

ABSTRACT

Title of Document: WRITING AT THE EDGE OF THE EMPIRE: THE POETICS
 OF PIRACY IN THE EARLY MODERN ATLANTIC WORLD

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My dissertation examines four pirate-authored texts from the early modern period, each of which centers on the development of piracy in the Atlantic world. Contrary to popular opinion, not all pirates were illiterate thugs. Many wrote about their experiences, and their narratives were immensely popular among early modern readers. I focus on the generic choices pirate-authors made as they crafted their narratives for popular consumption, particularly their use of chivalric romance, which they drew on to present “enchanted” histories of the Atlantic world. By representing themselves as chivalric knights-errant, pirate-authors transformed themselves from thieves to gallant knights, they recast their raids as knightly quests, and they re-imagined their gruesome acts of violence as heroic feats of daring at arms. The romance form thus allowed pirate-authors to create modern spaces of agency within empire that resembled the mythical landscapes of the medieval chivalric tradition. It also allowed them to fashion critiques of empire, which increasingly limited the social mobility of the lower social

strata from which most pirates hailed. Pirates' reflections on the violence of empire offer a disenchanting picture of the development of imperialism during the colonial American period.

My dissertation begins with Sir Walter Raleigh's 1596 *Discovery of Guiana*, which narrates the author's voyage to Guiana simultaneously as a knightly quest for the mythical city of El Dorado *and* as a mercantilist voyage for England. Raleigh was met with severe criticism for his decision to frame the history of his voyage as a romance quest because the notion of the adventure-quest celebrated the freedom of the individual apart from the power of the state. The conflict between the interests of the pirate-as-knight-errant and the aims of the state became even more pronounced during the seventeenth century. I trace the evolution this conflict in three narratives written by Caribbean pirates—also known as buccaneers—during the late seventeenth century: Alexander Oliver Exquemelin's 1678 *Buccaneers of America*, Raveneau de Lussan's 1689 *Journal of a Voyage Made into the South Sea*, and William Dampier's 1697 *New Voyage Round the World*. Whereas Raleigh could envision his adventure-quest as part of a larger narrative of English imperial expansion, buccaneer authors understood piracy as a utopian escape from the hegemony of empire. For Exquemelin and de Lussan, piracy represents an alternative to their lives as servants. The chivalric ethos that Exquemelin and de Lussan projected onto pirate society allows them to level a devastating critique of the debasing nature of empire. For Dampier, representing his circumnavigation of the globe as the adventure-quest of a troupe of knights-errant allows him to imagine a global space in which pirates could create a society completely free from constraints of imperial governance.

Ultimately, my dissertation demonstrates that the most unlikely band of literati in the Atlantic world made significant contributions to the development of American literary forms. By adopting the Old World form of the chivalric romance to New World contexts, pirate-authors created spaces of individual agency at the edge of the imperial domain, which allowed them to offer sharp critiques of the systems of exploitation and subjugation that structured imperial culture. The narratives I treat here reveal that the history of early America cannot simply be told as the history of states and empires. Rather, my research shows that early American scholars must broaden their disciplinary horizons to include the literary contributions of trans-national, trans-Atlantic subjects whose lives at the edge of empire allowed them to pursue lives of political transgression and fashion narratives that challenged progressivist narratives of imperial history.

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EARLY MODERN ATLANTIC WORLD

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Introduction

Early modern maritime literature, while popular among late-sixteenth and seventeenth century readers, has nevertheless failed to receive adequate attention from literary historians of early America, historians of colonial America, and historians of the Atlantic world. The trend of scholarly neglect of the social and cultural history of the early modern maritime world is a long one.¹ Thanks to the pioneering social history of maritime cultures produced by Marcus Rediker, this trend is changing and scholars are looking with increasing interest toward the Atlantic world for new archives capable of enriching our understanding of the generic forms used to make the New World intelligible in the colonial American period. By drawing attention to the harsh conditions most mariners faced while working in the merchant marine and the royal navy, Rediker has shown that the maritime sphere was defined by the same kinds of social conflicts between the ruling and the laboring classes that wracked landed society. As Rediker demonstrates in *Villains of All Nations: Atlantic Pirates in the Golden Age*, pirates did not buck authority with the kind of cheeky irreverence that one finds in Johnny Depp's *Pirates of the Caribbean*. Rather, the choice to become a pirate was a very serious act of political rebellion against the twin terrors that haunted the typical maritime worker: the increasing power of the state to force its lower-classes into oppressive labor systems, and the nearly unchecked power of ships' captains to subject their workers to physical abuse for even the slightest infractions. Rediker's emphasis on the connections between shipboard life and the larger processes of state formation, imperial expansion, and economic development, has energized historians by encouraging them to look to the world of Atlantic piracy as a site of critical inquiry.²

Literary historians have responded positively, albeit slowly, to the insights that Rediker has offered about the importance of maritime culture to the study of the early modern period. Claire Jowitt has recently shown that the term “piracy” and the figure of the pirate served important rhetorical and political functions in Elizabethan and Jacobean England. Jowitt articulates a “semantics of piracy” that runs from Sydney to Marlowe, Shakespeare, Wroth, Barclay, and a host of popular pamphlets and ballads, noting that the figure of the pirate played a central role in the political debates of the day, acting at times as an emblem for social change and at others as a figure for social conservatism (1). Richard Frohock has also noted the importance of piracy as a cultural signifier in the eighteenth century by drawing attention to Defoe’s and Swift’s arguments that British imperialism was simply piracy on a grand scale with more institutional backing than individual bands of pirates typically received (*Heroes of Empire* 122, 151).

These analyses of literary representations of piracy in the early modern period clearly identify a need for further investigation of piracy as a literary trope, but they leave open an important question that I want to pursue here: if literature about pirates does important cultural work, what then do we make of the literature that pirates themselves wrote? I argue that early modern pirate literature is connected by a common poetics—a set of shared commitments to particular literary forms that pirate-authors drew from to mediate their shifting relationships to Western Europe’s imperial states. Within the larger corpus of pirate-authored texts, the works of Sir Walter Raleigh, Alexander Oliver Exquemelin, Raveneau de Lussan, and William Dampier, which I consider here, serve as representative examples of the ways pirates acted not only as important political and

economic figures, but also as key contributors to the cultural discourse about empire and the colonial process.³

I am particularly interested in the ways these authors merge the generic codes of the medieval and early Renaissance chivalric romance with the more “modern” empirical epistemology that took hold throughout Western Europe during the seventeenth century. As historians of science Barbara J. Shapiro and Steven Shapin have shown, the scientific revolution that took place during the seventeenth century had a tremendous impact on early modern thinking.⁴ Francis Bacon’s programmatic statement that modern knowledge must proceed not from the musty volumes of the ancients, but from hard facts derived from direct observation, catalyzed what Michel de Certeau has called a “global reclassification” of nature in empirical terms (61). This reclassification was championed by professional bodies such as the Royal Society in England, whose mission was to create a new body of scientific literature that moved away from the rhetorical flourish and fancy that characterized the narratives of Marco Polo and John Mandeville toward a plain-spoken narrative form based on “real,” hard data. Literary historians have also noted that this epistemological shift away from classical models to modern ones manifested itself in an explosion of natural historical literature, which prioritized observation of the tangible realities of the New World over ancient geographical theories.⁵

Pirate-authors envisioned themselves simultaneously as early modern men of science and as modern knights-errant of an oceanic order. Pirate-authors deployed the pre-modern codes of the chivalric romance alongside the codes of modern scientific literature to create a hybrid generic form that allowed them to imagine themselves

alternatively as rebels against empire and as agents of empire, depending on the circumstances. When writing as natural historians, pirates could act as imperial functionaries by gathering new and useful knowledge about the Americas. When writing about their adventures as romance quests, pirates could act as heroic individuals living beyond the reach of the state.

The juxtaposition of these literary forms in pirates' texts creates interpretive problems because the romance tradition and the discourse of natural history entail radically different politics, and thus create contradictory narratives of pirates' relationships to empire. The romance values freedom of movement, martial heroism, and social reform through the performance of chivalric virtue. Natural history, by contrast, is part of a larger set of discourses that Western European empires used to justify their westward expansion. As a part of the broader cultural discourse on Enlightenment philosophy, politics, and science, natural history implicates the observer in the imperial project, creating by definition a fundamental commitment to the corporate interests of the state over the interests of the individual. The question for scholars of pirate narratives is what to do with the presence of the conflicting codes of romance and natural history and their attendant implications for the individual's relationship to empire.

The tradition in scholarship on pirate narratives has been to emphasize their contributions to natural history, which illuminates pirates' contribution to the scientific conquest of the Americas while also providing evidence of the hegemony of literary realism in the late-seventeenth century. I argue, however, that the strong presence of romance themes in pirate-authored text forces scholars to re-examine the literary value of such texts, which appeal simultaneously to two very different ways of representing their

authors' experiences in the Atlantic world. Rather than marginalizing the role of romance themes and tropes in pirate narratives, as pirate scholars have tended to do, I argue that the romance was as compelling a mode of mediating the "real" as were empirically-based scientific narrative forms. By placing role of romance in pirate narratives at the center of literary historical debates about the rise of modern narrative, I demonstrate that the ascendancy of literary realism during the seventeenth century was a highly contested and complex event in which the truth of history took different narrative forms depending on the author's position relative to empire.

I have chosen to focus my study on four major pirate-authored texts from the early modern Atlantic world: Sir Walter Raleigh's *Discoverie of Guiana* (1596), Alexander Oliver Exquemelin's *Buccaneers of America* (1678), Raveneau de Lussan's *Journal of a Voyage into the South Sea* (1689), and William Dampier's *New Voyage Round the World* (1697). I use a case-study model, devoting a chapter to each of these core texts. This model allows me to examine the unique choices that each author makes about the generic form of his text, while also respecting the unique sociopolitical position from which each author writes. As my chapters will show, each author envisions the figure of the pirate in a different way, and each articulates the relationship between piracy and empire in distinctive ways. Raleigh, for example, sees piracy as an extension of state interests, while buccaneer authors tend to represent the relationship between piracy and the state in oppositional terms. Given these differences, I believe that the case-study model offers the clearest view of the development of the romance form within individual pirate narratives. Such a model also makes visible the genealogical connections between the texts I consider here, which I argue articulate a trans-national, trans-hemispheric,

trans-historical poetics of piracy that emphasizes pirates' literary responses to the politics of empire.

I begin my study with Raleigh's *Discoverie*, which chronicles Raleigh's first trip to Guiana in search of the legendary golden kingdom of El Dorado. In the *Discoverie*, Raleigh imagines his quest for wealth and fame as a would-be conqueror of El Dorado as an extension of England's geopolitical interests. Prominent English ideologues like Robert Cecil and Richard Hakluyt, however, increasingly viewed adventurers like Raleigh as impediments to the development of stable and sustainable trans-Atlantic trade networks because they tended to place the desire for personal recognition over state interests.

In subsequent chapters, I turn toward the buccaneer narratives of the late seventeenth century. Each of these texts develops theme of the incompatibility of the values of the pirate-as-romance adventurer and the corporate interests of imperial states that we see emerging in Raleigh's *Discoverie*. Exquemelin's *Buccaneers*, de Lussan's *Journal*, and Dampier's *New Voyage* all illustrate the process by which pirates began to understand themselves as rebels against imperial hegemony, as well as the process by which they began to use narrative as a platform for exposing the evils of empire.

Exquemelin articulates his stance on imperial politics by contrasting his experiences as an indentured servant in the French West Indies with his experience as a barber-surgeon among the buccaneers. His experience of abuse and debasement as a bondsman exposes the brutality of imperial labor systems. By contrast, Exquemelin offers a utopian vision of pirate society in which disenfranchised subjects of empire can recreate themselves as gallant adventurers. De Lussan also served as a bondsman in the

French West Indies, and like Exquemelin, the account he offers of his suffering at the hands of abusive masters serves as a platform for a critique of a labor system defined by a level of cruelty that defies rationality. The *Journal* differs from *Buccaneers*, however, in that de Lussan projects a much more active persona in his account of his travels among the buccaneers than Exquemelin does. He frames his adventure-quest in the Americas as an extension of the martial ethos he cultivated as a young soldier in France, and in so doing, he represents piracy as a space of heroic agency within which downtrodden servants of empire can redeem themselves. In the *New Voyage*, Dampier begins from a space of social enfranchisement, unlike Exquemelin and de Lussan. During his circumnavigation of the globe in search of new trade markets for England, Dampier positions himself as an agent of empire whose primary interests are in recording natural historical observations for submission to the Royal Society of London, and in strengthening England's mercantilist economy. Once beyond the reach of imperial governance, however, Dampier explores the possibility of creating a pirate utopia in the South Sea that could exist alongside empire without being beholden to it.

In order to appreciate the importance of pirates' decisions to use the romance as a structuring device in their narratives, we must first understand pirates' interest in the discourse of natural history in conjunction with the interest among contemporary literary critics in highlighting the contributions pirates made to the development of scientific knowledge. For pirates, facility with the discourse of natural history implied a level of intelligence not typically accorded to maritime workers. For literary critics, drawing attention to the body of scientific knowledge found in pirate literature offers a fresh view into the intellectual lives of a purportedly anti-intellectual community. The critical

tendency to privilege the history of rise of mimetic narrative during the seventeenth century over more “literary” discourses like the romance, however, obscures the emergence of the romance as an American genre through which pirates fashioned powerful counter-histories of empire.

The New Sciences and the Romance Form in Early Modern Pirate Narratives

Pirates traveled far and wide during the seventeenth century, chasing Spanish galleons, plundering towns and cities along the Spanish Main, and running contraband trade with Spanish and English colonists. They also made extensive notes about the natural products in the areas they visited, perhaps in hopes of achieving a degree of literary fame, or perhaps as a defense of their usefulness to European sovereigns who might otherwise criminalize them for their depredations. In her analysis of William Dampier’s journals, Anna Neill argues that pirates frequently positioned themselves as natural historians in order to minimize the barbarity of their own actions and align themselves with civil society. As self-fashioned men of science, pirate-authors attempted to assert a measure of control over an otherwise chaotic world in which their own relationships to empire and the colonial project were constantly in flux. Compiling observations about flora, fauna, and native cultures allowed pirates like Dampier to remake themselves as civilized subjects through a juridical transformation of their fluid world into a “stable zone of scientific observation, where the boundaries between the ethnographic observer and his object of study are firmly drawn” (166). Richard Frohock has made a similar argument about the role of science in Exquemelin’s *Buccaneers*, suggesting that Exquemelin’s numerous observations about Caribbean natural history and his generally detached, factual style of reportage reveal his desire to establish himself as a

man of science who just happens to be stuck in the company of a profligate and incorrigible band of buccaneers (“Exquemelin’s *Buccaneers*” 62-63).

Pirate-authored texts are replete with the kinds of scientific observations that Neill and Frohock identify, and their authors often wrote in the detached, objective style favored by the lettered scientific elite of their day. Though his narrative predates the rise of the Baconian New Sciences, Raleigh plays to the emerging concerns over the factuality of travelers’ tales by relating his extensive ethnological observations about the natives of Guiana. Raleigh also shows himself to be keenly interested in the natural history of the region by focusing on the ways its most abundant natural product, gold, could be excavated and used to bolster a struggling English economy. As an indentured servant, Exquemelin was not in the same position as Raleigh to offer himself as an aristocratic agent for empire, but his notes about the merchantable commodities in the Caribbean are very much in the spirit of scientific advancement. Perhaps more than any of the pirate-authors I treat here, Dampier envisions himself as a philosophical traveler, an emissary of the Royal Society whose piratical activity was incidental to his more pressing concern with appearing competent in the eyes of the Society’s fellows.

We are not accustomed to thinking of pirates in such sophisticated terms, as most pirates likely did not keep detailed travel logs, and most certainly did not have their journals published and translated into multiple languages. There is thus a certain allure to interpretations of pirate-authored texts that foreground their authors’ modernity and commitment to literary realism. After all, the notion that pirates could also be men of science is a significant critical advancement beyond the popular conception that pirates were generally not smart individuals, and were certainly not engaged in the pressing

intellectual debates of their day. As keen and useful as the readings of scholars like Neill and Frohock have been for understanding the intellectual contributions of pirates to the development of the New Sciences, we would only be telling half the story about pirate-authors' literary import should we stop there, for pirate-authors also made significant contributions to the literary history of the romance form and the Spanish Baroque in the New World.

The utility of the romance as a hermeneutics of New World experience dates back to the era of Spanish exploration and conquest. Spanish conquistadors were avid readers of chivalric romances, which exercised a powerful influence over their imaginations. As Irving Leonard puts it, the Spanish imagination was “flamed into a passion for adventure, for discovery,” fueled in part by the fantastic tales of knightly adventure that populated the chivalric romance (8-11). The romance tradition presented a “highly imaginative, idealized concept of life in which strength, virtue, and passion were all of a transcendent and unnatural character” (13). Spanish adventurers searched earnestly for fountains of youth, Amazons, golden cities and other stock figures of the romance genre. As Barbara Fuchs has argued, conquistadors' use of romance tropes in their narratives allowed them to “digest the strangeness of their surroundings and insert themselves into a triumphalist fiction, one borne out not by the attainment of ever-elusive mythical goals, but rather by the astonishing conquest and destruction wrought upon native civilizations across America” (19). The projection of the world of romance onto the landscape of the New World thus offered adventurers a way of ordering an otherwise disorderly life marred by violence and marked by repeated failures to attain the object of their desires.

Pirate-authors drew on the same tropes for similar reasons as they took to the high seas in search of adventure and fame. For aristocratic figures like Raleigh, the generic codes of the romance tradition made it possible to imagine his journey to Guiana simultaneously as a mercantilist venture and as a personal adventure-quest for El Dorado in which he appeared as gallant conqueror of foreign lands. For those of lower social status than a courtly figure like Raleigh, the romance tradition created an imaginative space in which they could overcome the circumstances of their birth and social standing through acts of individual heroism.

By compiling accounts of their conquests of cities, towns, and their capture of Spanish ships, pirate-authors offered proof to their readers and to themselves that they were not petty thieves, but rather were modern incarnations of heroes of a bygone age. Erich Auerbach has argued that the romance as a genre exists only to prove the knight-errant's virtue in love and at arms through a series of graduated tests of election (136). Pirates routinely faced such tests as they imperiled themselves by entering battles in which they were far outnumbered. The frequent relations pirate-authors offer of their victories in battle offer proof of their suitability for the life of errantry. Exquemelin's relation of Henry Morgan's assaults on Portobelo and Panama City, for example, focus initially on Morgan's fearlessness in the face the unforgiving Panamanian terrain and the daunting task of conquering heavily guarded cities with very few men and resources. Morgan's bravado was laudable in its own right, insofar as it testified to his bravery at arms, but even more significant was Morgan's "heroic" conquest of the Panamanian Isthmus, also known as the Isthmus of Darien, which allowed the English to access the Pacific without having to pass the dangerous Straights of Magellan. William Croke, the

first English publisher of *Buccaneers*, picked up on this theme, foregrounding Morgan's role in the narrative as "Our English Jamaican Hero." Tarin de Cussy, acting governor of Saint-Domingue at the time of de Lussan's writing, lavished similar praise on the author for his dauntless courage, calling his trip the "greatest voyage of our age" because of its strategic revelation of the state of affairs in the South Sea. Even the Spanish American poet Juan de Castellanos lauded Francis Drake for his "*gran sagacidad y atrevimiento*" (great wisdom and daring) in his attacks on Spanish settlements and shipping (179).

By drawing attention to the long history of romance themes and tropes in the Americas, and by focusing specifically on pirates' contributions to that history, I aim to enrich the scholarly understanding of the generic complexity of pirate narratives, which drew from the romance tradition to mediate their authors' experiences in battle in ways that the discourse of modern science simply could not do. The complexity of pirates' experiences in the Atlantic world and the shifting roles they played as imperial functionaries and as rebels against empire necessitated a flexible poetics capable of mediating very different forms of subjectivity. On the one hand, pirate-authors were drawn toward the enchanted world of the romance tradition because of its capacity to render violence both intelligible and purposeful by imbuing piracy with the heroic qualities of the famous knights of medieval lore. On the other hand, pirates were drawn toward the "realist" discourse of natural history and the methodology of the New Sciences, which had divested itself of the magical worldview of the romance, because it offered them a way to communicate their intellectual ability and their usefulness to empire. I argue that the cultural significance of pirate narratives cannot be fully appreciated unless one accounts for the odd juxtaposition of these narrative forms,

particularly at a historical moment which scholars have argued is defined by the emergence of realism in the literary domain.

The recent critical tradition of situating pirate narratives within the modern empirical project of the New Sciences overlooks pirates' equally important investment in pre-modern ways of knowing and being in the world. Scholars working on piracy must recognize that pirate-authors told their stories as romances and as scientific expeditions without registering an absolute difference between the two genres. For pirate-authors, the romance form was as legitimate a mode of communicating historical experience as the discourse of modern science, and the use pirates made of romance tropes evinces a literary imagination that is informed by, but not ultimately tied to, the system of global reclassification that transformed the New World into a strictly material space for appropriation by modern states.

Pirate-authors' use of the romance tropes of errantry and the quest allows them to fashion critiques of the imperial states that had subjected them to various degrees of oppression by representing the desire to flee the imperial system as a moral imperative. Pirates' defection from plantations, naval ships, and merchant ships offered a clear and powerful critique of the violence of empire. This critique appears in pirates' narratives through relations of the authors' suffering at the hands of abusive masters and captains, coupled with frequent commentary on the incompetence of the imperial states that sought to subjugate them. Pirate society was an attractive alternative to life in empire. The radical difference between the structure of pirate society and imperial labor systems made it very easy for pirate-authors to represent the life of piracy as remarkably free, egalitarian, and utopian.

The inherent optimism of the romance genre is a projection of the authorial wish to live in a world where no one is ever disillusioned with the state of everyday life or the character of society (Beer 29-30). Romances pursue this fantasy by creating a world that exists for the sole purpose of proving the knight-errant's virtue in love and at arms through a series of tests of election (Auerbach 134-136). While these tests take place in an enchanted world that stands apart from everyday life, they nevertheless express a social conviction that the fallen, war-torn external world can be redeemed by the performance of chivalric virtue. José Antonio Maravall has linked the positive ethical dimension of the romance tradition to counter-imperial discourse by suggesting that the knight's individual actions, whether feats of arms or expressions of virtue in love, stand in fundamental opposition to the aims of the quickly centralizing early modern European state. Maravall offers the following description of the nature of state power:

[The state] wishes there to be no power other than itself, no law or justice other than its own. It imposes a homogeneity in obedience, even though the form of it may not be the same for everybody ... It seeks to eliminate, step by step, privileges and exemptions in an effort to prevent all private activity in the domain of its own functions.

(Utopia 49)

The state thus opposes the knight's freedom of will and usurps his social function of defending the weak and dispensing justice (49-52). The hegemonic power of the state stands in stark opposition to the principles of errantry for several reasons. First, the state seeks to limit the freedom of movement that defines the life of errantry. Second, the state appropriates the chivalric concepts of honor and justice to itself by making them matters

of law. This, in effect, negates the ethical function of the romance hero as the paragon of individual and societal virtue. Third, the state wishes to make the knight obsolete by removing the core of his identity, which lay in his special election to perform feats of daring that lay beyond the reach of average men.

The writers studied here respond negatively to the increasing power of Europe's imperial states by choosing to go "on the account" as pirates because piracy offers a compelling alternative to the disciplinary regimes of imperial states. For a figure like Exquemelin, who entered the Caribbean as an indentured servant and endured a litany of abuses in that capacity, buccaneer society was an escape into a new social order defined by the freedom of the individual's will and by a remarkably egalitarian code of ethics, at least among the buccaneers themselves. While pirates often showed few moral qualms during their raids on towns and ships, they nevertheless constructed for themselves an equitable system for the distribution of spoils whereby every man was compensated according to his function on the ship. Captains were chosen by the community and could be deposed at any time for misconduct, and pirates were free to choose the direction and duration of their voyages democratically.⁶ Their narratives celebrate these freedoms, noting explicitly how they stand apart from the hegemonic rule of the state. Exquemelin, for example, likens his escape to the buccaneer settlement at Tortuga as a moment of spiritual rebirth, calling himself a new Adam. Likewise, de Lussan enters the Caribbean as an indentured servant and suffers terrible abuses at the hands of his master. De Lussan was fortunate to receive a hefty ransom payment from his father, which allowed him to flee the navy and join the buccaneers, whose society he perceived to be built on the

principles of freedom and equality, in stark contrast to the principles that govern the French imperial labor system.

The Ambivalent Romance: Imperial Critique and Utopianism in Pirate Literature

By juxtaposing their experiences in bondage within empire with their experience of radical freedom as seagoing knights, pirates used the romance to critique progressivist narratives of empire. The critical function of romance that pirates deployed against the empires of the early modern period has its genesis in classical literature, beginning with Virgil's *Aeneid*, which celebrates in epic form the birth of the Roman Empire. David Quint contrasts Virgil's imperial epic with the anti-epic romance tradition embodied by Lucan's *Pharsalia*. Quint argues that the medieval romance, from which the pirates I study here draw, belongs to the tradition of Lucan, whose poem tells the history of empire from the perspective of the defeated and displaced. In place of epic heroes, whose travels ultimately beget an imperial tradition, stand the protagonists of medieval romance, who are destined to wander errantly without purpose. Rather than experiencing society as whole and history as coherent, romance protagonists inhabit a world of ruins and broken bodies, one that is "out of joint," one that "cannot be organized by imperial apologists into the plot of destiny," as Quint puts it (147).

The literature of piracy belongs in part to the tradition of romance-as-critique established by Lucan's *Pharsalia*. Pirates often told their stories from the loser's perspective in empire, typically inhabiting the position of the dispossessed within imperial systems that sought to celebrate their advancement in progressivist, epic terms. The use of the romance form to critique empire is especially strong in the buccaneer

narratives of the seventeenth century, but one can see the formation of this critical strain as early as the Elizabethan period.

In Raleigh's case, his romance wanderings were woven into the imperial epic of the English nation, although to a limited degree. Raleigh experienced the limits of his usefulness to empire as a seagoing knight-errant upon his return from his initial voyage to Guiana in 1595. He was received rather coolly by Elizabeth and key members of her court such as Robert Cecil, who would ultimately edit Raleigh's manuscript for publication and excise several passages in which Raleigh represented himself as a romance hero. Raleigh was clearly aware of the conflicts raised by his self-depiction as heroic individual and the corporate interests of the state by the time he wrote the *Discoverie*—he ends the narrative with a plea to Elizabeth, asking her to grant him the opportunity to return on a second voyage to sack and turn over Guiana's "maydenhead" so that he may deliver to her the wealth he promised to bring home from the first voyage. His plea implies a tacit recognition that his conception of himself as an individual romance hero is at odds with the epic of empire that was being weaved by Cecil and others at the time. By the end of his career, Raleigh recognized explicitly that his choice to portray himself as a romance hero was irreconcilable with Cecil's desire to represent him and the rest of England's heroes as tradesmen and planters. In later writings such as "The Lie" and *The History of the World*, Raleigh resolves the tension between romance and empire that emerges in the *Discoverie*, condemning empires generally and England's specifically as deceptive and morally corrupt.

The buccaneer narratives of the seventeenth century communicate an even stronger sense of opposition to imperial states in their narratives than Raleigh does in the

Discoverie. Exquemelin's and de Lussan's narratives, for example, begin with harsh indictments of the system of French indentured servitude that brought France's poor to the Caribbean, promising them a trade and a chance to climb in society by improving their estates and becoming rich. Both authors depict their masters as callous, abusive figures who treat their servants like slaves. Exquemelin and de Lussan challenge progressivist narratives of empire by revealing the corruption inherent in imperial labor practices. Like Raleigh's *Discoverie*, Exquemelin's *Buccaneers* and de Lussan's *Journal* recognize the fundamental conflict between the romance as a means of fashioning a heroic narrative of the self, and the epic desire to subjugate the individual to the rule of empire.

