hospitality extended “among all ranks, professions, and conditions” as long as they were white.³³ This intermixing was a result of the culture of a slaveholding colony. The combination of the cult of hospitality,

³¹ Schaw, *Journal*, 95-6; *A Short Journey*, 48-53.

³² Trevor G. Burnard, *Mastery, Tyranny, and Desire Thomas Thistlewood and His Slaves in the Anglo-Jamaican World* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 79.

³³ Robert Renny, *An History of Jamaica with Observations on the Climate, Scenery, Trade, Productions, Negroes, Slave Trade* (London: J. Cawthorn, 1807), 217.

the fear of slave rebellions, and divisions between white and black all contributed to whites of different social levels interacting with each other. While whites, as slaveholders, obviously valued firm hierarchies, the reality of colonial life forced whites of all social conditions to intermingle with each other "in a spirit of 'conscious equality.'" Burnard argues that colonial society resembled "Herrenvolk egalitarianism" where a false sense of equality was used only to promote white supremacy. Given that, regardless if they had dined together and interacted on a daily level an awareness of social rank and positions still existed.³⁴ Thus, among Creoles, collective dining was a mere performance of solidarity. While they could have formed social bonds, among themselves, they still considered rank essential and was always present. For example, men like James Ramsey, who regardless of being an abolitionist, still believed that "society cannot be maintained, even in idea, but by the inequality of condition, and various ranks necessarily arising from the social compact."³⁵

Dinner among Creoles and British travelers, however, was more than mere hospitality. It was a show of white unity, but it was also an act of identity formation. Taking into account Elizabeth Kim's argument that: "a group's perceived inferior status often drives it not only to mirror but to hyperbolize the ideology and actions of the dominant group in order to prove itself like (or better than) the group it wishes to please and to emulate."³⁶ Due to the West Indies status of colonies, Creoles sought the approval of Brits, most likely because they perceived those born and living in the metropole as superior to them. As a result, they yearned for social identification as well as to display their connection to Britain. The Creoles extravagant hospitality towards their visitors provided them an opportunity for social and national

³⁴ Burnard, *Mastery, Tyranny, and Desire*, 85.

³⁵ James Ramsay, *An Essay on the Treatment and Conversion of African Slaves in the British Sugar Colonies By the Reverend James Ramsay, ...* (Dublin, 1784), 17.

³⁶ Elizabeth Kim, "Complicating 'Complicity/Resistance,'" 169.

identification with British visitors, which brought about a sense of worth and belonging in the Creoles: “The goal of his behavior will be The Other...for The Other alone can give him worth.”³⁷

Just as Creole hospitality signified more than mere cordiality, the authors’ extensive attention to food suggests a connection with food that went much further than mere European interest in exotic foods. Food and drink are integral to most definitions of identity. They not only enhance people’s sense of belonging but also of becoming, which is what Thomas M. Wilson deems “the twin bases to social identity.”³⁸ According to Rebecca Earle, “ideas about food underpinned the ways Europeans understood the environment and inhabitants of the New World ... food helped make them who they were in terms of both their character and their very corporeality.”³⁹ Food and drink, then, served as signifiers of identity and group culture in the often “open-ended processes of social identification, that are at the heart of ethnic, national, class, gender, sexual, local and other identities.”⁴⁰ In other words, food was, but another feature in the comparison framework travelers employed when visiting and observing the ‘other.’ A feature seen in Luffman's displeasure on the lack of fresh butter in Antigua: “its inhabitants, in general, prefer the Irish, but it is sometime before an Englishman can be brought to eat either the one or the other.”⁴¹ Anglo-Irish relationships have long provided the evidence that racism is not always color based.

Luffman and Schaw also discussed the inferiority of the beef they consumed in the islands. Luffman, for instance, comments that the taste was so “unlike that of England, as if it

³⁷ Frantz Fanon in Elizabeth Kim, “Complicating ‘Complicity/Resistance,’” 169.

³⁸ Thomas M. Wilson, *Food, Drink and Identity in Europe* (Amsterdam: Editions Rodopi, 2006), 15.

³⁹ Rebecca Earle, *The Body of the Conquistador: Food, Race, and the Colonial Experience in Spanish America, 1492-1700* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 2.

⁴⁰ Wilson, *Food, Drink and Identity in Europe*, 12.

⁴¹ Luffman, *A Brief Account*, 62.

was not the flesh of the same animal, the best that can be got is very indifferent.”⁴² Their discussion of beef is relevant because, according to Menno Spiering, British beef was instilled with national characteristics of common sense, liberty, manliness and prowess since the sixteenth century.⁴³ In *Henry V* (1599) Shakespeare portrayed English men as made vigorous by eating beef: “give them great meals of beef and iron and steel, they will eat like wolves and fight like devils.”⁴⁴ However, according to Spiering, it was in the eighteenth century that the British connection with beef was established, but with an added focus of an Anglo-French rivalry. Whereas British men portrayed themselves as “hearty beefeaters,” French men were portrayed as effeminate and having to settle with “soupe maigre.”⁴⁵ This comparison is present in Henry Fielding’s ballad, “The Roast Beef of Old England,” where he is mourning what he deems the corrupting French influence on what once were hearty English men:

When mighty Roast Beef was the Englishman's food,
It ennobled our brains and enriched our blood.
Our soldiers were brave, and our courtiers were good
...
But since we have learnt from all-vapouring France
To eat their ragout as well as to dance,
We're fed up with nothing but vain complaisance
Oh! the Roast Beef of Old England,
And old English Roast Beef!⁴⁶

This identification with beef shows that food and drink are markers of identity. Consumption of foodstuff, then, is at the center of what people thought of themselves and others.⁴⁷

⁴² Schaw, *Journal*, 96; Luffman, *A Brief Account*, 54.

⁴³ Menno Spiering, in *Food, Drink and Identity in Europe*, Thomas M. Wilson ed, (Amsterdam: Editions Rodopi, 2006), 31.

⁴⁴ William Shakespeare, *King Henry V* (London: Arden Shakespeare, 2012), III. 7.

⁴⁵ Menno Spiering, *Food, Drink and Identity in Europe*, 32-33.

⁴⁶ Henry Fielding, *The Grub-Street Opera. As It Is Acted at the Theatre in the Hay-Market. By Scriblerus Secundus. To Which Is Added, The Masquerade, a Poem* (London: 1731).

⁴⁷ Wilson, *Food, Drink and Identity*, 14.

Given that food acted as identity marker meant that it was also bound to power relations. Jack Goody in *Cooking, Cuisine, and Class: A Study in Comparative Sociology*, argues that any “analysis of cooking has to be related to the distribution of power and authority in the economic sphere, that is, to the system of class or stratification and to its political ramifications.”⁴⁸ It is because of this power relation that it is particularly important that while, some foods, like beef and butter, were considered to be second-rate, for the most part, food was an area where the authors believed West Indians practices adequately emulated and even outshone British cuisine. Thus, the authors were not merely choosing all things British over West Indian practices, they were in fact open to admitting when Creole practices surpassed their own. A noteworthy example of a West Indian custom that exceeded a British one was the method of preparing the turtle. All authors commented on the turtle and its excellent taste and how the British manner of cooking and serving it was, in reality, spoiling it. Schaw, for instance, comments on how her stomach “used to stand at” any turtle dish back in Britain, but in Antigua, she was “vastly fond of it.” She explains that the reason it tasted so different back in Britain was because it was being cooked incorrectly: “They laugh at us for the racket we make to have it divided into different dishes. They never make but two, the soup and the shell. . . . firm and more delicate than it is possible to describe.” Schaw considered the difference so captivating that “could an alderman of true taste conceive the difference between it here and the city, he would make the Voyage on purpose, and I fancy he would make the voyage into the other world before he left the table.”⁴⁹ Long also comments on how many of the West Indians lived to old age due to “a regular course of turtle-diet, which is cooked here in the highest perfection.” This enthrallment with the turtle dish is much more complex than mere taste. Britons may not have considered West Indians as

⁴⁸ Jack Goody, *Cooking, Cuisine, and Class: A Study in Comparative Sociology* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 37.

⁴⁹ Schaw, *Journal*, 115, 95.

equals, but could consider them as adequate British colonials. The West Indian practice of preparing turtle dishes was a non-threatening custom deemed better than the British practice. Beef most likely would have been a different issue since it was embedded with British national qualities, but the Caribbean turtle -- and most West Indian food for that matter-- signified and reinforced positive notions of imperial domination and cosmopolitanism. Consequently, Creole success with food is a compliment to Britain's imperial influence. Thus, it should be relished and admired. Long, for instance, criticizes those Europeans who upon landing adhere to their customs of food and refuse to try the native foods. "Instead of attending to what reason points out," he argues, "most Europeans, after their arrival here, persist in devouring vast quantities of animal food, with very little (if any) mixture of vegetable: they indulge in bad butter, cheese, salt-beef, ham."⁵⁰

2.4 Creole Men and Mulattos

Of Creole men, most authors remarked on their amiable and youthful disposition. Schaw found the men to be "the most agreeable creatures I ever met with, frank, open, generous, and I dare say brave; even in advanced life they retain the Vivacity and Spirit of Youth." Likewise, Luffman commented that the men "deserve much praise" and the author of the *A Short Journey* noted the men's joviality and hospitality.⁵¹ Both Schaw and Long, however, provide what seems a hyperbolic image of the Creole men's masculinity. While lengthy, I cite these descriptions to show that their idealized views functioned as parameters of colonial masculinity:

Confining myself to the permanent natives, or Creole men, I have this idea of their qualities; that they are in general sensible, of quick apprehension, brave, good-natured,

⁵⁰ Long, *The History of Jamaica*, 150, 527.

⁵¹ Schaw, *Journal*, 112; Luffman, *A Brief Account*, 119; *A Short Journey*, 50.

affable, generous, temperate, and sober; unsuspecting, lovers of, freedom, fond of social enjoyments, tender fathers, humane and indulgent masters; firm and sincere friends, where they once repose a confidence; their tables are covered with plenty of good cheer, and they pique themselves on regaling their guests with a profusion of viands; their hospitality is unlimited; they have lodging and entertainment always at the service of transient strangers and travelers ; and receive in the most friendly manner those, with whose character and circumstances they are often utterly unacquainted... *There are no people in the world that exceed the gentlemen of this island in a noble and disinterested munificence.*⁵²

Paralleling Long's observations, Schaw wrote:

They are in general handsome, and all of them have that sort of air, that will ever attend a man of fashion. Their address is at once soft and manly; they have a kind of gallantry in their manner, which exceeds mere politeness and in some countries we know, would be easily mistaken for something more interesting than civility, yet you must not suppose this the politeness of French manners, merely words of course. No, what they say they really mean; their whole intention is to make you happy, and this they endeavor to do without any other view or motive than what they are prompted to by the natural goodness of their own natures. In short, my friend, the woman that brings a heart here will have little sensibility if she carry it away.⁵³

Both Long's and Schaw's representation of idealized masculinity in the figure of the Creole male suggests an effort to praise the virtues of colonialism. However, it is also an attempt to downplay their subsequent discussions of the Creole men's licentiousness with nonwhite women. Both Long and Schaw believed miscegenation to be a society's downfall. Similarly, Bryan Edwards described it as "a violation of all decency and decorum; and an insult and injury to society."⁵⁴ The Creole men's idealized descriptions, then, serve as an attempt to shield colonial anxiety and counterbalance the men's behavior.

According to Dr. Jonathan Troup, a young and unmarried Scottish physician who practiced in Dominica from 1789 to 1791, he constantly had to cure the young men of "virulent gonorrhoea" brought about by their frequent amorous adventures. Troup's accounts are quite

⁵² Edward Long, *The History of Jamaica*, 263. My italics.

⁵³ Schaw, *Journal*, 111-112.

⁵⁴ Bryan Edwards *The history civil and commercial, of the British colonies in the West Indies* (London, 1798), xl.

revealing of Creole heterosexual men's exploitative and sexual culture. He frequently participated in Mulatto balls held during the week where there were "parties of girls, young and old" whom men could pay for their company. He reveals that alongside Creole men, there were merchants, sailors, and visitors at these parties with "very few white women" present.⁵⁵ Troup also followed the local custom of taking mulatto mistresses and sexually sharing slave women. According to Luffman, sexually exploiting slave women was also a practice frequented by Creole men in Antigua: "there are persons in this island who let out their female slaves for the particular purpose of fornication and that as well as cohabiting with them is considered here a venial error."⁵⁶

Keeping mistresses was probably only financially possible for men of property. Troup notes that "young Daniel" he found it "expensive to maintain Mullattoes and that he is thinking of fixing himself in the matrimonial noose." Creole men in Dominica did not hold marriage in high regard. For instance, a Dr. Fillan told Troup that the gentlemen of Dominica seldom said the phrase "his wife" in the company of others, since "that is not but a vulgar expression and is never used by a man of breeding."⁵⁷ When men did marry, it was only to improve their financial situation, and they continued their liaisons with mulatto or slave women.

Troup like many of the men he treated also contracted gonorrhoea, from a "Negroe wench of Dr. C," which according to him was very painful, especially when walking, yet he still managed to "make love to a number of girls in [his] drunkenness." While Troup typically blamed alcohol for his licentiousness, he believed that it was also a result of a white man living in a slave society, "what can a young man do here to loose his time in evenings, he can't apply to books.

⁵⁵ Jonathan Troup, *Journal of Jonathan Troup*, West Indies, 1788-1790. Manuscript. MS 2070. 12v. University of Aberdeen, Special Collections, <http://calms.abdn.ac.uk/DSServe/>

⁵⁶ Luffman, *A Brief Account*, 115.

⁵⁷ Troup, *Journal of Jonathan Troup*, 133v, 29v.

Whores & money must be his Rescuer & cause of most of his misfortunes.” Troup, also like many of the men on the island, impregnated a mulatto woman, but nonetheless went back to Britain shortly after.⁵⁸

Mulattos held a complicated role in West Indian society. Luffman observed that “gentlemen-managers, as well as the overseers under them, contribute in a great degree, to stock the plantation with mulatto slaves,” and that it was “impossible to say in what number they have such children.” He also noted “as soon as they are born, they are despised, not only by the very authors...of their being but every white, destitute of humane and liberal principles. Such is the regard paid to the complexion in preference to the more permanent beauties of the mind.”⁵⁹ Both Schaw and Long would be those people that Luffman was criticizing in his writing. Schaw was shocked by the vast inter-racial relationships evidenced by the large numbers of mulattos she saw in “the streets, houses and indeed everywhere.” She refers to these interracial liaisons as “unnatural amours ... crime that seems to have gained sanction from custom, tho’ attended with the greatest inconveniences not only to Individuals, but to the public in general.” Schaw considered mulattos to be “a spurious and degenerate breed, neither fit for the field nor indeed any work, as a true bred negro.”⁶⁰ This severe dislike for mulattos was evidence of imperial anxiety. In a society governed by racial difference, based explicitly on skin color, miscegenation blurs these differences, thus blurring the distinction between master and slave. Given that “race essentialism legitimizes subjugation of whole groups of people for the benefit of the dominant group,” according to Elizabeth S. Kim, a clear distinction between the two, in this case, master

⁵⁸ Troup, *Journal of Jonathan Troup*, 45-47v, 1v.

⁵⁹ Luffman, *A Brief Account*, 45-46.

⁶⁰ Schaw, *Journal*, 112.

and slave, free and un-free, racial “purity” must be maintained.⁶¹

While Schaw is aware of the risk that these relationships cause to a colonial society, she nevertheless denies any culpability to the white men whom she pardons by stating, “tho children of the sun, they are mortals, and as such must have their share failings.” She, instead, fully blames the slave women for seducing the men: “The young black wenches lay themselves out for their white lovers, in which they are but too successful ... these wenches become licentious and insolent past all bearing.”⁶² The men, then, are presented as victims of the unnaturally licentious black women. Schaw’s response eludes the moral issues of colonialism -- that most of the interracial children are products of rape and sexual exploitation. By her attributing all blame to the female slaves, thus exonerating white Creole men, the integrity of empire is preserved.

Long, like Schaw, painted Creole men as victims of black women. While he was harsher towards them than Schaw, calling them “fools,” he nevertheless believed that black women were naturally born deceivers: “In well-dissembled affection, in her tricks, cajolements, and, infidelities, she is far more perfectly versed, than any adept of the hundreds of Drury. She rarely wants cunning to dupe the fool that confides in her.” Paralleling the climate theories that emerged during the Scottish Enlightenment, Long also blames the climate for the men’s transgressions, which ultimately serves as another justification: “If we consider how forcibly the warmth of this climate must co-operate with natural instinct to rouse the passions, we ought to...at least, judge not too rigidly of those lapses...and weakness of human nature.” While Long was not a follower of any climate theory that favored monogenesis, he believed in the effects climate could have on an individual. Specifically, whereas otherwise respectable Europeans

⁶¹ Elizabeth S. Kim, “Complicating “Complicity/Resistance” in Janet Schaw's *Journal of a Lady of Quality*.” *Auto/Biography Studies* 12, no. 2 (1997), 172.

⁶² Schaw, *Journal*, 112.

would lose their right frame of mind and fall victims to it and “on this account some black or yellow quasheba is sought for, by whom a Tawney breed is produced.”⁶³

Long considered the current state of mulattos a threat to West Indian economy and British national identity. In his book, he extensively describes the existing legal and economic limitations for interracial persons and provides his own opinions, which usually promote even harsher treatment. Mulattos were not able to hold any position in office, become members of the council, judges or jurymen, nor even vote for assemblymen. Mulatto was legally defined as those individuals who were unable to prove they were “above three steps removed in the lineal digression from the Negroe.” However, while Long was in no way favorable to the mulattos or any offspring of slaves, he believed they had a potential service to Jamaica and Britain. Long proposed rewarding only noteworthy mulattos and freed blacks to secure a class of subject that would protect the white hierarchy from any assault towards whites, specifically slave uprisings: “The retrieving them from profound ignorance, affording them instruction in Christian morals, and obliging them to serve a regular apprenticeship to artificers and tradesmen, would make them orderly subjects, and faithful defenders of the country.”⁶⁴

Roxann Wheeler argues that Long’s plan was intended to create a marked buffer group between whites and slaves, “the creation of buffer groups contains the heterogeneity of colonial populations according to ideologies of civility and savagery, commercial enterprise and idleness.”⁶⁵ Long expected that a select group of people of mixed descent would want to emulate the whites, the dominant group, and not only to become their protectors and intermediaries between whites and slaves, but by their wish to emulate the higher class they would also spur

⁶³ Long, *The History of Jamaica*, 332, 283, 328.

⁶⁴ Long, *The History of Jamaica*, 321, 334.

⁶⁵ Roxann Wheeler, *Complexion of Race: Categories of Difference in Eighteenth-Century British Culture* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000). 222.

forward the economy via consumerism. He believed that as a buffer group that would aspire to be like the dominant group, they would wish to emulate English customs and standards, which meant that they would continuously be consuming English goods. For Long, consumerism was the fastest way to produce a commonality among colonial subjects and achieve British civility despite racial differences. Long argued that if given better social position this group would gradually “strive for conveniences, and some even for superfluities. All this must add to the consumption of manufactures, and the cultivation of lands; and the colonies would be strengthened by the addition of so many men.”⁶⁶ Long was not merely arguing that a general consumerism would benefit the island's economy. Instead, he focused on the consumption of luxuries and not just necessities. He believed that the non-white groups would desire luxuries in an attempt to emulate the white groups. As a result, this would provide the incentive for continuing their industry in turn producing a prosperous society. The conclusion presented here is that through consumerism of British goods, non-whites would “transcend the savagery owed to their African ancestry” and Jamaica would truly become a “civil” society.⁶⁷ Thus, civilization directly corresponded to the purchase of British goods: “their wants will undoubtedly increase in proportion as they grow more civilized.”⁶⁸

It is interesting, however, that Long's proposal and theories on consuming luxury goods only applies to people of mixed and African descent. When discussing planters Long believes that luxury had a corrosive effect on them. According to Long, Creole men's excessive luxuries corrupted their drive to industry. Most narratives depicted planters as jolly, generous, and given to excesses in food, drink and clothing. Usually surrounded by slaves who take care of all of their needs. They, however, are seldom discussed as industrious men or presented being at work.