These late-seventeenth century pirate narratives differ from their Elizabethan counterpart in two major respects. First, these narratives begin with the assumption that romance individualism and corporate state interests cannot coexist peacefully. Raleigh assumed that he could merge the romance with the imperial epic successfully and only gradually realized that such a merger was not possible. Later writers were not so optimistic; they saw immediately that the space of agency created by the romance's high valuation of errantry was antithetical to the bureaucratizing drive of the state.

In one sense, then, pirate narratives use the romance form to critique empire by drawing attention to the ways in which empire forecloses upon the freedoms of the individual. There is, however, a second critical function of the romance in pirate narratives. At the same time that pirate-authors used the romance to critique imperial politics, they used it to create a utopian picture of piracy. As communities defined by the principle of freedom, pirate societies stood in natural contrast to the restrictive politics of

empire. Within the social context of piracy, every pirate was his own knight-errant; he could pursue his own adventures as he wished and was allowed to do as he pleased with whatever goods he could pilfer. Because the romance was supple enough to fashion critiques of social structures that displaced the individual and forced him to a life of errantry and to fashion narratives of errantry that had a positive, utopian dimension, it is easy to see why it appealed to pirate-authors as a rhetorical framework for their rather turbulent personal histories.

Northrop Frye identifies this utopian drive as a central function of the romance genre. Commenting on Frye's broad theorization of romance, Jameson identifies romance as a form of "wish fulfillment" driven by a utopian hope that the fallen world of everyday life could be restored to a state of Edenic utopianism. This process is effected by the performance by the true knight's quest to rid the world of evil. Critically, the quest-romance, for Frye takes place in a world apart from ordinary reality, but its real purpose is to address the social problems that fracture society in the "outside" world (qtd. in Jameson 110, Frye, 193).

The basic function of romance, then, is to separate the forces of good from the forces of evil so that the forces of evil can be easily identified and destroyed in order to prepare the way for social reform. Exquemelin, for example, not coincidentally figures his acceptance among the buccaneers by calling himself a new Adam, for he understood that the kinds of adventures the buccaneers pursued were directed expressly at the vast imperial systems of domination that had injured him personally and thousands of other indentured servants, in addition to a large number of slaves and indigenous inhabitants. The buccaneer society at Tortuga was a "transfiguration of the world of everyday life"

because it substituted the daily abuse, or the “old mortality” of the indenture system, for the conditions of a lost, prelapsarian Eden, free from sin and suffering.

By revealing the deep structures of violence that bolster the imperial project, pirate authors challenge the teleological coherence that defines the imperial epic.

Whether told as the history of military heroes, as was the case with Spain during the conquest era and England at the height of Drake’s career, or told as the history of heroic imperialists carrying the banner of the New Sciences, the official history of early modern empires was told as a progressive event, and the insights pirate-authors offer into the inner workings of empire challenge the teleological coherence of dynastic imperial claims at the same time that they call European empires’ sense of ethical progressivism into question.

While we are not accustomed to thinking of pirates as ethical progressivists or social reformers, to a certain degree their decisions to defect from main stream society represents a deep desire to “transfigure” the world of everyday life by living out a modernized form of the chivalric ethos, one in which individual freedom of will and feats of individual daring merited the highest honors. The positive function of romance allowed pirate-authors to fashion coherent narratives of the self-as-hero at the same time that they labeled the empires against which they rebelled as evil. As Fredric Jameson notes, the ability to separate “good” from “evil” is the central function of romance, its basic unit of thought. Jameson calls this distinction the “ideologeme” of the romance form, and while he acknowledges the usefulness of Frye’s reading of romance-as-utopian narrative, Jameson nevertheless argues that separating these basic cosmic forces is much harder in practice than in theory. In its ideal form, the romance works by a positional

understanding of good and evil, where the two categories are fundamentally opposed to one another in an abstract sense (112). Frye's argument about the positional nature of good and evil in romance is true in the main, but the idea that the romance hero is always wholly good and absolutely distinguished from evil is not universally true of the romance tradition, and I would argue that maintaining Frye's positional distinction is doubly hard in pirate narratives, wherein pirates rail against the evils of empire while also torturing and killing innocents. In response to Frye's argument about romance ethics, Jameson argues that actants can never be wholly good or wholly evil, simply because they arise from social situations defined by deep ideological conflict. As far as medieval romance is concerned, for example, Jameson draws attention to the function of the "villain" knight, whose status as insider and outsider to the emerging feudal class renders both his social position and his moral quality ambiguous (118-119).

The problems Jameson notes in maintaining the radical positional distinction between forces of good and forces of evil in traditional romance narratives manifest themselves in pirate-authored texts as well. As often as these narratives herald the bravery of the pirate-as-knight-errant, they also bear witness to a kind and frequency of violence that stretches even the romance's capacity to accommodate endless scenes of battle to its limits. The histories they tell reveal an imperial landscape filled with bloodied and broken bodies, as well as razed towns. The ruined landscapes of pirates' texts are the real consequences of their bravery at arms and their success against impossible odds at taking ships, cities, and towns throughout the Caribbean. The mass of rotting flesh and blood-stained, burnt ground left in the wake of many pirates' raids suggest that these marks of conquest are not testaments to the pirates' heroism, but symbols of a

fundamental barbarity that is indistinguishable in kind from the barbarity of the empires from which pirates fled.

Each of the narratives I consider here evidences this move from an “enchanted” view of piracy as a re-creation of the world of the chivalric romance toward a more “disenchanted” view of pirate life wherein their deeds are not heroic, not ethically progressive, not purposeful in any way, but are rather the base expressions of degenerate thieves.

Pirate Romances and the Atlantic Baroque

As I have shown, the romance form not only structures pirate narratives in important and under-theorized ways broadly speaking; it also performs the specific function of enabling a critique of empire while also endowing pirate society with a romance utopianism. The dialectic of enchantment/disenchantment that pirate-authors use to mediate their complex and shifting relationship to empire, however, is also characterized by fundamental instability. While this dialectic can be constructed in such a way as to preserve the distinction between good and evil as a distinction between empire and piracy, the value structure pirates establish in their narratives also flips at times, bringing the violence of piracy into focus and suggesting parallels with the violence of empire. At these moments, pirate narratives reveal the disenchanting realities of pirate life, slipping from the romance narrative of piracy-as-utopia into a Baroque narrative in which both piracy and empire are defined by institutionalized violence that cannot be masked by progressivist imperial rhetoric or romanticized depictions of piracy.

Each of the texts I consider here problematizes the progressive understanding of romance violence identified by Auerbach by revealing that the base, brutal, and

ultimately irredeemable form of pirates' violence bears a striking resemblance to the violence of empire. In Raleigh's narrative, the moment of revelation comes as the author depicts conquest not as chivalrous, but as rape, asking the queen's permission to turn and sack Guiana's un-breached maidenhead. In Exquemelin's narrative, that moment comes when the author and his crew are left to scramble for food and fight for their survival in a hostile Indian environment after being deserted by Henry Morgan, who decided to make off with the spoils of war after his attacks on Portobelo and Panama City without compensating his crew according to the *chasse partie*. In de Lussan's narrative, the profoundly transformative power that the life of violence can have over an individual manifests itself when the author returns home and is unable to see his own countrymen as anything but enemy Spaniards. Moreover, he cannot sleep because he is haunted by nightmares of the scenes of violence he so eagerly sought out as a young man. Even Dampier's narrative, which is admittedly the least bitter of the four texts that I treat here, nevertheless bears witness to the transformative power of violence on Dampier's character, as he advocates in the end of his narrative for the creation of a piratical state whose reach would extend from the Spice Islands through the Caribbean. For Dampier, the life of piracy momentarily takes such a strong hold on his imagination that he can only see himself as a partial subject of the crown who is defined more by his association with pirates than by his Englishness.

Spanish scholars working on the seventeenth century have used the term "Baroque" to describe the broad cultural sense of disenchantment with empire that structured Spanish political and artistic discourses during the seventeenth century. While the term "Baroque" was originally used as an aesthetic term, Spanish scholars have more

recently argued that the Baroque sense of disillusionment with modernity structures all of seventeenth-century life.⁷ Lois Parkinson Zamora and Monika Kaup have offered a useful list of key Baroque concepts that demonstrate very clearly the nature of Baroque disillusionment with modernity. According to Zamora and Kaup, Baroque subjects are typically skeptical of Enlightenment rationalism, science, and progressivist narratives of history, particularly of imperial history. Baroque literature bears witness to the crisis of modernity, which is defined by the horrifying realization that nothing in this world is secure or certain after the death of reason and faith (5-26). Baroque subjects are thus destined to feel displaced by the turbulent shift in political ideology, economic policy, and literary culture that took place during the seventeenth century. William Childers has added to this list the basic notion that in the Baroque social experience, individuals are stuck at a crossroads marked by the loss of old certitudes, and that Baroque subjects are forced to come to terms with the fact that the heroic ideal of absolute freedom upon which the romance was based will never again materialize (418).

Scholars working on Anglo-American and Anglo-British literatures have generally been hesitant to explore the utility of the concept of the Baroque for their own work, despite the long tradition of Spanish and German analysis of the English Baroque during the seventeenth century. The hesitance of scholars working in English literatures to adopting the concept of the Baroque as an analytical tool can be explained in part by the distinction between the Baroque as a Counter-Reformation movement and the English commitment to Reformation theology, which would naturally divert attention from the genealogical connections between early modern English literature and the Spanish literature of the *siglo de oro*. The lack of scholarly engagement with the Spanish Baroque

by scholars working on English literatures can also be explained in part by the critical divisions that often periodize seventeenth-century English literature—“Elizabethan” literature, the “Metaphysical Poets,” and so on. These labels encourage scholars to pursue connections between these subsets of English literature, but in so doing, the nationalist confines of these labels often discourage scholars from seeking out broader interpretive contexts that might reveal transnational connections such as the ones I am drawing here between the romance and the literatures of piracy, and between the multi-national literatures of piracy and the Spanish Baroque.⁸

With their bitter endings, each of the pirate narratives I consider is thoroughly Baroque. Raleigh’s career ends with a scathing critique in his *History of the World* of earthly empires as rotten things built on lies and violence. Exquemelin’s *Buccaneers* ends with the disenchanting realization that the egalitarian “brotherhood” of pirates often only existed when it was convenient. De Lussan’s disenchantment manifests itself in his inability to internalize the heroic status conferred upon him by statesmen. Far from feeling the hero, de Lussan ends his narrative with a confession of his perpetual haunting by the specters of war.

The author of each of the narratives I discuss begins with a profound experience of disillusionment with the allegedly humanitarian, philosophically and scientifically advanced, and religiously superior state, invests the life of piracy with an “enchanted” romantic vision in which the pirate can become the knight-errant of romance by practicing feats of daring at arms, and ultimately is forced to deal with the disenchanting reality that the life of piracy is built on the same structures of violence as empire itself.

A complete survey of the Baroque expressions in the narratives I examine here is not possible, but I wish to draw out a couple of illustrative scenes that suggest how closely the narratives' romance poetics are tied to Baroque themes. Dampier's *New Voyage* contains an intriguing series of vignettes in which he makes various observations about the Mindanao islands, from their natural products—chiefly cacao—to their geography, their history, and the present state of their political relationships with the Spanish and the Dutch. Dampier's curiosity clearly expresses his desire as an imperial functionary to secure a dependable commercial corridor from the Spice Islands through American waters to England, where East Indian goods could be bought and used, or redistributed for a profit. Once he and his crew had established themselves in the Spice Islands, Dampier entertains the notion that he and his hardy band of pirates are the rightful owners and overseers of the cacao trade. Initially, Dampier views this potential site of economic expansion in nationalist terms, but the independence his band of pirates enjoys from the rule of the state also allows Dampier to imagine the economic corridor his crew had opened between the Spice Islands and the Americas as the financial backbone of a pirate-run society stretching from the East to the West Indies. Dampier's independence from the rule of the state allows him and his crew to imagine themselves as knights-errant in quest of wealth and fame. By the end of the narrative, however, Dampier realizes that the bureaucratic arm of the English empire was extending its reach rather quickly, making it difficult for dissident subjects to create and sustain truly autonomous zones within the imperial nexus. We can see the deep sense of disappointment Dampier feels regarding the state's power to squelch his desire for political autonomy when he realizes that his dreams of a pirate society are ultimately

untenable in the final pages of his journal, where he writes off his desires to run the East-to West-Indies trade as “golden dreams” that can never be realized.

Another brief example of the ways pirate narratives tend to drift from an enchanted view of pirate society toward a disenchanting view of piracy as a social alternative to empire comes from de Lussan’s journal. Near the middle of his narrative, after de Lussan and company have crossed from the Caribbean into the South Sea, the author relates the story of the buccaneers’ assault on a Chilean coastal town. The author notes that the town’s residents had heard about the buccaneers, being forewarned of their brutality and told they both looked and acted like monsters. The buccaneers make a concerted effort to dispel such notions by taking care to remove the prisoners necessary to retain a ransom payment for the town without using undue force. The buccaneers take their captives to the nearby coastal island of La Puna, where they enjoy an idyllic retreat complete with daily music, feasting, and a host of beautiful women who are quite ready to give themselves over to the buccaneers once they become convinced of their captors’ virtue.

De Lussan describes the buccaneers’ retreat at La Puna in the utopian terms associated with the romance tradition, but we quickly learn that the pirate utopia at La Puna is a chimera. De Lussan finds himself a lover on the island—the wife of a newly deceased Spanish accountant—and entertains for a moment the possibility of making a life in the Spanish city with his new wife, working in her dead husband’s old job, but he is quickly reminded that the fact of their union is a result of the violence of conquest. De Lussan concludes that however enjoyable his stay at La Puna was, he could never live peacefully among the Spaniards. Even worse, he realizes that so long as he keeps

company with the buccaneers, he will be unable to live peaceably anywhere. This realization is supremely disenchanting to de Lussan, who is never able to regain the sense of personal heroism that initially propelled him to adventure as a young man. What is left in many of these narratives is a landscape in ruins, strewn with broken bodies and sick minds.

By drawing out the connections between the romance form and the Baroque, I aim here to enrich our understanding of the dynamics of early modern pirate narratives, which drew from an impressive array of narrative resources to help make sense of their highly fluid status as imperial subjects and rebels of empire, enchanted heroes and disenchanted fools. Demonstrating the influence of the Baroque in each of the narratives reveals a literary kind of “entanglement” between Spanish literary traditions and Anglo-British, French, and Dutch authors. As Eliga Gould has recently argued, early Americanist historians need to understand “the linkages that entangled the Atlantic world’s various empires and communities with each other” (15). The same is true for early American literary historians, who have typically avoided seeking out such connections because of the differential chronology of the development of the Spanish empire in the Americas and the belated imperial efforts of England, France, and Holland. Examining these maritime texts, however, shows that pirate-authors were very much entangled in a set of pre-modern and modern discourses from numerous national traditions as they tried to make their histories as Atlantic subjects intelligible.

Future work on early modern pirate literature must take the presence of romance and the Baroque themes in pirate-authored texts seriously and not simply dismiss them as vestiges of deceased literary traditions that obscure the real, positive cultural work that

such texts performed in the development of the New Sciences. Historians have often jettisoned the romance themes in these narratives. C.H. Haring's work is the most influential example of the tendency among historians to dismiss the romance and Baroque poetics I identify here as detritus. More recently, David Cordingly has echoed Haring's criticism of the "sensationalism" of pirate narratives, arguing that their rhetorical adornments detract from their historical value (Haring 277, Cordingly 40). As I have shown above, literary historians have also tended to prioritize the scientific discourse in pirates' narratives over other discourses and themes.

The critical tendency to foreground the "modernity" of early modern pirates' texts by focusing on their contributions to natural history, geography, and trade begs important questions about the "other" halves of these texts, which are filled with riotous scenes of battle and conquest, and grim scenes of torture and death. The codes of the chivalric romance and of seventeenth-century Baroque literature and culture are important to our understanding of the literary dynamics of pirate literature. This recognition has serious consequences for how scholars understand pirates as literary agents and participants in political discourse, but it also has important implications for the ways literary scholars tell the story of the rise of literary realism in the seventeenth century, and from there, the rise of the novel.

The standard metanarrative of the rise of modern narrative in the seventeenth century runs through the works of Auerbach, Ian Watt, and Micheal McKeon. It goes something like this: the empirical turn in the New Sciences and their related literatures facilitated a "literary conquest of reality" by means of a fully "referential use of language" (Watt 31, 32). By using language to refer directly to things, scientific writings

“captured” nature in words. The goal of achieving a perfect reflection of nature in art spilled over into literary discourse, which Watt argues sought to depart from the magical worldview of the “old-fashioned romance” tradition (10). McKeon builds on Watt’s narrative of the seventeenth century as a move away from romance toward literary realism, arguing that the novel could only be born when authors abandoned the literary imagination of the medieval period and adopted a more modern worldview. McKeon dismisses the romance as irrelevant because any individual can write him or herself into its overdetermined plotline of quest-adventure-conquest. It is only the novel, he argues, that can capture real individuals’ experiences of radical mutability in the ever-changing world of state and imperial expansion in absolute and faithful detail (220).

This standard narrative of the rise of literary realism in the early modern period can be maintained only so long as one ignores literary texts like the ones I consider here, which demonstrate that the distinction between the “truth” of the New Sciences and the “lies” of the “old fashioned romance” cannot withstand serious scrutiny. The rise of literary realism in the seventeenth century was a very “real” phenomenon, but the empirical terms upon which its epistemology was built were by no means experienced by early modern subjects everywhere as the sole means of communicating truth generally or of speaking to the needs of the individual specifically.

Pirate communities especially found themselves torn between the emerging and officially sanctioned mode of modern discourse, the natural history, and the heroic discourse of the chivalric romance, which enabled otherwise marginal subjects of empire to create for themselves a space of agency within an increasingly bureaucratized imperial nexus. Scholars working on the rise of the novel must thus contend with the persistent

presence of romance within texts often cited as evidence for the growing dominance of literary realism and thence of the novel. In other words, the history of the novel must be re-written to account for the wide range of literary modes that seventeenth- and eighteenth-century authors used as ways of representing the “real.”

As each of my chapters shows, pirate-authors drew from the codes of romance to tell essential truths about how they understood their relationships to empire, how they understood empire itself, and what they thought could be done to bring what they often saw as a corrupted world into a better state. Even as their narratives turn away from the utopianism of romance toward the darker, disillusioned world of the Baroque, these narratives continue to insist that their romance and Baroque poetics are as fundamentally true as the emergent genre of the true history. The question for scholars of early modern pirate literature specifically, and, in light of this work, of early American literary studies more broadly, is no longer: Why did the seventeenth century give rise to the brand of literary realism that then bequeathed the novel? Rather, the question is: How do we account for persistent presence of the romance and Baroque poetics throughout the seventeenth century, which has been so often heralded as the period in which the romance died and the novel was born? Quite simply, the answer is that we must articulate a more robust notion of literary realism that accounts for the fact that marginal subjects living at the edge of the empire drew from multiple narrative forms to tell the truth about their variegated and highly mutable experiences in the Atlantic World.

Ultimately, my project draws attention to an important but under-theorized corpus of early modern Atlantic pirate narratives, which offer early American literary scholars a unique view of the literary capacity of pirates. Their narratives offered trenchant critiques

of empire, as one would expect, but they also made important contributions to early American literary history. As part natural historians, pirate-authors demonstrated the incredible range of subjects invested in the science of empire. As part chivalric knights in the medieval mode, they challenged the dominance of the Baconian scientific paradigm by revivifying and refashioning the Old World mode of the chivalric romance to New World contexts. As critics of the Atlantic world at large, the authors I treat here create a previously unacknowledged trans-national and trans-hemispheric Atlantic Baroque.

The fluidity that the romance form offered pirates allowed them to shift between the roles of the imperial functionary and the individual adventurer. Making this shift was at times easier and at others harder, depending on the strength of states' imperial bureaucracy. Making this shift was also more desirable at some times than others, depending on the extent to which states deemed pirates' work necessary to their own project of economic expansion. As we shall see in chapter one, which examines Sir Walter Raleigh's *Discoverie of the Large, Rich and Bewtiful Empyre of Guiana*, pirates could work with the state as they pursued their lives of errantry, but this symbiotic relationship grew increasingly tenuous as European empires had begun to develop stable trans-Atlantic economies and no longer needed pirates to make economic inroads. The experience of Baroque disenchantment that defines Raleigh's later years sets the tone for the thoroughly Baroque narratives of empire that I examine in subsequent chapters.

**Chapter One: The Romance of the Self and the Rottenness of Empire in
Sir Walter Raleigh's *Discoverie of Guiana* (1597)**

By the time Sir Walter Raleigh had written his much anticipated but highly controversial narrative of his “discovery” of Guiana and its gold stores, he had earned a strong reputation as a daring military man, a talented author, an indefatigable reader, and a powerful presence in Elizabeth’s court. Raleigh’s illustrious career began in Ireland, where he was called to quell the Desmond rebellion, which he accomplished during the years 1580-1581. He distinguished himself by demonstrating his bravery in the guerilla-style skirmishes that broke out among the rebel factions. It was not just bravery that was on display in Ireland, it was the capacity for ruthless and decisive action that would make him a legendary figure in England and a person of interest at court. He proved himself a competent and trustworthy commander—just the sort that England needed to extend its dominion Europe to America. Raleigh also proved himself a resourceful politician, leaning on his charm to woo Elizabeth and curry her favor. Elizabeth’s grants of Durham Place and the wine patent provided Raleigh with the political and financial resources to carry out his ambitions for establishing colonies in America while also hunting for Spanish gold.

In the years after his ascension at court, Raleigh devoted his attention to his colonization schemes, the first of which was the Virginia venture in 1584. He formulated his colonial plans with a brain trust that included mystic and political theorist John Dee, imperial apologists Richard Hakluyt Sr. and his son, Richard Hakluyt Jr., and mathematician and astronomer Thomas Hariot. Raleigh’s decision to place Richard Grenville in command of the Virginia plantation effort proved disastrous; Grenville

established a small colony at Roanoke before departing on a privateering voyage in the Caribbean. The colony starved and came to a bitter end during Grenville's absence. Raleigh's second attempt at settling a Virginia colony in 1587 also failed because its leaders were more interested in piracy than planting colonies.

Despite the criticism Raleigh received for the failure of his Virginia ventures, Raleigh remained committed to his colonialist vision. Supporters like the younger Hakluyt roundly criticized Raleigh by suggesting that he was more interested in the short-term gains of privateering and piracy than the long-term gains that England stood to receive by settling successful plantations. In the face of the public suspicion that Raleigh was not the right man to lead the American arm of England's colonialist project, he was determined to recapture the queen's favor and to demonstrate that he was still as useful to her as a military leader in America as he was in Ireland. To that end, he proposed a search for the legendary golden city of Manoa in Guiana, where he promised to establish an English colony.

The Guiana venture was an act of quiet desperation for Raleigh. He knew full well that American silver and gold were bankrolling Spain's imperial efforts, and that England stood no chance in the American theater unless it could get its hands on mines of its own. Raleigh had a reputation for reading voluminously about America. Spanish accounts of the exploration of the Orinoco Delta in Guiana had long spoken of a man known as El Dorado, or "The Golden One," and of the golden kingdom over which he presided. If he could gain a foothold in Guiana, Raleigh believed that he could siphon off enough American gold to establish England as a rival superpower to Spain in the Americas.⁹

Given his then tenuous political position, the stakes were high for Raleigh as he undertook his first voyage to Guiana in 1585. From February to September of that year, Raleigh searched tirelessly for El Dorado without success. He interrogated key Spanish officials in the region as well as local chiefs or *caciques*, but found no substantial leads. When he returned to England, he had no silver, no gold, and no secure plans for establishing a colony in Guiana. All he could offer in the way of an apology was the *Discoverie* itself, which mingled excuses for his failures with promises of greater success should he be allowed to conduct a second voyage to Guiana. Throughout the *Discoverie*, Raleigh argues that his inability to locate El Dorado or any other significant source of precious metals is not due to his incompetence as a colonialist. He simply lacked the necessary time and resources to follow the trail of alluvial deposits he claims to have seen everywhere to their original source. Raleigh attempted to assure Elizabeth that he could unearth the veins of silver and gold that produced the deposits he and his men found if he were given enough men to mine the land and maintain a colony capable of defending itself against rival Spaniards and hostile Indians. Although the *Discoverie* made an impassioned case for a more extensive exploration of the region, his plea for additional resources fell on deaf ears; he would not be permitted to make a second voyage until 1616, when James I released him from imprisonment in the Tower of London to search for El Dorado again and redeem his diminished public reputation.

The *Discoverie* in Contemporary Scholarship

The *Discoverie* is arguably Raleigh's most important literary work. While he was respected for his courtly poetry, very little of that was published, and it is the *Discoverie* that testifies most clearly to the obsession with Spanish gold that defined Raleigh's career

as a colonialist. The *Discoverie* is also of central importance to Raleigh studies because it shows most clearly the fateful transition Raleigh experienced from being a promising military and political figure to being a pariah destined to rot in jail and suffer an ignominious death at the hands of James I after the failure of his second failed Guiana venture. The *Discoverie* is thus central to understanding Raleigh's political and literary career. It is also an important text in the history of English imperialism because it articulates for the first time a vision of an English empire built on global financial networks rather than on the fleeting and often miniscule contributions of pirates, privateers, and traders (Whitehead 9). Internationally, the *Discoverie* ignited the dynastic pretensions of France and Germany, whose sovereigns were inspired by the intensity of Raleigh's conviction that inestimable riches lay ripe for the taking. If this were true, all of Western Europe had a chance at competing with Spain for preeminence in the New World.¹⁰

Despite the centrality of the *Discoverie* to Raleigh's political career and his impressive, trans-national literary legacy, the narrative has received surprisingly little treatment from literary historians. Anthropologists such as Whitehead and historians working on British and Iberian colonialism have debated about truth-value of the *Discoverie* at length, as the narrative's place within early modern English historiography and colonial anthropology hinges on the question of its rhetorical construction and mimetic value. Speaking for a wide range of Raleigh scholars, Whitehead expresses his frustration at the seemingly arbitrary blending of plain-spoken historical narrative with sensationalism in the following words: "it is the blending of the empirical and rhetorical which makes texts such as Raleigh's so problemantical" (44). While I do not believe that

literary scholars need to be as preoccupied with mimeticism as Whitehead and other historians and anthropologists are, the general problem to which he points—the narrative’s mixture of the empirically-based methodology of modern historiography with more “literary” or “rhetorical” devices—does pose a salient problem for literary historians. The *Discoverie* is a generic mélange; it is at once part historical narrative, part natural history, part imperial epic, part chivalric romance, and part personal apology. The generic indeterminacy of Raleigh’s text has made it difficult for literary scholars to make sense of it and assess its place in Raleigh’s literary legacy specifically, and colonial American literature more broadly. As a result, the *Discoverie* has “fallen through the cracks” of early modern English literary history, as Benjamin Schmidt has argued.¹¹ What literary historians need is a methodology supple enough to allow these various modes to coexist in their individual complexity while also drawing thematic connections between them.

I argue here that reading the *Discoverie* through the generic lens of the chivalric romance offers a way of thinking about the relationship between historical and literary discourse as co-constitutive rather than mutually exclusive. Raleigh’s rhetorical decisions to represent himself as modern-day incarnation of the medieval knight-errant, and his decision to represent his travels as chivalric quests are, I argue, direct responses to shifts in English imperial ideology in the 1590s. As Raleigh wrote the *Discoverie*, ideas about how best to build an empire were changing rapidly. The notion that an English empire could be built on the backs of heroic adventurers like Drake was being replaced by the notion that the English empire should be built by settlement and trade instead. As David Shields has observed, Drake loomed large as a national hero after his seizure of the

Spanish treasure ship *Nuestra Señora de la Concepción* off the Peruvian coast in 1579. The capture of the *Nuestra Señora* sent Spanish authorities into a panic at the same time that it enlivened the hopes of English adventurers, who sought to enrich themselves and the crown through similar feats of daring (101). By the 1590s, however, English political theorists like Cecil and the Hakluyts had become critical of the long-term utility of the heroic adventurer as the foundation of England's trans-Atlantic empire. While the gains made by pirates such as Drake could be unbelievably large, huge hauls were few and far between and so could not be relied upon to support England's economy. Settlers, planters, and traders were far more useful to the English empire long-term than rogue adventurers were. These figures were the hew "heroes" of empire: they offered a stable geographical foothold in the New World, direct and regular access to valuable commodities that were less labor-intensive to harvest than precious metals, and the ability to sustain reliable trade networks without having to resort to the violence necessitated by the conquest model of empire advocated by Raleigh.¹² Raleigh thus found himself torn between the public persona he had fashioned during his service in Ireland as a martial hero and the emerging view of the English hero as a "mercantile nationalist," in Richard Helgerson's terms.¹³

The biggest challenge Raleigh faced as an author was how best to negotiate his own position within the shifting terrain of English imperial politics during the 1590s. Raleigh responds to this problem by taking on the persona of the medieval knight-errant, whose quests for individual glory and fame were ideally to be interwoven with the state's quest for an economic foothold in the Americas. As a romance hero, Raleigh could pursue his quest for El Dorado while also serving the crown by providing a record of the

political geography and natural history of the places traversed during his travels. The romance framework Raleigh used to write the *Discoverie* thus allowed for the articulation of an intensely personal obsession with Spanish gold that could also function as a contribution to the English imperial project.

The reading I offer here of the *Discoverie* as a romance thus shows that the pesky presence of “rhetorical” figures in the narrative emanate from Raleigh’s desire to create a heroic narrative of the self within a rapidly shifting political terrain that was phasing out heroes such as himself. In addition to answering the questions Whitehead raises about the mimetic value of the text, my argument enriches literary scholars’ understanding of the *Discoverie* by offering the romance as a unifying principle in a narrative that Schmidt rightly notes has confused scholars because of its disjointed literary form. Raleigh’s use of the themes and tropes of the romance do not signify an evasion of historical discourse; rather, his invocation of the individualist model of romance heroism is precisely an attempt to articulate the experience of life at the edge of empire, where subjects move fluidly into and out of the imperial domain.

While literary studies of the *Discoverie* are scant, there has been some engagement with the text by New Historicists such as Stephen Greenblatt and Louis Montrose. In *Sir Walter Raleigh: A Renaissance Man and His Roles*, Greenblatt argues that the *Discoverie* stands on the positive side of the dialectic between optimism and disappointment with English politics that defined Raleigh’s career. He assesses the narrative’s place in Raleigh’s political and literary career in dramatic terms, calling the *Discoverie* a “theatrical gesture calculated to dazzle the queen and win a return of her favor” while also being “the fulfillment of a personal vision” (104).

Greenblatt's reading of the *Discoverie* is essentially topical; the narrative represents one of many positive moments in Raleigh's career, each of which is counter-balanced by moments of disillusionment. Greenblatt correctly identifies the broad movement within Raleigh's literary corpus from enchantment with the English imperial project to disenchantment with the vicissitudes of courtly politics, and he identifies several important moments in the *Discoverie* where the romance poetics that I analyze here become visible. Raleigh's idyllic descriptions of the Guianan landscape, for example, follow the pattern of the pastoral romance. His references to Amazonian women and to Mandeville's *Travels* also belong to the fantastic world of the chivalric romance. The most memorable scene in the text—the one in which Raleigh depicts Guiana as a virgin woman ready to be taken—also appeals to the chivalric ethos as Raleigh proves his restraint in the face of temptation, refusing to rape the land without the queen's permission.

These romance themes identified by Greenblatt are indeed important to understanding the text, but I argue that the text is structured in a more fundamental and less topical way than Greenblatt's reading suggests. Raleigh does in fact appear as a dazzling heroic figure in the text, and he clearly attempts to please his queen, but there are several moments in the *Discoverie* where his desire to assert his individual authority as a conquest figure *a la* the romance's knight-errant complicates strictly nationalist or imperialist readings of the text. Moreover, through a close reading of Raleigh's errant wanderings throughout the Orinoco Delta, I show that the process of disenchantment that ultimately expresses itself in Raleigh's later writings is present already in the *Discoverie*. The presence of the positive function of romance and the nascent sense of disillusionment

that Raleigh would experience as a result of his political failures makes the text an ideal locus for capturing the full complexity of Raleigh's place in England's imperial project, and for understanding the significance of his literary self-fashioning at a moment when the romance was losing its purchase as a compelling narrative of the self.

Montrose has also noted important romance themes in the *Discoverie*, focusing particularly on the gendered language of the text and the theme of courtly love. For Montrose, the *Discoverie* helps bring Guiana into the discursive and imaginative control of the English imperial imagination. He draws attention to several points in the *Discoverie* where Raleigh allegorizes the landscape as feminine, especially the passage noted above where Raleigh represents Guiana as a virgin ready to be penetrated by him and his men at the Queen's order. Such episodes, he argues, effectively subjugate Guiana as a discursive, geographical, and political space, to the power of English rule.

While Raleigh insists on his virtue in love by promising not to "consummate" his relationship with Guiana until given the consent of the queen, the language he uses in the passage to describe his consummation suggests violent rape rather than courtly love. Raleigh says that he will "sack" and "turn" the land over for gold, for example. Montrose's analysis of the role of gendered discourse in the *Discoverie* is useful for understanding the text's gender politics, but he drastically overstates the power of colonial discourse by falling into the text's rhetorical trap of constructing a narrative of discovery and conquest that belies the political reality that Raleigh, and England *a fortiori* had yet to achieve. I offer a more nuanced reading that, while acknowledging Raleigh's clear desire to possess Guiana in sexual and economic terms, nevertheless recognizes the various ways his desires are refused and diffused by the complex physical

and political geography of the region. Raleigh is constantly turned away from the object of his desire by the dizzying network of rivers that run through the Delta, and he is turned away as well by native rulers who are aware that they have the power to disarm him and frustrate his search for El Dorado by turning the Delta into a house of mirrors. My argument thus suggests the need to be circumspect about the notion that colonial writing is “writing that conquers,” as de Certeau argues, so that we may be better able to see the various acts of resistance to colonial desire that present themselves in the *Discoverie*.

In the sections that follow, I will trace the emergence of Raleigh’s romance persona and the development his movement from enchantment to disenchantment throughout the text. I begin with a reading of the relationship between the manuscript version of the *Discoverie*, which has yet to be incorporated into literary scholarship on Raleigh’s text, and the published version, which was edited by Robert Cecil for public consumption. The tension between Raleigh and Cecil during the editorial process centers precisely on the degree to which Raleigh wishes to appear as romance hero rather than a more docile settler-trader. Several of Raleigh’s heroic self-portraits were deleted in the editorial process, but a number of suggestive passages made it to print. I focus in the second section on the passages in which Raleigh compares himself to Spanish conquistadors in order to establish the centrality of the romance narrative to the *Discoverie*. I then proceed to an analysis of Raleigh’s protracted dealings with the powerful Guianan *cacique* Topiawari, with whom Raleigh repeatedly attempts to make political alliances to protect his men from Spaniards and other Indian tribes. In this section, I show how Topiawari’s resistance to Raleigh’s advances complicates the notion that the *Discoverie* is an act of colonial possession. Topiawari’s refusal to help Raleigh

find el Dorado also complicates Raleigh's self-conception as a knight-errant, as he is constantly turned around and pointed in the wrong direction so that he may never attain the object of his desire. The disorientation Raleigh experiences during his quest throughout the Orinoco Delta produces a sense of disenchantment with the Guiana venture itself, as well as a sense of disenchantment with the public and courtly figures whom Raleigh knows have called the legitimacy of his colonial ventures into question. The Raleigh we meet at the end of the *Discoverie* is hardly the brash, dazzling figure described by Greenblatt. Rather, he is deeply unsettled by the criticism he receives and the uncertainty about his place in England's plans for colonizing America.

Raleigh, Cecil, and the Imperialist Agenda in the *Discoverie*

When Raleigh prepared the manuscript of the *Discoverie* for publication, he did so with an acute awareness of the scrutiny his narrative would face, both from public and private parties. The failure of the Virginia ventures was revelatory of Raleigh's pathological preoccupation with wealth and his relatively lesser interesting planting colonies fit for trade. He originally intended his Virginia colony as a North Atlantic base for raids in the Spanish Caribbean and along the Spanish Main. Raleigh only began to think seriously about using his royal patent for settling Virginia to settle, farm, and establish English trade in goods other than gold and silver after he was publicly shamed for the failure of the first Virginia colony. Unfortunately, Raleigh's second attempt to settle Virginia also failed because he was still more interested in gold than in the lumber, furs, and medicinal plants that abounded in North America. Raleigh's second failed voyage coincided with a series of political complications at court that stemmed from his unsanctioned marriage to Bess Throckmorton, one of Elizabeth's ladies in waiting.

Elizabeth's trysts with her charming adventurer were put to an end without her consent. She was so angry about the affair that she banished Raleigh from court from 1593 to 1597. At all possible levels, Raleigh's reputation was under assault during the most important period in his career.

With so many questions about his leadership ability, his commitment to national interests over personal gain, and his status at court, it is no surprise that Raleigh framed the *Discoverie* as a personal apology. In his Epistle Dedicatory and his note to the reader, Raleigh specifically addresses questions about the veracity of the El Dorado legend and his own motivation in undertaking the voyage. He takes pains to assure the reader that the intelligence on El Dorado's location is good, and that his motives for discovering El Dorado are pure. To this end, Raleigh makes note of the political history, geography, natural history, and economic potential of Guiana, submitting this knowledge to the crown in an effort to demonstrate his commitment to advancing the imperial aims of the state.

Richard Helgerson argues that issues of genre are inherently tied to politics. The decision to participate in the discourses of empire or to resist them is tantamount to "choosing to endorse one distribution of power and wealth rather than another" (155). Crucially, then, Raleigh must demonstrate his endorsement of the proper structures of political power and economic development through his use of genres that fit within the sanctioned poetics of empire.¹⁴ In this section I will examine the various cues Raleigh leaves the reader about how best to define his text generically, and will draw specific attention to the instability of each of the generic categorizations Raleigh attempts to establish for the text. The generic indeterminacy that defines the *Discoverie* makes it

difficult to sustain Raleigh's alignment with England's imperial interests. As much as Raleigh (and his editor) wished to fit the text within acceptable ideological parameters, Raleigh's romantic imagination pushes the text in the direction of the chivalric narratives of glory through conquest that England's imperial ideologues were working hard to suppress.¹⁵

In the Epistle Dedicatory Raleigh emphasizes his own pain and suffering in the Guiana venture in order to dispel the notion that his motive was primarily personal. He says "I haue beene accompanied with many sorrows, with labor, hunger, heat sicknes, & perill: It appeareth notwithstanding that I made no other brauado of going to the sea, then was meant, and that I was neither hidden in Cornwall or else where, as was supposed." Raleigh offers this rhetoric of the "paineiful pilgrimage" to counter the argument that he undertook the Guiana voyage with his plume spread, parading as a brave conquistador.¹⁶ Certain of Raleigh's critics actually argued on the basis of the *Discoverie's* reliance on fable and myth, and its complete lack of financial success, that Raleigh never even went to Guiana. Some suggested that he hid at Cornwall for the duration of the voyage and participated in it only as a financial advisor. Others, Raleigh says, "grosly belied me, that foreiudged that I would rather become a seruant to the Spanish king, then return, & the rest were such mistaken that I was too easeful and sensuall to undertake a iorney of so great trauel" (5). Not one to take assaults on his manhood lightly, Raleigh reminds his readers that he undertook the voyage "in the winter of my life," and that while he returned poor and withered, he nevertheless exerted himself tirelessly in the search of the Spanish gold that would aid "her Maiesties protection [from Spain] and the returne of the English nation" (7).

Raleigh ultimately hopes to deliver “a better Indies for her maiestie then the King of Spaine hath any” through a combination of a dutiful study of the relevant historical literature on the conquest of the Indies and a careful negotiation of the tense political relationships that exist between the borderers of El Dorado and Europeans (9). Accordingly, Raleigh offers in the Epistle a brief overview of the strong and weak points in along the Main, concluding with the suggestive claim that:

I could haue laid hands and ransomed many of the kings & Cassiqui of the Country & haue had a reasonable proportion of gold for their redemption: But I haue chosen rather to beare the burthen of pouerty then reproch & rather to endure a second trauel & the chances thereof, then to haue defaced an enterprise of so great assurance, untill I knew whether it pleased God to put a disposition in her princely and royall heart eyther to follow or foreslow. (10)

In this passage Raleigh positions himself as a romantic conquest figure, suggesting that he could easily have conquered the region and held the borderers for an impressive ransom, while also introducing the theme of chivalric restraint that would run throughout the text and ultimately serve as a rhetorical justification for Raleigh’s failure to produce material evidence of Guianan gold to the queen. While he could have done these things, he restrained himself out of consideration for the queen, in accordance with the chivalric code of virtue in love.

The matter of establishing an English presence in Guiana was a pressing one, Raleigh argued, because Charles V had already taken the “Maydenhead of *Peru*.” Spain’s riches did not come from “the trades of sakes, and Ciuil Orenge,” but from Charles’s

“Indian Golde,” which Raleigh argues “indaungereth and disturbeth all the nations of Europe, it purchaseth intelligence, creepeth into Counsels, and setteth bound loyalty at libertie, in the greatest Monarchies of Europe” (14). If Elizabeth really wanted to challenge Charles’s heir, Philip II, for preeminence in the Americas, trading in fish or wool or lumber would not do. Only American gold would be powerful enough to fuel the growth of England’s trans-Atlantic imperial project.

In generic terms, these prefatory documents are aimed at establishing the *Discoverie* as part of the English imperial literary tradition by inscribing Raleigh within the corporate narrative of the state.¹⁷ Rather than asserting himself with the bravado of a conquistador, whose accomplishments were memorialized in the chronicles of the Spanish conquest, Raleigh submits himself with humility to the cause of helping England assert and establish its place among the great powers of Europe by taking possession of key lands in Guiana. The *Discoverie*, Raleigh initially suggests, is to be read as an anti-romance, a work aimed at collective edification rather than the attainment of individual glory. There is much in the narrative to support such a reading.

The opening pages of the text focus on the natural history of Guiana and surrounding territories. Commenting on the excellent oysters of Punta la Brea, for example, Raleigh notes that the trees on which these oysters grow have been discussed by André Thevet in his massive natural history, *France Antarctique*, as well as by Pliny in his natural history (21). He also adds numerous remarks throughout the text about the human or “moral” history of the regions he visits. Raleigh opens with a roster of local tribes that lists their names and their relationships to one another (23).¹⁸ This natural and moral history helps the reader establish an understanding of the complex geography of

the Caribbean and the Orinoco Delta. Raleigh represents himself as a sober and practical observer in the narrative's opening pages. His practical side is evident in his desire to create a chart detailing the coastline and harbors of Trinidad, his first point of contact in the voyage (21).

The scientific persona Raleigh constructs for himself early in the narrative establishes credibility for the claims he makes subsequently about the history of El Dorado and the certainty he and his countrymen may have about capturing it. Any claims about the location of the mythical golden city forwarded solely on the basis of Raleigh's personal experience would have been cast aside by his readers. Knowing this, Raleigh incorporates the testimony offered by Spanish and French historians and eye-witness observers to support his own conclusions. Raleigh links the history of the empire of Guiana to that of the Inca empire by arguing that a certain faction of the Inca empire fled to the east, absconding with a significant amount of Peruvian gold. To buttress this claim, he reminds his readers that the "Emperour now raigning is descended from those magnificent Princes of *Peru* of whose large territories, of whose pollicies, conquests, edifices, and riches *Pedro de Cieza, Francisco Lopez* and others haue written large discourses" (37). Raleigh's borrowings from Pedro Cieza de León's *Crónica del Peru* and Francisco López de Gómara's *Historia general de las Indias* assure readers that the history of El Dorado was a long one that did not originate with him, and therefore was not a creation of his wild, gold-fetishizing imagination.¹⁹ The final published version of the text included the substitution of substantial passages from López de Gómara's *Historia* for the passages Raleigh originally included from Cieza de León's *Crónica*. Cecil rightly felt that López de Gómara's detailed description of the magnificence of the

court of the Inca Guayancapa and his relation of the huge quantity of gold collected for the ransom of Atahualpa would much more effectively convince readers of the wealth of the Inca empire than Raleigh's original citations (xlii).

Cecil's use of the 117th chapter of the *Historia* exemplifies the way Spanish knowledge is deployed in the *Discoverie*. To lend credence to the notion that gold mines existed in Guiana, Cecil inserts a direct quotation from the text claiming that "*Hallaron* [the Spanish explorers] *cinquenta y dos mil marcos de buena plata, y un million y trezientos y veinte y seis mil, y quinientos pesos de oro*" [They found fifty-two thousand markes of good silver, and 1,326,500 pesos of gold] (41). Cecil also includes a large section from the 120th chapter of the *Historia*, which describes the opulence of Guayancapa's court:

Toda el seruicio de sucasa, mesa, y cozina era de oro, y de plata . . . Tenia en su recamara estatuas huecas de oro que parecian gigantes, y las figuras al proprio, y tamano de quantos animales, aues, arboles, y yeruas produze la tierra . . . En fin no auia cosa en su tierra, que no la tuuiesse de oro contrahecha" [All the vessels of his house, table, and kitchen were of gold and silver . . . He had in his wardrobe hollow statues of gold which seemed giants, and the figures in proportion and bigness of all the beasts, birds and herbs that the earth bringeth forth . . . Finally there was nothing in his country whereof he had not the copy in gold]. (39)

Combined, these passages from the *Historia* make a compelling case for the existence of opulent and untapped wealth in the lands of Peru, and if the historians who posit an eastern branch of the Inca Empire in Guiana are to be believed, then readers could

plausibly expect similar riches to be tucked away there. Raleigh strengthens the case for the existence of an Inca empire in Guiana by citing the reports of various eye-witnesses. He cites the narratives of Francisco de Orellana and Diego de Ordás, who both successfully navigated portions of the Amazon River proximate to the city of Manoa. These expeditions paved the way for Juan Martínez, master of munitions on Diego de Ordás's ship, to be the first European ever to lay eyes on Manoa (43).²⁰ Martínez's story plays a central role in authenticating Raleigh's claims to be close to the golden city. Martínez, he says, "was he that christened the citie of *Manoa*, by the name *El Dorado*," effectively bringing it into the possession of the kingdom of Spain (49). While not all the claims Raleigh made about Guiana on the basis of his study of Spanish Americana were accurate, they were nevertheless carefully constructed as part of a trans-historical and inter-imperial discourse on El Dorado.²¹

Raleigh's command of the Spanish literature on El Dorado allows him to create a more robust and compelling picture of the natural and moral history of Trinidad and the empire of Guiana than he could have done solely on the basis of his own travels and personal experiences. The inclusion of Spanish knowledge in the *Discoverie* clearly establishes Raleigh's authority on El Dorado, but he is also careful to distinguish himself and his larger project from that of the Spanish empire. After the conquest of St. Joseph on Trinidad, for example, Raleigh captures the Spanish conquistador Antonio de Berrío, who acts as his primary informant on the political history of the Orinoco Delta. While he relies on Berrío for his historical, geographical, and political knowledge, Raleigh nevertheless distances himself from the Spanish empire in the following passage delivered to the Indians of St. Joseph:

I made them vnderstand that I was the seruant of a Queene, who was the great *Casique* of the north, and a virgin, and had more *Casique* under her then there were trees in their Iland: that she was an enemy to the *Castellani* in respect of their tyrannie and oppression, and that she deliuered all such nations about her, as were by them oppressed, and hauing freed the coast of the northern world from their seruitude had sent me to free them also, and with al to defend the countrey of *Guiana* from their inuasion and conquest. I shewed them her maiesties picture which they so admired and honored, as it had beene easie to haue brought them Idolotrous thereof . . . [I]n that part of the world her maiestie is very famous and admirable, whom they now call *Ezrabeta Cassipuna Aquerewana*, which is as much as *Elizabeth*, the great princesse or the greatest commauder. (31)

The passage draws on the familiar tropes of the Black Legend, which held that the Spanish empire was built on the unlawful subjugation and serial abuse of the indigenous inhabitants of the various lands they conquered and settled. Unlike the English, whom Raleigh portrays as models of chivalric restraint in the “maydenhead” passage, the Spanish showed little restraint in their use of native resources and their abuse of native peoples. In an early attempt to forge a political alliance between local Indians and the English in the middle of Spanish territory, Raleigh lets his audience know that his queen is just as much an enemy of Spain’s tyrannical rule as they are, and that having conquered Spain in Europe, she could easily do so in Trinidad, with native cooperation. Other key passages in the *Discoverie* develop this argument that the natives of Trinidad,

Guiana, and the surrounding regions need each other to achieve full liberty from Spanish tyranny.

Following a discussion of the logistics of defending an English-governed colony in Guiana, Raleigh intensifies his propagandistic rhetoric by reminding Elizabeth that all of Spain's New World possessions could have been England's had Henry VIII chosen to sponsor Columbus. Passed off as a stranger whose credibility was called into question simply because of the strangeness of his vision, Columbus's journey stands as an allegory for Raleigh's own. "This Empire," Raleigh says, "is made known to her Maiesty by her own vassal." Unlike Columbus's voyage, which was shrouded in mystery, Raleigh claims that El Dorado "is alreadie discovered" and that "many nations [are] won to her Maiesties loue & obedience." The Spaniards in the area have been "beaten out, discouraged and disgraced," and all Raleigh needs is a full endorsement in the form of a small army to garrison the settlement. Raleigh pleads for support from Elizabeth as her "Columbus," suggesting that any financial and military assistance she may give would be repaid a hundred fold, with the natural resources of Guiana effectively financing all of her activities at home and abroad (217-219). Should the rhetoric of liberation from Spanish tyranny fail to convince Raleigh's English audience, he further argues in this passage that Manoa could easily be brought into subjection as a tributary state to England, since "hee [the emperor] hath neyther shotte nor Iron weapon in all his Emypre, and therefore may easely be conquered." Citing Berrío once more, Raleigh assures Elizabeth that she can reasonably expect to acquire Guiana without military conquest because the Indians' own prophets predicted that the ruined empire of the "Inga" would be restored by the empire of "Inglaterra" (219).

Each of these passages is designed to convince Raleigh's readers that his interests are firmly in line with those of the queen and her advisors. Rather than straddling Guiana and lighting it ablaze until nothing but gold remained as he imagined the conquistadors had done, Raleigh instead chooses to emphasize his own humility and personal restraint in the enterprise. Speaking directly to Elizabeth, he says that "I woulde rather haue lost the sacke of one or two townes (although they might have been very profitable) than to haue defaced or endangered the future of hope of so many millions, and the great good, and rich trade which England maie bee possessed off thereby" (175). We might read this passage as the culmination of Raleigh's strenuous effort to participate in the formative discourses of empire. The *Discoverie* begins with natural history, includes useful remarks on geography, ethnography, political history, global economies and the broader history of inter-imperial contestation within which each of these discourses is ensconced. This strain of the narrative ends with the promise that Elizabeth can, with relatively little effort, become the most powerful sovereign in Western Europe.

Raleigh, the Eloquent Conquistador

Raleigh's careful rhetorical self-construction as a dutiful subject of empire is not entirely solid, however. There are several moments of textual slippage where Raleigh shifts registers from that of the natural historian, ethnographer, mercantilist, and imperial ideologue, to that of the chivalric knight-errant. In these moments, Raleigh's individualist spirit and his desire to mimic the feats of martial heroism that defined romance protagonists transform him from an imperial apologist to a conquistador figure. If we hearken back to Raleigh's Epistle Dedicatory, we can read between the lines of his insistence that he took to sea with no more bravado than the average merchant and see

that Raleigh is aware of the political implications of his use of the romance form to fashion a heroic narrative of the self. He works hard to mitigate the consequences of his choice to represent himself in such individualist terms.

Raleigh's self-conception as a romance hero had been established well before his departure for Guiana. In one of his more famous courtly poems, *Ocean to Cynthia*, Raleigh characterizes adventure thus:

To seeke new worlds, for golde, for prayse, for glory,
To try desire, to try love severed farr,
When I was gonn shee sent her memory
More strong then weare ten thowsand ships of warr,
To call mee back, to leve great honors thought,
To leve my frinds, my fortune, my attempte,
To leve the purpose I so longe had sought
And holde both cares and cumforts in contempt.

(qtd. in Greenblatt, 103-104)

The immediate reference in these lines is not to Guiana, but to Raleigh's forced return to England from a quest to capture Spanish treasure ships in 1592. Raleigh's poetic imagination transforms this moment of imperial contestation into a romance quest for riches and honor couched in his courtly desire to win Elizabeth's love (104). This "theatrical gesture," as Greenblatt calls it, is replicated in the *Discoverie*, which also attempts to transform Raleigh's assault on Spain into a chivalric quest for riches, fame, and courtly love. For all of Cecil's editorial efforts, the heroic persona Raleigh creates in the *Discoverie* never quite disappears. The deep, structural presence of the romance form

in the *Discoverie* posed persistent problems for Cecil, who put forth a sustained effort to make the narrative appear as credible as possible. The unavoidable presence of the individualizing themes of the romance quest and of individual feats of daring also posed problems for Raleigh, who wanted to preserve his individual autonomy while maintaining a privileged position in England's imperial program.

Noting Raleigh's impressive command of American travel literature and his equally impressive literary output, Benjamin Schmidt has called Raleigh England's most "eloquent conquistador." He was a "dedicated oceanic reader," a "gallant who explored . . . and a conquistador who read, not simply romances and geography, but a full scholarly range of genres (454, 456). Raleigh draws the connection between the romance tradition, the Spanish conquest of the Americas, and his own Guiana project through a military genealogy that links him to Spain's greatest conquistadors. Near the beginning of the narrative, when Raleigh is introducing the reader to Berrío and relating the local knowledge he gained from his captive about Guiana, Raleigh says that:

[I]f it shalbe my lot to prosecute the same [discovery and conquest of Guiana], I shall willingly spend my life therein, and if any else shalbe enabled therunto, and conquire the same, I assure him as much, he shall performe more than euer was done in *Mexico* by *Cortés*, or in *Peru* by *Pacaro*, whereof one conquered the Empire of *Mutezuma*, the other of *Guascar*, and *Atabalipa*, and whatsoever Prince shalbe Lorde of more Gold, and of a more beautifull Empire, and of more Cities and people, then eyther the king of Spayne, or the great Turke. (35)

Raleigh's offer to spend his life searching for El Dorado offers a none-too-subtle suggestion that he envisions himself as the rightful conqueror of the Empire of Guiana, and thus, as the heir to the legacy of conquistadors such as Cortés and Pizarro.²² While it is unclear whether Raleigh imagines himself in his potential role as a conqueror as a quasi-independent "prince" is unclear, he clearly envisions his voyage to Guiana in romance terms. The soldier who accomplishes this feat of conquest will have gained untold fame and wealth and will become immortalized as one of the great European conquerors of the New World. Raleigh's conquest rhetoric is markedly different from the plain prose style of the natural historian or geographer. Raleigh's use of conquest rhetoric in the above passage signals the presence of an alternative, quest-centered narrative within the *Discoverie*, which is at odds with England's corporate narrative of a settler empire built on mercantilist exchange.

As Anthony Pagden has reminded us, the first phase of European imperial expansion promised those engaged in it wealth and glory. The access to material wealth was, he observes, one of the few means of social advancement available to conquistadors, and the military glory they had a chance to display offered further opportunities to enhance their social status (64). The Spanish conquistadors established the model for this conception of empire, and in their early years, both the English and the French empires wanted to equal their successes, despite their pretenses of moral superiority to the image of Spain promulgated through Black Legend (64).