⁶⁶ Long, *History of Jamaica*, 503.

⁶⁷ Wheeler, *Complexion of Race*, 222.

⁶⁸ Long, *History of Jamaica*, 319.

Most authors focused on the planters' good nature, especially since their excesses (both material and sexual) made it hard to present them as equal to British ideals of masculinity and industry. For instance, the fact that the mulatto class was ever growing was evidence in itself of the Creole men's lack of control. Climate and national characters were two of the areas studied for explanations as to why "Europeans, who at home have always been used to greater purity and strictness of manners, are too easily led aside to give a loose to every kind of sensual delight."⁶⁹ Just as Long who used the hot climate to justify the men's liaisons with nonwhites, so did Bryan Edwards. Edwards claimed that the climate encouraged an "early and habitual licentiousness" which results in "a turn of mind and disposition unfriendly to mental improvement." Yet, while the climate might affect their capacity he denies any claim that the "Creoles, in general, possess less capacity and stability of mind than the natives of Europe." Given that those that escape "the contagion and enervating effects of youthful excesses" are as strong and capable like any European man.⁷⁰

Thus, regardless of the many negative qualities present in Creole men, the authors still generally present them favorably. Their behaviors are excused or justified, and fault always tends to lie elsewhere: on climate, nonwhite women and, as will be discussed, even on white women who are blamed for not maintaining their husband's attention. Probable reasons for this is that while the West Indian man consumed to the point of excess, he nevertheless consumed British goods and attempted to emulate British customs regarding food and clothing. Thus, while their excesses may have endangered colonial economy, it benefited British economy. Many Britons believed that if taken away from the temptations of a hot climate, the Creole man would be as ideal as any other British man. In fact, many works of fiction, like Richard Cumberland's *The*

⁶⁹ Long, *The History of Jamaica*, 328.

⁷⁰ Edwards, *The history civil and commercial, of the British*, xxix.

West Indian (1771) and Elizabeth Bonhote's *Rambles of Mr. Frankly* (1773), portrayed the Creole man as a merely a misguided Briton which upon his return to England and, with some guidance, would abandon his injudicious behaviors and adjust to the strict moral climate of Britain.⁷¹

2.5 Creole Women and Whiteness

Creole women of the West Indies also received significant attention in the travel narratives. Schaw considered them:

The most amiable creatures in the world, and either I have been remarkably fortunate in my acquaintance or they are more than commonly sensible, even those who have never been off the island are amazingly intelligent and able to converse with you on any subject. They make excellent wives, fond attentive mothers and the best housewives I have ever met with.⁷²

Luffman, similarly, described them as being “of refined sense, good wives, excellent parents, worthy friends, free from affectation and blessed with every amiable quality that can adorn the sex.” These views were parallel to those found in contemporary natural histories. Edward Long, for instance, described white women living in Jamaica as “lively, of good natural genius, frank, affable, polite generous, humane and charitable; cleanly in persons even to excess.” Likewise, Thomas Atwood in *The History of the Island of Dominica* commended their high moral standards and their “lovely” appearance.⁷³

⁷¹ Christer Petley, “Gluttony, Excess, and the Fall of the Planter Class in the British Caribbean,” *Atlantic Studies* 9, no. 1 (2012): 85-106. 94-97.

⁷² Schaw, *Journal*, 113.

⁷³ Luffman, *A Brief Account*, 37; Schaw, *Journal*, 114; Thomas Atwood, *The History of the Island of Dominica* (London, 1791).

While Creole men would engage in extramarital affairs with mulattos or slave women, white women were loyal to the marriage bed, according to Luffman. Likewise, Long stated that “few are more irreproachable in their actions than the Creole women: they err more in trivial follies, and caprices unrestrained, than in the guilt of real vice.” Similarly, Schaw remarked on how they were not jealous of their husbands since “a jealous wife would be here a most ridiculous character indeed.”⁷⁴ Not only are the women loyal, but they are the ones entrusted with the budget of the household, the women “keep their own keys and look after every thing within doors; the domestic Economy is entirely left to them; as the husband finds enough to do abroad.” Thus, since the husbands are engaged in interracial affairs, the women, thanks to their loyalty and safekeeping of affairs, uphold colonial morality as well as the British white race. They were entrusted with the future of the white colonial community, specifically with “the integrity and cohesiveness of its ethnic and cultural identity.”⁷⁵ Creole women, then, were the keepers of the British Empire in the West Indies. Through their loyalty to the marriage bed and the white race, they ensured the hierarchy of white over black, and thus plantation society’s existence. Long, for instance, believed that it was up to the women to “rescue this truly honorable union from that fashionable detestation in which it seems to be held.” He also asserted that Creole men found white women less attractive than nonwhite women and, thus they were unable to curb the men’s licentiousness. Creole women were at fault because: “one would suppose it no very arduous task to make themselves more companionable, useful, and esteemable, as wives, than the Negresses and Mulattas are as mistresses: they might, I am well persuaded, prove much honester friends.”⁷⁶ Long believed that a lack of education was a critical factor in the women's disadvantage. While nonwhite women did not have any form of education and were

⁷⁴ Luffman, *A Brief Account*, 37; Long, *The History of Jamaica*, 285; Schaw, *Journal*, 114.

⁷⁵ Coleman, “Janet Schaw and the Complexions of Empire,” 180.

⁷⁶ Long, *The History of Jamaica*, 352, 331.

still preferred by most men as companions, Long argued that with better education, white women would be better mothers and better able to instruct their young in what he deems to be the proper British way. They would also be more capable of guiding their husbands away from both their material and sexual excesses because as he argues, “They would, by this means, become objects of love to the deserving youths, whether natives or Europeans, and by the force of their pleasing attractions soon draw them, from a loose attachment to Blacks and Mulattoes.”

Long also suggested that women should be raised among other Europeans so they can emulate their customs and manners. The women who have this opportunity, he argues “become better qualified to fill the honorable station of a wife, and to head their table with grace and propriety.” Thus a combination of better education and frequent exposure to British customs would produce more desirable white female companions which would lead to an expansion of the white race, further securing the colony’s industry and its hierarchy and rendering the island “more populous, and residence in it manageable.”⁷⁷

Preservation of the white hierarchy and integrity of the white race was imperative because, as discussed, according to Schaw and Long, the mixing of races brings upon a community’s decline especially that of a colony. Long in *Candid Reflections* criticized how “the lower class of women in *England*, are remarkably fond of the blacks, for reasons too brutal to mention...By these ladies they generally have a numerous brood.” He feared that “in the course of a few generations more, the English blood will become so contaminated with the mixture...till

⁷⁷ Long, *The History of Jamaica*, 250, 279, 280. “Can the wisdom of legislature be more usefully applied, than to the attainment of these ends; which, by making the women more desirable partners in marriage, *would render the island more populous, and residence in it manageable*; which would banish ignorance from the rising generation, restrain numbers from seeking these improvements, at the hazard of life, in other countries; and from unnaturally reviling a place which they would love and prefer, if they could enjoy in it that necessary culture, without which life and property lose their relish to those who are born, not only to inherit, but to adorn, a fortune.”

the whole nation resembles the *Portuguese* and *Moriscos* in complexion of skin and baseness of mind.”⁷⁸

Mulattos, however, were numerous in West Indian society, and to uphold the hierarchy of whiteness, Creole women sought to preserve or achieve extreme whiteness. For instance, most Creole women wore bonnets or facemasks when outside to shield themselves from the sun. The masks covered their entire face and had “peep-holes the size of an English shilling” which Schaw considered to “make them look as if they are stewed.” Likewise, in *A Short Journey*, the author wrote that because of this “usual precaution for preventing the sun from blistering the skin,” the women arrive everywhere “puffing for breath and half stifled with their handkerchiefs.” Long, also negatively remarked that they would not go out of their homes, “without securing their complexions with a brace of handkerchiefs; one of which being tied over the forehead, the other under the nose, and covering the lower part of the face, formed a complete helmet.” Luffman observed that in England wearing such visors when speaking to others would be considered the “grossest ill-manners.”⁷⁹

Creole women wore the masks to ensure a pallid complexion. This was a conscious attempt to differentiate themselves from mulattos or other women of color. Skin color was a key component of white rule in plantation society, an indicator that differentiated between “freedom and slavery.”⁸⁰ Thus, if women wore masks, they did so to preserve an “aristocracy of skin.”⁸¹ Masks, however, were not the only method in which women of the West Indies used to keep their white complexions. James Grainger in his poem, *The Sugar Cane* (1764) reveals that women also used cashew nut to whiten their skin chemically. Cashew nut produces highly

⁷⁸ Long, *Candid Reflections*, 48-9.

⁷⁹ Schaw, *Journal*, 114; Luffman, *A Brief Account*, 36; Long, *History of Jamaica*, 413; *A Short Journey in the West Indies*, II, 67.

⁸⁰ Long, *History of Jamaica*, 9.

⁸¹ Coleman, “Janet Schaw and the Complexions of Empire,” 172.

caustic oil that was used “as a cosmetic by the ladies to remove freckles and sun burning; but the pain they necessarily suffer makes its use not very frequent” which might explain the mask as a prevention of having to do so.⁸² The Jamaican doctor, Patrick Browne in his *The Civil and Natural History of Jamaica* (1756) describes the painful process women went through to “skin their faces:”

This troublesome operation they undergo with great patience; during which they are obliged to refrain from all manner of company and conversation, and to keep in close confinement; it holds generally for fourteen and fifteen days; and the inflammation raised, during this process, frequently gives those ladies reason to repent of this piece of vanity; for it leaves their countenance sometimes more deformed, than any sports or freckles could have made it.⁸³

By flaying their faces, Creole women felt superior to those around them, especially the mulatto or black women with whom their husbands had affairs.

Creole women’s practice of flaying their skin was also an attempt to counter the perceived “assaults of creolization” by Mulattos.⁸⁴ According to Long in his section titled, “Freed Blacks and Mulattos,” he believed mulattos could one day be able to pass as white Creoles by interracial sex, climate adaptation, and whitening practices. He believed that mulattos wanted to “mend their complexion with more intermixture with the Whites” which would eventually result in them becoming legally “white” or “English” as was considered a child between a White and Quateron.⁸⁵ This was similar to the Latin America’s caste society where according to Alexander von Humboldt in his *Political Essay on the Kingdom of New Spain* (1811) the “greater or less degree of whiteness of skin decides the rank in which an occupies in society:”

A white who rides barefooted on horseback thinks he belongs to the nobility of the country. Colour establishes even a certain equality among men who.... Take a particular

⁸² James Grainger, *The Sugar-cane: A Poem In Four Books. With Notes* (London, 1764), IV. 132.

⁸³ Patrick Browne, *The Civil and Natural History of Jamaica In Three Parts* (London, 1756), 227.

⁸⁴ Coleman, “Janet Schaw and the Complexions of Empire,” 173-180.

⁸⁵ Edward Long, *The History of Jamaica*, 334.

pleasure in dwelling on the prerogatives of race and origin. When a common man disputes with one of the titled lords of the country, he is frequently heard to say, 'do you think me no so white as yourself?' This may serve to characterize the state and source of the actual aristocracy.⁸⁶

This shows that complexion was an "unstable boundary marker," using Deidre Coleman phrase.⁸⁷ A marker that became problematic to polygenists like Edward Long who argued for an essential distinction -- one much deeper than skin color -- between black and white races.

While Schaw was eager to find national similarities with all the people, and had stated that she had "never admired my own sex more than in these amiable creoles," nevertheless she was shocked by the "otherness" of the women's practice of bonneting and their use of "great deal of powder." She frequently commented how unhealthy the women looked due to lack of "proper air and exercise," concluding that they "want only color to be termed beautiful." Schaw, looked down on this custom precisely because it was entirely foreign to what she practiced, "I have always set my face to the weather; wherever I have been. I hope you have no quarrel with brown beauty." Her disapproval to the practice further increased when Fanny started wearing a bonnet during their stay on the island. Fanny who, according to Schaw, was "just blooming as a new blown rose," in only a week of wearing the mask her skin tone had started to change. Schaw states that had Fanny stayed longer she would have been "as pale as any of them."⁸⁸ Bonnets were evidently less for preserving the complexion and more like the cosmetics or oils used to whiten the skin. Coleman argues that the practice of whitening denaturalized whiteness- instead

⁸⁶ Alexander Von Humboldt, *Political Essay on the Kingdom of New Spain*. (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, and Brown, 1811), 177.

⁸⁷ Coleman, "Janet Schaw and the Complexions of Empire," 172.

⁸⁸ Schaw, *Journal*, 113-5.

of enhancing any differences it effaced it.⁸⁹ In this case, Fanny, a “brown beauty” was nearly losing her British identity and adopting a Creole one.

Authors also disapproved of the West Indian women's diet. The women were “abstemious in both diet and liquor” and drank “nothing stronger in general than Sherbert, and never [ate] above one or two things at table, and these the lightest and plainest.”⁹⁰ The consequence of this diet on the women’s physique was also considered detrimental. For instance, Edwards comments that, “to a stranger newly arrived, the ladies appear as just risen from the bed of sickness. Their voice is soft and spiritless, and every step betrays languor and lassitude.”⁹¹ Similarly, just as she opposed bonneting, Schaw openly and passionately rejected this Creole custom:

The poor women, whose spirits must be worn out by heat and constant perspiration, require no doubt some restorative, yet as it is not the custom, they will faint under it rather than transgress this ideal law... as I was resolved to show I was to be a rebel to a custom that did not appear founded on reason, I pledged her [the Landlady] in a bumper of the best Madeira I ever tasted.⁹²

While there is no clear explanation as to why the women were abstemious in both diet and liquor, it is possible that they did so in order behave and look like what they considered an ideal aristocratic lady, one who did not fall victim to excess.

While the Creole women seemed to be the models of their sex, by their loyalty as wives, intellect, and general amiability, they were criticized extensively for their Creole regard for extreme whiteness and asceticism. Thus, while the authors approved to whatever they deemed British, or better than British, (like the food) they rejected what were purely West Indian customs, considering them irrational, unusual and “unnatural.” Whiteness for the Creole women, however,

⁸⁹ Coleman, “Janet Schaw and the Complexions of Empire,” 178.

⁹⁰ Luffman, *A Brief Account*, 37; Schaw, *Journal*, 113.

⁹¹ Edwards, *The History Civil and Commercial*, xxvii.

⁹² Schaw, *Journal*, 80-81.

went much further than a simple ideal or even a marker of superiority over the mulattos and the slaves. In Schaw's narrative, whiteness symbolizes something sacred. This is evident when Schaw visits her friend, Lady Isabella Hamilton in St. Kitts. Lady Bell, as Schaw called her, was not a Creole but had been living in the island for four years. Schaw announces that her friend remained "unaltered" in beauty and mind, yet she could not help but notice the difference in her complexion, "the lily has far got the better of the rose." Lady Bell presents herself as a model colonialist. For starters, she greets her guests accompanied by a "little Mulatto girl, not above five years old, whom she retains as a pet ... dressed out like an infant Sultana, and is a fine contrast to the delicate complexion of her Lady." Furthermore, when Lady Hamilton takes Schaw on a tour of the plantation, Schaw soon realized it was not only to "satisfy her curiosity" about sugar processing, which Schaw deemed "one of the prettiest branches in the British trade," but a show of power over her slaves by Lady Bell. While at the boiling house, there "were several of the boilers condemned to the lash" but in a display of the power, Lady Bell removed her mask as "a sign of pardon."⁹³ This scene reveals that Creoles women's faces, especially those of the wives of the plantation owners, were symbols of forgiveness, and even deliverance.

This scene further proves that Creole women were complicit in the formation of empire. European women are often presented as passive participants of colonialism, who only focus on being mothers and wives, yet the narratives show otherwise.⁹⁴ While they did focus on the home, they were also active beyond the domestic and did their part to uphold the white patriarchy needed for slave plantations to function. What is ironic, however, is that while their inauthentic whitening was meant to show the superiority of the white Creole position in society, it also

⁹³ Schaw, *A Journal*, 114, 122, 129.

⁹⁴ See for example Catherine Clinton, *The Plantation Mistress: Women's World in the Old South*, (New York: Pantheon, 1984); Marietta Morrissey, *Slave Women in the New World: Gender Stratification in the Caribbean* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1998); C. L. R. James, *The Black Jacobins: Toussaint L'Ouverture and the San Domingo Revolution* (London: Penguin Books, 2001), 30-31.

weakened it. Given that with enough time, as seen when Fanny dons a mask, it would be impossible to differentiate between the “real white” and the artificial white.⁹⁵ Deidre Coleman argues that “the unnatural lily-white pallor of continuous masking, the rigid, inflexible obsession with purity of blood and whiteness, needs to be seen as an irrational symptom of a society that is in fact too fluid, too given to racial and sexual intermixture.”⁹⁶ It is this fluidity that leads to what Felicity Nussbaum calls the “slippery shades of Otherness.” The Creole women's obsession with whiteness established whiteness as a racial category -- one as visible as any other.⁹⁷ Schaw's characterization with “brown beauty” or rose color instead of the paleness of the lily sets what she deems as acceptable British woman's whiteness. Her declaration of being a brown beauty is her adherence to what she deems a healthy and rational path to British beauty -- one that is opposite to the Creole women's regard to whiteness, abstemious diet and lifestyle.

West Indians' enthusiasm for all things British and their practicing of British manners and customs resulted in an overall positive depiction of them and their environment. It was only their purely “un-British” customs that met authors' disapproval. Creole women strove to measure to the British feminine ideal, yet failed due to their extreme regard for whiteness and the measures they took to achieve it. The men, however, for the authors embodied ideal masculinity, despite of their preference and attachment to black women. While the men were not entirely absolved, the women of color were considered mostly to blame for these interactions. Furthermore, given that food and drink carried ample weight in the eyes of the authors, it was the men's hospitality and love for food and drink that further allowed for forgiveness of their

⁹⁵ Luffman, *A Brief Account*, 87.

⁹⁶ Coleman, “Janet Schaw and the Complexions of Empire,” 179.

⁹⁷ Felicity Nussbaum, “Women and Race: ‘A Difference of Complexion,’” in *Women and Literature in Britain, 1700–1800*, ed. Vivien Jones (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 69–88. 85.

indiscretions. The women's exceptionally ascetic attitude to both food and liquor, however, did not help excuse their perceived faults. Food was much more than just food. For both the Creoles and the British visitor, food was linked to social relations of inclusion, exclusion, power, health and the body.⁹⁸ It was yet another identity marker in the wide spectrum of markers. For the Creoles among themselves, it was a way to display unity and power. Between Creoles and visitors, it was a way to not only display national identity but to strengthen it.

Consumption of British goods was also critical to both the Creoles identity formation and the authors' perceptions of them. As seen with Long's proposal for mulattos, physical appearance, or ethnicity, did not carry as much weight in the mind of the British observer as did the colonial subjects' acceptance or rejection of British customs and consumer goods. For the authors, specifically Long, consumerism was the swiftest way to generate a commonality among colonial subjects and achieve British civility despite racial and national differences. "A shared material culture," as Wheeler argues, "facilitated social solidarity and the cohesion of the empire."⁹⁹ Clothing was a British good that was associated with issues of race, imperial and national politics, gender and economics.¹⁰⁰ Creole high regard for British fashions, despite its impracticality, deemed a positive reception from visitors, specifically Schaw. Thus, as seen, the authors' ability to identify, for the most part, with the West Indians, gave them a sense of community and connection. It influenced and reinforced both their national and individual identity, which was a decisive factor that influenced their perception of their experiences as well as their perception of the people they met.

⁹⁸ Patricia Caplan, *Food, Health and Identity* (London: Routledge, 1997), 3.