Raleigh's desire to follow the conquest model of the Spanish adventurers and to fashion himself as a knight-errant as they had done manifests itself at several other key points in the manuscript and printed text of the *Discoverie*. The first and most obvious

marker of Raleigh's romance imagination comes during his narration of the capturing and destruction of the town of St. Joseph on Trinidad, which I have already discussed in connection with Raleigh's anti-Spanish discourse. The passage in question relates Raleigh's activities after the capture of Berrío and his company. At the insistence of the local Indians, who had suffered greatly under Berrío's rule, Raleigh says in his manuscript: "I converted the new city in to ashes and wrate this saying of *Christ* on a great stone in the market place, *Omnis plantatio quam Pater meus non plantavit erradicantabitur*" (31).²³ Raleigh borrows here from Matthew 15:13, which reads: "every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up." Raleigh's hyperbolized depiction of the conquest of St. Joseph, as well as his self-representation as an arbiter of biblical justice, did not make it into the printed text. Despite the passage's tacit acceptance of the plantation model that was coming to dominate the imperial vision of the English state, the passage bore too strong a resemblance to the image of the Spanish conquistador for Cecil's taste. The more Raleigh looked like Cortés or Pizarro, the less likely he was to be accepted as a representative hero of the English nation. In the published text this episode is reduced to the following clause: "at the instance of the Indians I set their new City of *S. Ioseph's* on fire" (31). Cecil's editorial hand eliminates the chivalric/heroic overtones in the manuscript, replacing them with the plain style of factual reportage.

While this particular episode is edited to sound more like history than romance, there are several places in the published text where Raleigh's romance imagination finds more overt expression. During the raid on St. Joseph, for example, Raleigh offers an overview of Berrío's accomplishments, focusing specifically on the knowledge Berrío

was able to glean about the geography of the Delta and the political relations that existed between the tribes thought to live closest to El Dorado. Raleigh tells his reader that “I got som knowledge [about Guiana] . . . partly by mine own trauel, & the rest by [conference].” Having sought not only Berrío’s counsel, but also that of “al the aged men” and the “greatest trauelers,” Raleigh boasts of his knowledge of “the situations, the riuers, the kingdoms from the east sea to the borders of *Peru*, & from *Orenoque* southward as far as *Amazones* or *Maragnon*, and the regions of *Maria Tamball*, and all of the kings of Prouinces and captains of townes and villages, how they stood in terms of peace and war, and which were friends or enemies with the other” (73). For Raleigh, this information is useful because it facilitates conquest and thereby allows him to maintain the notion that he is the direct heir to the Spanish conquistadors. He says that without the knowledge he has gleaned about local geography and politics “there can be neither entrance nor conquest in those parts, nor els where: For by dissention betweene *Guascar* and *Atabalipa*, *Paçaro* conquered *Peru*, and by the hatred that the *Traxcallians* bare to *Mutezuma*, *Cortés* was victorious over *Mexico*, without which both the one and the other had failed of their enterprize, and of the great honor and riches which they attained vnto” (73).

Raleigh’s return to the military genealogy of the Spanish conquistadors emphasizes the glory attained by the individual in the drama of conquest over the corporate interest of the state. Most important are the “great honor and riches” enjoyed by figures like Cortés and Pizarro for their ability to marshal the forces of disgruntled tribes for battle against the most powerful tribes whom Raleigh thought guarded the gates to the golden city. The desire to emulate Spanish models of conquest while preying on the

Spanish empire itself had its immediate roots in the cultural legend created by Francis Drake's infamous assaults on Spanish ships and settlements from the Pacific to the Caribbean and along the Spanish Main. Drake's capture of the *Nuestra Señora* established an English hero cult that celebrated the figure of the gentleman adventurer as the backbone of the nascent English empire. Drake not only inspired his fellow Englishmen—he conferred upon the boldest among them the mark of inclusion into the circle of English heroes that centered on him. The following lines Drake wrote in praise of Martin Frobisher's Newfoundland expedition illustrate the vision of the true gentleman adventurer:

Who seeks by worthie deedes to gaine renowne for hire,
Whose hart, whose hand, whose purse is prest to purchase his desire;
If anie such theree bee that thirsteth after Fame,
Lo! Heere a meane to winne himself an everlasting name.

Who seeks by gaine and wealth t'advauce his house and blood,
Whose care is great, whose toil no lesse, whose hope is all for good;
If anie one there be that covets such a trade,
Lo! Heere the plot for common wealth and private gain is made.

He that for vertue's sake will venture farre and neere,
Whose zeal is strong, whose practice trueth, whose faith is void of feere:
If anie such theree bee, inflamed with holie care,
Heere may he fine a readie meane his purpose to declare.

So that for each degree, this Treatise dooth unfolde

The path to fame, the prooffe of zeal and way to purchase gold.

(qtd. in Shields, “Sons of the Dragon” 141-142)

True adventurers, Drake says, are driven by a “thirst for fame” and a desire for “private gain” through the acquisition of Spanish gold. As David Shields has asserted, “All of the English adventurers were really one adventurer, Sir Francis Drake,” for Drake embodied the belief that heroic individuals could attain immortal fame by braving the seas and attacking Spain (140). For Raleigh, adventure meant more than taking ships and burning cities—it meant following in the footsteps of the Spanish conquerors by subduing American territories and siphoning off their resources for personal gain.

The broad implication of Raleigh’s invocation of the legacy of the Spanish conquistadors is that it signals the presence of a romance narrative that is embedded within the long sections describing Raleigh’s travels through the Delta, which have often been read simply as part of the text’s historiographical apparatus. The nature of Raleigh’s romance quest manifests itself through his protracted engagements with Guianan *caciques*, whose local knowledge he needs in order to complete his quest and realize his heroic potential. These *caciques*, especially the formidable Topiawari, demonstrate a keen understanding of Raleigh’s politics and the nature of his quest. Their ability to send Raleigh on a series of wild goose chases ultimately turns Raleigh’s narrative of chivalric heroism into a narrative of aimless wandering. I argue that Topiawari’s ability in particular to prevent Raleigh from completing his quest for El Dorado initiates a Baroque sense of disenchantment with the idea of the heroic conquest, as well as the corporate

narrative of achieving heroic status through settlement and trade. The end result of Raleigh's quest, I argue, is a thoroughly disenchanted picture of life within the imperial domain and with the possibility of constructing a narrative of individual heroism at the edge of empire.

Raleigh, Topiwari, and the Deferral of the Conqueror's Desire

Raleigh gleaned much of the information he had on the tribes of the Delta prior to his own expedition from his Spanish captive Antonio de Berrío, who was the acting governor of Trinidad at the time of Raleigh's voyage, and who had made his own sallies into the Orinoco Delta in search of El Dorado. During Raleigh's discourse with Berrío, Raleigh learns that the only way into the empire of El Dorado is through the bordering tribes who inhabit the city's outermost limits. The king of one of one such tribe, Carapana, is acknowledged by both Berrío and Raleigh to be "very wise, subtile, and of great experience," due to his age and his experience in dealing with Europeans. Carapana was allegedly nearly one hundred years old at the time of Raleigh's writing. As a young man, he had been sent to Trinidad and then to Parico to spend time among the French and Spanish, and to travel with the Indians of Trinidad, Margarita, and Cumaná. During his sojourn, he:

[G]rew of more understanding, and noted the difference of the nations, comparing the strength and armes of his country with those of the Christians, and euer after temporized, so, as whosoever else did amisse, or was wasted by contention, *Carpana* kept himself and his country in quiet and plentie: he also held peace with the *Caribas* or *Canibals* his neighbors, and had free trade with all nations whoseover els had war. (75)

Carapana's time among Europeans and indigenous Caribbean tribes clearly made him a wise man; he knew that the Europeans had come either for conquest or trade or both, and that their presence in the Caribbean and on the coastal regions proximate to the Delta was increasing. Carapana allowed Berrío's men to rest and victual with his tribe for six weeks, but knew that upon Berrío's return he would either have to deflect the Spaniard's interest or risk losing the peace he had long labored to maintain for his people. Berrío did indeed return, and he sought a direct route to El Dorado. Carapana's foresight, or his "subtlety," as Raleigh puts it, caused him to lead Berrío's men to a king named Morequito, "assuring them that no man could deliuer so much of *Guiana* as *Morequito* could, and that his dwelling was but fiue daies iourney from *Macureguari*, the first ciuill towne of *Guiana*" (77).

Raleigh inserts this brief anecdote about Berrío's encounter with Carapana as evidence of his repeated assertions that he has solid evidence of Manoa's existence and its accessibility to the English. He explains the significance of Berrío's meeting thus: "Now your Lordship shall understand that this *Morequito*, one of the greatest Lords or Kings of the borders of *Guiana*, had two or three yeeres before been at *Cumana*, and at *Marguerita*, in the west Indies, with great store of plates of gold" for trade, which were brought straight from El Dorado itself (79). Raleigh carefully constructs the argument here to suggest that knowledge about El Dorado has been circulating throughout the Caribbean during the years surrounding his first Guiana voyage quite independent from Raleigh's own researches: Carapana is a known entity to the Spanish and the French; more consequentially, Morequito, Carapana's link to El Dorado, is recognized as a willing trade partner to the Europeans, and he trades in gold. Given the ambient suspicion

surrounding the existence of El Dorado among Raleigh's audience, including his advisor Robert Cecil and the queen herself, the links Raleigh establishes here between Berrío's knowledge, Carapana's knowledge, and the widely acknowledged public presence of Morequito in the trade circuits of the Indies, help legitimize his continued quest into the interior.

Much like Carapana, Morequito shows impressive foresight when dealing with the Spaniards. He passes Berrío's crew off to the neighboring town of Macureguarai, whom Carapana assures can guide the expedition to El Dorado. According to Berrío, Topiawari, who ruled Morequito's people, followed Carapana's lead and sent the Spaniards to other bordering towns in search of rich cities built like Christian towns. Knowing that the expedition would fail, Topiawari prepared an assault on Berrío's returning crew. His people slew all but one Spaniard, who was lucky enough to swim away with 40,000 pesos (81). In reprisal, Berrío had Topiawari's uncle murdered, and took Topiawari along as a guide in chains for seventeen days. During that time, the Spaniards forced Topiawari to help navigate the difficult terrain between Morequito and Emeria, where he was finally ransomed for one hundred plates of gold and other prizes.

This back-story to Raleigh's own narrative of exploration is critical because it establishes him as a more knowledgeable, more competent conquistador than Berrío. By extension, it also helps him construct a sense of English imperial identity that is morally superior and more practical than the Spanish strategy of violent conquest. Carapana, Morequito, and Topiawari all knew that the Spanish were out for gold. They knew what that meant for their own long-term political condition, and they deftly maneuvered to keep Berrío's crew disoriented. While the capture of Topiawari made ample sense given

his people's assault on the Spanish explorers, Raleigh is quick to point out that dragging this highly respected elder around in chains effectively cost Spain "the love of the *Orenoqueponi*, and of all the borderers." Berrío would never have the gall to send men into those regions again. Raleigh, on the other hand, makes a strong case that the failure of the Spanish has left the door wide open for the English to step in and form the critical alliances with the borderers that they would need to push further into the jungle and closer to Manoa.

With his reader aware of the prehistory of Europeans' encounters with the borderers of the Delta, Raleigh leaves Berrío's story and returns to his own travel narrative. After arriving at a port within the Morequito territory, Raleigh seeks counsel with Topiawari in hopes of establishing an alliance with him that could deliver access to Manoa. Raleigh plays up the contrast between the reaction of the Morequito to the Spanish and their reception of the English, for whom Topiawari's people laid out a sumptuous repast that included fish, fowl, and local delicacies such as the parakeet and the armadillo (139). The scene sets the table for Raleigh's appeal to Topiawari for help in eliminating the Spanish threat in the area. Raleigh appeals to Topiawari's emotional side, reminding the elder of the litany of abuses his people have suffered at the hands of the Spanish. Topiawari had recently lost his uncle to Berrío's men, and Raleigh knew that his best chance of getting Topiawari to forge an alliance with Raleigh and the English was to force the elder to relive the pain of his uncle's death. As he reminds Topiawari about the cruelties of Spanish conquistadors, Raleigh assures the elder that his queen would treat Topiawari's people much better. Her rule, he suggests, would be defined by "justice" and "charitie to all oppressed nations" (141).

Raleigh's offer of political asylum to Topiawari's tribe was certainly more generous in theory than Spain's manner of governance was in practice, but his discourse on the virtues of his nation and his queen were hardly altruistic. No sooner does Raleigh extol Elizabeth's virtues than he begins "to sound the olde man as touching *Guiana*, and the state therof, what sort of common wealth it was, how gouerned, of what strength and pollicy, how farre it extended, and what nations were friends or enemies adioining" (141). Protection from Spain, Raleigh implies, depends upon Topiawari's willingness and ability to satisfy Raleigh's own gold lust. Joyce Lorimer has noted that Raleigh's dealings with Topiawari are rife with contradictions. Raleigh at first appears to be an enlightened imperialist interested in creating a climate of political equality between England and the bordering "nations" of Guiana. Should Topiawari refuse, however, Raleigh threatens that his tribe would be annexed by force to England as a tributary state. Raleigh's transparent desire to overthrow his potential allies without regard for the law of nations or natural law in the event that they impede his search for gold reveals, as Lorimer puts it, that "Naked self-interest is inconveniently apparent behind the invocations of high-minded imperialism" in Raleigh's thinking (xxxvii).

Such naked self-interest is evident in Raleigh's desire to change topics from Topiawari's suffering to his knowledge of El Dorado. While he has flattered Topiawari by recognizing his political sovereignty as the leader of a civilized "nation," Raleigh's flattery appears to be directed at gathering better intelligence about the real "nation" under consideration: the "common wealth" of El Dorado. Raleigh's questions to Topiawari indicate that he imagined El Dorado as an advanced kingdom analogous to that of the Mexica and the Inca. Louis Montrose has argued that Raleigh's desire to map

out in the *Discoverie* the political geography of the Delta so that he can exploit its resources places the text within the genre of colonial discourse that Michel de Certeau calls “writing that conquers.”²⁴

Despite Raleigh’s ardent desire to play the role of the romance hero by realizing his quest for Guianan gold, he clearly needs Topiawari’s knowledge and the support of the bordering nations if he and his men are to have any chance at penetrating the interior and finding the El Dorado. Topiawari plays the situation masterfully, deflecting Raleigh’s thrust by telling his own version of a local cautionary tale. Topiawari familiarizes Raleigh with the political geography of the region by revealing that his people, as well as those downriver as far as Emeria in Carapana, were all of Guiana and called themselves collectively the Orenoqueponi “because they bordered the great riuer of *Orinoque* (141). The peoples living between the river and the Sierra Imataca were also counted among the Orenoqueponi. This broad alliance from Topiawari’s lands to those of Carapana and from the space of the river to the mountains offered Raleigh a promising network of indigenous allies capable of directing him on his quest and victualling him and his men. Naturally, Raleigh inquired about the peoples living beyond the mountains. Topiawari markedly changes his tone, answering:

[W]ith a great sigh (as a man which had inward feeling of the losse of his conntrey and liberty, especially for that his eldest sonne was slain in a battel on that side of the mountaines, whom he most entirely loued,) that he remembered in his father’s life time when he was very old, and himself a yoong man that there came down into that large valley of *Guiana*, a nation from so far off as the *Sun* slept (for such were his own words,) with

so great a multitude as they could not be numbered nor resisted, & that they wore large coats, and hats of crimson colour, which colour he expressed, by shewing a piece of red wood, wherewith my tent was supported, and that they were called *Oreiones*, and *Epuremei*, those that had slaine and rooted out so many of the ancient people as there were leaues in the wood vpon all the trees, and had now made themselves Lords of all. (143)

The invaders slaughtered the borderers of Giuana, threatening to extinguish the line of Iwarawaqueri entirely.²⁵ The Oreiones and Epureimeï were said to have a great kingdom beyond the mountains, and to have established heavily manned garrisons to protect the borders of their territories (143).

Topiawari represents the Guianans' enemies as ferocious in war and imperial in their ambitions. By following their conquest of Guiana's borders with the establishment of a garrison, the Oreiones and Epureimeï appear to mimic the Spanish model of militarized conquest and settlement. The proximity of such a warlike people would doubtless have given Raleigh pause, especially given his relatively weak knowledge of the area and general paucity of manpower and resources. Topiawari does give Raleigh a glimmer of hope when he relates that in recent years, the presence of a common enemy in the Spaniards has softened the enmity between the Oreiones, Epureimeï, and the Guianians. The common threat of Spanish rule made it possible for Raleigh to imagine gathering the support of the bordering nations as Cortés had done in Mexico, but Topiawari leaves the scene before any more can be said about the matter. Citing his

advanced age and an unfavorable climate, Topiawari returns home and leaves Raleigh to his own devices.

This first meeting between Topiawari and Raleigh is critical to understanding the development of the romance poetics of the *Discoverie*. As a “bookish conquistador,” Raleigh doubtless wants to appear in a commanding role in his narrative. His tone, which Lorimer has generally described as “heroic” and “flamboyant,” is tempered here by Raleigh’s clear lack of knowledge and direction (xcv). Although Raleigh attempts to mask his almost complete reliance on Topiawari for guidance by foregrounding his own crew’s agency in leaving the elder’s company to resume their quest, the chasm between Topiawari’s local knowledge and Raleigh’s lack thereof is too great to bridge. Far from being the sort of “writing that conquers,” Raleigh’s relation of his first encounter with Topiawari reveals the fragile state of Raleigh and his crew—they are more likely to be conquered by rival Spaniards or Indians than they are to conquer El Dorado and stave of the Spanish.

The picture we get of Raleigh’s vulnerability at this point in the narrative complicates the triumphalist reading of the *Discoverie* offered by Montrose, as well as the broader triumphalist narrative of European colonial discourse offered by de Certeau. De Certeau has described the ideological construction of America in the European historical imagination as a “colonization of the body by the discourse of power” (xxv). The particular body about which de Certeau speaks appears on Jean van der Straet’s famous 1580 engraving entitled, *America*, which depicts the encounter between the European explorer Amerigo Vespucci and a native Indian woman, who stands as an allegory for America. This graphic form of writing, de Certeau says, is “*writing that*

conquers. It will use the New World as if it were a blank, ‘savage’ page on which Western desire will be written. It will transform the space of the other into a field of expansion for a system of production. From the moment of a rupture between subject and an object of the operation, between a *will to write* and a *written body* (or a body to be written), this writing fabricates Western history” (xxvi). Much has been written about van der Straet’s evocative image as a representative example of the hegemonic operation of Western European imperial discourse broadly speaking, but I want to focus here on the ways this image—and particularly de Certeau’s reading of it—has become a standard hermeneutic for reading the *Discoverie*.

Montrose’s reading of the *Discoverie* is representative of the way de Certeau’s theory of colonial discourse gets applied to particular texts. Montrose sees the *Discoverie* as the kind of gendered wish-fulfillment fantasy described by de Certeau. As Montrose puts it, “America” “awakens to discover herself written into a story that is not of her own making, to find herself a figure in another’s dream.” Montrose makes the connection between de Certeau’s analysis of a graphic image and Raleigh’s prose text by noting that the textualization of the “body of the Other” is a result of “symbolic violence, mastery and self-empowerment” that manifests itself in a “symbolic action whose agent is gendered masculine and whose object is gendered feminine” (182). Raleigh’s authorial imagination stands in for “Western desire” and his Guiana for Vespucci’s “America” (183).

Montrose focuses his analysis on the “maydenhead” passage, wherein Raleigh notes that the country has never been:

sackt, turned, nor wrought, the face of the earth hath not bene torne, nor the vertue and salt of the soyle spent by manurance, the graves have not been opened for golde, the mines not broken with sledges, nor their Images puld downe out of their temples. In hath never bene entered by any armie of strength, and never conquered or possessed by any christian Prince. (qtd. in Montrose 188).

The association between Guiana and the female body's unbroken "maydenhead" leads Montrose to conclude that "By subsuming and effacing the admired societies of Amerindian men in the metaphorically feminine Other of the land, the English intent to subjugate the indigenous peoples of Guiana can be 'naturalized as the male's mastery of the female'" (188). Montrose argues that the gender hierarchy established between Raleigh's masculine persona and America's feminine gender construction "sanctions the Englishmen's collective longing to prove and aggrandize themselves upon the feminine body of the New World, and, at the same time, the emergent hierarchical discourse of colonial exploitation and domination reciprocally confirms ideology's hegemonic force" (188).

Montrose's argument has drawn necessary attention to the politics of gender in Raleigh's text, but it takes as a *fait accompli* the historical process of the struggle for power between Amerindians and Europeans. The *Discoverie* makes clear that this process was still highly contested through its depiction of the tense relationships that existed between Raleigh, Topiawari, and the rest of the borderers. As Raleigh's first meeting with Topiawari shows, the *Discoverie* can hardly be described as the sort of writing that conquers. Despite his best efforts, Raleigh is unable to coax Topiawari into revealing

whatever knowledge the elder might have about the way to El Dorado. In fact, Topiawari turns the tables on Raleigh by relating the story of the conquering tribes that live beyond the nearby mountains, planting a seed of doubt in Raleigh's mind about his ability to accomplish his task before drifting out of sight to return to his village. By leaving before Raleigh can solidify a long-term political alliance with his people, Topiawari makes it all too clear that the distinction between the conqueror and the conquered is fuzzier than Raleigh would like. Rather than making steady progress toward the object of his desire, as the great conquistadors did, Raleigh is instead forced into a pattern of endless wandering that imbues his romance quest with a sense of dramatic irony.

Topiawari's refusal to remain with Raleigh and further satisfy his curiosity about local geography reveals the limits of Raleigh's attempt to reclassify the borderlands of Manoa as part of England's growing collection of epistemic New World possessions. Clearly aware of the skepticism his readers would show about his ability to penetrate the interior of the Delta and actually find gold, Raleigh inserts a series of claims from a number of sources that testify to his proximity to significant stores of precious metals. He claims, for example, that a cacique named Wanuretona assured him that he and his people would assist the English, should they dare, in an assault upon the nations guarding Lake Amuku, whose surrounding mountains abounded in gold (149). Raleigh buttresses this claim by noting that Berrío also told him that rich silver mines were to be found in those mountains, though as Joyce Lorimer observes, Spanish records of Berrío's explorations refer to no such claims (149, n. 2).

Raleigh switches from claims about the presence of local gold and the certainty of native assistance to his own carefully crafted set of claims about the region's potential

wealth. He offers a lovely pastoral image of the country surrounding the Caroli River. “I neuer saw a more beawtifull countrey, nor more lively prospects,” he claims. The area abounds with cranes, herons, luscious green grass, fragrant carnations, and countless stones that “promised eyther golde or siluer by his complexion” (153). Raleigh’s pastoralism enhances the narrative’s romance poetics by representing America as a space that would reward its conquerors not only with material wealth, but with natural beauty and abundance. Unfortunately for Raleigh, the difference between the rhetoric of natural abundance and the reality of poor local mineral resources became a point of serious contention. In a defense that was to bring him ridicule from Cecil, Elizabeth, and his public readership, he claims that his crew was unable to bring any of this wealth home because “we had no meanes but with our daggers and fingers to teare them out heere and there, the rockes being most harrd of that minerall sparr” (153). The veins Raleigh and the queen sought, he claims, lay a fathom or two deep in the mountain, however, and could not be worked for lack of equipment and manpower.²⁶

Raleigh’s lack of progress in his search for El Dorado causes him to seek a second meeting with Topiawari, whom he hopes will reconsider the notion of a political alliance with the English in exchange for knowledge of the whereabouts of El Dorado. During their second meeting, Raleigh switches tone, attempting to threaten his would-be ally into giving up his secrets about the location of El Dorado. Taking Topiawari into his tent, Raleigh tries to intimidate the elder by reminding him that both his new rivals, the Spanish, and his old rivals, the Epuremei, are planning an imminent attack that would wipe his people out completely. The only means of escape, Raleigh suggests, is to steal away with the English into the “golden partes of *Guiana*,” where they could seek the

“couill townes and apparelled people of the *Inga*” (74). Exactly how this strategy would benefit either party is not clear, as both would essentially be trapped in what Raleigh believed was an eastern branch of the Inca empire.²⁷ Topiawari’s response shows that he immediately comprehends Raleigh’s desperation and the implications that any alliance between him and the increasingly fanatical explorer would have for his people. Raleigh relates that “Hee gaue me an aunswere to this effect: first that hee did not perceiue that I meant to goe onwarde towards the Citie of *Manoa*, for neyther the time of the yeare serued, neyther could he perceiue any sufficient numbers for the enterprize: and if I did I was sure with all my company to be buried there” (167). Topiawari further warns Raleigh that he dare not attempt to invade the empire of Guiana without the help of all the bordering nations, for he recalled hearing about the recent slaughter of 300 Spaniards who attempted an offensive on the plains of the Macureguari and were routed because they “had none of the borderers to their friends” (167). This must have been a crushing blow to Raleigh’s ego, for it meant that despite his best efforts, he would never be like Cortés or Pizarro, whose success hinged on their ability to marshal the forces of local tribes to assist in the conquest of a common enemy. His inability to mobilize the borderers to act on his behalf left him a weak simulacrum of Spain’s conquistadors.

Topiawari’s response reverses the tables once again on Raleigh, reminding him that *he* is the one who should feel threatened given his obvious lack of progress in finding El Dorado and his clear lack of understanding about the political geography of the Delta. Topiawari teases Raleigh by suggesting that just a little further downriver from their current position he can find tribes who own massive plates of gold. Topiawari offers to guide Raleigh should he promise to garrison fifty men at his village as security against

the Spanish, which Raleigh could not do. Raleigh's inability to play quid pro quo with Topiawari effectively ends the strain of the narrative in which Raleigh explores the possibility of political alliance.

From this point forward, the notion of political alliance gives way to a militaristic approach to "discovering" Guiana. Returning briefly to the famous "maydenhead" passage, Raleigh reminds readers there that Guiana has never been "opened for gold, the mines not broken wiht sledges, nor their Images pulled down out of their temples. It hath never been entered by any armie of strength, and neuer conquered or possessed by any Christian Prince" (211). The language invokes a scene of rape in which Guiana's "maydenyead" is "sackt" and penetrated either by an English army, or by a daring individual such as Raleigh. Absent from this passage, and from those that follow, is any notion of negotiation. In place of the rhetoric of peaceful alliance between sovereign nations is a discourse of conquest in which indigenous others are placed under the rule of either of European sovereigns, or of bands of English conquistadors.

The "Rottenness of Empire": Disenchantment in the *Discoverie* and Beyond

Raleigh attempts to convince his readers of the feasibility of an English conquest of Guiana by arguing that some of the borderers have already been transformed into willing subjects of the crown. The remaining bordering tribes and the emperor of Guiana himself should follow suit, Raleigh argues, but should they resist, he claims that the entire region could be taken easily by military force. Raleigh makes his military intentions clear when he communicates that the emperor of El Dorado would certainly fall to the English because he "hath neyther shotte nor Iron weapon in all his Empyre, and therefore may easely be conquered" (219). To bolster this argument further, Raleigh

claims to have learned from Berrío a Peruvian prophecy stating that the Inca will be delivered from the Spanish by men from “Inglaterra” (219).

Raleigh suggests here that conquering Guiana would allow him to realize his destiny as a conquistador while also preserving his privileged role in the machinery of England’s trans-Atlantic economy. By focusing on the military aspects of conquest, Raleigh continues to assert himself as a martial hero in the romance mode. The ending of the *Discoverie*, however, suggests that he has failed in this endeavor. The narrative ends with a poem in which Raleigh deflects the reader’s attention from his own failures to his potential future successes. In the first stanza of the poem, Raleigh praises the virtues of the monarch who has the steel to subdue Guiana by the sword. In the second stanza of the poem, he shifts his focus from the state to the individual, extolling the virtues of the soldier who is brave enough to sally forth to conquer Guiana on his own. The poem reads as follows:

“Whatsoever Prince shall possesse it, shall be greatest, and if the king of

Spayne enjoy it, he will become vnresistable. Her
Maiesty heereby shall confirme and strengthen the o-
pinions of al nations, as touching her great and prince-
ly actions. And where the south border for *Guiana* rea-
chet to the Dominion and Empire of the *Amazones*,
those women shall heereby heare the name of a
virgin, which is not onely able to defend her
owne territories and her neighbors, but
also to inuade and conquere so

great Empyres and so
farre remoued.

After which point, he adds that:

To speake more at this time, I feare would be but trou-
blesome: I trust in God, this being true, will suf-
fice, and that he which is king of al kings and
Lord of Lords, will put it into her
hart which is Lady of Ladies to pos-
sesse it, if not, I wil iudge those
men worthy to be kings there-
of, that by her grace and
leaue will vndertake
it of them-
selues.

Raleigh appeals here to Elizabeth's political ambitions, assuring her that continued support of the Guiana project will make her name great among all nations, expand her territory, and create a bond of solidarity between herself and the warrior women of the Amazon. He is aware, though, that his talk of El Dorado is becoming "troublesome" in the eyes of Elizabeth and her advisors because of Raleigh's habit of delivering partial returns on his promises. His heroic romance narrative of the self was proving to be a poor fit within what Mary Fuller has called the new "colonial romance," in which the subjects of foreign lands are compelled to give away their freedom without

bloodshed because they have an inherent knowledge of and respect for the political order of the colonizer (232).

The basic conflict between Raleigh's romance and the colonial romance of the state existed for good reason: Raleigh had not actually "discovered" anything, nor had he brought home any significant evidence that the gold mines sought by the Spaniards and Englishmen like himself actually existed in Guiana. He had inflicted light losses on the Spanish, made a few tenuous connections with local tribes in the Orinoco Delta, and come home broke. Despite his heroic rhetoric, Raleigh was forced to grapple with the hard reality that his American romance might be a grand figment of his own imagination. The optimism Raleigh brought to his first Guiana venture was thus tinged with a sense of despair by the realization that many of his readers thought him a dreamer at best and a quack at worst, and that he had lost all of his credibility with the Elizabeth and her court by coming home empty handed.

Raleigh expressed his disenchantment with the harsh criticism he received at court in his later writings. In "The Lie" (1608), Raleigh confronts a series of deceptions that run from church to court, from politics to science. While the poem itself is broad in scope, there are nevertheless several stanzas that express Raleigh's particular disappointment with his declining social status. The following lines offer a scathing critique about the court, the crown, and the ideas of heroism to which Raleigh devoted his military career:

Say to the court, it glows
And shines like rotten wood;
Say to the church, it shows

What's good and doth no good:
If church and court reply,
Then give them both the lie.

Tell age it daily wasteth;
Tell honour how it alters;
Tell beauty how she blasteth;
Tell favour how it falters:
And as they shall reply,
Give every one the lie.

Tell fortune of her blindness;
Tell nature of decay;
Tell friendship of unkindness;
Tell justice of delay:
And if they will reply,
Then give them all the lie. (qtd. in Greenblatt 109)

Raleigh's loss of faith in honor, favor, fortune, and justice reflect his disenchantment with the state in whose name he made the painful pilgrimage from London to Guiana and back (Greenblatt, 109). A similar experience of disenchantment emerges during Raleigh's trial for treason in 1603. During the trial, Greenblatt suggests, Raleigh "transformed his life into a symbol of the lives of all men threatened by an overwhelmingly powerful system," specifically the capricious legal system of the state, which can falsely accuse and take a

man's life in a week's time (119). The state was also guilty of a systematic reliance on torture as a means of abstracting confessions, which, the English argued, was one of the most perfidious elements of the Inquisition (119). Raleigh's trial was a dramatization of the experience many Englishmen had of alienation from the state. It laid the groundwork "for the belief that the state was hostile to the deeper values of religion and the individual" (120). Ultimately, Raleigh moved "restlessly back and forth between despair and heroic self-assertion, disillusionment and fervent optimism" (124). His self-conception as a suffering pilgrim on an essentially noble journey for self and state crumbled with his 1603 imprisonment in the Tower (124-125).²⁸

The sense of isolation and disillusionment that runs from the final stanzas of the *Discoverie* through Raleigh's courtly poetry and his trial records also expresses itself in his last literary work, the *History of the World*, which he wrote during his time in the Tower but did not finish before his execution in 1616. In the *History*, Raleigh attempts to offer an account of the history of temporal kingdoms. For Raleigh, history, particularly political history, is directed by providence. In his view, the wicked of the earth will face judgment, while the righteous shall enjoy God's favor. Raleigh's providentialist history, however, is riddled with contradiction. He fails to work out the connection between human action and divine judgment in any systematic way. By the end of the narrative, all references to a divine plan for history have been left off. Instead, there are only references to the plans of individual states and Raleigh's estimation of their worth (149). The state, Raleigh argues, is an essentially destructive force from which there is no escape in this world. The lack of God's presence in history leaves Raleigh with a sense of emptiness and disillusionment because history increasingly appears to him as simply the

record of nations who are “set upon enslaving other nations and doomed to enslavement themselves” (151).

Raleigh’s *History* exposes the “rotteness of empires” (Greenblatt, 102). In doing so, it completes the cycle of disenchantment that begins in the *Discoverie* and pervades other literary works like “The Lie.” While Raleigh retains a glimmer of hope in the *Discoverie* that a heroic existence apart from the rule of the state is still possible, the fall from grace within court circles he experienced after his numerous failures at colonizing Guiana and Virginia demonstrate that the narrative of individual martial heroism that propelled Drake to iconic status was fast losing its purchase due to England’s increasing investment in mercantilist and settler-planter models of imperial expansion. Raleigh’s marginalization within courtly culture and within England’s imperial vision had important literary consequences: with the expansion of empire, individuals who wished to pursue the life of knight-errantry on the imperial periphery had to face the difficult narrative choice of rendering their histories either as acts of imperial service, or rendering them as individual quest-narratives, whose ultimate investment lay not in the advancement of empire, but rather in the advancement of the individual through heroic action.

The buccaneer authors who wrote prolifically during the late-seventeenth century confronted exactly this problem, as they took to sea in search of a means of economic and social advancement. Many of the Caribbean buccaneers hailed from the lower classes of European society, and as such, they felt a natural attraction to the life of piracy, which promised both riches and fame. The romance form provided the buccaneers a natural narrative framework for framing their histories of violence and theft as heroic quests. It

also created an antagonistic relationship to empire for the obvious reason that piracy disrupted legitimate trade and rejected metropolitan law.

The authors I treat in the chapters that follow, however, all had ambivalent relationships to empire. As lower-class subjects laboring in the plantation system, Exquemelin and de Lussan criticized imperial labor politics, but they also retained a degree of commitment to the imperial project. Their romance tales were commingled with the natural historical narratives sought by imperial functionaries. These authors tended to try to keep one foot within the imperial system and the other out of it. Their competing investments in imperial and counter-imperial cultures created narrative friction between the romance mode and its politics, and those of progressivist imperial history.

In the following chapter, I examine Exquemelin's *Buccaneers*, which was the inaugural work in the buccaneer narrative tradition. Exquemelin's narrative registers the tension between imperial history and romance individualism through an oscillating evaluation of the moral character of empire on the one hand and buccaneer society on the other. The pirates of Tortuga whom he joined lived in an apparently utopian society. The utopian mythos of the narrative is drawn from the romance tradition, but it is not easily sustained in Exquemelin's text. As his experience with the buccaneers deepens, Exquemelin realizes that his initial characterization of pirate society as a utopian idyll within the crucible of empire was wrong. The pirates whose actions Exquemelin records are so brutal and senseless in their use of violence that they make it impossible to sustain a utopian interpretation of their society and their "heroic quests."

Alongside this wavering narrative of romance is a natural historical narrative that relates Exquemelin's findings on the geography, flora and fauna, and potential commodities of the areas covered in his travels. As a natural historian, Exquemelin inserts himself into the imperial discourse of scientific advancement, creating a split narrative self. I argue that this split narrative of the self, as a romance hero and a hero of empire, is an intensification of the fracturing process we see in Raleigh's case, where the romance of the self becomes increasingly incompatible with the mercantilist structure of European trans-Atlantic economies. Because Exquemelin's narrative begins from the position of the dispossessed, the sense of disenchantment with empire emerges more quickly and more intensely than in the *Discoverie*, and this disenchantment begins to spill over into Exquemelin's view of piracy as an alternative way of attaining liberty and achieving heroic status.

Chapter Two: The Disenchantment of History in Alexander Oliver Exquemelin's *The Buccaneers of America* (1678)

On May 2, 1666, Alexander Oliver Exquemelin set sail from Havre de Grace in France en route to the West Indies as an *engagé* of the French West India Company. Shortly after his arrival, Exquemelin was fortunate enough to escape the bonds of servitude and flee to join the buccaneer settlement at Tortuga, which lay just off the northwest coast of the island of Hispaniola. He remained in the buccaneers' company until 1672, after which time he returned to Europe. In 1678, the narrative of his travels was published and disseminated widely across Europe. After its initial publication in Amsterdam as *De Americaensche Zee-Roovers* in 1678, the narrative gained immense popularity. A German translation appeared in 1679, followed by translations into Spanish (1681), English (1684), and French (1686).²⁹ These editions expressed a widespread interest in the cultures of Caribbean piracy that were developing alongside Europe's expanding Atlantic empires.

The seventeenth century was a particularly turbulent period in the development of Europe's empires of trade, and the Caribbean was one of its hotbeds. Spain's weakening grip on its American possessions created footholds for the Dutch, English, and French, who used the islands of Curaçao, Jamaica, and Tortuga as bases for raids on Spanish settlements and shipping. Exquemelin's first-hand account of the buccaneers' assaults on the Spanish throughout the Caribbean and along the Spanish Main provided a crucial resource for European statesmen and imperial ideologues intent on competing with Spain for pre-eminence in the American theater.

Buccaneers has a complex textual morphology, expanding and contracting in size and scope from one edition to the next, but its basic composition consists of a mixture of autobiographical narrative, natural history, and cultural history. The narrative is broken down into three major sections. Section one narrates the history of the French at Hispaniola, including the history of Exquemelin's own arrival there; section two narrates the history of the buccaneers at Tortuga, their way of life, and their most notable exploits; and section three focuses specifically on the career of Henry Morgan, whose attacks on Portobello and Panama City drew attention to Spain's vulnerability in Panama, which was seen as a prized possession by empires and pirates alike because it provided easy access to the Pacific and the rich East Indies trade. The remainder of the narrative balances Exquemelin's observations about the natural history of Hispaniola, Tortuga, and the various stops along the buccaneers' itinerary with his observations on the cultural history of the buccaneers themselves and the indigenous groups with which they came into contact.³⁰ The text's natural history offers a wealth of data about available sources of food and provision, suitable crops, merchantable commodities, and the geographical locations of ports, rivers, and fortifications—all of which would have been of keen interest to travelers of the region. Its cultural history establishes a pan-Caribbean, multi-national genealogy of pirates that includes Bartolomeo el Portugues, Rock the Brazilian, François l'Olonnois, and Henry Morgan.

Because of its unique position as the primary source document for much of the history of these Caribbean pirates, critics have tended to focus their energies on distinguishing fact from fiction and establishing the historical accuracy of Exquemelin's text. In his classic study of seventeenth-century piracy, Clarence Haring recognizes

Buccaneers as one of the “earliest and most important” sources on the subject (277), an observation seconded by David Cordingly’s claim that Exquemelin’s narrative “has provided the basis for all serious histories of the buccaneers and, in spite of some inaccuracies, remains the standard work on the subject” (40). In contrast, Peter Earle, through a reading of contemporary Spanish documents pertaining to the sack of Panama, concludes that Exquemelin either fabricated portions of his narrative of Henry Morgan’s exploits or received a faulty second-hand relation of them.³¹

While such debates about historicity are largely intractable due to the lack of other primary source material, they have nevertheless produced some recent, more sophisticated studies on the ideological function of the narrative’s historical form itself. Richard Frohock has recently shown how the question of truth in *Buccaneers* is tied to larger cultural questions about credibility and authority. Within the context of early modern “trusting systems,” authors had to establish their own credibility by appealing to contemporary standards of social respectability and scientific objectivity in order for their texts to “count.”³² Merchants and travelers were considered suspect by metropolitan men of science because they were either more concerned with profit than scientific advancement or prone to indulge in fantasy or both. As Michael McKeon observes, it was a general proverb of the seventeenth century that “Travellers may tell Romances or untruths by authority” (100). In fact, one could assume that they did. Tales of Amazons, cannibals, and cities of gold were so frequent among travel narratives as to become cliché. While many readers were willing to suspend disbelief because travelers claimed first-hand experience of such marvelous realities, the proverb cited by McKeon suggests that readers were often skeptical of travel narratives because they bore too close a

resemblance to the fables of romance. The travel narrator was thus faced with the task of proving to his readers that he was a “socially humble, yet respectable and authoritative, witness to history,” not a liar (Frohock 58).

Travel writers such as Exquemelin frequently appealed to the discourse of science to prove their own trustworthiness as historians and to show that their narratives were “true histories” and not lying ones.³³ As Anna Neill has shown, buccaneer authors worked hard to demonstrate that they were, despite all appearances, actually civilized subjects whose aim was to add to the stores of knowledge required by European empires (166). Such authors faced not only the general skepticism that conditioned readers’ reactions to travel writing, but also a particular skepticism of their moral worth, and hence their trustworthiness, on account of their violent pasts. In the face of these basic challenges to their personal character and the historicity of their narratives, buccaneer authors used ethnographic discourse, among other things, to establish their own civility against the backdrop of the “savage” inhabitants of the New World (177).

This recent work suggests that the important question about Exquemelin’s *Buccaneers of America* is not whether it is true or false, history or romance, but what, in ideological terms, is at stake in the production of its particular brand of truth. Exquemelin, not surprisingly, defended the historicity of his text, assuring his readers that the experiences and observations it contained were true, no matter how strange they seemed. Unfortunately, no amount of swearing could change the basic fact that for early moderns the true history and the romance were inseparably linked.³⁴ While McKeon extrapolates from this insight about the period’s deep skepticism a larger claim about the “unavailability of narrative truth as such,” it is more accurate to say that narrative truth is

a function of formal practices of enunciation and is therefore never fully present or absent as such (119).³⁵ As Fredric Jameson argues, “history” always comes to us through narrative form, and every narrative form registers, in its own way, the social and political tensions that underlie its production (35, 49). History and romance, as forms, represent important “units” of the ideological dialectic of empire. These units, or “ideologemes,” as Jameson calls them, define each form’s horizon of meaning, its manner of communicating narrative truth (87).

In this chapter I situate Exquemelin’s *Buccaneers* within the horizon of the romance genre by exploring the complex dialectical relationship it shares with the narrative form of history. Though their degree of theoretical sophistication differs, the work of both traditional historians and of contemporary literary and cultural historians shares a basic commitment to reading the narrative *as history*, largely disregarding its romance poetics. But if we lend credence to the Renaissance proverb that travelers often tell “Romances and untruths by authority,” we must consider more seriously the legacy of the romance form in early modern travel texts like *Buccaneers* and the ways in which its forms of “authority” relate to the forms of authority sanctioned by the emergent empiricism of early modern historiography.

Early modern historiography, which privileged the narrative of imperial history as linear, progressive, and methodologically advanced is a prominent formal feature of Exquemelin’s text. This linear, progressivist history, however, is couched within the larger structure of the chivalric romance, which tends to favor the fantastic and the heroic over the prosaic, and tends as well to value martial exercise over dispassionate observation.³⁶ In its romance form, *Buccaneers* imagines the history of the seventeenth-

century Caribbean as a backdrop for a series of quests by piratical knights-errant whose egalitarian society and martial prowess offered a powerful alternative to the brutalizing life that subjects like Exquemelin suffered while in service of abusive plantation owners, merchant captains, and naval captains.

The stark difference between pirate society and life in the imperial labor system leads Exquemelin to represent pirate society and its high valuation of heroic individualism as utopian. The narrative's heroic, utopian strain, however, is drowned out by moral depravity of the buccaneers, who prove ultimately not to be heroes, but villains more evil than the empires against which they rebelled. Whereas the traditional function of violence in chivalric romances is to prove the virtue of the protagonist, the knights-errant in *Buccaneers* deploy violence gratuitously, senselessly, and thereby render the narrative's romance frame incoherent.³⁷

The collapse of the narrative form of romance in *Buccaneers* has important consequences for its historiographical function. Progressivist narratives of imperial history depend on the suppression of the very acts of violence that permeate the scenes of romance heroism that populate the text.³⁸ What remains is a disenchanting history of empire that reveals the ways in which the chaotic field of the Atlantic world pushed the narrative forms of history and romance to their limits as hermeneutics of experience. In order to illustrate the regressive movement of the narrative's logic, I begin with its scientific, historical dimension, and proceed toward an analysis of the circular pattern of errant wandering that envelops and problematizes progressivist histories of empire.

“Merchants of Light”: The Science of Empire and the Production of History

With the rise of the “New Sciences” in the seventeenth century, the discourse of history developed a distinctively modern concern with direct observation and objectivity. The shared methodological and epistemological concerns of science and historiography for immediate, first-hand knowledge and direct experience catalyzed a radical transformation in the way that knowledge was produced. Francis Bacon was perhaps the most influential proponent of the new set of epistemic practices that that would define the “new” sciences, and is therefore a useful measure for the “modern” brand of history that Exquemelin fancied himself as writing in *Buccaneers*. Bacon’s aim was a complete reformation of the tradition of natural philosophy, which was focused on natural history specifically, but also had consequences for general practice of historiography. Key to this reformation was the idea that modern historians should bypass the volumes of antiquity, fueled as they were by superstition and speculation, and access the book of nature directly.

This “new” model of history had a liberating effect: old structures of authority were dismantled and replaced by fresh insights gleaned from the direct experiences of modern individuals. However, not all modern subjects were on equal footing within Bacon’s reconceptualization of science. While anyone could record his experiences and observations, only privileged men of science were granted the ability to fashion those experiences and observations coherent systems of knowledge.

Bacon’s vision for the production of new knowledge carried with it a division of labor that mapped conveniently onto the geography of European imperial expansion. Within his system, laborers performed two distinctive operations: some were miners, and some were smiths. In this configuration, miners were colonial travelers and merchants

whose journeys brought them into contact with the raw material data of New World nature and the cultural history of its inhabitants. Smiths, by contrast, were metropolitan men of science whose erudition and objectivity rendered them alone fit to fashion credible theories of natural history.³⁹ By subordinating colonial subjects to their metropolitan counterparts, the Baconian system wedded the progress of science to political systems of domination in ways that rationalized and legitimized state power.

We can see this connection between scientific advancement and the hegemonic politics of empire clearly in Bacon's *New Atlantis* (1627), which distilled his vision for a global empire of science through the depiction of a utopian scientific community nestled in a forgotten island off the South American coast. The *New Atlantis* is salient to the present study for its succinct summarization of the epistemological economy in which Exquemelin attempted to trade through fashioning *Buccaneers* as a modern, scientific, historiographical narrative. To clarify Exquemelin's place within this economy, I will offer a brief récit of the plotline of Bacon's text and show how the social model it propagates influenced authors such as Exquemelin.

The *New Atlantis* narrates the discovery of the island of Atlantis, located off the coast of Peru. The author and his crew stumble upon the island during a trade venture to the Far East that gets blown off course by contrary winds. The hapless crew arrives on Atlantis while they are dangerously low on both rations and hope. As a gesture of mercy, the island's inhabitants permit the crew to rest and victual, and during that time, its rulers reveal the island's forgotten history and the secret inner workings of its society.

This society's defining feature is a massive structure known as Solomon's House, or the College of the Six Days' work as it was also called. The House was structured on a

vertical axis that extended from more than three miles below the Earth's surface to a little more than half a mile above ground. Its vertical structure provided a literalized representation of the epistemic hierarchy established in Bacon's scientific writings. In its bowels were the miners, who collected nature's raw materials. In its Middle Region were those who studied the more elevated movements of celestial bodies such as stars and comets. In its Upper Region were the smiths, who controlled the entire operation of the house.

A few remarks about the various occupations of the house's fellows are in order here as they bear directly on our understanding of the place of buccaneer authors such as Exquemelin in the modern empire of science. The job of collecting raw data fell to the Merchants of Light, who traveled to the four corners of the Earth to gather all of the published work on natural and moral history. These Merchants of Light passed their knowledge up the ladder to Depredators, who extracted experiments from the mass of books given them, and these in turn passed their work up the ladder until it reached the Compilers, whose job it was to arrange the data they received into tables and charts suitable for the highest class of workers, the Interpreters of Nature. Interpreters were charged with the task of distilling the mass of material and experimental knowledge provided by the lower classes of the House into the principles, axioms, and laws of nature (Bacon 486-487). Accordingly, the Interpreters accomplished the chief end of the House, which was acquiring the "knowledge of Causes, and secret motions of things; and the enlarging of the bounds of Human Empire, to the effecting of all things possible" (480).

The structure of Solomon's House re-imagines the structures of domination that characterize European imperialism along a vertical axis. Whereas the oppositional

relationship between imperial centers and their colonial peripheries imagines hierarchies of power/knowledge along a horizontal plane, the *New Atlantis* imagines those same power structures in a very literal, vertical way. Those who worked in the bowels of nature found themselves under the discipline of lettered metropolitans in the same way that colonial subjects found themselves under the governance of a centralized state. Ralph Bauer has labeled this conflation of knowledge production with political power “epistemic mercantilism” (4). The phrase highlights the ways in which epistemic practices mapped out in social space (for example, the distinction between those who could observe and those who could arrange) were also mapped out in geographical space in order to buttress European structures of imperial governance. In this model, raw data, like raw goods, flowed from West to East in service of imperial interests, from the bottom of the imperial House to the top.

Buccaneer authors such as Exquemelin could make valuable contributions to natural history by acting as imperial functionaries of the sort that Bacon envisioned as “Merchants of Light.” Their compilations of direct observations of New World nature and culture could help usher in the modern empire of science by bringing ever-expansive geographies within its ambit. Dampier’s preface to the *New Voyage* exemplifies this connection between buccaneers’ experience and the imperial project. The purpose of his history, he declares, is to contribute to the “advancement of knowledge and the Interests of [his] country.” Significantly, Dampier submitted his journal to Charles Montague, then president of the Royal Society of London, a move that explicitly positions the *New Voyage* within the hierarchical model of knowledge production envisioned in the *New Atlantis*. While Exquemelin eschewed such a narrowly nationalist paradigm, he too

envisioned his journal as an important contribution to the scientific literature on the Americas.⁴⁰

Entering this conversation from the proper position was crucial for authors with a violent past like Exquemelin. As Steven Shapin has shown, in order to participate in the formative discourses of modernity, including natural philosophy and historiography, one had to demonstrate one's reliability within the "trusting systems" that governed the production of scientific knowledge during the seventeenth century. These "trusting systems" operated on a series of maxims designed to separate reliable authors from unreliable ones. Within such systems, Shapin states, "knowledge of people was constitutively used to make and unmake knowledge of things" (287). Social status and reputation were just as important as what one said. If this was true of early modern subjects generally, it was truer for pirates. Moral integrity and disinterestedness were two of the primary criteria used to differentiate trustworthy authors from untrustworthy ones. Pirates were obviously not known for either. Their penchant for lawless violence was a disqualifier on the moral front, and their cupidity was an infringement upon the scientific value of objectivity. Moreover, pirates refused to participate in the normative operations of the state, including its system of rationalized, centralized government, and its system of authorized circuits of economic and cultural exchange (212).

Exquemelin's ability to position himself as a modern, scientific historian allows him to distance himself from the criminals with whom he traveled and thereby to reconstitute himself as a civil subject. Montrose has called this process "subjectification." ("Professing the Renaissance" 21). By assuming the appropriate position within the system of epistemic mercantilism that defined the exchange and production of knowledge

during the seventeenth century, Exquemelin endows his narrative with the sense of coherence and teleology characteristic of imperial history, thereby confirming his own agency as an imperial protagonist.⁴¹ To cement his status as a credible and authoritative witness to history, Exquemelin would have to prove the veracity of his narrative, his proximity to the events he relates, and his reliability within the trusting systems of early modernity.

Exquemelin as Imperial Historian

The proverb related by McKeon about the fuzzy line between history and romance in the tradition of travel literature suggests that a central problem for travel writers was the facticity of their narratives. As Hans Galinsky has argued, the urgent question for early modern historians, most especially those who culled their material from their travels, was how to “convey that subjectively true sense of the marvelous and at the same time keep the reporter’s cardinal goal of conveying objective truth.” (“Exploring the Exploration Report” 7). Exquemelin shows that he is keenly aware of this problem. In *Buccaneers*, he makes a special effort to demonstrate his own trustworthiness as a witness to history. Much of the history of *Buccaneers* is written in the detached language of reportage that characterized proper historiography within the tradition of the New Sciences. In addition to adopting a plain, transparent style, Exquemelin further assures readers of his trustworthiness by showing familiarity with the travel literature of the Americas, and by demonstrating that he possesses the skeptic’s gift of separating fact from fiction in this literature to deliver an accurate, authentic product.⁴²

The narrative’s opening pages showcase Exquemelin’s broad knowledge of maritime customs, geography, oceanography, natural science, and maritime economy.

The departure of Exquemelin's ship from Havre de Grace in France occasions a brief mention of the strong and dangerous current known as the "Race." Exquemelin notes that the passing of the Race is marked for many seamen by a peculiar ritual that mingles the process of knighting, Christian baptism, and an excessive consumption of alcohol. During this ritual, the boatswain takes up mock vestments and a wooden sword, dons blackface, and orders every sailor who has not passed the Race before to do the following: receive the sign of the cross in black daubing, endure a blow at the nape of the neck from the boatswain's wooden sword, suffer baptism from the crew using pales of water, and pay his indulgence to the crew by donating a bottle of brandy to the community's stores (26). Exquemelin knows about this bizarre ritual from direct experience as a traveler with the French West India Company, but he demonstrates a comparative knowledge of maritime customs that would surely have bolstered his status as a worthy historian. The Dutch, he notes, also engage in a similar ritual when crossing the Race, and when crossing the Berlingues off the Portuguese coast. Speculating on the origins of the ritual, Exquemelin says that "Nobody from either nation can give the reasons for doing these things, apart from its being an old custom among seamen. Some say the matter was so ordained by the Emperor Charles V, but it is not to be found in his book of laws" (27).

The practical knowledge of geography and oceanography evinced by Exquemelin's relation of the location of dangerous currents positions him as a modern man of science during a period when the mythological depictions of the sea were giving way to an increasingly rationalized form of representation.⁴³ Exquemelin's mention of the "Races" signals his assent to and command of this modern, scientific re-imagining of oceanic space. So too does his mention of the crew's passing of the Tropics of Cancer

and Capricorn, which are given with their precise latitude and longitude according to the tradition of contemporary “star-gazers” (27).

Immediately following Exquemelin’s remarks on oceanography are a series of observations about the island of Tortuga, the home of the buccaneers, which lay just off the northwest coast of Hispaniola. Continuing the scientific logic of his remarks on oceanography, Exquemelin further entrenches himself in the discourse of science by relating the island’s exact latitude, longitude, circumference, and breadth. Alongside these basic geographical notes is a series of remarks about the island’s natural productions, which include “many wild boar,” “wild pigeons,” “many sea crabs,” and a kind of “excellent timber” called pox-wood that was “much sought after for building ships and houses.” Present as well are “aloes and many other medicinal herbs” of interest to natural philosophers, including much sought-after tobacco crops (30, 32). The details Exquemelin provides are tailored specifically to enhance European readers’ knowledge of the natural history of the Caribbean. He makes his statement of purpose at the end of the second chapter, which is, he says, “to satisfy the reader’s curiosity of everything worthy of note in the western part of America” (34).