⁹⁹ Wheeler, *Complexion of Race*, 178.

¹⁰⁰ Munns, *The Clothes That Wear Us*, 22.

CHAPTER 3. AMERICAN COLONIES AND ANTI-ENGLISH SENTIMENT

“This Noble country, which indeed owes more favours to its God and king than perhaps any other in the known world and is equally ungrateful to both, to the God who created and bestowed them and to the king whose indulgent kindness has done everything to render them of the greatest utility to the owners” ~ Janet Schaw, *Journal* (1775)¹

In the eighteenth century, the North American colonies were discussed at length in the British press as well as in travel narratives. Some authors promoted the settlements as a land of rapidly achieved progress; others saw the potential but felt that colonials were not meeting it, while others were merely disappointed by them all. Regardless, of intention what it is noticeable is that these narratives present a comparison framework that surprisingly was not based on ethnicity, status, or even political affiliations. Unlike the Creoles of the West Indies who consciously emulated British customs and behaviors; the Americans in the Thirteen Colonies were often openly anti-British. Possession of either the “right” conduct or practices made them favorable in the authors’ eyes. For some authors, agricultural practices were deemed more important than anything else; others valued behavior and ethics, even if those discussed were revolutionaries and despised anything British. While adoption of any of the practices appreciated by the observers did not erase differences in class, race, and political affiliation, it is clear that for the observers consanguinity was not just about location of birth or political principles, but about shared attitudes and experiences.

¹ Schaw, *Journal*, 158.

3.1 Americans or British? Discourses of National Identity and Consanguinity

Scholars argue that North American colonists continued to see themselves as British right until the start of the Revolution. Historians have found that rather than reject British nationalism, colonists sought to assert their membership.² They embraced the new identity of Americans reluctantly and in response to the British government's failure to grant them full British rights. Views of the British North American colonists in Britain, during the conflict, however, were not so clear. During the early stages of the American Revolution, there existed a division among Britons as to how to approach the issue. Julie Flavell argues, "Londoners were slow to react to the American Revolution as if it were a foreign war. Most saw it as a provincial uprising that sooner or later would be patched up."³ This indicates that the issue on how to respond to the rising conflict was fundamentally linked to the colonists' status as British citizens, "whether this was a civil war among Englishmen or a war with aliens ... masking themselves as Englishmen."⁴

Allan Ramsay in *Letters on the Present Disturbances in Great Britain and Her American Provinces* (1777) argues for the latter. Claiming that it was because the colonists' "practice of calling themselves Englishmen, and us brethren, they have artfully persuaded the people of England that they are their fellow-citizens, and Englishmen like themselves, to all intents and purposes." He believed that upon further examination it would be clear that they are neither

² Michael Zuckerman, "Identity in British America: Unease in Eden," in Nicholas Canny and Anthony Pagden, eds., *Colonial Identity in the Atlantic World, 1500-1800* (Princeton: Princeton, 1987), 115-57; Jack P. Greene, *Peripheries and Center: Constitutional Development in the Extended Politics of the British Empire and the United States, 1607-1788* (Athens, Ga. Press the Press, 1986); Jack P. Greene "Empire and Identity from the Glorious Revolution to the American Revolution," in P. J. Marshall, ed., *The Eighteenth Century* (Oxford, 1998), 208-30; Julie M. Flavell, "The 'School for Modesty and Humility': Colonial American Youth in London and Their Parents, 1755-1775," *Historical Journal*, 42 (1999): 377-403.

³ Julie Flavell, *When London Was Capital of America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011), 241.

⁴ Dror Wahrman, "The English Problem of Identity in the American Revolution," *The American Historical Review* 106, no. 4 (2001): 1256.

“foreigners” nor “Englishmen” and only give “great perplexity both to the Government and people of England, and must ever continue to perplex them till their true nature, and their true relation to Great Britain is accurately known.”⁵ Likewise, John Fothergill, a London physician, argued that the British “were almost total strangers to America, to the Country, and to its Inhabitants,” thus it was ludicrous to call them brethren.⁶

Unlike Ramsay and Fothergill, those who sympathized with the North American colonists saw them as members of the British nation and emphasized that the colonists were descendants of the British. John Erskine, for instance, in his tract, *Shall I Go to War with My American Brethren* (1769) called the colonists his “brethren” and Britain's “children.” He asks, “Shall the friend, the brother, the father, the son, imbrue their hands in the blood of men, by the types of nature, esteem, or gratitude, dear to them as their own souls?”⁷ Another commentator similarly argues that Americans were “of the same language, the same religion, the same manners, and customs, sprung from the same nation, intermixed by relation and consanguinity.”⁸

Both views justified British Parliamentary action albeit in different forms. To deny the colonist of their British-ness and deem them as “foreigners” or a “new class of men” it meant that it was the British duty to act against them, allowing Parliament to adopt hostilities.⁹ By stressing the shared heritage, the colonists' resistance fell into the category of a purely British act, and any hostility instead of conciliation by Parliament would seem authoritarian and anti-

⁵ Allan Ramsay, *Letters on the Present Disturbances in Great Britain and Her American Provinces* (London, 1777), 19-20.

⁶ John Fothergill, *An English Freeholder's Address, to His Countrymen* (London, 1780), 34.

⁷ John Erskine, *Shall I Go to War with My American Brethren? A Discourse from Judges the XXth and 28th: Addressed to All Concerned in Determining That Important Question* (London, 1769), 10.

⁸ Thomas Tod, *Observations on American Independency* (Great Britain, 1779), 6.

⁹ Ramsay, *Letters*, 19-20.

British.¹⁰ As Stephen Conway observes, different opinions expressed in Parliament, press and private diaries suggest that people's views started changing as the war went on. He argues that the critical event was “neither Lexington nor the Declaration, but the Franco-American alliance and the broadening of the conflict from 1778.”¹¹ A union with France, which had been for centuries the “other” for England, convinced Britons that the North American colonists were indeed no longer part of the same nation.¹²

This is not to say that North American Colonists had previously been considered equal to the British living in the metropole. Some commentators found them crude and unsophisticated while others believed them to be virtuous and pure.¹³ The fact that Irish and British convicts, as well as German immigrants, and a black slave population that also cohabited in the colonies, further gave a reason for those living in the metropole to believe that Americans were different from them. Despite these lines of thought before the American Revolution, Americans and British had been united during War of the Austrian Succession of 1739-1748 as well as the early stages of the Seven Years' War (1756-1763). By the end of the Seven Years' War, however, the enthusiasm for inclusivity had begun to fade. Conway argues that it was because of the close interactions between the two armies. Once the men started to interact with each other several frictions arose, specifically on military differences. For instance, General Amherst complained in 1759 that “left to themselves” the colonial soldiers “would eat fried Pork and lay in their tents

¹⁰ Linda Van Netten Blimke “All seems dreary, savage and desert”: Janet Schaw’s Journal of a Lady of Quality and American dystopia, *Studies in Travel Writing* 20, no. 4, (2016): 326.

¹¹ Stephen Conway, “From Fellow-nationals to Foreigners: British Perceptions of the Americans, circa 1739–1783,” *The William and Mary Quarterly* 59, no.1 (2002): 68.

¹² Conway, “From Fellow-nationals to Foreigners,” 68.

¹³ See Robert Hobart to Charles Hotham, Jan. 31, 1778 (Hull University Library: Hotham Papers), DD HO4/19, “All the Women are exceedingly Vulgar.”; Basil Cozens-Hardy, ed., *The Diary of Syllas Neville, 1767-1788* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1950), 31, “The body of the people in America are much more virtuous and understand the nature of Liberty better than the body of the people at home.”

all day long.”¹⁴ It is interesting that his criticism included pork and idleness because, as will be seen, it was the most common criticism of American men found in the travel narratives. William Donaldson also questions the colonists' military capabilities, in his *North America, A Descriptive Poem*. The poem, based on his experience during the French and Indian war, claims that blind vanity drove the Americans, “which suggested to them, that they could accomplish their End, and drive the French from America - without the assistance of [British] Regulars.”¹⁵ As the British press assigned the success of the war to the British troops, both the British public and many British politicians believed “that the colonists (though still described as “our People”) were incapable of their own defense. The press depicted the Americans as a non-martial people, in need of British protection.”¹⁶

The results and portrayals of the military interactions between the two seem to have been the beginning of a declining relationship. Once Britain's empire continued to grow with more islands in the Caribbean, acquisition of Canada and new areas in Africa, Britons began to see the Americans as merely another group of people they had authority over. As Kathy McGill observes, the point of British intervention in the French Indian war was to add “glory and conquest to the British Empire,” and not for the protection of “fellow nationals.”¹⁷ Thus, considering how the British and North American colonists' relationship had already suffered, it is no surprise that the eventual Anglo-French alliance ultimately severed the bond.

¹⁴ Conway, “From Fellow-nationals to Foreigners,” 81.

¹⁵ William Donaldson, *North America, A Descriptive Poem. Representing The Voyage to America, A Sketch of that Beautiful Country; with Remarks upon the Political Humour and singular Conduct of its Inhabitants* (London, 1757), 19.

¹⁶ Conway, “From Fellow-nationals to Foreigners,” 81.

¹⁷ Kathy McGill, “How Easily the World May Be Begun: British History, American Newness, and National Identity,” *Dialectical Anthropology* 27, no. 2 (2003): 105-20. 110.

3.2 Travel Narratives and North America

Before the American Revolution, eighteenth-century travel literature about North America would fall into two categories: criticism or colonial propaganda. Those who encouraged migration to America regularly represented North America, specifically North Carolina, as a paradise on earth, full of natural resources, peace, and hospitality. John Lawson in his *History of North Carolina* (1714) described it as:

A delicious country, being placed in that Girdle of the World which affords Wine, Oil, Fruit, Grain, and Silk, with other rich commodities, besides a Sweet Air, Moderate Climate, and Fertile Soil; these are the blessings (under Heaven's Protection) that spin out the thread of life to its utmost extent, and crown our days with the sweets of Health and Plenty, which when joined with content, render the Possessors the happiest Race of Men upon Earth.¹⁸

Similarly, the work titled, *Informations concerning the Province of North Carolina, Addressed to Emigrants from the Highlands and Western Isles of Scotland* (1773) by a so-called Scotus Americanus, argues against the injustices suffered by the Scottish people in Britain and presents North Carolina as a better alternative. North America is portrayed as free of poverty and oppression, crime and corruption. The author also describes it as “the best country in the world for a poor man to go to, and do well.”¹⁹ For Americanus, there was no comparison between the two countries given the opportunities North America presented. “In a word,” Americanus argues, “let the Highlanders only compare the situation of the country they now live in, to the country of which I have given them. . . . then if they can, let them long hesitate about the choice they are to make.”²⁰

¹⁸ John Lawson, *History of North Carolina* (London, 1714), 152, 44.

¹⁹ Scotus Americanus, *Informations concerning the Province of North Carolina, Addressed to Emigrants from the Highlands and Western Isles of Scotland* (Glasgow, 1773), 29.

²⁰ Americanus, *Informations*, 32.

In the eighteenth century, Scotland achieved increasing prosperity through improvements in agriculture and growing external trade. While this meant wealth for some, it also implied poverty for others. Social and economic changes in Scotland, especially in the Highlands, following the Jacobite uprising of 1745, meant new depths of poverty to peasant farmers and their landlords. Due to modern improvements to agriculture, which usually resulted in a reduction of workforce and increased rents, both groups were losing their traditional way of life and doing business. Whereas in the past peasant's relationships with landlords were clan driven, both for protection and employment, now they had become strictly commercial.

This transition from a tribal system to a civil one constituted a transformation of Scottish Highland life. According to Evangeline Walker Andrews, this resulted in the following: an increase in crime and anarchy; a substitution of money payments for payments in kind; and a limited food supply for an increasing population.²¹ Letters from kin in America stating the glorious opportunities found there was the slight push that many needed to escape their situation. Since the beginning of the century, Scots had been immigrating to America in steady numbers, but it accelerated after the Seven Years' War and became a "flood" in the early 1770s.²² These represented almost all gradations of wealth and grades of the population, from farmers, tenants to tacksmen.²³ They were attracted by the cheap and fertile lands of the colonies, as well as by the opportunities these lands offered. While Scots immigrated to all colonies, the West Indies, Nova Scotia, and New York, the Carolinas were the most favored.

Janet Schaw, also a Scot, and who traveled to North Carolina a mere two years after Americanus, presents a very different image of the place: "a dreary Waste of white barren sand,

²¹ Walker Andrews "The Highland Emigration" in Schaw, *Journal*, 257.

²² Ted Ruddock, *Travels in the Colonies in 1773-1775: Described in the Letters of William Mylne* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1993), 5.

²³ Walker Andrews "The Highland Emigration," 257.

and melancholy, nodding pines.” Unlike Americanus, for Schaw, America is the complete opposite of a paradise and hardly a better alternative to Britain. Paralleling Ramsay’s line of thought where one was either foreign or British, she then categorizes America as foreign, emphasizing the unfamiliar: “In the course of many miles, no cheerful cottage has blest my eyes. All seems dreary, savage and desert.”²⁴ The lack of any resemblance to Britain certainly influences her opinions and perceptions of everything she encounters. Whereas when she was in Antigua where “its principal beauty” was the “resemblance it has to Scotland” which brought her joy, in America her first encounter with the countryside was anything but pleasant. En route to her brother’s plantation, it began to get dark and as she stated, “the idea of being benighted in the wilds of America was not a pleasing circumstance to an European female.” For her, America resembled a foreign, wild, and dangerous place where she was “terrified at last almost to Agony.” When forced to continue on foot, she remarked that, “All I had ever heard of lions, bears, tigers, and wolves now rushed on my memory, and I secretly wished I had been made a feast to the fishes rather than to those monsters of the woods.” While she was already very much aware, and in opposition, of the political situation in America, this first encounter with the countryside made her even more despondent towards it: “I am sick at heart, my spirits fail me.” Afterwards, Schaw could not help but wonder if it was all worth it for Britain: “Was it for this that such sums of money, such streams of British blood have been lavished away?...Dearly has it been purchased, and at a price much dearer still will it be kept. My heart dies within me, while I view it.”

Schaw considered the impending revolution as an “unfortunate disease” that swept the entire area. Schaw was an ardent loyalist and considered the Revolution as an affront to her beliefs and even a threat to her family. Especially considering that her brother, Alexander, was the newly appointed customs official for St. Kitts and her other brother, Robert, was a plantation

²⁴ Schaw, *Journal*, 141,

owner in North Carolina. Her personal connection to both Britain and its empire could explain why she was notably harsher to American practices than any other she had encountered during her travels, because while in the West Indies the Creoles wanted to adopt British ways, the Americans, as will be seen, were consciously refusing them.²⁵

Ambrose Serle sarcastically commented that Americans had no reason to adopt British ways or revere their ancestors, given that significant numbers of these ancestors were transported convicts.²⁶ Moreover, travel narratives also denied the North American colonies a background and history. Unlike Britain whose history was full of castles, wars, ruins and notable figures, America was considered new and with very little to offer as a historical heritage. British travelers within Britain itself could visit and experience the places that helped define their heritage. However, this was something that they were unable to do when traveling to America. Instead of ruins, America did have several forts that had been built and abandoned during the French Indian War, but these were not very impressive given that they were barely a quarter of a century old and already almost decayed. Schaw was not impressed when she visited one of these forts: “In figure and size this fort resembles a Leith timber-bush, but does not appear quite so tremendous, tho' I see guns peeping thro' the sticks.” She concludes that they are anything but inadequate for protection, “if these are our fortresses and castles, no wonder the Natives rebel; for I will be bound to take this fort with a regim[ent] of black-guard Edinburgh boys without any artillery, but their own pop-guns.”²⁷

Americans, as a result, were discussed as being in an “earlier stage of development.” “They were,” McGill argues, “not simply removed geographically from Europe, but were also

²⁵ Schaw, *Journal*, 147, 74, 141, 194.

²⁶ Ambrose Serle, *The American Journal of Ambrose Serie, Secretary to Lord Howe 1776-1778*, ed. Edward H. Tatum, Jr. (New York: Arno Press, 1969), 48.

²⁷ Schaw, *Journal*, 142.

nonsynchronous with European historical time.” The fact that many British people felt that they did not share a collective history with the Americans was significant when considering American and British nationality. Ernest Renan, for instance, defines a nation as “a group of people who share a common legacy of memories and consent to live together to perpetuate this mutual heritage.” Similarly, Anthony Smith defines “nation” as “a named community of history and culture.”²⁸ Thus, a shared history is an essential factor in national identity.

Not everybody, however, found America’s lack of an old historical past as detrimental to the nation. Some observers were enthusiastic about its possibilities and future. William Moraley, for instance, believed that when Europe’s fame declined, America would take its place. Likewise, philosopher and Irish cleric, George Berkeley, believed that the past was in Europe and the future in America.²⁹ Americans were also creating their own history and their own customs. With the Revolution, new festive dates were added and new ways of celebrating old ones, as one British observer commented: “we suppose...for the sake of differing from our mode”³⁰

3.3 Americans: Customs, Food, and Agriculture

From the onset of her narration, Schaw held a low opinion of the peoples and customs of North Carolina. She wrote to her friend: “I have now been above a month in this country, and have not lost a day in endeavoring to find out something or another worth your attention, tho' I am far from being certain of my success.” She did find topics to discuss, but they rarely were to

²⁸ McGill, “How Easily the World May Be Begun,” 113; Anthony Smith, “The Origins of Nations,” in Geoff Eley and Ronald Grigor Suny, eds., *Becoming National* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 107

²⁹ McGill, “How Easily the World May Be Begun,” 113.

³⁰ Frederick Mackenzie, *Diary of Frederick Mackenzie, giving a Daily Narrative of His Military Service as an Officer of the Regiment of Royal Welch Fusiliers during the Years 1775-1781 in Massachusetts, Rhode Island and New York* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1930), 84.

the benefit of the Americans. While in the West Indies, Schaw found some practices displeasing, but her overall tone was a favorable one, albeit with some condescension. In America, on the other hand, her tone is consistently that of disappointment. For instance, regarding agriculture, although she had previously described the scenery as barren, as she spends more time in the area she emphasizes on the land's abundant natural resources: "The cotton is in plenty growing everywhere for the wick, if they would take the trouble to spin it. The berries hang to the hand, and seem to beg you to gather them, but they generally beg in vain, not one out of fifty will take the trouble to make them into candles." In her observations, she is critical that while nature is bountiful, the Americans do not take advantage of it. Schaw considers that while other places, specifically Britain, need to pay exuberant prices for the items that they are close to she observes that "here they have it for nothing, if they would only accept of it." She believes there is excellent capital potential to be gained from the land and is outraged that it was "almost entirely neglected" by the Americas due to their "indolence." As an imperial acquisition, America, in her eyes, should have been more productive.³¹

Through the narratives' descriptions of natural resources and their management, the comparison framework associated with economic progress is exceptionally apparent, mainly when the authors discuss American planting practices. Schaw, for instance, believed that "every instrument of husbandry was unknown" to the Americans and as a result, it took them "twenty Negroes" and a whole day to do as much work as "two horses with a man and a boy would perform" back in Scotland.³² Observers considered that one of the reasons why the land was so neglected was due to the Americans' reliance on slaves for hard labor. Not only did the Americans not adequately train the slaves, but neither did they provide for them. Slaves were

³¹ Schaw, *Journal*, 151, 203.