European readers were bound to be especially curious about the history of the buccaneers and the various destinations to which they traveled, little known as they were before the publication of Exquemelin’s history. The form of his relation of the buccaneers’ history is crafted to adhere to the standards of “epistemological decorum” that Shapin argues guided the production of scientific and historical knowledge during the seventeenth century. During the period, science was largely a gentleman’s pastime. The gentleman-scientist was defined by a self-effacing rhetoric marked by plain style and

a spirit of disinterested objectivity (212). He was an “antiauthor” whose defining characteristic was the effacement of his own authorial voice and personal interests from his narrative (223). *Buccaneers* aims at precisely this kind of self-effacement by relating much of its history in the third person.⁴⁴

Most of the history Exquemelin offers of the buccaneers is marred by horrendous violence. Aware of the potential charge of guilt by association, Exquemelin tells their story with the critical distance contemporary readers would have expected from a serious and trustworthy historian. The narrative of the buccaneers’ raid on Panama City is illustrative of the historiographical form of *Buccaneers*. Exquemelin was clearly present during the raid, but he disappears from its relation. “They” (the buccaneers), he says, sent out repeated expeditions of marauders and brought back booty and prisoners whom “they” made “to suffer the greatest cruelties and tortures.” The depth of the buccaneers’ depravity in this instance bears quoting at length:

[T]hey strappado’d him [captive citizen] until both his arms were entirely dislocated, then knotted a cord so tight round the forehead that his eyes bulged out, big as eggs. Since he still would not admit where the coffer was, they hung him up by his male parts, while one struck him, another sliced off his nose, yet another an ear, and another scorched him with fire—tortures as barbarous as a man can devise. At last, when the wretch could no longer speak and they could think of no new torments, they let a Negro stab him to death with a lance. (200)

The buccaneers’ imagination is striking for its ability to stretch the bounds of human cruelty almost beyond belief. Their desecration of captives’ bodies is completely

gratuitous, their manner utterly barbarous. Exquemelin foregrounds their savage nature through the repeated pronominal distancing of the third-person “they” from the implied but cloaked authorial “I,” who is presumably a more properly calibrated ethical subject than his depraved cohorts. To show that such acts were the general rule among the buccaneers, Exquemelin notes that “they committed many more such cruelties. They showed little mercy, even to the monks, and would have shown none but for the hope of extracting money from them. Nor did they spare the women, except for those who yielded themselves completely” (200-201).

As Richard Frohock has argued, in order to be viewed as a trustworthy and authoritative witness to history, Exquemelin’s authority “depends paradoxically on his familiarity with, and his distance from, the buccaneers with whom he travels” (“Exquemelin’s *Buccaneers*” 57). He must show, as in the episode related above, that he was close enough to the events in question to relate them accurately. He must also show that he was sufficiently distanced ethically from the buccaneers to avoid damaging his reputation. Exquemelin achieves this balance by relating the events of the raid in such fine detail that readers would have to assume his presence, while simultaneously casting himself as an independent observer of events, not a direct participant in them.

On the few occasions where Exquemelin moves from the third to the first person, the intent is usually to bolster his authority as an eye-witness or to convince readers of his moral integrity. For example, he relates the sight of a monstrous caiman with which no other authors “have ever had such experience of them as I have” (45).⁴⁵ Similarly, he relates a fairly incredible story of a group of people living in the mountains of Gibraltar who resemble Indians but have ape-like feet, arrow-proof skin, and monstrous strength.

These fearsome beast-men have a habit of seizing Spaniards, taking them up to the tree-tops, and hurling them to the ground. “I have read various descriptions of America,” Exquemelin claims, “but never found any mention of such people.” Assuming from his direct experience with Barbary apes living in the region, Exquemelin speculates that such people may belong to that species, but eschews unwarranted conclusions in favor of a more measured approach: “Several Spaniards have assured me that these creatures are human, and that they have seen them frequently: I give it here for what it’s worth” (97). Both cases demonstrate Exquemelin’s familiarity with the travel literature of the Americas. The latter case especially shows Exquemelin’s ability to sift fact from fiction as he weighs second-hand reports against his own direct experience to forward the most plausible conclusions possible about the wild men of Gibraltar.

The use of the first person to establish Exquemelin’s moral integrity can be seen in the narrative of the buccaneers’ raid on Panama City discussed above. He shifts from the third-person register used to describe most of that raid’s violent history to a first-person relation of his experience with an unfortunate victim of Morgan’s lust. One of the crew’s captives was a “young and very beautiful wife of a rich merchant” whom Exquemelin says was “so steadfast her name deserves to live” (201). After a prolonged resistance to Morgan’s advances, this poor woman was placed in solitary confinement, stripped naked, and given “so little to eat she was almost dying with hunger.” Morgan’s assault on this poor woman was typical of the buccaneers’ treatment of female captives. As an eye-witness to the torments this woman faced, Exquemelin risks appearing as an accomplice to Morgan’s crimes. He therefore notes shrewdly that “Once or twice I helped by bringing her food, though this had to be done on the sly” (203). Exquemelin’s use of

the first person here confirms his moral integrity by registering his own potentially dangerous defiance of Morgan's orders.

Despite such careful manipulation of the codes of epistemological decorum, the legitimacy of Exquemelin's history was suspect simply because he was part of the working class of the maritime world. The prejudice against the laboring class was registered clearly by the disdain evinced by the prominent seventeenth-century scientist Robert Boyle for the divers' reports that called into question his own hydrographic theories on the basis of the divers' immediate experience with the elements theorized by Boyle. Boyle's disdain for these divers' reports was based on the argument that they were "not philosophers but laborers" (qtd. in Shapin 262). The implication was that physical laborers were disqualified from participation in scientific endeavors because manual labor atrophied one's analytical faculties. Henry Stubbes, a noted physician and contemporary of Boyle's, stated the matter more poignantly when he decried the narratives of "*negligent, or un-accurate Merchants and Seamen,*" whose observations were suspect due to their alleged illiteracy. "What judgments," he asks, "have these *men of no reading*, whereby to *rectify or enlarge their Enquiries?*" (qtd. in Shapin 294-295). While Stubbes overstates his case regarding the ignorance of seamen, who read and wrote more widely than assumed, their prejudicial characterization by himself and, by extension, by Boyle clearly complicated the process of subjectification through the manipulation of the conventions of modern, scientific history.⁴⁶

If history is what allows Exquemelin to articulate himself as a subject, what helps him climb from the ranks of indentured servitude to the order of the Baconian Merchant of light, history is also "what hurts," as Jameson puts it. For Jameson, "History" calls our

attention to the determinate contradiction between social classes—in this case, the fundamental conflict between the interests of maritime laborers seeking authoritative status as men of science and authors of history, and the interests of the gentlemanly class whose authority rests on their ability to maintain systems of subordination that deny claims to agency by laborers, merchants, seamen, and pirates. The persistent failure of society's marginal class to dislodge the mechanisms of their own subordination shows the limits of History, which Jameson says is ultimately “what refuses desire and sets inexorable limits to individual as well as collective praxis, which its ‘ruses’ turn into grisly and ironic reversals of their overt intention” (102).

The ideological function of the historical form in *Buccaneers*—its “intention” in Jameson’s idiom—is the reproduction of the progressivist narrative of imperial history emblemized by the utopian vision of the *New Atlantis*, which attempts to make a place for seamen such as Exquemelin as imperial protagonists. Within this narrative, the march of empire is figured as the march of knowledge, a sanitized, rationalized endeavor to bring the expansive geographies of empire under its control. The modern, scientific conventions of Exquemelin’s history described above signal his desire to participate in the production of precisely this sort of imperial history. The remarks of his early translators also confirm this point. William Croke’s preface to the 1684 English edition of *Buccaneers* is representative in this regard. Exquemelin’s narrative, he says, “enlargeth our acquaintance with Natural History, so much prized and enquired for by the Learned of the present Age, with several observations not easily to be found in other accounts already received from America.” Croke praises Exquemelin for the fidelity of his history, his plainness of style, and his sincerity—points which suggest that Exquemelin

has indeed achieved his intended effect. And yet, there is a sense in which the ideological intention of the historical form of *Buccaneers* is refused and ironized.

At the level of textual reception, even the ebullient praise of an editor like Crooke carries with it the implicit criticism that the rhetorical simplicity of his style shows him to be an “illiterate man” in need of a learned overseer capable of rendering his history intelligible.⁴⁷ At the level of the narrative’s internal logic, the desire to reproduce the progressivist, sanitized narrative of imperial history propagated by statesmen and imperial ideologues is frustrated by the persistence of a grim and pervasive violence that renders such a history incoherent. As the narrative reveals, such violence is not ancillary to the project of European imperial expansion, but is in fact constitutive of it.

Exquemelin’s realization that buccaneer culture is characterized by the same type of brutality as the imperial cultures against which it rebels further intensifies this theme by revealing that violence itself is the governing syntax of the Atlantic world, and that this violence places inexorable limits on the process of individual subjectification. History, as a hermeneutic of experience, becomes a ruse. In its place stands the utopian hope of romance.

Romance and Utopia in *Buccaneers*

In order to comprehend the ironization of the historical form in *Buccaneers*, we must return to the narrative’s primal scene. Exquemelin’s narrative begins with the traumatic history of his departure from France to St. Domingue as an indentured servant of the French West India Company. While indentures such as Exquemelin were lured with the promises of an apprenticeship and a prosperous future as farmers or merchants at the end of their term, the reality was that most of them would learn only how to suffer

and would end their careers in penury. Indentures like Exquemelin shared a lot not entirely different from that of slaves. They were given the same rations for food and clothes and were bought and sold for indefinite terms at their masters' whim. Like slaves, they were also routinely beaten and starved.⁴⁸ Exquemelin's experience as an indenture followed this typical script. After a Company sell-off to recoup bad debt that included its "assets" in indentures, Exquemelin found himself in the hands of "the wickedest rogue on the whole island" of Hispaniola, who did him "all the harm he could think of," depriving him of food and beating him within inches of his life (34). A fortunate fall into the hands of a more humane master provided Exquemelin the opportunity to purchase his freedom, at which point he fled Hispaniola to join the buccaneer community at Tortuga.

Exquemelin figures his escape from servitude and his entrance into buccaneer society as a moment of spiritual rebirth:

When I was free once more, I was like Adam when he was first created. I had nothing at all, and therefore resolved to join the privateers or buccaneers, with whom I had stayed until the year 1670, accompanying them on their various voyages and taking part in many important raids.
(34)

It has been suggested that this moment of social detachment initiates the process of distancing crucial to establishing the text's modern historiographic dimension (Frohock 58). This moment can be read more productively as the beginning of the text's romance sequence. The language of the passage bears a striking similarity to the language used by Jameson to describe the ideological function of romance. He describes that function in the following terms:

Romance is . . . a wish-fulfillment, or Utopian fantasy which aims at the transfiguration of the world of everyday life in such a way as to restore the conditions of some lost Eden, or to anticipate a future realm from which the old mortality and imperfections will have been effaced. Romance, therefore, does not involve the substitution of some more ideal realm for ordinary reality . . . but rather a process of transforming of ordinary reality. (110)

Romance has always aimed at wish fulfillment, especially the fulfillment of desires that cannot find expression within traditional social forms.⁴⁹ In the case of *Buccaneers*, the wish to be fulfilled is an escape from the dehumanizing culture of French planter society and pursue a life of freedom. Buccaneer society seemed to offer precisely the kind of alternative social formation necessary to gratify Exquemelin's desire for liberation. Compared to Saint Domingue, Tortuga was a veritable Eden.

Within the romance tradition, the transfiguration of reality described by Jameson is affected through the quest, an adventure undertaken by the knight-errant to confirm his virtue in love and at arms. The knight's quests provide the basic narrative structure of romance, which Auerbach identifies as a "graduated test of election" designed to chart the knight's progress toward the perfect ideal of chivalric virtue (136). Each adventure defines, through the knight's heroic performance, the values by which society is to be transformed. Romance thus works on the concept of change through action: every act of bravery, every feat of daring brings the world one step closer to its ideal form.

The logic of romance is, in a deep way, the logic that propels the formation of pirate culture. Romance celebrates thorough the knight's errant wandering the freedom of

the will to determine its own course through “reality.” This basic affirmation of free will is also what compelled many pirates to go “on the account,” effectively announcing their criminality. Much like the knight-errant of romance, the pirate’s existence is defined by a series of quests of his own choosing. Pirates’ affiliation or disaffiliation with a particular community is purely matter of choice. Pirate communities thus embodied through their very existence the belief that the power of the state, expressed through its hyper-rationalization of political, military and economic relations, could be resisted, and that society itself could be reshaped on different principles. Members of such communities could govern themselves apart from the power of the state, and could reclaim the heroic ideal that was vanishing quickly with the emergence of highly centralized and widely diffused systems of bureaucratic imperial governance. It is easy to see why, for Exquemelin, joining the buccaneers was compelling on both the political and the ideological level. At least in the beginning, the life of piracy was liberating: like Adam in the Garden of Eden, Exquemelin was stripped bare of all encumbrances and so, in having nothing, had everything. Exquemelin offers numerous examples of the ways in which buccaneer culture rebelled against the oppressive politics of the state.

Unlike citizenship in the state, membership within the community of buccaneers was not compulsory. Neither was the authority of its figurehead absolute. Captains are chosen by the community, not by unilateral command, and they are forced to share the material circumstances of their crew: the captain shares the crew’s fare, is paid according to the scale they prescribe, and is bound to cruise where, and only where, the crew has agreed to go. The form of buccaneer society was a radical departure from the practice of the state. So too was the character of its operations. Exquemelin notes that the buccaneers

frequently traveled and raided in bands far smaller than the number of their enemies—a practice that provided them ample opportunity to demonstrate their martial-heroism. An exemplary figure of such chivalric virtue was Bartolomeo el Portugues, a feared Caribbean pirate, who was taken captive by the Spanish during a raid on a ship bound for Havana and sentenced to death on the following day. Undaunted, Bartolomeo managed to escape under the cover of night, floating away to safety on two empty wine bottles, after which point he marshaled a counterattack and took that very same ship in harbor days later with a crew of just twenty men (77-79). Another famous Caribbean pirate nicknamed Rock the Brazilian demonstrated similar bravado when, after suffering a shipwreck near Golfo Triste, he determined that his crew of thirty men would take on the Spanish cavalry one-hundred strong and seek no quarter. The Spanish, Exquemelin claims, lasted no more than an hour before taking flight, leaving their horses and their food behind (80-81).

The freedom of will exhibited in the political form of buccaneer society and implied by the daring manner of its military operations articulated a vision of a counter-modernity defined by individual acts of heroism. The buccaneers were modern incarnations of the medieval knight-errant, rebelling against the political and economic form of the modern state and harkening their constituency back to a utopian Golden Age populated by heroes, not bureaucrats, by free individuals, not disciplined bodies. As José Antonio Maravall has eloquently put it, “genuine utopian thinking does not evade reality but is directly oriented toward it” (Maravall, *Utopia* 188). In its modern form, as opposed to its medieval form, that orientation was directly against the hegemonic rule of the

imperial state, and it was animated by the common conviction within the chivalric tradition that “men are born free and exempt from law” (156-158).

The buccaneers’ self-exemption from the rule of law created a highly mobile utopian space within the imperial nexus that was defined by the heroic ethos of romance. In a very real sense, the old mortality that defined Exquemelin’s existence as an indentured servant had been effaced and his social reality had been deeply transformed. Thus, while it may in a sense be true, as Maravall says, that “[w]hile the sixteenth century is one of the richest in utopian thought, the seventeenth is one of the poorest,” (192) it is also true that the utopian vision of romance persisted well through the seventeenth century and that it performed important political and cultural work within the pirate communities that thrived during its waning moments.

Closer scrutiny of the romantic vision of *Buccaneers*, however, shows that the particular ideologeme of romance—its separation of the forces of good from the forces of evil—ceases to function when it becomes clear that the heroes of buccaneer lore are just as depraved as the villainous imperial cultures against which they rebelled. As the scenes of shocking brutality that populate the narrative mount, it becomes clear that the “progressive” dimension of romance identified by Auerbach is itself a ruse cloaking the narrative’s devolution into a maelstrom of violence. At the discursive level, the gradual unraveling of the romance plot of Exquemelin’s text points to the limits of the romance as an interpretive mode.

The Failure of Romance and the Disenchantment of History

The appeal of the romance frame, as we have seen, lay in its ability to mediate through literary form the political and cultural antagonism between the brokers of power

in the imperial world and their subordinates. It provided the narrative structure necessary to imagine imperial cultures as evil in contrast to the heroic, utopian character of buccaneer society. We can trace the development of this structure throughout the narrative. By doing so, we can begin to understand how *Buccaneers* reveals the limits of romance as a hermeneutic of experience.

Exquemelin develops the reader's sense of the class antagonism already implied by his narrative of social death and rebirth through a series of anecdotes that illustrate the oppressive character of imperial society. In contrast to the Edenic representation of the society of Tortuga, imperial culture seems astonishingly brutal. Exquemelin begins his critique of that culture with a denunciation of the French planters of Hispaniola—a group with which he was all too familiar from his term of indenture. They show an utter disregard for the humanity of their servants, who, Exquemelin claims, are barely better off than slaves or animals. He notes that these planters “trade in human beings just like the Turks, selling bondsmen among themselves as people in Europe deal in horses.” They often go recruiting in France for dupes, who are given promises of wealth only to be sold and worked “harder in fact than the Negroes” because slaves have to be maintained for life, whereas indentures only had to last a few years (64). In a particularly chilling example of the planters' cruelty toward their servants, Exquemelin offers an anecdote about a fugitive bondsman who was caught, returned to his master, and forced to endure a series of tortures before meeting death. When this fugitive was caught, his master “tied him to a tree, beat him till the blood gushed down his back, then smeared his flesh with a sauce made of lemon juice, salt and red pepper. He was left in this state, tied to the tree, for twenty-four hours. Then the master came back and struck him again, until he died

under the blows.” So incomprehensible were these measures that Exquemelin could only explain them by assuming the man who inflicted them to be demonically possessed (65).

Though English masters were not so blunt as the French in their use of force, they were just as guilty of abuse in Exquemelin’s eyes. The tendency of the English was to lengthen the terms of indenture in order to extract the maximum quotient of productivity from their servants’ labor. English servants were traditionally bound for seven years. During their first five years, they received what appears to be normal treatment in Exquemelin’s view. During their sixth year, however, English masters had a habit of tormenting their servants so much that they begged to be sold to a new master. Happy to oblige this request and receive extra compensation for his laborer, the original master would sell off his servant for another term of three to seven years. Exquemelin claims to have known personally English servants who have been “enslaved” in this manner for durations of fifteen, twenty, and twenty-eight years (66).

Given the pervasiveness of the Black Legend, it is not surprising that the Spanish are also targets of Exquemelin’s criticism. He notes that the effects of Spanish tyranny were felt acutely by the Miskito tribes living in the corridor running from Honduras to Panama. Miskito tribes in Costa Rica, Exquemelin observes, “shun all contact with strangers,” for “when the Spaniards first came to this country they subjected the inhabitants to such cruelty they looked on the conquerors with terror, and fled into the interior.”⁵⁰ Spanish cruelty produced in the Miskito a deep distrust of all Europeans, who were deemed guilty by association as colonial oppressors. Moreover, the Miskito grew suspicious of other local tribes, some of which had conspired with the Spanish to overthrow them for their resistance to Spanish rule. Forced to scatter swiftly to escape

colonization, Miskito tribal ties were severed, so deeply in fact that each of the surviving groups developed different dialects and lost the ability to communicate with one another. By the time of Exquemelin's encounter with them, the Miskito of Costa Rica were in a state of perpetual war. Exquemelin observes that the political rift tearing the Miskito apart is a direct result of linguistic differentiation. "Nothing," he says, "brings about more enmity between two peoples than their being unable to understand each other" (214). Contact with imperial culture disfigured Miskito society, which had become a living testament to its depravity.

Against such a morbid backdrop, one would expect the purportedly freer and more egalitarian culture of the buccaneers to appear vivid and luminous. Exquemelin's testimony, however, points in the opposite direction: the buccaneers did not escape or even reform the systems of imperial domination against which they rebelled; they merely repeated them. The careers of the two most prominent pirates in *Buccaneers*—the French pirate François l'Olonnais and the English pirate Henry Morgan—support this rather disappointing conclusion. A brief anecdote regarding each of their careers will serve to illustrate the point.

L'Olonnais earned fame for his marauding in the Caribbean and along the Spanish Main, where he became infamous for his brutality. His treatment of the prisoners taken during his raid on the Venezuelan port city of Puerto Caballo cuts a mean figure. The buccaneers succeeded in taking a Spanish ship while in port, and brought in a large catch of prisoners too, whom Exquemelin says the buccaneers "treated most cruelly, inflicting on these poor folk every torment imaginable." L'Olonnais set the bar high. Exquemelin reports that "When l'Olonnais had a victim on the rack, if the wretch did not instantly

answer his questions he would hack the man to pieces with his cutlass and lick the blood from the blade with his tongue” (107). If such a gruesome scene were not enough to convince the reader of l’Olonnais’s savagery, Exquemelin adds further detail. In order to gauge the strength of the local Spanish defenses, l’Olonnais gathered together the entire lot of his prisoners for interrogation. With a captive audience in hand, l’Olonnais selected one man from the lot to serve as an example of the ill fate that awaited those who refused to answer his demands. Upon hearing that the prisoners could not or would not tell him how to pass safely by the Spanish garrisons, l’Olonnais, “being possessed of a devil’s fury, ripped open one of the prisoners with his cutlass, tore the living heart out of his body, gnawed at it, and then hurled it in the face of one of the others, saying ‘Show me another way or I will do the same to you.’” (107).

The scene harkens readers back to the argument Montaigne made in the sixteenth century about the barbarism of European imperialists, which far surpassed the alleged barbarism of the “cannibals” of the New World. The image of l’Olonnais gnawing on a captive’s heart provided a very literal translation of Montaigne’s argument in “On Cannibals.” The image also invites the reader to consider the more recent representations of the tyranny of European empires that were marketed aggressively by the Dutch and dispersed to a broad international readership during the seventeenth century. *The Mirror of Spanish Tyrannies* (1620), for example, linked Spanish brutality in the Low Countries with its mirror image in the New World by depicting on its title page Spain’s imperial bureaucrats presiding over scenes of violence that included beheading, torture, and the slaughter of children. The applicability of this representational strategy was immediately visible to publishers of the *Buccaneers*, who replaced Spanish figureheads with pirates

like l'Olonnais and their European victims with American ones.⁵¹ The sensationalized depiction of l'Olonnais's crimes against humanity linked Exquemelin's increasingly disenchanting experience of life among the buccaneers with the ambient cultural sentiment that the New World was simply a new stage on which Europeans could play out their habitual conflicts.

As if to reign in the unruly violence of his cohorts and to mitigate its consequences for his heroic idealization of buccaneer society, Exquemelin moralizes on the occasion of l'Olonnais's death. In an act of poetic justice, l'Olonnais meets his end in Panama, where he is "hacked to pieces" by a local Indian. Exquemelin interprets l'Olonnais's death, and the end it put to his monstrous brutality, as providential, saying that "God would permit this man no further wicked deeds, but was ready to punish him for all the cruelties he had inflicted on so many innocent people by a cruel death" (117). As the obverse of Exquemelin's earlier anecdote about the abusive and demonically possessed French planter, the scene of l'Olonnois's death appears to restore a sense of theological order to the narrative. As Frohock puts it, the death of l'Olonnois renders the "seemingly senseless buccaneer violence coherent and suggests that a benevolent, if bloody, order reigns over the apparent chaos and strife in the Caribbean world" (Frohock, "Exquemelin's *Buccaneers*" 66). However, such petty acts of providence did not change the basic fact, confirmed at every stop along the way, that life among the buccaneers was as far away as one could get from the utopian view of pirate society with his narrative begins.

If Exquemelin's troubling experience serving in l'Olonnois's troupe cast doubt on the heroic narrative of piracy, his experience as a member of Morgan's crew made

Exquemelin certain that there was nothing chivalrous or heroic about piracy. We have already seen Morgan's perversion on display through Exquemelin's relation of his assault on one of the female captives from the raid on Panama City. After the city's burning, Morgan sent his cronies to gather the treasure, exempting them from the customary oath buccaneers took not to skim loot. The result was that a sizeable portion of the silver, gold, and precious stones gleaned from the raid found their way into the captain's coffers before they could be factored into the crew's share. While captain Morgan and his officers were taking the best share of the spoils for themselves, the rest of their crew was left without food. Many of the sick and wounded died for want of food, and even those of sound health found themselves having to eat buzzards to survive. They received cold comfort from Morgan, who calculated crew's shares after Morgan's skimming to be a mere 200 pieces of eight per man, with depressed exchange rates for wrought silver and jewels. Exquemelin says that "[w]hen he saw the common folk had begun to grumble bitterly, Morgan instantly made ready to leave. He had the fortress demolished and set on fire, after he'd had the brass cannon removed to his ship. Then he immediately set sail, without any sign of departure" (207-208).

Morgan's swindling of his crew was Exquemelin's last significant experience with the buccaneers. The disappointing nature of that experience provided a final confirmation of the building sense that romance, like history, was a ruse, that its narrative form and its ideological project were not tenable as hermeneutics of experience. The harrowing lesson of *Buccaneers* is that the effort to break free of the chain of violence only produces deeper entanglement. The distinction between imperial cultures and the piratical cultures that railed against them blurs as Exquemelin's horizon of experience

broadens, such that the two ultimately become indistinguishable in their brutality. As David Quint has put it in a slightly different context, the aggregate picture is one of a world “out of joint,” of “a history that cannot be organized by imperial apologists into the plot of destiny” (147). Neither the scientized mode of modern history nor the pre-modern heroic ethos of chivalric romance proves capable of joining the diverse body of experiences recorded in *Buccaneers* into a coherent whole.

The disjunctive element in the narrative is the fact of violence itself. Throughout *Buccaneers*, violence appears as pervasive, ineluctable. It resists narrative. And in so doing, violence occasions what Frank Kermode has called “the collapse of the poetic.” Kermode intends this rather bleak concept to explain what happens to narrative form when it confronts the “barbarous, brutal, mute, meaningless reality of things.” In this confrontation, the old codes of romance break down, and down with them goes modernity’s pretence to enlightenment. “Reality,” Kermode says, “has such a violent temper that it does not tolerate the ideal even when reality itself is idealized” (qtd. in Beer 40). The collapsed idealism to which Kermode’s “collapse of the poetic” points is the baroque sense of disillusionment or disenchantment with reality that circulated broadly through every aspect of social life during the seventeenth century, including the literary domain.⁵²

Gillian Beer notes that “in the traditional romance, no one is ever disillusioned.” This is because “[d]isillusionment calls into question the whole wish-fulfilling function of the form and undermines the fabric of its world” (40). In its traditional form, romance is progressive, if not at the level of the advancement of a linear plot, then certainly at the level of the ethical advancement of its protagonist. Thus, its basic wish is fulfilled.

However, in its confrontation with the modern reality of an increasingly centralized, rationalized and hegemonic imperial state, there is no “progress,” only conflict. Both the heroic ideal of chivalry and the modern, progressivist history of empire collapse in the face of a crass, real world that does not conform to either of its fantasies.⁵³

If we return for a moment to the end of Exquemelin’s narrative we can see the dialectical exchange between history and romance, and the narrative incoherence that results from the absence of their synthesis, in high relief. After Morgan’s departure, Exquemelin and the rest of the jilted crew find themselves foraging for food along the coastline of Costa Rica. Repelled by hostile Indians at Boca del Toro, the crew flees to Cabo Gracias a Dios, where they find a much warmer welcome and obtained proper victuals. The Indians there had a long history of cooperating with the buccaneers: they were allowed to trade, live among them for as long as they liked, and were even permitted to marry their women for the modest price of an axe or an old knife. As impressed as he is by their amicable history with such renegade company, Exquemelin is even more impressed by the form of their society. “These Indians,” he says, “form a little republic, having no chief over them whom they acknowledge as lord or king” (220). This sovereign tribe has its own land, near thirty leagues in circumference, and lives in complete isolation from the neighboring tribes and Spanish settlements that surround it. Tribe members divide themselves into two separate communities, which Exquemelin calls “provinces,” each with its own distinctive labor tasks. They hunt only with objects made from nature, eat simple, natural food, and bring an overabundance of provisions when they serve the buccaneers. On matters of religion, they lack a systematic theology, holding an abstract notion of divine power but no belief in any specific god or devil.