³² Schaw, *Journal*, 163.

forced to subsist on little food, in many cases on just a measure of Indian corn a day, some salt for the entire week, and a scant amount of clothing. Visitors blamed the alleged American farmers' idleness and ineptitude. In 1752 Bishop August Gottlieb Spangenberg, head of the Moravian Church, visited North Carolina with a group of settlers, the intent on buying some land. In his diary, he wrote that except for the production of corn and hogs (which he calls the “chief support of the farmers”), farm work was “poorly done.”³³ Similarly, John Lawson in his *History of North Carolina* (1714) comments that he never saw an acre of land managed as it should have, except when it came to raising pigs. “The only business here is raising hogs,” he argues, “which is managed with the least trouble and affords the diet they are most fond of.” He concludes, “were they as negligent in their Husbandry in Europe, as they are in Carolina, their Land would produce nothing but Weeds and Straw.”³⁴

Cattle and horse management was another area in North Carolina considered inferior to anywhere else. Spangenberg observed that during winter the animals are left on their own and “if they live, they live.” By spring, he commented that the animals were “reduced by hunger and cold that they hardly recover before fall.”³⁵ According to Spangenberg, this was a significant problem in North Carolina because planters believed that livestock did not need care during winter. Robert Horne, for example, in the seventeenth century wrote that “cattle both great and small, which live well all the Winter and keep their fat without Fodder.”³⁶ Even in the eighteenth century, Lawson’s *History* is guilty of this deception: “Their Stocks of Cattle are incredible, being from one to two thousand head in one man's Possession; these feed in the Savannas, and

³³ Adelaide L. Fries, *Records of the Moravians in North Carolina* (Raleigh: Edwards & Broughton, 1922), 39, 260.

³⁴ John Lawson, *History of North Carolina*, 152, 42.

³⁵ Fries, *Records*, 35.

³⁶ A. S. Salley, Jr., *Narratives of Early Carolina, 1650-1708* (New York, 1911), 69.

Other Grounds, and need no fodder in the winter.”³⁷ These statements are either deliberate misrepresentations by the authors or plain ignorance of the actual conditions. They can also be a combination of both in hope to attract more settlers. Especially since according to Spangenberg, this enticed many to settle in the area, specifically “crowds of Irish, who will certainly find themselves deceived.”³⁸

While travelers admired the West Indian Creoles for taking advantage of what nature offered them and how they luxuriously dined every day, of the Americans, Schaw noted that: “if they can raise as much corn and pork as to subsist them in most slovenly manner they ask no more.”³⁹ Similarly, Lawson wrote, “the truth of it is, the inhabitants of North Carolina devour so much swine's flesh that it fills them full of gross humors.”⁴⁰ Pork, however, was an item, if not the only one, considered superior to Britain's. Brickell, for instance, believed it exceeded any in Europe due to the variety of “Acorns, Nuts, and other Fruits” which Americans used as seasoning. Lawson, while critical of the amount of pork Americans ate, presumed that “if Carolina is not the chief it is not inferior, in this one Commodity, to any Colony in the hands of the English.”⁴¹ Nevertheless, in any other area concerning agriculture, they were considered inferior. Vegetables even though the soil was believed to be ideal were poor due to “their indolence [which] makes them prefer what herbs they find growing wild to those that require the least attention to propagate.” Lawson also finds that if the planters showed more interest in their industry, they would be “be qualified to manage their Agriculture to more Certainty, and greater advantage.”⁴²

³⁷ Lawson, *History of North Carolina*, xv.

³⁸ Fries, *Records*, 35.

³⁹ Schaw, *Journal*, 153.

⁴⁰ Lawson, *History of North Carolina*, 152.

⁴¹ Brickell, *Natural History of North Carolina*, 55; Lawson, *History of North Carolina*, 46.

⁴² Schaw, *Journal*, 174; Lawson, *History of North Carolina*, 42.

The perceived inferiority of American agricultural practices was particularly relevant because it showed that Americans were not interested in contributing to Britain's economy. The apparent barrenness of the land was not due to natural scarcity since as the narratives describe natural products left to waste. Instead, the colonists themselves and their negligence were the problem. Furthermore, their resistance to British agricultural practices was a resistance to the British Empire itself. By rejecting the empire, they were also rejecting any possibility of fraternal feelings between them and the British. Schaw, for instance, considered this rejection absurd since she believed that a reciprocal relationship would have been mutually beneficial for the two nations' economy. She claims to have been "really grieved to see so many rare advantages bestowed on a people every way so unworthy of them."⁴³ Schaw questioned any possibility of a reputed British character in the Americans. M. Carmen Gomez-Galisteo argues that for the observer "America often appears as a place for moral degeneration and a potential threat to the European sense of civilization."⁴⁴ The fact that they have not changed their environment, as a real Briton would have done, showed that the environment had changed them.⁴⁵

The supposed indolence of the men of North Carolina was a particularly prominent topic in the narratives. William Byrd II, a British planter from Richmond, Virginia traveled to North Carolina in 1721 and commented that, "Surely there is no place in the world where the inhabitants live with less labour than in North Carolina."⁴⁶ His descriptions of the men, while lengthy is one of the few that offers such details of a supposedly everyday life:

⁴³ Schaw, *Journal*, 174.

⁴⁴ M. Carmen Gomez-Galisteo, *Early Visions and Representations of America: Álvaro Núñez Cabeza de Vaca's "Naufragios" and William Bradford's "Of Plymouth Plantation,"* (London: Bloomsbury, 2003), 67.

⁴⁵ Linda Van Netten Blimke, "All seems dreary, savage and desert," 330.

⁴⁶ Colonel William Byrd and Edmund Ruffin, *The Westover Manuscripts: Containing the History of the Dividing Line Betwixt Virginia and North Carolina: A Journey to the Land of Eden, A.D. 1733; and A Progress to the Mines* (London, 1841), 27.

The men, for their parts, just like the Indians, impose all the work upon the poor women. They make their wives rise out of their beds early in the morning, at the same time that they lie and snore, till the sun has risen one-third of his course, and dispersed all the unwholesome damps. Then, after stretching and yawning for half an hour, they light their pipes, and, under the protection of a cloud of smoke, venture out into the open air; though, if it happens to be never so little cold, they quickly return shivering into the chimney corner. When the weather is mild, they stand leaning with both their arms upon the corn-field fence, and gravely consider whether they had best go and take a small heat at the hoe: but generally find reasons to put it off till another time. Thus they loiter away their lives, like Solomon's sluggard, with their arms across, and at the winding up of the year scarcely have bread to eat.⁴⁷

While Byrd's description is cynical enough to cause suspicion of bias, similar comments are evident in other narratives. For instance, William Mylne wrote that whereas the women in American plantations worked hard at spinning and weaving cotton, the men were "cursedly lazy" and did "nothing but mind the plantation and hardly that." He considered them as "mere Indians to their women making them do all the work." Likewise, Lawson states that it was "a thorough aversion to labor that makes people file off to North Carolina, where plenty and a warm climate confirm them in their disposition to laziness for their whole lives." Similarly, Schaw wrote that Americans spent most of their time "sauntering thro' the woods with a gun or sitting under a rustick shade drinking New England rum made into grog." She concluded that, "should Gabriel himself assure the folks here that industry would render everything better, they would as little believe him, as they would your humble servant."⁴⁸

In Schaw's case, her dislike was not due only to xenophobia based on ethnicity or political affiliations, since she even criticized her older brother, Robert, who although a loyalist, was "adhering to the prejudices of this part of the world, and is only using American methods of cultivating his plantation." She did not accuse him of indolence, however. She, instead, was impressed at what he had managed to do so far in comparison to those around him: "he has done

⁴⁷ Byrd, *The Westover Manuscript*, 27-28.

⁴⁸ William Mylne, *Travels in the Colonies in 1773-1775*, 26-29; Lawson, *History of North Carolina*, 157; Schaw, *Journal*, 153, 163.

more in the time he has had it than any of his Neighbours, and even in their slow way, his industry has brought it to a wonderful length.” She could not help but think, though, “had he followed the style of an East Lothian farmer . . . it would now have been an estate worth double what it is.” She excused her brother for not knowing any better given that he was still very young when he moved to North Carolina. While he was easily convinced by his brother Alexander and herself to change his methods, his wife completely refused all of them: “Mrs. Schaw was shocked at the mention of our manuring the ground, and declared she never would eat corn that grew thro' dirt. Indeed she is so rooted an American, that she detests everything that is European.”⁴⁹

Schaw was profoundly astonished at the American rejection of anything European. For instance, she met an old Englishman, whom she only referred to as “the Gentleman” and whom she admired very much for his manners, deportment, and overall knowledge. He had spent many years in America after living in various places in Europe. He was seemingly a scholar of mathematics, physics, and botany. He also had “no bad smattering of Mechanicks.” According to Schaw, the Gentleman was very adept at gardening and herbal medicine. To her surprise, his neighbors did not admire him: “Would you not imagine this man would be prized and courted? That the young would refer to his experience, and those of riper years apply to his superior knowledge.” That, however, was far from the case. In fact, his previous employer a planter of fortune, who she refers to as a “savage,” dismissed him even though the Gentleman had created a garden for him that “produced everything he wished for.” According to Schaw, the reason the employer fired the Gentleman was because his neighbors mocked him for using European practices of gardening: “his neighbours laughed at him for it. He first became sulky and then

⁴⁹ Schaw, *Journal*, 160.

rude to poor H, refusing him a negro to work, and bidding him to raise his dammed European stuff with his own hands.”⁵⁰

3.4 Janet Schaw and the American Man

Compared to the men in the West Indies whom Schaw considered “the most agreeable creatures she ever met,” she described the American man as having an “appearance in every respect the reverse of that which gives the idea of strength and vigor, and which the British are so remarkable.” According to her, American men were “tall and lean, with short waist and long limbs, sallow complexions, and languid eyes, when not inflamed by spirits. Their feet are flat, their joints loose and their walk uneven.” Similarly, Mylne wrote that they look “as if risen out of a fit of sickness.”⁵¹ Thus, in the narratives, the American male was not only inferior to the British man in industry and vigor but in physical appearance as well. They were, in fact, described as animalistic in appearance and manners. Schaw, for instance, was surprised to find that after she conversed with an American man, even though his “meager looks disgusted” her, he spoke and behaved like a gentleman. “The creature was tame and genteel enough,” she observed “made a bow, as if he had once known what it was to enter a decent apartment, spoke with a voice that seemed humanized and entered into conversation very much like a rational being.”⁵² While this exchanged surprised her and made her rethink her perceptions, it is clear that for her the American male was closer to a beast than a human. Her statement “as if he had *once* known what it was to enter a decent apartment,” signifies that in her mind the American man had

⁵⁰ Schaw, *Journal*, 165-6.

⁵¹ Schaw, *Journal*, 111; Mylne, *Travels in the Colonies*, 29.

⁵² Schaw, *Journal*, 181.

deviated so much from the ancestors that they had forgotten how to behave in decent company, yet the knowledge was still there deep inside.

It was not just blind prejudice against the Americans, however, since Schaw formed very favorable opinions of some, even those who actively opposed British rule, as was the case with Col. James Moore. James Moore was born in New Hanover precinct in 1737, from American born parents. On September 1, 1775, Moore was appointed colonel of the first regiment of Continental troops raised by the Convention. Of him, Schaw observed:

Whom I am compelled at once to dread and esteem. He is a man of a free property and most unblemished character, has amiable manner; and a virtuous life has gained him the love of everybody and his popularity is such that I am assured he will have more followers than any other man in the province. He acts from a steady tho' mistaken principle that I am certain has no view or design, but what he thinks right and for the good of his country.

James Moore was very passionate about what Schaw deemed as “steady tho' mistaken principle.” He conscientiously opposed British government in America. From the time of the Stamp Act until his premature death, he was “generous and high-minded” in his efforts to promote the Revolution. Schaw observed that he was clear that the conflict would end in hostilities that he deemed necessary instead of mere words, yet she witnessed and admired that he did not force anyone to join the cause, specifically her brother. “When my brother told him he would not join him,” she notes “for he did not approve the cause, ‘Then do not,’ said he, ‘let every man be directed by his own ideas of right or wrong.’” Although Schaw perceived him as a threat to the empire, she could not help but admire him. She solemnly concludes that: “If this man commands, be assured, he will find his enemies work.”⁵³

In her observations, she showed great shrewdness of judgment given that Moore turned out to be pivotal in the campaign that ended in the Battle of Moore’s Creek Bridge, considered

⁵³ Schaw, *Journal*, 168, 318.

the “first victory of the Revolution.” Deemed as the “great and undisputed hero of the campaign,” Moore’s actions were critical to its success: “He planned the whole campaign, provided for every contingency, and drove the enemy... The success of the American arms is due entirely to his foresight, energy, and skill.”⁵⁴ He only served a year in the army, however, since he died of fever at Wilmington, January 15, 1777.

While Moore was utterly against British rule and did not adopt any British practices or goods, in Schaw's eyes, he behaved as a true gentleman, which for her inevitably meant how British gentlemen behaved. Thus, regardless of his political affiliations and heritage, because of his behavior and ethics, he was held in high esteem. Showing that neither ethnicity nor political views carried as much weight in the mind of the British observer as did the colonial subjects' acceptance or rejection of British customs, notwithstanding if they were conscious of it or not.

Another example would be Mr. Joseph Eagles who was born in America, but raised in England. She considered him “entirely English” and held him in high regard, mainly because he “very justly considers England as the terrestrial paradise and proposes to return.”⁵⁵ Mr. Eagles was around nineteen or twenty when Schaw met him. He was her brother's ward, and throughout the narrative, she continuously praised him for his knowledge: “I never saw so general and so extensive a genius as he is possessed of.” She spent many hours with him in the surrounding woods, observing and studying plants and animals. In her letters, she told her friend that it was thanks to him that she was able to give so many details about many different subjects. Schaw was not ignorant of American fauna and flora, having “read all the descriptions that have been published of America.” What she appreciated about Eagles was his ability to educate her in the

⁵⁴ W. J. Peele and Clarence Hamilton Poe, eds., *Historical and Literary Activities in North Carolina, 1900-1905*, North Carolina Historical Commission, (Goldsboro: Nash Bros., printers, and binders, 1904), 236-238.

⁵⁵ See Schaw, *Journal*, 316. He never did return, however, but remained in the colony until his death in 1791.

areas she was unfamiliar. She did fear that Eagles, like others around him, would join the cause of the Revolution, which she considered an “unfortunate disease” that had swept the entire country: “I would fain hope his good sense will prevent his joining in schemes, which I see plainly are forming here.”⁵⁶

Schaw’s perception of Col. Robert Howe was more complicated given that unlike Eagles and Moore, whom she admired without question, she both liked and disliked Howe. Robert Howe was her brother’s brother-in-law and a native to North Carolina. Howe had a contentious reputation in both his personal life and political career. He became a Justice of the Peace in 1756 and was appointed captain at Fort Johnson from 1765-1773. Howe was a member of the Assembly as early as 1760. He married Sarah Grange in 1754, a daughter of a wealthy planter, but separated in 1772 due to his numerous affairs and many illegitimate children.

Of his political career the Governor of North Carolina, Gov. Josiah Martin, while acknowledging that Howe was a “man of lively parts and good understanding,” accused him with “misapplication of the public money” and with attempting “to establish a new reputation by patriotism.” Others who had a better conception of him still presented a dual opinion. A northern commentator, for instance, considered him as “a most happy compound of the man of sense, the sword, the senate, and the buck. A truly surprising character.” Also acknowledging his womanizing ways, the commentator remarked: “a favorite of the man of sense and the female world.” His faults were acknowledged but excused: “He has faults and vices — but alas who is without them.”⁵⁷ Howe, in fact, was also one of the most mocked characters by a resident, who under the pseudonym the “Musquetoe,” produced a fourteen-page document of revealing caricatures of the prominent actors in the American Revolution. Given that Howe was a

⁵⁶ Schaw, *Journal*, 149-151.

⁵⁷ Schaw, *Journal*, 317

notorious philanderer and large slave owner, the Musquetoe referred to him as "a scabby sheep that would damn a Myriad in a gloomy sable."⁵⁸

Regardless of this reputation and the fact that he was an active revolutionary, Schaw found him polite and a gentleman and even questions his reputation:

This Gentleman has the worst character you ever heard thro' the whole province. He is however very like a Gentleman, much more so indeed than any thing I have seen in the Country. He is deemed a horrid animal, a sort of a woman-eater that devours every thing that comes in his way, and that no woman can withstand him...I do assure you they overrate his merits, and as I am certain it would be in the power of mortal women to withstand him, so am I convinced he is not so voracious as he is represented.⁵⁹

It is interesting that notwithstanding of his reputation and his political affiliations, Schaw still considered him the most well behaved gentleman she met. Schaw was not a mere follower of established ideas. She formed her own opinions based on her experiences and beliefs. In her assessment of both Howe and Moore, it is evident that she was not entirely blinded by her own political affiliations and not wholly driven by prejudice.

3.5 American Women in the Narratives

The narratives describe the American Women much more favorably than the men. They were usually portrayed as fond mothers, and unlike their husbands, highly industrious. John Brickell noted that the women were "the most Industrious in these Parts," who handmade most of the household's clothing though large in size. He adds that they were "not only bred to the Needle and Spinning, but to the Dairy and domestick Affairs, which many of them manage with a great deal of prudence and conduct, though they are very young." Since women trained in

⁵⁸ Richard Rankin, "Musquetoe' Bites: Caricatures of Lower Cape Fear Whigs and Tories on the Eve of the American Revolution," *The North Carolina Historical Review* 65, no. 2 (April 1988): 173-207. 182.

⁵⁹ Schaw, *Journal*, 167.

agricultural work from a young age, they were able to “help and assist their Husbands in any Servile Work, as planting when the Season of the Year requires expedition.”⁶⁰ A woman working in the fields was a common observation in the narratives. Usually commented as a deride to the men, authors would state that the men were sliding into savagery by letting the women take on hard agricultural labor, just as the Indians did.⁶¹ As Byrd commented that, “The men, for their parts, just like the Indians, impose all the work upon the poor women.” Likewise, Mylne, who praised the women’s dedication to spinning and weaving cotton, wrote that men “mere Indians to their women making them do all the work.” Byrd also wrote that the women were much less likely to succumb to “the Distemper of Laziness” than the men.⁶²

European travelers frequently wrote about Native American’s gender roles. They regarded idleness as a male virtue in Indian culture. An observer described, “their sole occupation . . . being war, hunting, fishing, fowling, and smoking tobacco.” Whereas the women not only tended to children, but also planted crops, hauled heavy loads, artisanal work, cleared lands and repaired dwellings.⁶³ Thomas Chalkley, a Quaker missionary who traveled to America and across Europe, commented: “I never in any Part of the World, saw women so tenderly dealt by as our English, or British women.”⁶⁴ Similar beliefs formed the basis of comparison when it came to gender roles and division of labor. The narratives many references to Native Americans when discussing American men and women display a particular fear that American colonists were becoming similar to the natives.

⁶⁰ Brickell, *Natural History of North Carolina*, 32.

⁶¹ McGill, “How Easily the World May Be Begun,” 114.

⁶² Byrd, *The Westover Manuscript*, 27; Mylne, *Travels in the Colonies*, 26-29.

⁶³ Kathy O. McGill, “The Most Industrious Sex!: John Lawson’s Carolina Women Domesticate the Land,” *The North Carolina Historical Review* 88, no. 3 (2011): 280-97. 287.

⁶⁴ Thomas Chalkley, *A Journal Or, Historical Account of the Life, Travels and Christian Experiences, of That Ancient, Faithful Servant of Jesus Christ, Thomas Chalkley* (London, 1751), 77.

Women's fertility and role as mothers were also frequently noted in the narratives. Byrd for instance, wrote that women "spin, weave and knit, all with their own hands, while their husbands, depending on the bounty of the climate, are slothful in every thing but getting of children, and in that only instance make themselves useful members of an infant colony."⁶⁵ However, the narratives usually attributed the rapid population growth to the women and not the men. The women usually married young seldom considered "old maids," and were amazingly fertile. The women, then, were seen as the ones who were most contributing to the continuance of the colonial mission. Brickell wrote, "Women are very fruitful, most Houses being full of Little Ones."⁶⁶ Lawson, when discussing a specific shellfish remarked that it increased "vigour in Man" and that it made "Women fruitful," yet he also wrote that the women do not need it since "the Women in Carolina are fruitful enough without their help." He also commented, "they have very easy Travail in their Child-bearing, in which they are so happy, as seldom to miscarry."⁶⁷ Regarding motherhood, Schaw considered her brother's American wife, Mrs. Schaw, to be the "most excellent wife and a fond mother."⁶⁸ English novelist Edward Kimber in a regular column in *The London Magazine* titled, "Itinerant Observations in America," (1745-6) wrote that American women were the ideal of their sex. They were very "handsome in general and most notable Housewives." He did comment that at times they seemed reserved which looks at first to "a stranger like unsociableness," but it was because they lived in isolation and were always focused on their duties. He even advised British women to imitate them and warned that if they

⁶⁵ Byrd, *The Westover Manuscript*, 20.

⁶⁶ Brickell, *Natural History of North Carolina*, 31.

⁶⁷ Lawson, *History of North Carolina*, 95. 47.

⁶⁸ Schaw, *Journal*, 161.

continued in their impertinence they “will never never, raise ... to the Character or Situation of these American wives.”⁶⁹

Of American women, Schaw claimed to have “gained some most amiable and agreeable acquaintances amongst the Ladies; many of whom would make a figure in any part of the world.” Schaw, in fact, was surprised at the difference between the sexes. According to “a sensible man, who has long resided” in North Carolina, Schaw understood that the difference was due to because the women still practiced the genteel manners of their British female ancestors:

In the infancy of this province, said he, many families from Britain came over, and of these, the wives and daughters were people of education. The mothers took the care of the girls, they were train'd up under them, and not only instructed in the family duties necessary to the sex, but in those accomplishments and genteel manners that are still so visible amongst them, and this descended from Mother to daughter.

Fathers, on the other hand, raised the men. These took them to the woods and taught them how to get lumber, hunt, and protect their families from Indian attacks. This Schaw considered worthy; however, she remarked, “a few generations this way lost every art or science, which their fathers might have brought out.” She adds that though “necessity no longer prescribed these severe occupations, custom has established it as still necessary for the men to spend their time abroad in the fields.” Schaw observed, however, that the women she met were also part of a tea party where they burnt their tea. She excuses the women by commenting that they delayed doing so as much as possible and only sacrificed very little tea. This excuse reveals that British essentialism purely governed Schaw's ideology and perceptions. The American women she met were acceptable, and better than the men, because they held British manners, and even though they partook in anti-British practices, according to Schaw, they did so unwillingly.⁷⁰

⁶⁹ Edward Kimber and Kevin J. Hayes, *Itinerant Observations in America* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1998), 53-4.

⁷⁰ Schaw, *Journal*, 154-5.

The reality was, however, that many American women voluntarily and actively engaged in political activity. For instance, the Edenton Tea Party on October 1774 in Edenton, North Carolina, occurred less than two hundred miles away from Wilmington where Schaw stayed. The Tea Party was a protest by fifty-one women, led by Penelope Barker (1728-1796). The women signed a statement of protest vowing to boycott British tea, clothing, and other goods. While boycotts and protest were frequent at the time, this was the first instance of one entirely led by women. Barker was very open and passionate about her political views wrote:

Maybe it has only been men who have protested the king up to now. That only means we women have taken too long to let our voices be heard. We are signing our names to a document, not hiding ourselves behind costumes like the men in Boston did at their tea party. The British will know who we are.⁷¹

They sent their petition to Britain, where it received considerable attention albeit negative. In the colonies, however, it inspired other American patriots to take up protests and form groups. One such group was the “the young Ladies of the best Families in Mecklenburg County” who protested by not receiving any addresses of any young gentlemen, except those who followed and served in the revolutionary cause. Other counties also adopted this protest. The Safety Committee deemed it “sensible and polite” and “worthy the imitation of every young lady in America.”⁷² While the actions of these women were not as politically direct as Baker's petition, it does display the development of an entirely separate identity to a British one, as well one led by viewpoints instead of place of birth.

⁷¹ Tom Lansford and Thomas E. Woods. *Exploring American History: From Colonial Times to 1877* (New York: Marshall Cavendish Reference, 2008), 1098.

⁷² Alan D. Watson, “Women in Colonial North Carolina: Overlooked and Underestimated,” *The North Carolina Historical Review* 58, no. 1 (1981): 1-22. 14-15.

3.6 “Unlawful Brethren” and “True Obedient Sons:” Loyalists and Revolutionaries in the Travel Narratives

Schaw certainly felt that both she and the notion of Britishness were under threat in America. After meeting more men, she is saddened and frightened to discover that feelings against Britain were widespread: “I am sorry to say, however, that I have met with few of the men who are natives of the country...and as their natural ferocity is now inflamed by the fury of an ignorant zeal ... I cannot look at them without connecting the idea of tar and feather.” Mylne also felt endangered in America and in a letter to his sister he wrote: “I durst not keep a journal, in many places they talked of spies being out, I was afraid I might be taken for one ... I should have been tarred and feathered.”⁷³

Tarring and feathering were not created in America but imported. The practice has possible origins in Antiquity, with continuous practice throughout the Middle Ages. King Richard I, for instance, used it as a punishment for theft among the crusaders. In seventeenth-century Germany, it was used to punish a group of drunken nuns and friars. There is evidence that sailors introduced it to the colonies sometime in the middle of the eighteenth century. It was not until the 1760s that the Sons of Liberty adopted it as the official punishment for informants and customs officials as a mean of resisting the Townsend Revenue Act. Parliament passed the Act in 1767 to levy taxes on tea, paint, paper, and glass, plus added duties on other imported goods. It also created the American Board of Customs to enforce its compliance. The Sons of Liberty, however, while unable to revoke the act, made sure to make the task as hard as possible.

⁷³ Mylne, *Travels in the Colonies*, 75.

They would, for instance, ransack the homes and offices of Stamp officials as well as tarring and feathering officials and informants.⁷⁴

While the Americans did not invent Tarring and Feathering, their use of it became a marker of identity. It enabled the colonist to remove and mark any who did not follow their political opinions. While doing so, the colonists would confront their own awareness of citizenship and national identity. By attacking the “enemies,” or the “others,” they bound themselves even closer to their political beliefs and desires of American Liberties, which consequently defined their collective identity. Given that it became a shared ritual across the colonies, it further emphasized that theirs was a common cause. As Benjamin Irvin argues, “Tar-and-feather violence thus became an important means by which the colonists relinquished their British identities and pledged their allegiance to one another and to the new United States.”⁷⁵

It is no surprise, then, that in the narratives the authors continuously mentioned their fears of being tarred and feathered; fears that were not unsubstantial. In Wilmington, Schaw almost witnessed an actual tarring and feathering of the groom of one of her companions, “You can hardly conceive what I felt when I saw him dragged forward, poor devil, frighten out of his wits.” Luckily, however, at the request of some officers who knew the man, “his punishment was changed into that of mounting on a table and begging pardon for having smiled at the regiment. He was then drummed and fiddled out of the town, with a strict prohibition of ever being seen in it again.” It is no exaggeration when she, like Mylne, wrote, “it is very dangerous to keep letters by me.”⁷⁶

⁷⁴ Benjamin H. Irvin, “Tar, Feathers, and the Enemies of American Liberties, 1768-1776,” *The New England Quarterly* 76, no. 2 (2003): 197-238. 199, 201-2.

⁷⁵ Irvin, “Tar, Feathers, and the Enemies,” 229.

⁷⁶ Schaw, *Journal*, 190.

In 1775, Schaw was caught in the middle of a town being taken over by the “rebels,” as she refers to the revolutionaries. She witnessed a group of men, many of her acquaintances, keeping prisoners until they swore allegiance to the Revolutionary cause. The prisoners had to sign, a “Test,” which according to one of the prisoners forced them to “abjure our king, our country, and our principles.”⁷⁷ Throughout her stay, Schaw did not cower from activity, in fact, she refused to leave town until she found out further information and ways to send her letters.

Schaw’s letters from this moment on stop discussing flora and fauna and instead focus on the political actions occurring around her. The first significant confrontation Schaw witnessed was at Governor Martin’s estate when Revolutionaries attempted to capture him. Martin managed to escape and send his family to safety, including his wife who was pregnant at the time. There were three failed attempts to capture Martin. The first, which Schaw relates, was when he was in New Bern; the second at Fort Johnston; and the last was while he was aboard the man-of-war, *Peggy*. The Americans believed that Martin was trying to persuade General Cornwallis to attack from the southern coast along with three thousand Highlanders. Of Martin, Schaw had stated, “He is a worthy man by all accounts, but gentle methods will not do with these rusticks, and he has not the power to use more spirited means.”⁷⁸

Robert Howe was in fact the instigator of the first attack on Martin. Ever since Martin became the Governor of North Carolina, the two disliked each other. At the time, Howe was commander of the Fort Johnston as well as chief baron. Martin asked Howe, however, to step down from the court. Howe agreed given that he still had command of the Fort, but that changed as well when the preceding commander returned in 1773. It was at this moment that Howe joined the Revolutionary cause and began opposing British rule. Martin then accused Howe of “aiming

⁷⁷ Schaw, *Journal*, 192.

⁷⁸ Schaw, *Journal*, 187, 156-7.

to establish a new reputation by patriotism.” A short time after his attempt to capture Martin, Howe was appointed colonel of a regiment.⁷⁹

Afterwards, Schaw met Howe again on her visit to Wilmington during a dinner at the house she was staying. He, however, overstepped social decorum by picking up a book Schaw had been reading to share it with others. She reprimanded him “with a half compliment to his general good breeding,” and he apologized, asking her to dictate his punishment. Schaw, already angered by all she had witnessed, admits to her reader that: “One might have expected, that tho' I had been imprudent all my life, the present occasion might have inspired me with some degree of caution, and yet I can tell you I had almost incurred the poor groom's fate from my own folly.” This was so because as punishment she asked him to read the section of Shakespeare’s *Henry IV* where Falstaff makes fun of his troops, thus lessening the honor he had of commanding them. Howe did not fail to make the connection and “coloured like Scarlet,” yet finished the reading to the present company. He afterward approached her and whispered, “you will certainly get yourself tarred and feathered; shall I apply to be executioner?”⁸⁰ This flirtatious exchange between the two was also a display of power between a loyalist and a Revolutionary. Schaw had managed to ridicule him and his command, and Howe, in return, threatened her.

The previous day Schaw had witnessed a review of revolutionary soldiers. Not impressed with what she saw, she stated that she could not help but laugh as she recollected them: “2000 men in their shirts and trousers, preceded by a very ill beat-drum and a fiddler, who was also in his shirt with a long sword and a cue at his hair, who played with all his might. They made indeed a most unmartial appearance.” Nonetheless, she was very much aware that,

⁷⁹ Schaw, *Journal*, 317.

⁸⁰ Schaw, *Journal*, 191.

regardless of their current form, they could still threaten British forces because, as she says, “the worst figure there can shoot from behind a bush and kill even a General Wolfe.”⁸¹

Schaw, in fact, disapproved that Britain had not engaged in active hostilities against America. Actively engaging in the debate, she continually questioned and regretted Britain’s peaceful stance. Upon witnessing her friends imprisoned she wrote: “Oh Britannia, what are you doing, while your true obedient sons are thus insulted by their unlawful brethren; are they also forgot by their natural parents?” She was concerned that any hostilities now would not end well for the empire given the developments she witnessed: “Two regiments just now would reduce this province, but think what you will, in a little time, four times four will not be sufficient.” It is clear that through her writing, Schaw sought to diffuse any American sympathies and change any perceptions of the colonists as “brethren.” She instead upholds that an armed response against the rebels is defensible and, even needed. Within her narrative, the revolutionaries are indeed rebels. Her account displays a lack of kinship between loyalists and the Americans, and in turn between America and Britain. While those who esteemed Britain were its “true obedient sons,” its “friends” and “loyal subjects” those who did not were “ungrateful,” “unworthy” and “unlawful.”⁸²

While Schaw shows as awareness of the political debate surrounding the political status of the colonists as British or not, her narrative is not simply an attempt to convince her readers that the colonist are not British. Nor is her account a mere attempt to inspire hostilities towards America either.⁸³ To assume that her distress and frustration while in America is merely feigned or inspired by a political agenda, exaggerates European domination and power as Nigel Leask

⁸¹ Schaw, *Journal*, 190.

⁸² Schaw, *Journal*, 192, 180, 158, 174, 192.

⁸³ See Linda Van Netten Blimke “‘All seems dreary, savage and desert’: 323-338. Van Netten Blimke argues that Schaw’s narrative concerning America is in its entirety an attempt to gain support in promoting hostilities towards the colonies.

argues.⁸⁴ While she was interested in information and passionate and open about her political views, she was also genuinely shocked at the “cruel and unjust treatment the friends of government are experiencing at present.”⁸⁵ As an ardent loyalist, the actions around her seemed irrational and vicious. Even more so since she knew many of the people that were being affected at the moment.

Archibald Neilson, whom she grew very fond of during her stay, was one of the affected loyalists. Neilson was Gov. Martin’s young Scottish assistant and as Schaw writes, “when one considers the fate of this young fellow, it is impossible not to be greatly affected.” He became very sick with worry due to the attacks on his employer. He also had to flee his house given that some drunken revolutionaries set out to kill him, since he had aided in both Martin and his family escape. Moreover, most of all Schaw mourns his loss of opportunity. “Had this unlucky affair not happened,” she writes, “he had been in as fine a way as any man in the province, and as he had turned all his attention to this line, it will not be easy for him to carry it to another.”⁸⁶ Progress was one of the main reasons why many British, predominantly Scots, moved to America. For Schaw, who is always considering alternatives for improvements in everything she sees, to impede opportunity due to acts of disloyalty and rebellion is not only a loss for the individual, but also a waste and “the greatest cruelty to the mother country.” Neilson ended up having to flee North Carolina with Schaw and her companions. The rest of his life did indeed show his loss of opportunity given that he was never able to achieve positions similar to the ones he held in the northern colonies. Neilson had to abandon all his property upon leaving North America, including two houses, two slaves, and personal belongings. After he parted ways with Schaw in 1775, he went to London and applied for a commissaryship or any similar post in the

⁸⁴ Leask, *Curiosity and the Aesthetics of Travel Writing*, 17.

⁸⁵ Schaw, *Journal*, 179.

⁸⁶ Schaw, *Journal*, 197, 206, 209, 188.

British army in America, but was denied. The Treasury granted him a temporary position, on his offering to go as a volunteer to New York. However, the same year his brother died back in Scotland leaving a widow and nine small children. Neilson was obliged to return to home and take care of not only his brother's family, but his aged mother as well. In 1783, he was awarded a yearly allowance of £60. He never married and stayed in Scotland until his death in 1805.⁸⁷

Schaw's own brothers were also in danger due to the events at the time. Her brother Alexander fled North Carolina at the petition of Gov. Martin to deliver some letters to London.⁸⁸ Although his departure was a secret, the revolutionaries somehow grew suspicions and guarded the roads. Schaw was concerned because as she stated: "It would not, however, have been an easy matter to make him yield, as he had an invincible aversion to the tar pot, and as he carried a pair of pistols in each pocket, he would have tried these in the first instance." Alexander Schaw made it safely to the ship and arrived in England sometime in September or October.⁸⁹ It was fortunate he was not caught because upon reaching London, alongside Gov. Martin's letter, he sent a description of North Carolina he had been writing during his stay in the colony to Lord Dartmouth, the Lord Secretary of State for the Colonies from 1772 to 1775. This document focused on the different access points to the colony and possible difficulties an invading army might have. His focal point and vocabulary are strategic and distinctly military focused. For instance, when discussing distance between a possible port and a town he describes it as "good

⁸⁷ Schaw, *Journal*, 157, 328-330.

⁸⁸ Schaw, *Journal*, 196. On July 5, Governor Martin wrote to Lord Dartmouth, "I have engaged Mr. Alexr Schaw, whom I have the honour to introduce to your Lordship, to charge himself with this letter. This gentleman is qualified by his intelligence, his candour, and his accurate observation, during some months that he has resided in this colony, to give your Lordship every information that you can desire relative to its present condition and circumstances. Mr. Schaw is an officer in the customs in the Is. of St. Christopher's, from which he has been absent by leave on his private concerns, and was preparing to return to it, when Capt. Tollemache's arrival presented me with so fair an occasion to employ him advantageously for his Majesty's service that I could not resist it."

⁸⁹ Schaw, *Journal*, 196-7.

anchorage within half a musket shot of the town.”⁹⁰ He also notes that every colonial has various firearms in their homes, mainly because the militia laws require them. He, however, assures that: “There is now a numerous body of the sons and grandsons of the first Scotch highland settlers, besides the later emigrants who retain that enthusiastic love for the country from which they are descended, which indeed scarce a highlander ever loses, that they will support its dignity at every risk.”⁹¹ However, despite his belief in a strong loyalist force, he was still realistic that many will join the revolutionary cause regardless if they believe in it or not, to save their property.

Schaw’ older brother Robert, was precisely one of these who was faced with either exile and loss of property or joining the revolutionary cause. Janet Schaw had mentioned that he had “been offered every thing, but has refused every offer, and I tremble for his fate, but any thing rather than join these people.” On September 1, 1775, however, he was commissioned a colonel in the Revolutionary Army. He joined possibly under pressure, just as his brother predicted many would do. Robert was never a full supporter of the cause and “refused to follow the lead of the radical party.” As a result, in June 1777, a James Murray wrote, “Bob Schaw will be obliged to leave Carolina for not taking the oaths to the states, and so must several Scotch for the like crime.” It is possible that the revolutionaries confiscated his property since in 1786 the administrators of his estate were authorized to sell the lands and to keep the personal estate for the widow and son.⁹²

Despite her personal loss due to the revolution, Schaw was clear that the revolutionaries’ actions were not just attacks on herself and other colonial loyalists, but that these are attacks on Britain as a whole.⁹³ For her, the revolutionaries, or those “seized by such delirium,” are “self-

⁹⁰ Alexander Schaw, “Description of North Carolina by Alexander Schaw,” in Schaw, *Journal*, 282.

⁹¹ Schaw, “Description of North Carolina,” 281.

⁹² Schaw, *Journal*, 188, 320.

⁹³ Van Netten Blimke, “All seems dreary, savage and desert,” 333.

interested wretches, who are endeavouring to ruin this royal first-rate [vessel] on purpose to steal from the wreck materials to build themselves boats with.”⁹⁴ In her opinion, the actions of the revolutionaries are progressively damaging to both the colony and the British Empire, and subsequently its people.

The American colonies were understandably a topic of debate for many Britons living in the Metropole in the eighteenth century. Unlike in previous recent conflicts, where "us" and "them" were criterions of difference, in regards to America, the distinction was not so clear.⁹⁵ Some Britons saw the Americans as brethren, part of Britain, and therefore worthy of receiving all British rights. These felt that to act against the colonials violently was not only fratricide but also a display of an authoritarian government. Those who opposed this position and saw the colonials as foreigners and rebels felt that Parliamentary action was justifiable, even a British duty. However, armed conflict between an empire and its colony was an indication of vulnerability and even possible collapse, which might have influenced any Parliamentary reservations.

Travel narratives contributed significantly to this debate. Some authors, mostly in the beginning of the century, presented the Americas as an Eden on Earth. They portrayed America as a land where anybody could prosper regardless of prior knowledge or lack of wealth. Others were not so praiseful of what they saw. Many considered the men indolent, the women overworked, and the land mismanaged. It is clear that the lack of proper agricultural practices and general disregard for the land translated into a disregard of their heritage, fellow Britons, and

⁹⁴ Schaw, *Journal*, 211.

⁹⁵ Dror Wahrman, “The English Problem of Identity in the American Revolution,” 1245.

most importantly, Britain itself. To not fulfill their duty as a colony, which was to provide to the imperial center, was an affront to the metropole.