This “little republic” was no doubt of interest to Exquemelin for the striking resemblance it bore to the settlement he had joined at Tortuga. Their social formations are remarkably egalitarian. As Nicholas Rogers observes, they only submit to the absolute authority of a single headman during wartime; in peacetime the meanest and the most dignified are on equal footing (121). Moreover, they articulate their own sovereignty through direct opposition to colonial powers, especially to the Spanish, who launched a long but unsuccessful campaign to bring them into subjection. In their persistent sovereignty, they rebel against the modern social order, in much the same way that the buccaneers did. The elegant simplicity of their government and agriculture, however, suggests that these are not “modern” rebels; they are rather like the inhabitants of an Ovidian Golden Age, who knew no war and lived in harmony.⁵⁴

As he represents them, the Miskito embody the chivalric and pastoral ideals of romance. However, the fact that they find representation at all in Exquemelin’s narrative is a product of history, in both its strict chronological and its ideological senses: Exquemelin stumbles upon them while trying to find enough food to survive after being swindled and left to survive by a member of his own “little republic,” and he records his observations in the form of ethnology to fulfill his role as a modern, scientific historian. The convergence of the romance and historiographic discourses in this anecdote produces one of those grisly ironizations of intention about which Jameson speaks. As an embodiment of the utopian ideal of romance, the Miskito stand as a surrogate for the crippled community of buccaneers that Exquemelin joined. The Miskito represent yet another extension of the romance drive toward wish-fulfillment that is expressed in *Buccaneers* as the desire for an anti-modern social formation capable of transfiguring the

ordinary reality of abuse and suffering into something more liberating. Unlike the settlement at Tortuga, though, this idealized community remains inaccessible to Exquemelin—he passes them by as his own historical trajectory takes a different course. In real time, the crew moves forward in its journey back to more hospitable ground in Jamaica; discursively, Exquemelin’s narrative moves forward from ethnology to geography and natural history in pursuit of historical coherence.

Ultimately, such coherence eludes Exquemelin’s authorial grasp. By the time his detachment had reached Jamaica, he had learned that a third of their number remained missing and that there was a new governor in town, Sir Thomas Modyford, who intended to put a stop to buccaneering in the region. Morgan had fled for England. Those who stayed in Modyford’s reach were hanged, and those who were not fled to join the French at Tortuga, because, as Exquemelin says, these men “are so accustomed to the buccaneering life it is impossible for them to give it up. If one port is forbidden them, then they sail to another, for this part of the world is full of fair harbours, where the buccaneers can find all they need to maintain their ships, and food in abundance” (226). Exquemelin abruptly cuts off this thread of the narrative at this point, but the circular logic at play loops back once more in the text’s final chapter, which is devoted to the capture, escape, and revenge of the men of Bertrand d’Ogeron, governor of Tortuga and friend to the buccaneers. A failed attempt by d’Ogeron and his men at taking Dutch Curaçao ends with an inauspicious landing at Puerto Rico, where the Spanish are happy to put them to work fortifying the island’s defenses before shipping them back off to Europe. Once at “home” in France, the buccaneers rally and sally forth again to Tortuga at the first possible chance. The reader is left only with the following description: “Many

went out marauding again, with a fleet then being equipped in Tortuga under the command of M. de Maintenon. They took the island of Trinidad, which lies between Tobago and the coast of Paria, and put it to ransom. Afterwards, their intention was to raid and plunder the city of Caracas, situated nearly opposite Curaçao” (233).

What is conspicuously absent in these episodes is the relation of Exquemelin himself to the events he relates. Though the narrative accustoms its readers to the self-effacing form of the third-person historical narrative, there is nevertheless a strongly implied authorial presence that emerges from the clues Exquemelin gives the reader about his first-hand knowledge of many of the events he relates. In the narrative’s final phase, however, the author disappears from his history without a trace. It is an odd ending, to be sure, disappointingly flat in comparison with the dramatic narrative of social death and rebirth with which *Buccaneers* begins. As history, *Buccaneers* ultimately lacks coherence, whether narrative or political. Unlike Bacon’s *Merchant’s of Light*, Exquemelin’s voyage has no fixed point of return; its author has no part to play in the drama of imperial history. Rather, Exquemelin’s history is left trapped in a pattern of circular, errant wandering that, however disenchanting, is nevertheless revelatory of the deep structures of relationality that govern what William Boelhower has described as the “centerless and ultimately unstructured” circum-Atlantic world (“Flow” 28).

The feeling of disillusionment and disorientation that Exquemelin leaves the reader with is a function of his role on board the ships of l’Olonnais and Morgan. As a barber-surgeon, Exquemelin was always implicated in the expeditions of his pirate captains, but he was never at the head of them. Consequently, his construction of the romance of piracy is largely based on a spectator’s view of pirate life. Exquemelin’s

initial decision to join the buccaneers at Tortuga registers his own emotional investment in pursuing the life of radical freedom that pirates appeared to possess, but the rest of the narrative is structured by Exquemelin's observations on and judgments of the actions of those around him. In the following chapter on Raveneau de Lussan's *Journal of a Voyage into the South Sea*, the romance of piracy is told through the author's first-person perspective.

De Lussan also hailed from the servant class in the French Caribbean, and as such, his narrative carried with it a visceral critique of the system of indentured servitude practiced in the Indies. His own romance of piracy, however, focuses less on relating the histories of other pirates' deeds. Instead, de Lussan uses the figure of the knight-errant and the quest theme to endow his personal exploits with Caribbean and South Sea buccaneers with an air of dignified heroism. He demonstrates his bravery at arms and his virtue in love at numerous points in the narrative as proof to his readers that he is living a morally worthy life, one dedicated to the pursuit of the perfection of the chivalric code outlined by Auerbach.

Despite the difference in narrative perspective between *Buccaneers* and the *Journal*, de Lussan's narrative comes to similar conclusions regarding the possibility of living a morally worthy life at the edge of the empire. Toward the end of the narrative, de Lussan offers a troubling confession: his life as a pirate has left him mentally scarred and deranged. He laments that he is unable to escape the specters of war, which haunt his sleep, and he is unable to reintegrate himself fully into civil society because he cannot shake the suspicion that everyone around him—even in his native France—is an enemy bent on ending his life. This harrowing portrait of de Lussan's emotional collapse

resounds with the disenchanting portrait of pirate society that we find at the end of *Buccaneers*. The *Journal* thus intensifies the theme of disenchantment with both imperial society *and* pirate society, pushing the narrative toward the Baroque realization that there is no redemptive space within the imperial domain or on its periphery. Everywhere these buccaneer authors look, they see a level of violence that makes it impossible to sustain the hope that piracy could offer a means of pursuing a freer, nobler existence through errantry than they could achieve within the imperial labor system. Nevertheless, de Lussan makes a grand effort at writing himself into the role of a romance hero whose destiny is to adventure out into the Atlantic world.

Chapter Three: Romance, Anti-Romance and the Tragedy of Empire in Raveneau de Lussan's *Journal of a Voyage Made into the South Seas* (1689)

In March of 1679, a young soldier of fortune named Raveneau de Lussan departed from Dieppe in France for the New World. His arrival in Saint-Domingue that same year marked the beginning of a series of adventures that would earn him national fame for his daring and for the narrative he produced upon his return. His *Journal* was published in Paris in 1689, and shortly thereafter in London.⁵⁵ The *Journal* was a matter of immediate and widespread interest for the valuable information it provided regarding Caribbean buccaneers' recent expeditions in the South Sea. During the decade that passed between the publication of Exquemelin's *Buccaneers* and de Lussan's *Journal*, the buccaneers of the Caribbean had extended the scope of their operations considerably. Prior to Henry Morgan's successful crossing of the Isthmus of Panama in 1671, the South Sea was a rather impractical target for Caribbean pirates. Their typically smallish ships were hardly fit for the months-long journey around Cape Horn, or for the treacherous passage of the Straits of Magellan. Morgan's crossing, however, proved that one need not take on such a long and dangerous voyage; the overland route could be passed in a matter of weeks, and with little harm if given the assistance of local tribes. This revelation changed buccaneer culture dramatically. By the 1680s, English and French buccaneers were making regular expeditions into the South Sea and exacting a significant toll on Spain's commercial activity there. De Lussan's *Journal* provides one of the earliest accounts of this new phase of buccaneer history, and it is the first specifically French account of its kind. It tells the story of the author's participation

in the most sustained and significant buccaneer incursion into the South Sea, which began in 1684 and ended in 1689, one year after de Lussan's own return to France. During that period, French and English raiders launched assaults on Granada, Guayaquil, Porto Bello, and Paíta, among other places, harassing every ship they could while coursing the coastline from Guatemala to Chile.

Despite its relatively short duration, the period of piracy in the South Sea covered in de Lussan's *Journal* was profoundly impactful for both the Spanish and for Spain's imperial rivals.⁵⁶ Spain realized rather quickly that its Pacific coastal defense system was completely inadequate for hunting down the buccaneers. The crown could not afford to build and maintain a naval patrol unit, and neither could the colonists and merchants, whom the crown burdened with the expense of their own defense (Bradley 163-164). The buccaneers had established control of several islands near the coastline, and without a strong defense system the results were predictable: coastal towns were repeatedly pillaged, infrastructure was damaged, and merchants were scared out of their crucial role as suppliers of food and other goods. Although this period of buccaneer activity never yielded a take as large as Drake's seizure of the *Nuestra Señora* a century earlier, it did raise awareness of the systemic failure of Spain's Pacific defenses, and it consequently enlivened the imaginations of hundreds of Caribbean buccaneers who had designs on taking their share of the famed riches of Peru (Bradley 158).⁵⁷

The opening of the South Sea through the Isthmus created a welcome opportunity for buccaneers, who were receiving increasingly cold receptions from colonial governors in the Caribbean, to try their luck in a new environment. In its privileging of Atlantic and

Caribbean contexts over the South Sea, however, the historiography of early modern piracy obscures our sense of the significance of this moment, and of the narratives that bear witness to it. Consequently, de Lussan's *Journal* has remained largely absent from historical studies of buccaneer culture, and in fact remains entirely absent from the literary histories of piracy and the Atlantic world at large.⁵⁸ In this chapter, I redress the lack of critical attention to de Lussan's narrative by analyzing the poetics of the *Journal* in order to explore the relationship between the narrative's romance framework and the political context that surrounds it. The martial-heroic persona de Lussan takes on in the narrative frames his journey as a knightly quest that begins as an extension of the aims of the French imperialism, but ends with a critical reflection on the ability of the romance form to express adequately the lived experience of knights-errant questing in the imperial domain of the modern state. As I will show, the dissonance created by the difference between the text's starting point and its ending point allows a layered critique of both the politics of empire and the literary forms used to legitimize it to emerge. By acknowledging the trauma of life within the imperial domain, de Lussan's narrative problematizes the epic narrative of empire, as well as the romantic narrative of the self. In their place stand the counter genres of the anti-epic and the anti-romance, which register the tragic dimension of imperial culture at a formal level. The anti-martial nature of these counter genres and their recognition of the high human cost of conquest denaturalizes the power relations that sustain imperial culture.

The Knighting of de Lussan

De Lussan's emergence as a knight-errant in the *Journal* begins almost from his infancy. "For my part," he says, "I cannot account for inbred instincts. All I can say is

that from childhood I have been born a traveler.” De Lussan’s native instinct to travel began to manifest itself at age six, when he developed a habit of running away from home in search of adventure. This “migratory instinct,” as he calls it, grew in adolescence into a taste for watching sieges and battles from a distance. As he looked on, the staccato percussion of the drums of war awoke in him a martial spirit that could not be quashed. Led by “the kind hand of fate,” de Lussan’s martial spirit was further nurtured by a military officer with whom he developed an intimate friendship based on their “mutual fondness for war” (32).

De Lussan’s fondness for war arose during the Franco-Dutch War (1672-1678), which brought France into conflict with the Low Countries over border territories in Europe and over Caribbean holdings in the New World.⁵⁹ De Lussan’s military friend offered the young soldier a place in his regiment as he prepared to lay siege to Condé, and it appears that de Lussan’s first military engagement went swimmingly. While most men returned from war shaken and disturbed, the experience only served to inspire de Lussan to seek newer and riskier ventures.

The next step in his military career took him to sea, though perhaps not entirely of his own volition. It appears that de Lussan was pressed into service in the French navy shortly after the siege of Condé as part of the crown’s initiative to strengthen its maritime presence. Bad luck brought de Lussan under the command of a captain who made a career out of ransoming pressed youth. To his good fortune, a hefty payment from his father secured de Lussan’s freedom. Unshaken by his brief captivity, de Lussan continued to pursue the soldier’s life by making friends with another officer of the French military, the Count d’Avegean. This distinguished soldier of the French Guard offered de Lussan

the opportunity to look on as his regiment prepared to attack Saint-Ghislain. As an onlooker, de Lussan found himself enflamed with the lust for battle. "I could not desist," he says, "from finding warfare more alluring than ever, deadly as it was" (33). His ability to take pleasure in this pornographic gaze at war was of course a byproduct of his distance from the actual threat of combat. He acknowledges that "this engagement cost the lives of many of our men, without, in the slightest way, jeopardizing mine" (33). Even so, he suggests that his mental fortitude in the face of combat is a confirmation of his mettle. While de Lussan's tune changes significantly over the course of the narrative, the momentum of his experiences at Condé and Saint-Ghislain propelled him forward in pursuit of adventure. De Lussan says at this point that his mind was completely "engrossed with voyages, the longer and more dangerous, the more attractive" (33). Accordingly, he made his departure from France on March 5, 1679, bound for the New World.

The martial-heroic persona de Lussan fashions for himself in the *Journal's* opening pages is patterned after the knight-errant of romance. Though he never receives a formal recognition of his "kighthood," his narrative bears witness to his knightly destiny. For much of the medieval and Renaissance periods, knightly culture was courtly culture. As Auerbach has noted, the romance provides a vehicle for the expression of courtly values, and in fact, its primary function is to establish those values as absolute (134). The close connection between courtly values and the romance tradition manifests itself through the figure of the knight, who is *de facto* a member of the ruling class. As a member of courtly society, the knight expresses the fundamental belief of the aristocratic class that only members of chivalric-courtly society are fit for adventure, since they alone

can have meaningful experiences (139). While the growing emphasis during the Renaissance on individual agency relaxed the standard of nobility by birth and fostered the notion of nobility by action, the exclusive dimension of courtly culture and its literary productions remained significant. For a figure such as de Lussan, this meant that a justification of his “kighthood” was required to give his “adventures” legitimacy within the romance tradition. In the absence of birthright, proof in the form of narrative would have to suffice.

De Lussan negotiates the problem of justifying his status as a knight-errant quite carefully in the opening pages of the *Journal*. The true knight pursues only two things: feats of arms and feats of love (140). To accomplish these feats, the knight sets out on a series of adventures designed to display his martial valor. The plotline of the romance is structured by the continuous series of these adventures. In fact, it is completely determined by them. Auerbach observes of the romance that “[n]othing is found in it which is not either accessory or preparatory to an adventure. It is a world specifically created and designed to give the knight an opportunity to prove himself” (136). Part of the preparation for knightly adventure is innate, a function of one’s birth. Some are simply born with the constitution necessary to live a life of virtue amidst unremitting assaults on one’s morals and one’s life. This is not the only means of preparation, however. The inculcation of courtly virtues also requires proper training and practice over time (134). Lastly, attaining knightly status requires affirmation by those in the knight’s social sphere of his proper and full entry into the knightly order.

All of these elements are addressed specifically in the *Journal’s* introduction. Though de Lussan was not born into the aristocracy, making him an outsider to knightly

culture, we are told that he possessed from infancy the migratory instinct that propels the knight-errant. We recall that before his sixth birthday, the young de Lussan felt the urge to run away from his parents to pursue excitement, and we may presume, a degree of danger. This instinct is part of his constitution, de Lussan suggests—it is a surrogate marker of his native suitability for errantry. De Lussan also sets up the opening scenes of the *Journal* in such a way that we see the events of his early life as a series of tests of election. His childhood fascination with travel develops into an adolescent urge to perform feats of arms.

The sieges of Condé and Saint-Ghislain provide a theater for the exercise and perfection of the chivalric value of courage in battle. In both sieges, de Lussan seeks out conflict in order to prove his passion for adventure and his resolve in the face of danger. The siege of Condé proves de Lussan's merit as a soldier, and the language he uses to commemorate his inclusion into the regiment is telling of his desire to represent military service as chivalric action. He offers his captain "the services of my sword, as yet untested, which I longed passionately to use" (32). While the sword was certainly relevant in combat in the seventeenth century, its presence harkens back to a heroic age prior to the emergence of long-range arms like the arquebus. Symbolically, the sword represents de Lussan's bravery at arms, a *sine qua non* of the true knight. At the siege of Saint-Ghislain, the proof in evidence is de Lussan's mental fortitude. As we have seen, de Lussan uses his position as an observer rather than a combatant to showcase his ability to take in the entire scene of the conflict, dead bodies and all, without flinching. The ability to draw inspiration from battle as de Lussan does at Saint-Ghislain, coupled with the

ability to brandish arms as displayed at Condé, act as tests of election and establish his worthiness as a knightly adventurer.

Even in the presence of such assurances, the true knight must demonstrate that he has come about his profession in the right way, that he has chosen the right path, as Auerbach puts it (135). This final point of affirmation must come from external sources, persons in the knightly world who recognize the knight as a true embodiment of the chivalric ideal. In the case of de Lussan's narrative, such affirmation comes first from God, then reluctantly from his parents. He explains his decision to adventure thus:

To remain home and not to know what the rest of the world was like was all well enough, I thought, for a woman. I felt, however, that a man should not live at home indefinitely but should at all costs, see the world . . . Of young men, like myself, it may be said—this cannot, however, usually be said of women—their desires are the will of God. To speak frankly, I was completely obsessed with my plans for adventure. (34)

The natural proximity of God's heart to those of men like de Lussan confirms his obsession with travel as ethically sound at the same time that it affirms his election as an adventurer. In the face of cosmic approval, de Lussan's parents could not help but consent, and so they recommended a trip to Saint-Domingue to pursue his quest. Having thus "knighted" himself through the form of his narrative, de Lussan embarks on his four-year quest for fame and fortune in the Americas.

The Epic of Empire and the Quest of Romance

The martial spirit that guides de Lussan's quest for adventure is tied in the narrative's opening scenes to the project of French imperial expansion under the reign of

Louis XIV. His first experiences at arms, as we have seen, take place within the context of the conflict between France and the Low Countries. The subsequent expression of his martial prowess in the Caribbean and South Sea as a pirate link the individual quest of the romance to the corporate interests of the imperial state. This linkage takes the form of a libidinal urge that gets expressed through de Lussan's hyper-masculinist rationale for adventure. De Lussan justifies his quest through the gendered conception of adventure as a masculine ideal ratified by God, over against the desires of women, who presumably do not seek adventure and do not enjoy God's unconditional blessing in their endeavors. Northrop Frye identifies this libidinal investment in adventure as a hallmark of the romance genre. For Frye, the quest-romance "is the search of the libido or desiring self for a fulfillment that will deliver it from the anxieties of reality *but will still contain that reality*" (qtd. in Jameson 110). In de Lussan's case, the quest offers a means of deliverance from the stagnant life to which most of his fellow Frenchmen are consigned. He appears anxious, even from a young age, at the prospect of having to live a prosaic life in his native Paris. By contrast, the fluidity of life at sea allows this anxiety to be transformed into action by extending the politicized adventure de Lussan undertook in France in the service of the state into the colonial domain.

The close connection that de Lussan draws between his own personal quest and the expansionist endeavors of the French imperial state inscribes the *Journal* within the larger epic narrative that legitimized the state's political aims. As David Quint has shown, the literary epic from Virgil onward has been wedded to imperial politics. In the Virgilian tradition, Quint argues that "the epic is tied to a specific national history, to the idea of world domination, to a monarchical system, even to a particular dynasty" (8). The

conservative politics of the epic tradition were designed to buttress the absolute monarchy's claim to power and precedence. As Michael Nerlich has noted, the French monarchy had been in search of its own imperial epic since the time of François I (291). The process of constructing an imperial epic, however, was a complicated one in the French case.

The period from the reign of François I to that of Louis XIV saw a transition in the conception of the French monarch from the martial-knightly ideal of the medieval era to the anti-martial courtly ideal of the early modern period. Imperial ideologues were thus faced with the challenge of negotiating between the desire to represent the monarch according to the knightly ideal of a Lancelot or a Tristan and the political reality that the expansion of monarchical power depended on the diminution of the knightly class as political figures. While François I still retained the air of a knightly king, Louis XIV was represented as an expressly non-martial hero (295). The move of his court to Versailles consolidated state power at the court at the same time that it catalyzed the shift in values from the warrior ethos of the medieval knight to a leisure culture that was more interested in plays and operas than feats of arms (299).

While the representation of the monarchy moved away from the romance concept of adventure during the latter half of the seventeenth century, the French state still leaned hard on individual adventurers to further its political aims and to generate new and useful knowledge about the state of affairs in the Atlantic world. During this period, the soldier became a crucial link between the figure of the individual adventurer and the state. Thus, while the monarchy distanced itself from the knightly class at home, it appropriated the knowledge of soldiers of fortune such as de Lussan to further its interests abroad. As

Nerlich notes, figures like de Lussan could pursue knightly glory by quest so long as their adventures could be “integrated and ‘refunctioned’ to become elements of the glorification of the absolute monarch” (301).

The glorification of the monarchy under Louis XIV entailed an expansion of its overseas presence. The logistics of this process were left to Jean-Baptiste Colbert and his son the Marquis de Seignelay, who served successive terms as the king’s minister of finance. Colbert was charged with the tasks of building a royal navy fit to rival those of the English and Dutch, and of stimulating French commerce through a series of trading ventures to the East and West Indies. Seignelay was similarly committed to the project of expanding the empire through commerce and sought to see his father’s vision for a French empire of trade through. In order to enlarge its presence in the West Indies, the crown and the ministry were in need of a constant influx of information regarding the state of affairs in the Caribbean. Merchants and pirates were ideal sources of the kind of practical knowledge sought by the state; their travels brought them into contact with vast geographies and thus with a wide range of commodities, markets, and tactical insights about how to tap into them. The *Journal* was especially valuable in this connection because it provided critical information about both the Caribbean and the Isthmus of Panama, which was the golden key to the untapped resources of the South Sea trade.⁶⁰

In the Caribbean theater, the Dutch enjoyed pre-eminence. They were masters of the contraband trade between Europe and the Spanish colonies. Their entrepôt at Curaçao, which lay just off the coast of Venezuela, was optimally positioned to distribute goods along the Main and to the Spanish islands. Colbert and Seignelay both sought to establish a similar base for contraband trade in the Antilles, either at Curaçao or close

by.⁶¹ The *Journal* offered helpful perspective on the prospect of taking Curaçao for the crown.

Under the command of Laurent de Gras, de Lussan and company cruised the Caribbean with a letter of marque authorizing the seizure of Spanish ships and goods. The buccaneers had initially set their sights on Havana, but unfavorable winds damaged their ships and blew them off course. In search of a place to refit their ships, the buccaneers cruised to Curaçao and sought permission to land and trade for necessary supplies. They were promptly rebuffed by the island's governor, who refused to buy de Lussan's assertion that they were on "official" business in pursuit of Spanish ships and meant the Dutch no harm. The Dutch governor's suspicion of the buccaneers' intentions turned out to be well-founded: while de Lussan's own ship had approached the city of Curaçao in search of aid, other ships in the French retinue had landed at the port of Santa Cruz and had infiltrated the city with a force of two hundred men. French ships had also captured and robbed two Dutch ships near Havana, despite the fact that the French and Dutch were at peace at the time. The predatory acts of the buccaneers against the Dutch showed how little sway official politics in Europe held "beyond the line." While the two countries were officially at peace, the reality was that the French were as desirous to interlope on the Dutch contraband trade as they were to capture Spanish ships.

The buccaneers' stop at Curaçao provides the occasion for de Lussan to make the island better known to the French. He observes that the island's Dutch and Jewish inhabitants primarily traded sugar, wool, and hides to the Spanish. While the French would certainly have liked to take the island itself and rob the Dutch of their primary base of operations in the Caribbean, de Lussan notes that both the main fort and the city itself

are strongly fortified, putting Curaçao out of the question as a site for French imperial expansion (47-48). While Curaçao was not a viable option, the buccaneers continued to seek out alternatives. From there they cruised to the nearby port city of Cape Vela, which was located on the western end of the Gulf of Venezuela. At Cape Vela, the buccaneers set themselves up as contraband traders to disguise their real intention, which was to reconnoiter the area to see if it was suitable as a base of operations.

As was often the case, decisions about the viability of a given locale as a rallying point for the buccaneers was determined not by the strength of Spanish forces alone, but also by the strength of the various bands of indigenous tribes that had retained their sovereignty within Spain's imperial dominions. De Lussan reports that the area surrounding Cape Vela was inhabited by a "nation of very cruel, barbarous, and savage Indians, who did not make friends with any other people, not even with the neighboring Spaniards" (48-49). These Indians were part of a band of unassimilated native tribes inhabiting the Venezuelan coast and threatened to interrupt the buccaneers' business of trade and plunder in the region. De Lussan observes that the local tribes are remarkable for their bravery and that they are ferocious in war. He offers the unfortunate fate of the Marquis de Maintenon as a cautionary tale to those who might wish to establish themselves in that area. The Marquis was acting governor of the island of Marie Galante, and commander of one of the King's frigates. Having taken a fresh prize, Maintenon put in at Boca del Drago for water. Members of the "savage" tribe at Boca del Drago jumped into the water en masse and attacked the ship, despite being under constant fire from the ship's guns. These Indians pushed the ship's reconnaissance boat some fifty feet to the shore, where they proceeded to slaughter the crew and make off with their bodies. They

then swam out to cut the cables of the main ship and force it to founder while they slaughtered the remainder of the crew. Maintenon was lucky enough to unfurl the sails before the Indians could board. His story stood as a warning to future travelers of the dangers that await them in Indian territory (49-50). Though most of Maintenon's crew left with their lives intact, de Lussan argues that the local Indians had beaten the buccaneers at their own game. These Indians, he argues, are "the oldest pirates in America" (49). Their long experience in battles with Europeans had rendered them a serious threat to pirates like de Lussan's crew, who might have thought their numbers and arms were sufficient to guarantee their safety during excursions into the mainland.

This kind of local knowledge was indispensable to French imperialists who were seeking detailed reports about the political geography of the Caribbean. The *Journal* was perhaps most valuable for the information it contained about the Isthmus of Darien, the crossing of which meant easy access to the relatively unguarded South Sea coast of Central and South America. Spanish silver and gold had to pass from the mines in Mexico and Peru to the Caribbean and across the Atlantic via routes that Caribbean pirates had identified and staked out. The *flotas*, which carried goods from Seville to the Caribbean and back, were prime targets for the pirates, but they were also well guarded. By contrast, the ships that brought the silver from Mexico and Peru to Panama City for its overland transport to Porto Bello were highly vulnerable because Spain could not afford to provide adequate naval support to protect its South Sea shipping. In addition to the access the buccaneers stood to gain to Spanish shipping along the coast, the establishment of a secure means of traversing the Isthmus also provided the alluring possibility of

capturing the larger Manila galleons that carried Spain's silver and gold to the Orient in exchange for silks, spices and other valuables.

De Lussan's company attempted a crossing of the Isthmus in pursuit of the fabled riches of the South Sea trade. They received invaluable assistance from the Samboes Indians, who inhabited the Miskito Coast and the islands adjacent to it, as well as the Indians of Darien, who were sworn enemies of the Spanish and thus fast friends with Spain's rivals (52). These tribes informed the buccaneers that some two hundred buccaneers under a different captain had just crossed the Isthmus. Like their immediate predecessors, de Lussan's troupe was also granted safe travel through the treacherous passage from Portobello to Panama City.