Both Mylne and Schaw were eyewitnesses to the growing revolutionary fervor among the colonials. Their travels allowed them to engage with the ideologies emerging out of the political crisis. They were able to see how white Americans were progressively assuming an identity separate from that of the metropole. American colonials were refashioning themselves as a people oppressed by an imperial system, distorting the clear distinction between colonizers and colonized found in the West Indies. Since the West Indian colonizers remained politically aligned to the metropole, the question of their race was not an issue in the narratives. While they were judged by how similar or not their practices were to British customs, authors, in the end, considered them British. But Americans, on the other hand, specifically for Schaw, were unquestionably a different people. Loyalists, for Schaw, established their parentage through filial respect and obedience to Britain. The revolutionaries demonstrated their lack of lineage through their rebellious and disloyal thoughts and actions.

Like most loyalists, the resistance Schaw encountered profoundly disturbed her. She believed the revolutionary ideas were nothing but a disease or delirium. She was amazed at the number of supporters the revolution had and worried that Britain would not be able to stop its growth. Unlike, Edmund Burke, who mourned the loss of reconciliation with America, Schaw was a strong supporter of using force against the rebels. In her narrative, she is continuously challenging any views of mercy towards the colonials. For her, by not immediately stopping their actions, Britons were supporting them, and in turn exacerbating the situation and suffering of the empire and those loyal to it. "I wish to God," she exclaimed, "those mistaken notions of moderation to which you adhere at home may not, in the end, prove the greatest cruelty to the

mother country as well as to these infatuated people." She believes that to do nothing is also neglecting their duty to Britain's "loyal sons": "Good God! What are the people at home about, to suffer their friends to be thus abused." Through her depiction of the violence against the loyalists, she challenges any idea of commonality and equality to the rebellious American colonists. When she wrote that the "the Loyal party are all as one family," she is signaling who is British and who is not, and to whom British protection was due. Schaw, however, did not believe that all Americans were guilty or at fault, only those whom she considered struck by the disease of rebellion: "it is not a whole empire, but some self-interested wretches." Thus, it was not mere xenophobia that drove her assessment of Americans. Their reject of anything British, and Britain itself, made the American colonials inferior in her hierarchy, regardless of their gender or social class. For Schaw, instead of an Eden, America with its rejection to Britain, turned out to be a "land of nominal freedom and real slavery."⁹⁶

⁹⁶ Schaw, *Journal*, 180, 193, 211-2.

CHAPTER 4. SLAVERY AND THE TRAVEL NARRATIVE

“Man is man, place him on what spot of earth you will --distinguish his customs and manners, and at pleasure, paint his countenance white, black, brown, olive; what you will, man is man: and it is playing shamefully with terms, to talk of a different species, and thereby mean brute.” ~ Anonymous¹

4.1 Slavery in the West Indies

George Boulukos argues that slavery is an “inherently paradoxical institution,” because it depends on “laborers who are valuable precisely for their human abilities—their ability to learn continuously and to perform complex demanding tasks—but at the same time systematically, and symbolically, denying them the expression of their humanity.”² The 1780s signal the beginning of a sustained political campaign that called for the abolition of the British transatlantic slave trade. The trade ended in 1807, and by the 1830s, abolitionists achieved the full juridical emancipation for all slaves living in the British Empire. During this time, slaveholders were compelled to defend the social and economic world they maintained in the Caribbean. Their apologies for slavery exposed the fundamental reality of life in the Caribbean: that the institution of slavery was bound with a complex set of social and cultural values.

In the eighteenth century, the West Indies were the most important holding of the British Empire. The Caribbean accounted for nearly one-fifth of all British imports, and approximately seven percent of Britain's exports went to the West Indies. The West Indies, in fact, produced and consumed far more per capita than the American colonies. Slave-produced sugar was at the center of the transatlantic economy, and Jamaica was the “dominating presence” in the West

¹ Anonymous, *A Short Journey*, 131-2.

² George Boulukos, *The Grateful Slave: The Emergence of Race in Eighteenth-Century British and American Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 1.

Indies when it came to trade. Over forty percent of the sugar imported into Britain came from the island. Furthermore, over forty percent of the entire West Indian population resided on Jamaica. The majority of the Jamaican population lived in the low-lying regions of the island, where it was most fertile. Large sugar plantations, often referred as estates, occupied the best lands in these areas. The average Jamaican plantation had over two hundred slaves who lived and worked on the property. During the eighteenth century, the slave population in the island rose exponentially as the spread of sugar plantations continued. By the end of the century, over one thousand plantations existed in Jamaica, which created a high demand for enslaved workers and the slave population reached about 354,000. By the time of emancipation, slaves encompassed approximately 84 percent of the island's population.³

Beside slaves and white colonists, free black and mixed race people also comprised West Indian population. For instance, in Jamaica two-thirds of the free non-whites were of mixed race. These were either freed from slavery or born into freedom. Slaveholders occasionally freed individual slaves, a process known as manumission. As discussed earlier, sexual relationships between female slaves and white men were common in the West Indies. The legal status of the children produced from these relationships derived from their slave mother, thus they were born into slavery. Some planters, however, often manumitted their children; less sent them abroad to study. In all of the West Indies, however, laws were passed limiting the political and economic behavior of all mixed-race people.⁴

Sexual exploitation by plantation owners was just one of the many cases of abuses committed against enslaved people. There existed very few legal constraints on what the slaveholders could do to their slaves. Always fearing insurrections, white colonists used many

³ Christer Petley, *Slaveholders in Jamaica Colonial Society and Culture During the Era of Abolition* (London: Routledge 2016), 1-7.

⁴ Petley, *Slaveholders in Jamaica*, 6.

terror tactics to maintain authority and display white dominion. The most popular methods of punishment and coercion were whipping and confinement, although gruesome punishments like disfigurements and dismemberment were not uncommon. The slaveholders' violent reactions to any challenge of their authority displayed their anxieties and fears of slave revolts. They were aware that slaves vastly outnumbered them and while revolts were not frequent, they did occur. One of the earliest in the century was the 1733 insurrection on St. John in the Danish West Indies, which lasted almost a year. Another was the 1760 Jamaican insurrection known as Tacky's Revolt that lasted a few months but inspired successive rebellions afterward. Most significant was the Haitian Revolution of 1791, where slaves seized both their freedom and the colony from the whites. The Haitian Revolution was every slaveholder's worst fear. All the colonies feared and dreaded a rebellion of its scale long before it occurred. Other smaller yet significant challenges to slaveholders' authority were day to day acts like slow work, theft, sabotage and feigned illnesses. Regardless, slave owners met most acts of defiance with violence and brutality.⁵

As a result, British travelers often expressed concern regarding the effects of Caribbean life had on the Creoles. Many worried in moral terms, questioning the slaveholders' absence of compassion towards the slaves. Others questioned the lack of legal restraints. Most Britons, though, thought that the distance from Britain eventually resulted in Creoles distancing themselves from British standards. By the late 1780s, the worry and criticisms of the slaveholders' behavior grew into a national antislavery campaign. The campaign mixed condemnation for the Creoles' behavior as well as concerns of the slaves' humanity.

⁵ Petley, *Slaveholders in Jamaica*, 5-9.

Abolitionists sought to gain support from metropolitan society by exposing the violence and brutality committed against enslaved peoples by British colonials.⁶

Abolition also meant that new ways of colonial governance were required. The imperial government usually left colonials to manage their affairs, yet during the abolition movement, it began to demonstrate more interest and control over the colonies. For example, canceling or altering local laws when they concerned slavery. Unsurprisingly, this closer involvement resulted in debates regarding the constitutional rights of the colonials, primarily by the colonials themselves. Planters considered slaves as mere property or “stock.”⁷ Given this view, they expected the right to manage their “property” however they wished. An example is the plantation owner, and advocate for better treatment of enslaved people, Joshua Steele’s answer to an official query in the 1780s regarding a slave-owner’s legal power over slaves. Steele states that it “is rather by implication (from Slaves being bought as chattels, in the same manner as horses, or other beasts) than by any positive law defining what the power of a master shall be, in this island.”⁸ Because of their status as property, slaves were legally powerless to act against the slaveholders’ cruelty, given that “Negroes and other slaves are not allowed to give evidence against any white or free person.” Bryan Edwards, considered precisely this legal limitation to be the institution greatest defect: “that the evidence of the slave cannot be admitted against a White person, even in cases of the most atrocious injury. This is an evil to which, on several accounts, I fear no direct and efficacious remedy can be applied.”⁹

⁶ Petley, *Slaveholders in Jamaica*, 8.

⁷ Edwards, *History Civil and Commercial*, 180.

⁸ Douglas Hall, “Slaves and Slavery in the British West Indies,” *Social and Economic Studies* 11, no. 4 (1962): 305-318. 306.

⁹ Edwards, *History Civil and Commercial*, 171-2.

The law and the church turned a blind eye to the masters and estate managers' inhumane treatment towards their slaves. The Church of England approved the colonies status quo, social as well as economic. Each colony had a parish that functioned as the local administrative units, and local men of property held the parochial offices. There were no colonial bishops until 1824, and as Michael Craton argues, "the few clergy were often as ignorant and debauched as the planters themselves." In the early years of West Indian slavery, planters made "token gestures" towards Christianizing slaves. A Jamaican Act of 1688 decreed that "all masters, mistresses, owners, and employers" should teach their slaves the principles of Christian religion, and baptize them when they convert. Plantation owners rarely observed this Act and in 1789 Jamaican legislators declared that no such provisions existed.¹⁰

Most planters refused to educate their slaves on Christianity and to read and write because they feared that once they learned and converted, they would understand even more the unjustness of their situation. In a blunt statement to the missionary James Phillippo, a Jamaican slave owner stated:

We will not tolerate your plans till you prove to us they are safe and necessary; we will not suffer you to enlighten our slaves, who are by law our property, till you can demonstrate that, when they are more religious and knowing they will still continue to be our slaves...Slavery must exist as it now is, or it will not exist at all. If we expect to create a community of reading, moral, church-going slaves we are woefully mistaken.¹¹

The white colonials' irritation towards anti-slavery movements was not unexpected given the considerable material benefits the institution provided them. Slaves were capital equipment in a capital-intensive economy. As Joshua Steele's comment suggests, planters purchased slaves because they provided services that produced wealth for their owners. Douglas Hall attests slaves were a "multi-purpose" investment. They performed many tasks, from turning the soil, weeding,

¹⁰ Michael Craton, "Christianity and Slavery in the British West Indies 1750-1865," *Historical Reflections* 5, no. 2 (1978): 141-60. 142.

¹¹ Craton, "Christianity and Slavery," 142-3.

cutting canes, processing and packing sugar, to driving the cattle, building and repairing roads or buildings. They also did other not exclusively economic services as collect firewood, fish, and domestic duties. As Hall reasons, “A man who owned nothing but slaves could make a living by hiring them out in a variety of employments; a man who owned nothing but windmills would be less well off.”¹²

Creoles were aware of the criticism their way of life caused in the metropole. They sought to hold on to the liberties and benefits they achieved in the colonies as the privileged white class, but also desired to present themselves as loyal and proper British subjects. Their desire to be deemed as equal British subjects is apparent in their interactions with visitors from the metropole. Their attempts to emulate British customs could only go so far given that slavery was a purely colonial institution, yet when graced with British visitors most slaveowners sought to portray themselves as benevolent and fair. This is exceedingly apparent in John Pinney's instructions to his estate manager during a visit of a friend of the prominent abolitionist William Wilberforce (1759-1833):

Do not suffer a Negro to be corrected in his presence, or so near for him to hear the whip . . . Point out the comforts the Negroes enjoy beyond our poor in this country. . . Show him the property they possess in goats, hogs, and poultry, and their negro-ground. By this means he will leave the island possessed with favourable sentiments.¹³

4.2 Slavery and the Narratives: West Indies

For some visitors, their pleasure with the Creoles' desire to emulate British customs eased their perceptions of them as slaveholders. Schaw, for instance, presented the plantation owners she met in the West Indies as all being fair to the slaves and the slaves as grateful to their

¹² Hall, “Slaves and Slavery,” 308.

¹³ Hall, “Slaves and Slavery,” 310.

masters. Others, especially, those travelers writing by the end of the century, like Luffman, did not fail to see the slaveowners as participants of a cruel and inhumane institution.

Schaw believed in a supposed inferiority of the African race and perceived slavery as a necessary component of plantation life. Her entries display a naiveté that almost seems artificial. For instance, the first entry she made on slavery was when she visited Col. Samuel Martin's plantation. Of the slaves, she commented that they “cheerfully perform the labour imposed on them” given that Martin was a “kind and beneficent Master, not a harsh and unreasonable Tyrant.” For her, the enslaved appeared as “subjects of a good prince, not the slaves of a planter.”¹⁴ Schaw in her description of slavery is using what Elizabeth Bohls describes as “aesthetics of colonialism.” Shaw adopted the discourse of the picturesque to aestheticize colonialism and its components. According to Bohls, Schaw relayed the same racist apologetics in which Britain justified slavery. Her very first description of slave labor is given “through a lens of benevolent paternalism.” Otherwise, in her narrative, slave labor is omitted. Pratt points out that aesthetic discourse represents a “transformative, appropriative way of seeing that distances or detaches the observer while asserting the dominance of an eye that is European.”¹⁵ In other words, aesthetic discourse justified imperial actions. It offered a way to distort the ugliness of colonialism, as well as camouflage “the illusion of moral superiority claimed by the

¹⁴ Schaw, *Journal*, 103-4. Samuel Martin was born in 1693 at his father's plantation, Green Castle. For most of his life Martin traveled between Antigua and England until settling in Antigua in 1750. He was an advocate of paternalistic slaveholding practices as well as of efficient plantation management. Significantly, because his father, Major Samuel Martin, was killed by his own slaves on December 27, 1701, during one of the first recorded slave revolts in Antigua. Official reports of the incident do not state the reasons behind the revolt, but they suggest that it was most likely due to poor treatment. For instance, Governor Codrington wrote of Martin, "I'm afraid he was guilty of some unusual act of Severity, or rather some indignity towards the Coromantees." See David Barry Gaspar, *Bondmen and Rebels: A Study of Master-Slave Relations in Antigua* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985), 186. See also Samuel Martin, *An Essay upon Plantership, humbly inscrib'd to all the planters of the British sugar-colonies of America* (Antigua, 1750).

¹⁵ Elizabeth A. Bohls, “The Aesthetics of Colonialism: Janet Schaw in the West Indies, 1774-1775,” *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 27, no. 3 (1994): 363-90. 375-6.

colonial master.”¹⁶ The aesthetic language was a useful tool of empire given that it “argues without arguing.”¹⁷ It presented that which was unnatural, brutal and ugly, as natural, humane and attractive.

Another useful result of using aesthetic discourse is that it absolves both the observers and the individuals committing the crimes. As Elizabeth Kim states, “Imperialism aestheticized through language protects the imperialist from having to recognize collective and individual hypocrisy and guilt.”¹⁸ Schaw's text presents this absolution of guilt. Upon noticing that Martin's slaves or the “subjects of a good prince” had whip scars on their backs, she justified it by maintaining that there was no other alternative to the use of the whip. “However dreadful this must appear to a humane European,” she wrote, “I will do the Creoles the justice to say, they would be as averse to it as we are, could it be avoided, which has often been tried to no purpose.” To further absolve the Creoles, she argued that slaves do not feel pain or misery as white humans do:

When one comes to be better acquainted with the nature of the Negroes, the horror of it must wear off. It is the suffering of the human mind that constitutes the greatest misery of punishment, but with them it is merely corporeal. As to the brutes it inflicts no wound on their mind, whose Natures seem made to bear it, and whose sufferings are not attended with shame or pain beyond the present moment.¹⁹

Schaw's beliefs of the African race are in keeping with eighteenth-century discourses of race. Enlightenment ideas on the origins of different skin colors ranged from skin pigments as the product of different climates to a “biological determinism maintaining that racial differences

¹⁶ Elizabeth S. Kim, “Complicating ‘Complicity/Resistance’ in Janet Schaw's *Journal of a Lady of Quality*,” *A/b: Auto/Biography Studies* 12, no. 2 (1997): 166-87. 171.

¹⁷ Bohls, “The Aesthetics of Colonialism,” 390.

¹⁸ Kim, “Complicating ‘Complicity/Resistance,’” 171.

¹⁹ Schaw, *Journal*, 127.

were innate, created by God.”²⁰ Monogenists, who believed that skin color was the result of climate, asserted that all humanity had shared a common ancestry with Adam and Eve.

Polygenists, like Edward Long, believed that some races, primarily African, were inferior and closer to apes than to Europeans. Schaw's comments about Africans are explicitly set within this discourse.

Because of these beliefs about race, many writers like Schaw accepted slavery as a colonial institution, and others, like Long, went further and defended it. Long in his *History* has a chapter on Africans titled, “Negroes.” He divided this chapter into three parts: the native or “Creole” Blacks, the imported or “salt-water” Africans, and the African race in general. He begins his chapter by dismissing climate theories about skin color and proceeds to describe Africans’ physical traits and how these differ from the European men and women. He uses terms like “bestial fleece” for hair, and “bestial smell” for a supposed skin smell. Long portrays Africans in wholly negative terms, lacking in everything that Europeans admire:

In general, they are void of genius, and seem almost incapable of making any progress in civility or science. They have no plan or system of morality among them. Their barbarity to their children debases their nature even below that of brutes. They have no moral sensations; no taste but for women; gormandizing, and drinking to excess; no wish but to be idle.

He concludes his argument by calling Africans the “vilest of the human kind.” He claims that they are of “proud, lazy, deceitful, thievish ... incestuous, savage, cruel, and vindictive, devourers of human flesh ... cowardly, devoted to all sorts of superstition.” In short, Long attributes every possible vice to Africans. Although he argues that if they are “imported young,” some of this “brutality” diminishes, he also added that this was not always the case. For him, it is

²⁰ Elizabeth A. Bohls, *Women Travel Writers and the Language of Aesthetics, 1716-1818* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 55.

surprising that although Africans have been among “Europeans, and their manufactures, for so many hundred years, they have, in all this series of time, manifested so little taste for arts, or a genius either inventive or imitative.”²¹

As a true polygenist, Long spends a vast amount of his chapter comparing African physiology with orangutans, claiming that Africans resemble ape physiology much more than European. He not only argues for similar physical traits, he also compares the African mind to the minds of apes. After discussing African’s alleged similarity to apes, as well as their supposed lack of European values, he deduced that black people were inferior to whites. He asks, “When we reflect on the nature of these men, and their dissimilarity to the rest of mankind, must we not conclude, that they are a different species of the same genus?”²²

Even among contemporaries, Long’s racism was radical. David Brion Davis, for instance, argues, “Few eighteenth-century writers could equal Edward Long in gross racial prejudice.”²³ Polygenism, in the eighteenth century, was unpopular, though followed by a radical racist minority. While other polygenists promoted similar views as Long, his were the most detailed and extreme. For instance, Hume’s essay, “Of National Characters,” stated that, “negroes . . . and other species of men” were “naturally inferior to the whites,” and, while equally objectionable, it was presented in a footnote in the second edition (1753) whereas Long has chapters dedicated to such ideas. The same applies to the work of other contemporaries such as Hume’s cousin, Lord Kames, Adam Smith, Voltaire, Robertson, and Monboddo.²⁴

While less drastic, other narratives present similar views. Schaw, for instance, upon first encountering black children, writes: “Just as we got into the lane, a number of pigs run out at a

²¹ Long, *History*, 353-5.

²² Long, *History*, 356.

²³ David Brion Davis, *The Problem of Slavery in Western Culture* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell Univ. Press, 1966), 459.

²⁴ Aaron Garrett, "Hume's Revised Racism Revisited," *Hume Studies* 26, no. 1 (2000): 171-77.175.

door, and after them a parcel of monkeys. This not a little surprised me, but I found what I took for monkeys were Negro children, naked as they were born.”²⁵ By mistaking the children for monkeys, she parallels Edward Long by deeming black people as members of a different species, reinscribing the opinions of African as subhuman. She also made several entries regarding “Negroes feelings” though none of them are particularly sympathetic towards the slaves. Through her remarks, it is clear that she sees slaves only as property purchased for a service. Her economic interests are apparent when she advised planters to pay particular attention as to what service the slave should be employed in at the moment of purchasing: “It behoves the planter to consider the country from whence he purchases his slaves; as those from one coast are mere brutes and fit only for the labour of the field, while those from another are bad field Negroes, but faithful handy house-servants.” She continues by also noting that “there are others who seem entirely formed for the mechanick arts, and these of all others are the most valuable.” In her opinion, this “want of attention to this has been the ruin of many plantations.” Schaw only referred to slaves when regarding their duties and profit to the planters. For instance, when discussing different illnesses or possible causes of death slaves suffer from, she did not show concern in regards to them as humans, but as a potential loss for the estate. “They are also very subject to dropsies,” she noted “by which they [the planters] lose many of their boilers, who are always the best slaves on the plantation.” To justify this outlook, Schaw insisted on the supposed innate differences of the African race, specifically their incapacity to experience prolonged suffering or pain or even any familial attachments:

Since I am on the chapter of Negroes feelings, I must tell you that I was some days ago in town, when a number for market came from on board a ship. They stood up to be looked at with perfect unconcern. The husband was to be divided from the wife, the infant from

²⁵ Schaw, *Journal*, 78.

the mother; but the most perfect indifference ran thro' the whole. They were laughing and jumping, making faces at each other, and not caring a single farthing for their fate.²⁶

To support arguments regarding slavery and slave management, Schaw presents slaves as reactive, impervious to psychological pain and long-term contemplation. Schaw conveyed what Moira Ferguson calls an ameliorative approach where she did not reject slavery, nor slave punishments, but disapproved extreme brutality.²⁷ When she refers to Martin's slaves, she suggests that a kind and compassionate treatment of slaves will result in their loyalty and willingness to work. According to Schaw, "the alacrity with which they serve him, and the love they bear him, show he is not wrong."²⁸ While she justifies systematic violence when deemed necessary by the owners, she believes that ameliorative approaches generate more productive laborers.

Schaw's account of slavery obscures the coercive, oppressive and exploitative nature inherent in all master and slave relationships. By stressing the loyalty and love that Martin's slaves allegedly felt for him, she was naturalizing the institution of slavery. Moreover, she was obscuring the legal and social constraints that slaves endured in plantation society. By depicting the slaves as "brutes" invulnerable to psychological suffering she diminished the horrors of the institution. She eluded the constant threat of violence that coerced any slave behavior, perpetuating the myth of the happy slave. As she noted when describing slave alertness "did you not know the cruel necessity of this alertness, you would believe them the merriest people in the

²⁶ Schaw, *Journal*, 128.

²⁷ Moira Ferguson, *Subject to Others: British Women Writers and Colonial Slavery, 1670-1834* (New York: Routledge, 1992). 91-112.

²⁸ Schaw, *Journal*, 105.

world.”²⁹ However, by recognizing these threats of violence, she undermined her earlier claims about the love and loyalty of Martin's slaves.

Luffman’s and the anonymous author do not circumvent in their writings the violent nature of the institution. The differences in their accounts reflect the shifting socio-political environment of Britain. Schaw traveled to the West Indies in the mid-1770s before the British abolition movement became popular in the 1780s. By the time Luffman and the author of the *Short Journey* traveled to the West Indies, almost twenty years after Schaw, abolitionism was becoming a well-established movement. Abolitionist literature that circulated in Britain asserted the humanity, if not equality, of the African race.³⁰ While in Antigua, Luffman was still very much aware of the abolitionist debate occurring in the metropole. In his letter sent to on February 7, 1788, he was celebrating that the British legislature had “serious thoughts of reforming the abuses in, if not totally reforming the slave-trade to Africa and slavery in the West Indies.” In the same letter he condemns the institution, calling it “the most abominable, the most to be abhorred of any species of commerce ever carried on by our countrymen, it is a disgrace to those excellent laws we boast and to the enlightened age we live in.”³¹

Similarly, the author of the *Short Journey* while in the West Indies called the arguments in favor of slavery “unnatural.” The narrative reveals that the author traveled to the West Indies to visit the plantation he inherited from his father in Jamaica. On his way he also visited Barbados. His letters show that he did not enjoy his travels to the islands and was anxious to leave. He wrote to a friend named Eugenio back in England about his experiences throughout his stay. The most prominent topic of his letters, however, was his encounters with slavery and his

²⁹ Schaw, *Journal*, 128.

³⁰ Petley, *Slaveholders in Jamaica*, 8

³¹ Luffman, *A Brief Account*, 124.

distaste for it. He described various interactions with slaves and free blacks, where he admired their manner of speaking and emphasized that they were as insightful as any European. His narrative is exceptional in comparison to the others because he recounts the conversations he had with some of the slaves and free blacks he interacted with, specifically his deceased father's attendants Cudjoe and Philantropos. In his accounts he attempts to capture the slaves' linguistic differences in their speech as well as their point of view concerning their social and legal situation. Regarding the supposed inferiority of the African race, the author challenged: "prove to me that the African is not a man, prove to me that heaven has not bestowed upon him the distinction of reason, prove to me that he is merely a brute, and I will be one of the foremost to say compel him into your service." The author further showed his awareness of the contemporary literature about the West Indies, as well as the race debate when he criticized Long:

Could I, as the historian of Jamaica has done, enter into the anatomical inquisition, and decomposition of original human particles, and thereby, as he has done, satisfy myself of a difference of species... It would never diminish the repugnance I feel at the very name of slavery --of that name that implies the degradation of animated nature, into a monstrous machinery, wound up and kept in motion by torture.

The anonymous author also touches upon the myth of the happy and loyal slave that Schaw promoted. When he meets his slaves, he is disturbed by their "servility of mind" and how they kissed his shoes and showed "extravagant joy" at meeting him. Upon asking Philantropos about this behavior, he told him that they do so out of fear:

Chains and tortures puts [them] constantly in mind of their dependence of their master, and finding flattery, and every species of servility powerful means of soothing the overseers that are placed immediately over them, it gradually becomes a part of their character.³²

This statement explains the reason behind the behavior of Col. Martin's slaves which Schaw described as the "merriest people in the world" and who "loved" their master. George Boulukos

³²Anonymous, *A Short Journey*, 121, 128-9, 82-3.

argues that the grateful slave was a popular trope in the eighteenth-century literature about slavery. The trope described that through the ameliorative efforts of the planter, they could reform slavery to where brutal punishments of slaves would end, and the slaves in response would become grateful and devoted to the reformer. This approach eliminates what Peter Hulme calls the “problem with slavery,” which entails that “slaves are dangerous because forced to labor against their will; the danger is removed if their ‘enslavement’ is voluntary and therefore not slavery at all.” This romantic trope ultimately served to reinforce the idea that through the compassionate acts of white plantation owners, slaves could embrace their subjection. Resulting in a more productive environment under more humane regime, which was what Schaw was promoting. However, as Boulukos argues, the key to this regime is the “threat that non-compliant – ‘intractable’ – slaves will be sold to new, presumably less humane, owners.”³³ Thus, fear and coercion were always at the forefront of slave and master relationships.

Another scene where Schaw aestheticized slave interactions, is her depictions of slave markets on the day after Christmas:

We met the Negroes in joyful troops on the way to town with their Merchandize. It was one of the most beautiful sights I ever saw. They were universally clad in white Muslin...Both men and women carried neat white wicker-baskets on their heads, which they balanced as our Milk maids do their pails. These contained the various articles for Market.

The passage goes on describing in detail the items for sale and how slaves arranged them in the “most elegant manner.” Schaw’s description presented a pleasing composition of colors and visual aesthetic. Slaves were not wearing the filthy garbs she had previously made a note of; instead, they are wearing clean white festive clothes. She contrasted the white garbs on the slaves’ black skin as well as provided detailed descriptions of the brilliant colors of the fruits and

³³ Boulukos, *The Grateful Slave*, 1-4.

flowers they were selling. In this picturesque scene, slaves are presented as happy and joyful, temporarily freed from work and punishment: “At this Season the crack of the inhuman whip must not be heard, and for some days, it is an universal Jubilee; nothing but joy and pleasantry to be seen or heard.” However, just as all other instances where slaves seemed to be happy and content, there was the threat of violence in the background: “It is necessary however to keep a lookout during this season of unbounded freedom; and every man on the Island is in arms and patrols go all round the different plantations as well as keep guard in the town.”³⁴ Schaw presents the slaves as embodiments of the beauty and bounty of the island at the same time she naturalized the pervasive violence of plantation culture. The joy and peace described was a tool used to promote and maintain the institution of slavery.

The slaves' Christmas festivities were a tradition among plantation societies to placate slaves and avoid insurrections. During this time, which varied from several days to a week, slaves were allowed to eat, dance, sing, and other merrymaking. David Barry Gaspar, in *Bondmen and Rebels*, argues that the slaves were able to behave during this time in ways “so opposite to ordinary life as to constitute what anthropologists call a rite of reversal – ‘a ritual event in which everyday patterns are turned topsy-turvy.’”³⁵ Both slaves, as well as slave-owners, acknowledged the importance of holidays such as Christmas for temporarily easing the tensions inherent in their every day. Commenting on the use of these holidays by the planters, Frederick Douglass states:

³⁴ Schaw, *Journal*, 107-9.

³⁵ Gaspar, *Bondmen and Rebels a Study of Master-slave Relations in Antigua*, 140.

From what I know of the effect of these holidays upon the slave, I believe them to be among the most effective means in the hands of the slaveholder in keeping down the spirit of insurrection. Were the slaveholders at once to abandon this practice, I have not the slightest doubt it would lead to an immediate insurrection among the slaves. These holidays serve as conductors, or safety-valves, to carry off the rebellious spirit of enslaved humanity.³⁶

Also commenting on slaves' Christmas activities in Antigua, John Luffman in 1787 noted that he had been “entertained very much during the last week [of December] by the Negroes paying their highly absurd compliments of the season to every person from whom they think a trifle can be drawn.” Also noting the importance and necessity of this holiday, he exclaims that slaves are “so careful are they to prevent any encroachment on” their claim to the holidays “that were their owners to give them double the time in lieu thereof, at any other season of the year, they would not accept it.” Luffman cited the example of a slave-owner whose slaves killed him “purely because he obliged them to work on the days appointed for holidays.”³⁷

Fear of slave insurrection was ever-present in plantation culture. Laws concerning slaves often attempted to avoid rebellions. Actual slave revolts were not frequent, but they did happen and often enough to instill an ever-present fear in the planters. Whites knew that slaves overwhelmingly outnumbered them. By the 1780s, the total population of the West Indies was approximately 520,000, including 65,300 whites, 20,000 of mixed race, and 455,000 blacks.³⁸ Not surprisingly, news and rumors of slave insurrections produced anxieties and tensions, often reflected in everyday interactions between slaveowners and slaves. News of the British and French abolition movements, the French Revolution, and other slave insurrections contributed to fueling slaves' longing for freedom, and increasing planters' fears of rebellions.

³⁶ Frederick Douglass, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*, eds. Gerald Fulkerson, John Blassingame, and Peter Hinks (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), 55.

³⁷ Luffman, *A Brief Account*, 116-7.

³⁸ Bohls, "The Aesthetics of Colonialism," 371.

The Haitian Revolution of 1791-1804, for instance, had profound impact on the everyday lives of planters and slaves in the West Indies and the North American colonies. Slaves saw it as an example of self-liberation, which was exactly what the slave-owners feared. Davis argues, “Throughout the Americas planters and government officials learned to live in a state of alert. The very words ‘Santo Domingo’...evoked at least a moment of alarm and terror in the minds of slaveholders throughout the Americas.”³⁹ Jamaica's proximity to Saint Domingue, made white colonists in Jamaica particularly paranoid about slave revolts. Maria Nugent's journal, for example, reveals her anxiety of the possibility of a slave rebellion in Jamaica upon receiving reports of what was occurring in the nearby Saint Domingue. In November 1801, she wrote, “Very much shocked in the evening, by a sad account of the massacre of three hundred and seventy white persons in St. Domingo. How dreadful, and what an example to this island.” Although Nugent was against slavery and slave punishments, she saw the news as “barbarous and strange beyond conception indeed!”⁴⁰ Showing that, like many planters, she was unable to see slave rebellions as a result of the institution’s unfairness. As the slaves in Saint Domingue finally succeed in securing their freedom in 1804, Nugent becomes increasingly nervous about the impact it will have on the slaves in Jamaica. She wrote on March 4, 1804:

Go to bed with a thousand apprehensions, and in low spirits. People here are so very imprudent in their conversation. The splendour of the black chiefs of St. Domingo, their superior strength, their firmness of character, and their living so much longer in these climates, and enjoying so much better health, are the common topics at dinner; and the blackies in attendance so much interested, that they hardly change a plate, or do anything but listen. How very imprudent, and what must it all lead to!

Nugent is disturbed by how her dinner guests were not only positively portraying the black rebels of Saint Domingue, but also doing so in front of her slaves. She furthermore, sees her

³⁹ David Brion Davis, *The Impact of the Haitian Revolution in the Atlantic World*, ed. David Geggus (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2001), 4-5.

⁴⁰ Nugent, *Lady Nugent's Journal*, 40, 179.

slaves' interest as a sign of impending danger. While no major slave rebellion occurred in Jamaica after the Haitian Revolution, Nugent was never able to regain her "spirits" and optimism she had felt before it. When Nugent left Jamaica, two years after, she expressed her relief in doing so given that the "constant anxiety" had worn her out.⁴¹

4.3 Slavery in the North American Colonies

North America in the eighteenth century witnessed an influx of non-English peoples. The three main groups were the Scot-Irish, Germans, and Africans. Africans were the most numerous of the three, specifically in the southern half, composing approximately one-third of the total population. As a result, a chief concern of white colonials was slave control and governance. Slaves codes were developed in attempt to create some form of legal basis to follow and justify the consideration of men and women as property. In Northern colonies the laws concerning slave governance were less detailed than in the South, and they also tended to be less harsh in treatment, although inhumane nonetheless. Regardless of differences in laws between the North and South, all power rested on the white population. Exceptionally clear in the southern colonies, where the slave codes exemplified the unharnessed power that the white population had over blacks. Slaves could not leave a plantation unless they possessed a "ticket" from their overseer or master. White people were authorized to arrest any slave who did not possess one or could give a satisfactory explanation. If slaves were captured or killed in the process, the owner would be compensated from a public treasury. Slaves also could not congregate in large numbers, carry anything that might resemble a weapon, be out after curfew, or strike a white person. White men were usually required to serve in patrols supposed to protect the community at night and on

⁴¹ Nugent, *Lady Nugent's Journal*, 198, 307.

holidays.⁴² These codes revealed the ever-present fear of slave rebellions.

Slaves codes played a vital role in American plantation society. They were intended to confirm the white population's sense of mastery over their slaves. These laws told the slave owner, not the slave, what they were required to do to discipline their slaves. The laws were attempts to enforce slave discipline by making sure owners, individually and collectively, exercised them. They imply that maintenance of slavery depended on mass consent of the white population – an agreement that every slave owner should maintain total control. This does not imply that owners were adverse on following these laws given that the codes also “furnish[ed] indirect justification for the severities of slavery.” A slave owner could be as unmerciful as he or she deemed with full confidence that he “was carrying out an obligation to society—and he had a written law to prove it.” They also provided opportunities for defining the supposed character of the slaves in such a way that the inhumane measures seemed necessary. A prime example is the South Carolina code of 1639 and 1735:

As the said negroes and other slaves brought unto the people of the Province for that purpose, are of barbarous, wild, savage natures, and such as renders them wholly unqualified to be governed by the laws, customs, and practices of this Province; but that it is absolutely necessary, that such other constitutions, laws and orders, should... be made and enacted, for the good regulating and ordering of them, as may restrain the disorders, rapines and inhumanity, to which they are naturally prone and inclined; and may also tend to the safety and security of the people of this Province and their estates.

The laws represented the minority population's desperation to assert full mastery over the majority. In a request to strengthen slaves laws, the governor of Virginia, Alexander Spotswood, in 1710 reminded the Assembly that to maintain full mastery they needed constant vigilance: “Such an Insurrection would surely be attended with Most Dreadfull Consequences so I Think we Cannot be too Early in providing Against it.” He suggested that they could do so “by putting

⁴² Winthrop D. Jordan, *White Over Black: American Attitudes Toward the Negro, 1550-1812* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012), 108.

our Selves in a better posture of Defense and by Making a Law to prevent The Consultations of Those Negros.”⁴³ Thus, the fundamental reason behind these laws was to subject the black population and to deter and avoid any rebellions.

4.4 Slavery and the Narratives: North American Colonies

Fear of slave rebellions and slave violence was a prominent discussion in the narratives by the British travelers visiting the American colonies. Schaw’s account of North America not only describes the developing violence due to the emerging Revolution but also the prominent racial conflicts and the potential of violence between slaves and whites. Unlike her descriptions of Antigua, where if she mentioned slaves at all, were as part of an idealized plantation life, the slaves in the American colonies appear as dangerous and potentially violent. Whereas in Antigua she would describe slaves as “merry,” “joyful,” and “loving,” in America she describes them as “brutal,” “thieves” and a “constant plague.” She also makes clear that whites’ property was not safe given that slaves constantly stole it. As a result, her friend, whom she calls the Gentleman, was unable to have a small plot of land of his own and grow a garden. She explains that it was because he was “in no situation to defend his property his fruit, his vegetables and everything else became the prey of the neighbouring Negroes, who tore up his fences, carried off what they could eat and destroyed the rest.” In her narrative, Schaw did not allow for necessity as the reason behind the slaves thieving. She, instead, followed contemporary pro-slavery arguments that the black slaves in America were better provided for than the poor whites in Britain: “The allowance for a Negro is a quart of Indian corn per day and a little piece of land...they rear hogs and poultry, sow calabashes and are better provided for in everything than the poorer white

⁴³ Jordan, *White Over Black*, 109-111.

people with us.” Despite their allowances, she argued, slaves still “steal whatever they can come at, and even intercept the cows and milk them. They are indeed the constant plague of their tyrants, whose severity or mildness is equally regarded by them in these Matters.”⁴⁴

Alongside thieving, Schaw also portrayed the slaves in America as violent, brutal and dangerous. A notable example is an unusually long and grisly scene where she described her party killing an alligator during an outing. The gruesome nature of the scene is somewhat uncharacteristic of her narrative, and while she said to have not been able to “see this without horror” and felt compassion at the end for the animal, she provided an excessive amount of gory details of how it was killed. It is significant because she made sure to point out that the slaves were the ones killing the animal in such a brutal manner, given that, as she wrote, they were “very dextrous at this work.”⁴⁵

While in America, Schaw's primary worry regarding slaves was that they would rebel due to misunderstandings of the *Proclamation for Suppressing Rebellion and Sedition*, or commonly called the *King's Proclamation* issued on August 23, 1775. The Proclamation was George III's response to the outbreak of armed conflict at Lexington and Concord, Massachusetts, in the spring of 1775. The document declared the American colonies in a state of open rebellion and called the leaders of the revolution “dangerous and ill-designing men.” Men who had forgotten their allegiance to the “Power that has protected and sustained them” and who were “levying war against us.” The king also ordered British officials to “use their utmost endeavours to withstand and suppress such rebellion.”⁴⁶ The document was a sign that the king was not inclined to reconciliation with the colonies, further weakening colonial attachment to the metropole. In her

⁴⁴ Schaw, *Journal*, 166, 177.

⁴⁵ Schaw, *Journal*, 149-51.

⁴⁶ Isaac Kimber, and Edward Kimber, “Proclamation for Suppressing Rebellion and Sedition” *London Magazine, Or, Gentleman's Monthly Intelligencer, 1747-1783* 44 (1775): 435-36.

narrative, Schaw states that many who had not seen such proclamation, claimed that it was “ordering the Tories to murder the Whigs, and promising every Negro that would murder his Master and family that he should have his Master's plantation.” She saw this as a strategy by the revolutionaries to convince others to join their ranks. She warned, however, that such approach might backfire given that slaves would be listening and might be tempted to kill royalists and revolutionists alike: “This last Artifice they may pay for, as the Negroes have got it amongst them and believe it to be true. Tis ten to one they may try the experiment, and in that case friends and foes will be all one.”⁴⁷

Royalists also had previously used racial tactics not only to enlist supporters but to instill fear in the revolutionaries. During the previous year, several governors including North Carolina's Josiah Martin issued proclamations that promised slaves their freedom if they would join the royalist cause and take up arms against the revolutionaries. While the prime motive was to increase their military forces, they also sought to exploit the contemporary fears of slave insurrections in hope to deter more colonials taking up arms. Planters did not receive these proclamations favorably since they did indeed see them as explicit commands for organized slave insurrections. Many, however, used it against the loyalists as propaganda for the revolutionary side, by “calling upon race-conscious American colonists everywhere to fight against the British tyrants and their traitorous black brutes.”⁴⁸ Regardless of their motive, the result of these proclamations was intense fear of slave rebellions by royalists and revolutionists alike. Schaw related how upon visiting a town everybody was consumed with fear of revolt and the slave accompanying her were taken into custody:

I found the whole town in an uproar, and the moment I landed, Mr. Rutherford's negroes

⁴⁷ Schaw, *Journal*, 199.

⁴⁸ Benjamin Quarles, *The Negro in the American Revolution* (Virginia: Omohundro Institute of Early American History and Culture, 1996), 111-133; Kim, "Complicating Complicity/Resistance," 181.

were seized and taken into custody till I was ready to return with them. This apparent insult I resented extremely, till going up to Doctor Cobham's, I found my short prophecy in regard to the Negroes was already fulfilled and that an insurrection was hourly expected.

Schaw eventually justified the colonials' racialized actions given that a group of slaves was allegedly discovered meeting in the woods, “most of them with arms, and a fellow belonging to Doctor Cobham was actually killed.” Both loyalists and revolutionaries were “now united against the common enemies. Every man is in arms and the patrols going thro' all the town, and searching every Negro's house, to see they are all at home by nine at night.”⁴⁹

Driven by fear of the black slave, American rebels and loyalists alike responded by displacing all of their worst fears of safety, revolution, and colonial dissolution “onto the politically expedient figure of the black slave.” Consequently, “the actual enemies were temporarily united by an illusory enemy they both helped to construct.”⁵⁰ Even Schaw participated in a midnight patrol where she “marched off at the head of the party stopping at the different houses in our way to examine if the Negroes were at home.” While she was on patrol, the commander of the party told her that he believed the whole situation was made up. A “trick,” he argued, intended “to inflame the minds of the populace, and ... to get those who had not before taken up arms to do it now and form an association for the safety of the town.” She also found out that the murdered slave was not a conspirator. Instead, that it was well known that he met with a female slave in the neighboring woods, who since she was “being kept by her Master, was forced to carry on the intrigue with her black lover with great secrecy, which was the reason the fellow was so anxious to conceal himself.” Further, indicating that the whole conspiracy might be false, the commander told her “the very man who shot him knew this, and had watched

⁴⁹ Schaw, *Journal*, 201.

⁵⁰ Kim, “Complicating “Complicity/Resistance,” 181.

him.” Schaw then lost her fervor for the patrol and lamented how “poor Cobham had lost a valuable slave, and the poor fellow his life without the least reason.” Schaw's comment of when she met that night with Mrs. Cobham, a native of the province, further reveals the strength behind using slaves for political agendas. According to Schaw, Mrs. Cobham was “so much affected by the fate of her Negro, that she is almost as great a Tory as her husband, which was not lately the case.” Laments aside, Schaw still ended the account by stating, “my hypothesis is however that the Negroes will revolt.”⁵¹

4.5 Women and Slaves

Traditional notions of white women living in the colonies have been that they tended to ameliorate the cruelties of slavery.⁵² While the men were the slave-owners, women were the victims of a “male-centered colonization mission.” In 1797, Moreau de Saint Mery, discussing the French colony of St. Domingue, noted that women due to social pressure were forced to support the institution of slavery by having to manage plantations and maintain the white hierarchy. Therefore, white women's role in the colonies appeared to be as simply mothers and wives. While, as loyal wives and mothers, they were still securing the white colonial project, narratives show that they also engaged in the slavery system autonomously and actively.⁵³

⁵¹ Schaw, *Journal*, 201.

⁵² See for example Joan Gunderson, “The Double Bonds of Race and Sex: Black and White Women in a Colonial Virginia Parish,” *Journal of Southern History*, 52 (1986): 351-72; Barbara Bush, “White ‘Ladies,’ Coloured ‘Favourites’ and Black ‘Wenches’: Some Considerations on Sex, Race and Class Factors in Social Relations in White Creole Society in the British Caribbean,” *Slavery and Abolition*, 2 (1981): 245-62.

⁵³ Hilary Beckles, “White Women and Slavery in the Caribbean,” *History Workshop*, 37 (1993): 66-82. 67-8.

It is important to consider that colonial patriarchy did attempt to insulate white women of all classes from the aesthetically roughest aspects of slavery. Legislations and social customs served as parameters to “shield” women. For instance, planters refused to hire working-class white women as field laborers, but had no qualms using black women for the work. Furthermore, children of a white woman and an enslaved black male were born free, unlike those of black female slaves. This prevented the children of white women from being considered property. Both woman and child, however, would experience social derision, and the slave would suffer severe corporal punishment. While boundaries did exist limiting women's participation within slavery, the “victim approach” Moreau de Saint Mery implies distorts the actual role women had in the shaping of the economic and social relations in the colonies.⁵⁴

White males were only the predominant slave owners in the plantation sector, women, instead, were the main slave owners in the urban areas. Women also purchased more female slaves than male slaves to work on their property. In urban areas, white women also sexually exploited their female slaves for a fee. Urban mistresses would discreetly advertise their female slaves as sexual companions for men and would gravely punish the women if they did not come back with the full fee. In rural sectors, women enforced the white hierarchy just as the men did, punishing slaves when they deemed necessary. As a result of women's compliance with slavery, travelers expressed worry about the effects slavery would have on women's “delicate and refined feelings.” For instance, F.W. Bayley in 1833 during his four years' stay in the West Indies witnessed a bloody scene between a slave and a white woman, where he noticed that some other women were watching with indifference. He then expressed concern about the damage slavery was causing not only on black people but also on white, especially women:

I will ask them whether it would be proper for their wives and daughters to witness such

⁵⁴ Beckles, “White Women and Slavery in the Caribbean,” 68.

a spectacle? I will ask them whether the mind of a female, with only a common sense of decency, would not be shocked at such a scene? A woman of delicate and refined feelings would shudder at the bare idea; ask them what is of yet more importance, whether it be right, for children, for infant minds that require to be formed and moulded by good precept and example, to be rendered callous to scenes of cruelty, and void of pity or compassion.⁵⁵

Another observation made by British travelers was that Creole domestic life involved an inappropriate intimacy of white women with black slave attendants. Authors, like Long, for instance, feared that a result of this interaction was that white women were adopting Black practices. Upset by what he perceived was a cultural deterioration, he wrote:

Those, who have been bred up entirely in the sequestered country parts, and had no opportunity of forming themselves either by example or tuition, are truly to be pitied. We may see, in some of these places, a very fine young woman awkwardly dangling her arms, with the air of a Negro servant, lolling almost the whole day upon beds or settees, her head muffled up with two or three handkerchiefs, her dress loose, and without stays. At noon, we find her employed in gobbling. pepper-pot, seated on the floor, with her sable hand-maids around her.⁵⁶

The author of the *A Short Journey* described a very similar scene as the one Long depicted. During a regular visit to Prospect Penn, he was invited to join the women in their room. Once there, he found that all the women, both white and black, were “lolling” in loose nightgowns while the children were “sprawling on mattresses thrown on the floor.” The mistress of the house had “a very large china bowl between her knees, as she sat cross-legged upon the bed ... while she was spooning this out others were opening the black crabs to find those fullest of yellow fat and red eggs.” Further, exemplifying Creole cultural influences on the women and children, during an interaction with one of the white children in the room it is clear in the child’s speech the influences of cross-cultural exchanges:

⁵⁵ F.W. Bayley, *Four Years' Residence in the West Indies: During the Years 1826, 7, 8, and 9* (London, 1833), 197.

⁵⁶ Long, *History*, 279.

There was a little urchin, about seven years old, who constantly stunned my ears with “*me wantee crab, me wantee crab.*” To stop his noise I took up the first crab that came into my hand and gave it to him, but he immediately examined it and finding it had no eggs he roared out: “*him no hab eggs, him blue maugre to hell, me no wantee man crab, me wantee woman crab!*”... I would have taught the little scoundrel better manners, but his mother called him to her, kissed him a dozen times, and picked him out the best *woman crab*.⁵⁷

The author does not voice any negative opinion on the women’s behavior, except when it concerned the child’s discipline, yet it is perceivable how the women’s behavior was a product of cross-cultural influences between white women and their black attendants. Behaviors that most British visitors would have considered inappropriate.

Also discussing the influence of slaves on Creole women’s speech, Maria Nugent expressed her frustration upon meeting a group of white women: “never was there any thing so completely stupid. All I could get out of them was, ‘Yes, ma'am — no, ma'am,’ with now and then a simper or a giggle.” Of another woman she met she reported: “Mrs. C is a perfect Creole, says little, and drawls out that little, and has not an idea beyond her own Penn.” It is clear that Nugent found many Creole women to be lacking in her standards of white femininity and domesticity, implying like Long that they are culturally inferior to their British counterpart.⁵⁸

Thus from the narrative, white women as slave owners emerge as pro-slavery, autonomous, and who often adopted black behaviors and mannerism. While they were still assigned the role of “matrons of the slavery culture,” it is clear that they were also “active participants in their own right in the socio-economic accumulations that slavery made possible.” They contributed to the development of colonial society and economy, both as wives to plantation owners, but also as owners in their own right. As Beckles argues, “Their participation in the consolidation and defense of the slave system, then, cannot be explained solely in terms of

⁵⁷ Anonymous, *A Short Journey*, 34-37.

⁵⁸ Nugent, *Lady Nugent's Journal*, 76, 52.

their dependent status – social and economic victims of patriarchy.”⁵⁹ Instead, focus should be on their autonomy and active participation in colonial society and the institution of slavery.

The transition of the British West Indies in the 1640’s to a sugar monoculture solely based on African slave labor determined the islands’ social structure and racial composition.⁶⁰ Schaw, through her picturesque representations of plantation society, represents such society as an ideal balance between black and white, where most slaves labored under generous and benevolent masters. Schaw’s writings, as well as other pro-slavery eighteenth-century accounts of the West Indies, collaborate with current discourses of racial inferiority to legitimize as well as render appealing the “relations of power, violence, and brutality” that characterized plantation society.⁶¹ During the period of the Abolition movement, everything changed dramatically in the West Indies, though. Despite of the loss of the American Colonies, Britain was successfully expanding both economically and in size. Slaveholders did not experience such growth, however. They experienced a decline in political and social influence. Furthermore, by the 1820s the economy of sugar colonies entered in a period of pronounced economic decline. As Catherine Hall noted, Jamaica always stands out in the discussion of slavery because it was there that the English first debated “the African, slavery, and anti-slavery, emancipation and the meanings of freedom.”⁶² Whereas Jamaica was once considered the “jewel in the crown of the empire,” now the British associated it with “irreligion, sin, and slavery.”⁶³ Jamaica, as well as the other sugar colonies in the West Indies, gradually ceased to be a land of opportunity for white slaveholders on the make. Travel narratives written later in the century depict this gradual change in attitude.

⁵⁹ Beckles, “White Women and Slavery in the Caribbean,” 80-81.

⁶⁰ Petley, *Slaveholders in Jamaica*, 4

⁶¹ Bohls, “The Aesthetics of Colonialism,” 390.

⁶² Catherine Hall, *Civilizing Subjects: Metropole and Colony in the English Imagination, 1830-1867* (Oxford: Polity, 2002), 11.

⁶³ Petley, *Slaveholders in Jamaica*, 4.

Whereas Schaw described the islands' slaveholders as idyllic men and women and as benevolent masters, later narratives notice their cruel treatment of slaves. The authors of these later narratives are also not reluctant to express sympathy for these slaves as well as their disdain for the institution. As Pratt argues: "Important historical transitions alter the way people write, because they alter peoples experiences and the way people imagine, feel and think about the world they live in."⁶⁴ Thus, while consumption and adoption of British customs and goods were able to positively influence the authors' opinions of the Creoles, when it came to slavery, during the era of Abolition, such adoption and consumption were not enough to completely deter how they were seen and judged.

⁶⁴ Pratt, *Imperial Eyes*, 4.

CONCLUSION

And now, my friend, adieu to our epistolary correspondence, which I hope ends here, as I sincerely hope we may never be again as long parted, and that our travels shall mutually serve to amuse our winter evenings, when we shall travel them over again in the friendly circle of a cheerful hearth ... I will positively say Adieu, Adieu.³⁸⁸

Schaw's farewell, like in all the other narratives, expressed a desire to be home once again and relive her experiences among a circle of friends. This aspiration to relive their experiences once home and for others who had not taken the journey to experience them as well was the whole purpose of writing travel accounts. All the authors expressed their anticipation to be home again and to discuss what they experienced. This attitude also reveals why the study of travel narratives is important. By doing so, it is not only possible to experience what the traveler did, but to see how they analyzed and expressed these events to those back home. Through their accounts, we were able to see more of eighteenth-century British ways of thinking about race, belonging, national identity, and consanguinity, than about the various peoples and cultures the authors sought to describe.

The narratives reveal that consumerism was the quickest way to generate a commonality among colonial subjects and achieve British civility despite racial and national differences. Consumption of British goods was a critical factor in the Creoles' identity formation as well as on the authors' perceptions of them. Clothing was one of these goods that Britons associated with issues of race, imperial politics, gender, and economics. Creoles' high regard for British fashions, despite its impracticality, deemed a positive reception from visitors, specifically Schaw who had elatedly exclaimed: "They

³⁸⁸ Schaw, *Journal*, 253-4.

have the fashions every six weeks from London, and London itself cannot boast of more elegant shops than you meet with at St. John's!"³⁸⁹ Showing that as Wheeler argues, "A shared material culture facilitated social solidarity and the cohesion of the empire."³⁹⁰

Food was another critical feature in the comparison framework visible in the narratives. While some dishes, like beef and butter, were considered to be second-rate in comparison to British cookery, for the most part, food was an area where the authors believed West Indians food practices adequately emulated and even surpassed British cuisine. This verdict is particularly relevant considering the power relations between colony and metropole because it showed that the authors were not just choosing all things British, but were open to admit when West Indian customs surpassed their own.

Food also allowed for Creole identity formation. The ostentatious food exhibitions and elaborate dinners among Creoles and British travelers were more than mere hospitality. Due to the West Indies status of colonies, Creoles sought the approval of their British visitors because they perceived those born and living in the metropole as superior to them. Hence, they yearned for social identification as well as to display their connection to Britain. The Creoles' extravagant hospitality towards their visitors provided them an opportunity for social and national identification with the metropole, which produced a sense of worth and belonging: "The goal of his behavior will be The Other...for The Other alone can give him worth."³⁹¹

Creoles knew they were observed and assessed according to eighteenth-century British customs and views on national identity. Accordingly, most Creoles modeled themselves according to the customs of their British ancestors. As Petley argues, they

³⁸⁹ Schaw, *Journal*, 115.

³⁹⁰ Wheeler, *Complexion of Race*, 178.

³⁹¹ Frantz Fanon quoted in Kim, "Complicating 'Complicity/Resistance,'" 169.

were “seeking metropolitan acceptance as useful subjects of an extended British world.”³⁹² Creoles adapted some of their practices for colonial living, but when the authors saw these as necessary, they praised the Creoles for their resilience. Travelers only looked down upon Creole adaptations of British values when they saw them as excessive or too much altered. Thus, Creoles tackled beliefs of inferiority by negotiating their placement in the social spectrum given to them by the British. Their self-fashioning as equal members of British society shows their identification with a collective identity and past, which is what forms a national identity. The authors' ability to identify with the West Indians, gave them a sense of community and connection. This identification influenced and reinforced both the authors' national and individual identity, which was a decisive factor that influenced their perception of their experiences, as well as their perception of the people they met.

It was because of this search for a sense of community and connection that the resistance encountered in America profoundly disturbed British visitors, specifically Schaw. As a loyalist, Schaw considered that the revolutionary ideas were nothing but a disease, and she was amazed at the number of people supporting the revolution. Through her depiction of the violence against the loyalists, she challenged any idea of a shared commonality to the rebellious American colonists. It was not just mere xenophobia that drove her assessment of Americans, given that Schaw did not believe that all Americans were guilty or at fault, and even developed high opinions of some. It was their rejections of anything British, particularly planting practices, which made American colonials inferior in her hierarchy regardless of their gender or social class.

The narratives' treatment of slavery and slaves reveal that the British racial

³⁹² Christer Petley, “‘Home’ and ‘this Country,’” 43.

ideology based on the adoption of British customs is only applicable to the white colonial other. Slaves due to their color of their skin and contemporary notions of race did not have the opportunity through consumerism or emulation to “elevate” themselves in the eyes of the visitors as the white Creoles did. Schaw’s writings, as well as other pro-slavery eighteenth-century accounts of the West Indies, follow the current discourses of racial inferiority to legitimize as well as render appealing the “relations of power, violence, and brutality” that characterized plantation society.³⁹³ The narratives also reveal that Creole women were complicit in the formation of empire and in the maintaining of slave plantation societies. European women, often presented as passive participants of colonialism, display in the narratives that while they did focus on the home, they were also active beyond the domestic and did their part to uphold the white patriarchy needed for slave plantations to function. During the abolition movement, however, everything changed dramatically in the West Indies. Slaveholders experienced a decline in political and social influence, and the sugar colonies entered in a period of economic decline. Travel narratives written later in the century depict this gradual change. Whereas earlier in the century slaveholders were portrayed as the epitome of ideal men and women, later narratives in their assessment of white colonials considered their cruel treatment to slaves, as well as the influences of Creole culture on their behavior.

The British Empire was a “generator of ideas about nationality, race, ethnicity, and difference that impacted metropolitan culture and categories of knowledge in profound and quotidian ways,” according to Kathleen Wilson.³⁹⁴ Travel accounts are tools that make it possible to witness this impact as well as the culture-specific

³⁹³ Bohls, “The Aesthetics of Colonialism,” 390.

³⁹⁴ Wilson, *Island Race*, 15.

perceptions and misperceptions that result from travels across the empire. While consumerism or emulation of British practices did not entirely forgo racial, gender, or class differences, they did, however, create another type of hierarchy among British subjects. Insufficient emulation or outright rejection of British customs and commodities resulted in an inferior place for the individuals being observed than that of the individuals living in the metropole or those who did partake in English norms. The British also linked ideas of progress to this hierarchy. In accordance to the comparison framework of “us” and the “other” that emerged in the Scottish Enlightenment, whatever Britons did not consider up to par or better than British ways they considered it backward, as the authors’ discussion of agricultural practices in America reveals. While xenophobia is certainly a factor in the authors’ assessment of the ‘other,’ it is misleading to attribute their perceptions solely to this kind of chauvinism. By late eighteenth century, xenophobic attitudes in Britain had considerably changed for the better, although not entirely eliminated.³⁹⁵ Since any hierarchy is innately prejudicial, what is important to observe is that the eighteenth-century British essentialism was not founded on location, or social class, but on behavior. As Schaw declares, it was not merely due to the “spot of earth” they were born in but in the shared, or possibility of sharing, manners, memories, and connections.³⁹⁶

³⁹⁵ Paul Langford, *Englishness Identified: Manners and Character, 1650-1850* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 224.

³⁹⁶ Schaw, *Journal*, 21.

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