The Indians of Darien acted as couriers, shuttling information back and forth between the buccaneers crossing the Isthmus and those who had already reached the South Sea. They also acted as guides, helping the buccaneers navigate the region's rather difficult terrain. De Lussan states that "without this co-operation it would have been difficult, in fact impossible, to cross through their country had they wished to oppose us, not alone because of their superior numbers but even more because of the many forests and other natural difficulties encountered which made it impossible to find the route without their guidance" (59). Despite their tremendous help, de Lussan cautions his readers about placing too much trust in the Indians of Darien. His crew had been forewarned of these Indians' "treachery," which was the preferred epithet among Europeans for tribes that retained their sovereignty during the colonial process and refused permanent alliance with any empire. The Indians of Darien had been known to shift allegiances without notice. They could at one moment appear as the buccaneers'

friends and turn on them the next by revealing their presence to the Spanish. De Lussan notes that many buccaneers had suffered such a fate (59). The reality of the situation, de Lussan recognizes, is that the Indians of Darien were as opportunistic as the buccaneers themselves. When it suited them to accompany the pirates in search of Spanish treasure, they did so; when it suited them to turn the pirates over to the Spanish for a price, they did so.

The value the ministry and the crown placed on the *Journal* for its assessment of the political geography of the Caribbean and South Sea is clear from the prefatory letters that accompanied its publication. The letter sent from the governor of Santo Domingo to de Lussan's father upon his son's return from the South Sea is particularly revealing of the *Journal's* significance. Tarin de Cussy was acting governor of Santo Domingo at the time of the *Journal's* publication. He was also a close associate of Seignelay and was therefore highly invested in the ministry's project of enlarging France's presence in the West Indies. De Cussy lavished praise upon de Lussan, who undertook what he considered "the greatest and finest Voyage in our Age." His elaboration of the import of the *Journal* bears quoting at length:

[H]e has seen Countries, which a great many People in the World content themselves to view in Maps, without desiring any other sight of them, tho' they had all the Riches thereof bestowed upon them for their Pains.

Besides the pleasure you will have to see your Son again, you will have also that of hearing him Discourse, pertinently enough, of his Voyages and Adventures, there being no other besides himself of all that Company that can give an exact Account thereof, as having all along applied himself to

keep a very punctual Journal of all Transactions, which I am confident will be pleasing to my Lord Marquess *de Signelay*: I have my self the Honour to write to him concerning it, that so I might engage your Son to go and Present it to him, which perhaps otherwise he would not have adventured to do, out of the little Esteem himself has of his own Work. This is what offers itself at present for me to write to you, assuring you that I should take a great deal of Pleasure to find my self in any Condition to serve him. (39)

As we have seen from the *Journal's* opening pages, de Lussan represents himself as a knight-errant in the tradition of the chivalric romance. De Cussy, too, represents de Lussan as a knightly hero, but his argument for political significance of de Lussan's errantry is strongly bent in the direction of the state's expansionist aims. For de Lussan, "adventure" provides a means of achieving fame and fortune outside the bounds of the territorial state. While de Lussan's adventures in the Caribbean and the South Sea were an outgrowth of the adventurous spirit he cultivated as a youth in France, they were also the expression of a drive to transcend the limits of the life to which he would have been consigned had he remained in Paris. De Cussy performs the deft move of "refunctioning" the concept of adventure so that it bolsters the power of the monarchy rather than undercutting it. During the course of the letter, the meaning of the concept of "adventure" shifts—as it is applied to de Lussan's voyage, it represents knightly errantry; as it is applied to the production of the *Journal* itself, it represents the conscription of the narrative by the ministry. De Cussy's entreaty for de Lussan to present his narrative to Siegnelay is meant to push the author to "adventure" in a new way: he is to submit the

narrative and the reports it contains about areas of keen interest to the state to Siegnelay as a sign of his own “esteem” for his work.

For de Cussy and for Seignelay alike, de Lussan’s quest mattered because it could be integrated into the narrative framework of the imperial epic. Jonathan Lamb observes that the romance form could merge the competing aims of the questing individual and the epic of empire in precisely the way that we see the two wedded in de Cussy’s letter (54). As Lamb suggests, though, there is a fundamental tension between the political and ideological function the epic genre and the function of romance. The epic tells the story of the birth of a nation; its plot is guided by destiny and is in that sense resistant to improvisation and individual initiative. The romance, on the other hand, is directed not by fate but by chance; its plot is built around the concepts of improvisation and individual initiative (54). Though the *Journal* begins by coupling state politics and individual adventure, the progression of the narrative decouples the two as the concept of adventure becomes increasingly individualized.

The Ideology of Adventure and the Romance of the Self

As we have seen, the concept of adventure is linked to French geopolitics in the narrative’s opening scenes. It was his service in the French military that gave de Lussan his first taste of adventure, and it was the desire to nurture the adventurous spirit that arose during the period of his military service that initially inspired de Lussan to seek adventure in the Atlantic world. The meaning of adventure, however, takes on a much more individualized sense once de Lussan enters the Caribbean and begins his career there.

Like Exquemelin, de Lussan entered the Caribbean as an indentured servant. He provides the following account of his first three years at Santo Domingo:

Here, however, I spent more than three years, not with the idea of seeing the country, but for other causes that prevented one from being free to get away, namely, because I was in the service of a Frenchman—though he ill deserved to be called one, for his harshness combined with malice was more like that of a Turk . . . Finally, my patience was stretched to the breaking point and, surfeited with what seemed like an endless train of cruelties, I carried my complaints to the king's lieutenant, Monsieur de Franquesnay, who was then acting-governor. His kindness proved a veritable heaven or refuge. He took me into his home and there I remained for six months. In the meantime I borrowed money and, like an honest man, I desired to repay it . . . I conceived the idea of joining the buccaneers, sailing away with them, seizing what money I could from the Spanish and, in this way, paying my debts. (34-35)

Here the concept of adventure is tied to the expression of individual will: de Lussan pursues a life of piracy because he refuses to remain trapped within the system of indentured servitude that nearly cost him his life and stood to rob him of the opportunities for adventure that brought him to the Caribbean in the first place. Life within such a system profoundly curtailed the expression of individual initiative, but life among the pirates allowed, at least theoretically, for the kinds of improvisational expressions of the free will that were embraced by the romance concept of knightly adventure.

In contrast to the epic tradition, in which events *happen to* individuals, and in which the individual is subordinated to the program of nationalist history, the romance tradition operates on the concept of adventure as something *chosen by* the individual. The ideological shift represented by the re-conceptualization of adventure as a thing chosen as opposed to a thing endured represents a key transition in the development of a distinctly modern understanding of the individual. As Nerlich argues, the concept of adventure in antiquity was understood as an extraordinary event that one experienced and endured. However, in antiquity the concept of adventure was not glorified as an end in itself, nor was it elevated to the status of an event that defined one's life (3). During the medieval and Renaissance periods, the meaning of adventure shifted radically. Nerlich observes that the essential hallmark distinguishing modern adventure from its classical conceptions "is that adventures are undertaken on a *voluntary* basis, they are *sought out* . . . and this quest and hence the adventurer himself are glorified" (5). In its medieval and Renaissance expressions, adventure became a life-defining event, one that brought the adventurer fortune and fame. In the *Journal*, de Lussan represents adventure as a voluntary action designed to bring glory to the individual. The narrative of his departure from Saint-Domingue to seek adventure among the buccaneers emphasizes de Lussan's choice in the matter, at the same time that it suggests adventure as a means of glorification. De Lussan mentions specifically his desire to prove his "honesty" through adventure. The performance of this traditional chivalric ideal suggests that he possesses an inherently knightly constitution, which acts as an ethical form of glorification (306-307). Adventure also provides a means of glorification by providing ample opportunities for the

adventurer to demonstrate his valor at arms and to accumulate wealth and fame through his military prowess.

The buccaneers demonstrated their military prowess through a number of assaults upon key port cities along the South Sea coast. Upon their entry into the South Sea, the buccaneers attempted to refit their ships and perform reconnaissance among the several islands that lay just off the South Sea coast. During this process, they were caught by surprise by a small Spanish fleet. Foundering off the Panamanian coast with no wind and two unarmed ships, the buccaneers took heavy fire and sustained significant damage to their ships. Heavily outmanned and outgunned, the admiral and vice-admiral of the French fleet called a conference and “resolved to perish fighting courageously rather than allow a single one of their boats to be captured” (84). The crew nearly perished for having its ships shot through so badly that they carried several feet of water in the hold, but good fortune brought them to harbor. Having taken stock of their losses, de Lussan notes with surprise that the crew had only nine wounded and one dead among them. To this rather remarkable realization, de Lussan responds: “On this point, I can truthfully say, without fear of exaggeration, that this is a surprising and almost miraculous thing that with so few men and equipped with such inferior vessels as ours, we had been able to withstand their fire and resist and combat a fleet so much larger than ours, made up of such good vessels and with so many Spaniards aboard” (86). The episode is typical of buccaneer narratives in its emphasis on the heroism of the buccaneers, whose doughty spirit frequently carried them to victory over enemies amid seemingly impossible circumstances. By emphasizing the buccaneers’ courage, de Lussan confirms their

martial valor. Though they did not gain the victory, they demonstrated the kind of bravery and resolve that distinguished worthy men at arms.

On this occasion, de Lussan laments that the crew was not able to take the Spanish ships, as they contained enough treasure “to make us rich for life.” “This would have saved us in one *coup d’etat* from the series of trials and tribulations that were our lot for thee years,” he says, “[b]ut divine providence ordained otherwise” (87). Such trials and tribulations are reflections of God’s desire to test the resolve of the buccaneers, but they are also barometers of the buccaneers’ worth as knights-errant.

De Lussan assures his readers that the buccaneers upheld the chivalric code in all circumstances. Right before the crew’s assault on Granada, he mentions that the crew “drew up regulations condemning anyone to forfeit his share of our loot if convicted of cowardliness, rape, drunkenness, disobedience, larceny, and failure to obey orders” (121). De Lussan offers further proof of the buccaneers’ nobility in his relation of a series of violent exchanges between the buccaneers and the president of Panama. As part of their reconnaissance of the Panamanian coast the buccaneers captured twenty prisoners at Boca del Chica. The president of Panama had also captured a handful of prisoners from the buccaneers’ crew, which precipitated a violent process of negotiations in which several prisoners from both camps were slaughtered. De Lussan acknowledges the brutality of the buccaneers’ negotiations process, which consisted of beheading Spanish prisoners and sending their severed heads back to the president to signal their intent to remain firm in their demand that Panama City ransom itself. “This procedure was, to tell the truth, rather violent,” de Lussan reflects, but he maintains that “it was the only possible way of bringing the Spaniards to their senses, for we knew they would try to

trick us unless we took a firm stand and that they were quick to take advantage of any slackness on our part” (164). De Lussans transforms the buccaneers’ irrational acts of violence into a means of encouraging the Spaniards themselves to think more rationally about their actions. Moreover, he suggests that the beheading of so many innocent prisoners was a necessary action, but was by no means the buccaneers’ first choice.

By projecting an air of disappointment at such a gruesome but necessary evil, de Lussan suggests that the buccaneers are ethical subjects, despite common protestations by the Spanish to the contrary. As further proof of the buccaneers’ virtue at arms, de Lussan includes a letter from the buccaneers to the president of Panama in which he accuses the Spanish of using poisoned bullets against them. The buccaneers called this tactic such a “manifest breach of law and the practices of clean warfare that if we wished to punish you in accordance to your treatment of us, we would not give quarter to a single one of your men” (165). Whereas the Spanish are unscrupulous in war, the buccaneers, de Lussan suggests, follow a higher, nobler code that mirrors the chivalric ideal of fighting fiercely but fairly.

De Lussan paints the buccaneers as a group in a heroic light. He also highlights his own military prowess in his accounts of their raids. During a raid on Segovia, the buccaneers found themselves hemmed in by the Spanish, who had received word of their coming and prepared for a stiff defense. The region was especially dangerous for the buccaneers: in addition to having to cross a nearly unnavigable river, they were also easy targets because the region was surrounded by dense foliage, which gave their pursuers excellent cover. De Lussan displayed his tactical brilliance by splitting the company into small groups, each of which was given instructions on how to alert the rest of the

company if danger arose. He notes that “[t]hese methods having been put into practice saved the lives of many of our men” (280). His tactical intervention showcased precisely the kind of improvisational, individual action that separated the romance form from the epic. The buccaneers’ pursuit of individual fame and fortune distinguishes the concept of adventure forwarded by the *Journal* from the corporatized conception of adventure articulated by de Cussy and the ministry and forced on de Lussan’s narrative by the prefatory letters that accompanied it. The abundance of episodes displaying the buccaneers’ daring in the *Journal* link its individualized conception of adventure to a romanticized conception of the buccaneer as a chivalric hero. The romance of the self that unfolds in the *Journal* stands in stark contrast to the rather un-romantic narrative of the self that de Lussan offers during his time in servitude.

Utopia and Dystopia in the *Journal*

In addition to celebrating the piratical self as a modern version of the chivalric hero, the *Journal* also imbues pirate society with an air of utopianism. South Sea voyage narratives were particularly well suited to exploring the concept of utopia. Because they were situated in remote lands geographically that were conceptually distant from European experience, these narratives could imagine South Sea voyages as a “blank slate” upon which the author could inscribe a new social vision (Lamb 13, 43). Utopian interludes appear often in the knightly quests of romance. In the *Journal*, they emerge in two key scenes: the first imagines a utopian space amid a Spanish settlement on the South Sea coast; the second imagines a utopian space within pirate society itself.

In the first scene, de Lussan observes that the Spanish on the South Sea coast of South America:

have not known what war is; they live in profound tranquility, and have forgotten how to use fire-arms. But since we found a way to pay them a visit, they have now a large supply on hand. They are unaccustomed to war . . . Their nearest enemies are some white Indians who inhabit a corner of Chili, men of prodigious strength and size, who are incessantly at war and who, when they take captives, remove the stomach as calmly as if removing bones from a tortoise and then tear out the heart. (67)

These Spaniards live in an American Eden. They do not fight. They do not even remember how to use their arms. The cultures of violence that had torn Europe apart from the Crusades onward and had traversed the Atlantic with the expansion of Europe's trans-Atlantic empires appear to have been completely immobilized in this remote corner of the globe. The absence of war suggests the utopian potential of this particular site, for the Spanish inhabitants seem to live in a society based on different principles than those that entailed European states in endless conflicts.

While this settlement appears to hold utopian potential, de Lussan's account of it is riddled with contradictions that suggest its ultimate unsustainability. To begin, the peace the Spanish enjoy is not a true peace; it is merely the temporary amnesia of their former habits of war. They have "forgotten" how to use their arms, de Lussan tells us. Their sleeping memory of war is awakened by the presence of the buccaneers, who have begun to threaten the security of Spanish settlements all along the South Sea coast. De Lussan notes that this group of Spaniards has left off their peaceable ways and begun to restock their supply of firearms now that the buccaneers have found a way to "pay them a visit" (67). We begin to see that the utopian potential of a site like this cannot be realized

or sustained because it depends on the repression of a pre-existent habit of war and an impossible isolation from the cultures of war that had already infiltrated the Atlantic, the Caribbean, and now the South Sea.

The unsustainability of this potentially utopian site is further confirmed by presence of the “white Indians” whose hostility toward the Spanish stands as a reminder of the history of conflict that brought the Spanish to the Americas in the first place. Because this particular space is marked by the active presence of conflict between indigenous communities, the Spanish, and Spain’s imperial rivals, it cannot function as the “tabula rasa” on which an alternative social vision is inscribed. Its utopian potential, in other words, is nullified by the persistent traces of the violence that permeate the imperial domain. The utopian drive in this episode finds expression elsewhere in the *Journal*, specifically in de Lussan’s account of the buccaneers’ assault on Guayaquil.

De Lussan begins his narrative of this event with an anecdote about the Spanish friars’ characterization of the buccaneers:

The padres dislike us so cordially that they assured women who had never seen buccaneers that we were not formed like other mortals, that our faces were not like those of real men, and that we ate women and little children. This caused them to conceive a keen horror and aversion for us, which they lost only when they came to know us. (211)

The friars depict the buccaneers as one of the monstrous races typically associated with Europeans’ cultural Others. In so doing they reverse the trope of monstrosity to dehumanize rival Europeans. Europeans frequently articulated their fear of the threat posed by their cultural others using the figure of the cannibal, who he represented a threat

to the bodily integrity of the European subject. In much the same way, the buccaneers are represented as cannibals who threaten the physical bodies of their Spanish enemies, as well as their social body, through their attacks on its means of reproduction (women and children).

De Lussan begins his attack on the friars' position by suggesting that their insistence on the monstrosity of the buccaneers is really an act of displacement that directs attention away from their own lecherous behavior. He argues that most of the friars "led the lives of libertines" amongst the city's extraordinarily beautiful women (211). Even so, the friars' negative portrayal of the buccaneers held sway over the city's inhabitants, many of whom respond to the buccaneers with "horror" and "aversion." De Lussan attempts to show that this antipathy toward the buccaneers can be overcome relationally as the city's inhabitants (especially their women) "come to know them."

The first proof of the buccaneers' civility emerges during an exchange between de Lussan and a female captive. The captive begs de Lussan not to eat her. Somewhat surprised by the request, he asks his captive why she would think he would do such a thing, to which the woman responds that the friars had frightened the women by telling them that the buccaneers were a monstrous race. They had convinced the women that the buccaneers did not even look like human beings, but resembled monkeys and behaved as animals did (212). De Lussan's humane treatment of this woman proves that the buccaneers are not monsters, but rather principled soldiers capable of fighting fairly and showing restraint when necessary. He offers a further testament to the buccaneers' civility when he remarks that after spending some time in their company, the Spanish women "felt very differently toward us, frequently giving indications of a passion

bordering at times on folly” (211). Not only are the buccaneers no longer monsters—they are so attractive that the Spanish women are inflamed with an uncontrollable lust.

This reversal of the Spanish women’s attitude toward the buccaneers is meant to establish the buccaneers’ virtue in love as well as at arms. It is also meant to set the scene for the utopian, idyllic retreat of the buccaneers and their captives to the nearby island of La Puna. The group remained at La Puna for over a month while they waited for the citizens of Guayaquil to produce the money necessary to ransom the city. During this time, de Lussan says that the buccaneers “made friends with the ladies among our prisoners, and without being violent, solicited their favors and made them lose, as I have already remarked, whatever aversion they may previously have had for the French nation before they knew them” (217). By insisting that the Spanish women’s “favors” toward the buccaneers are bestowed freely without the threat of violence or coercion, de Lussan shows that the buccaneers follow the chivalric code by exercising restraint in the face of a temptation that could be gratified without fear of repercussion. So peaceful was the buccaneers’ retreat to La Puna that they “forgot their past hardships and thought no more of the Spaniards than if they were living safely in the heart of Paris” (217). Here they enjoyed the charms of the Spanish women of Guayaquil, as well as a sumptuous repast provided by the constant influx of food from the city and an excellent symphony.

The buccaneers’ temporary settlement at La Puna presents the reader with what Lamb calls “enchanting descriptions of voluptuous sociality.” Such descriptions are imbued with utopian hope. They attempt to wed the desire for individual pleasure with a stable social structure, and in so doing, to restore readers’ sense of the salience of the hope for a utopian reform of civil society (24). In the context of the *Journal*, the problem

with such utopian idealizations is that they are dashed by the presence of the kind of violence that resists idealization. The utopian scene of voluptuous sociality at La Puna, we must remember, is the direct result of imperial conflict. The buccaneers' consorts are, after all, prisoners of war. La Puna itself is no more than a detention center for the citizens of Guayaquil, whom the buccaneers hoped to trade for ransom. However pleasant the buccaneers' stay on the island was, it was not sustainable because it was surrounded and constituted by violence.

This fact is not entirely lost on de Lussan. He begins to realize how unsustainable his utopian vision of the buccaneers' settlement at La Puna is during the course of an "adventure" he takes with a female captive on the island. This woman, whose husband was killed during the buccaneers' assault on Guayaquil, appears overjoyed at the prospect of deliverance from the "unpleasant life" she led amongst her fellow countrymen. She is so happy to be in de Lussan's company, in fact, that she proposes that the two hide away in some remote corner of the island until the buccaneers depart, at which point the two can return to Guayaquil and marry (217). At one level, the private love plot symbolizes the failure of the corporatized utopian vision of the entire buccaneer community insofar as its culmination is only achievable in the absence of the larger community of buccaneers. At another level, it preserves the hope of utopian experience by reducing it to a smaller scale. To entice de Lussan to follow her plans to elope, his paramour promises de Lussan her husband's old office in the treasury, her own property holdings, and letters of assurance from local officers to ensure that he would be well received by the residents of Guayaquil. The idea of a former pirate keeping the books for one of Spain's most important and most vulnerable cities on the South Sea coast, though, seems too good to

be true even to de Lussan, who has his doubts that the residents of a city that had been so recently abused by the buccaneers would receive him willingly. He relates his dilemma in the following terms:

I felt strongly inclined to accept what was offered. Two powerful incentives prompted this feeling: one was the miserable, dull life we led out here, where we were in constant danger of dying and from which I might escape by a fortunate meeting with a beautiful woman, with considerable property; the other was my despair of ever being able to return to my own country for lack of suitable vessels. (218)

Marrying his beautiful and eligible lover offers the opportunity to culminate the love plot, which is a hallmark of romance, but more importantly, it offers an escape from the constant danger to which the buccaneers exposed themselves. The scenes of death that followed the buccaneers everywhere they went appear to have taken their toll on de Lussan, who is no longer the doughty soldier undaunted by death that we met at Saint-Ghislain. He now appears much more fragile, afraid of death and eager for escape. Marriage would make this escape possible, but it would also consign him to a life apart from his native France. Once again, we are confronted with a drastic change in de Lussan's self-characterization. The narrative begins with de Lussan's strident assertion that he must escape the mundane existence his fellow Parisians live in order to see the world, but here we see a homesick hero who can no longer imagine himself as a piratical knight-errant. His quest for adventure has degenerated into a quest for survival. It seems that only a return to France can ensure de Lussan's self-preservation.

The regressive movement catalyzed by this scene marks the end of the narrative's utopian vision. Neither the peaceable Spanish settlement nor the buccaneers' idyllic retreat can last; both are entangled in the webs of violence that stretch across the Atlantic, the Caribbean, the South Sea, and their littorals. Pirate life itself also proves to be an unsustainable utopia. While it offered indentures like de Lussan a new and radical freedom, piracy turned out to be a form of bondage in that it wedded pirates to careers of violence that posed a constant threat to their survival. The failure of the utopian vision of the *Journal* reveals that the imperial domain is in fact a dystopian environment. The realization of the dystopian nature of imperial life that emerges from the repeated failure of the text's utopian imagination opens up a space for reading the *Journal* as a counter-narrative of empire. Not only does its utopian imagination collapse under the weight of the traumatic violence that is constitutive of imperial culture, but the entire romance plot that structures the narrative collapses as well. We are left with a narrative whose failures signal the inadequacy of the literary form of romance as hermeneutics of experience.

The *Journal* as Counter Genre

Barbara A. Simerka defines the "counter genre" as the "negative image" of an already established generic form (47). In the *Journal's* closing scenes, we begin to see the emergence of a negative image of the romance genre, which we may call the anti-romance.⁶² When read as an anti-romance, we begin to see the limits of the romance form itself as a rhetorical tool for authors like de Lussan who sought to pursue an heroic life by taking to sea as a pirate.

The reticence de Lussan shows in the above passage about returning to combat marks a significant change in the narrative's representation of pirate life. Early on in the

narrative, pirate life is viewed as a means to freedom. Piracy allows de Lussan the opportunity to gratify his desire to pursue a life of errantry along the pattern of romance. By the end of his stay at La Puna, however, pirate life has become completely disenchanted. De Lussan appears unable to rationalize the violence that he has engaged in during his “adventures.” As Nerlich has noted, the concept of adventure evolved during the Renaissance from its classical meaning as something that happens to an individual to the modern understanding of adventure as something that one chooses. This latter meaning finds expression in the romance tradition through the knight’s voluntary quest for fame and fortune. By the end of the *Journal*, the sense of adventure that characterizes the romance has shifted back toward what Nerlich has defined as a more classical conception of adventure as something that happens to one (5). De Lussan now avoids the “danger” that the romance hero courts. He appears to have lost his ability to control his own adventure, and his only shelter appears to be a return to France.

The traumatic experience of war that wracked de Lussan affected the rest of the crew as well. Upon the buccaneers’ return to the Caribbean, they laid anchor at Petit Gôave, where they awaited safe passage home to France. Despite the fact that the crew had returned safely to friendly waters after a long and dangerous trip to the South Sea, the buccaneers appear unable to enjoy the peace that accompanies their journey’s end. De Lussan says that:

While lying there at anchor, some of our men whose spirits were so misguided and whose minds had given way from the suffering they had experienced to such an extent that they were always imagining Spaniards were coming, upon sighting from the deck of the boat some men on

horseback riding along the seashore, got out their arms ready to fire thinking they were enemies, although we assured them we were among friends. (290)

These buccaneers are haunted by the specters of war. Even in the safety of a French harbor they see Spaniards at sea, Spaniards on shore, and Spaniards on land, all ready to do them harm. These paranoid delusions continue to haunt de Lussan even after his return to France. He offers this telling account of the declension of his mental state after his two-year sojourn among the buccaneers:

I cannot refrain from adding that I, for one, had so little hope of ever returning, that for more than fifteen days my return seemed like an illusion. At the same time, I avoided sleeping for fear that, upon awaking, I would find that I was back again in the land from which I had so recently departed. (291)

As Gillian Beer argues, the romance almost always has a happy ending. Though it often takes its hero through a complex series of adventures, it normally ends with a celebration of the core values of “fecundity, freedom, and survival” (29). Northrop Frye elaborates, arguing that the romance typically culminates in a final heroic deed that reveals the knight in all his glory. Frye calls this moment of recognition the “*anagnoresis* or discovery” which leads to the “recognition of the hero, who has clearly proved himself to be a hero even if he does not survive the conflict” (186-187).

De Lussan frames his *Journal* as a romance: its plot is structured around the adventure-quest, and its protagonist is characterized as a knight-errant. The adventures that comprise the body of the narrative demonstrate traditional the chivalric values of

bravery, martial prowess, and genteel behavior toward women. The narrative's *denouement*, however, lacks a proper ending. It does not celebrate the traditional values of fecundity, freedom, or survival. Piracy was a means of social reproduction for de Lussan in that it offered him the chance to escape the social death entailed by indentured servitude and experience rebirth as a free subject among the buccaneers. As the narrative's closing demonstrates, however, the brand of freedom piracy offered ultimately resulted in a kind of psychological bondage—even after they have left the life of piracy behind, neither the crew nor de Lussan himself can decathect from the scenes of violence that dominated their adventures. Most of the buccaneers survived, to be sure, but the uneasy state they occupy in their survival negates the values of fecundity and freedom that we traditionally associate with romance.

The *Journal* also lacks the classic moment of *anagnoresis* in which the knight achieves the final end of his quest and is revealed to readers in all his splendor. Properly speaking, there is no final heroic deed at the end of the narrative. While they had amassed some wealth from their raids, most of the buccaneers were not able to enjoy the fruits of their labor. Several of them gambled away their earnings as soon as they got them. Those who kept their loot were stalked, and in some cases murdered, by those who had lost their portion, and many of the buccaneers simply could not haul their loot across the treacherous terrain of the Isthmus of Panama. In this respect, their heroic efforts in battle amounted to nothing. And while the prefatory letters by de Cussy and Seignelay attempted to immortalize de Lussan and the buccaneers as national heroes because of the valuable accounts they offered about the crossing of the Isthmus and strength of Spain's

defenses in the Caribbean and South Seas, their own fragile state upon their return suggests that they viewed themselves not as heroes but as traumatized soldiers.

In their fractured state, the buccaneers collectively, and de Lussan particularly, stand as negative images of the heroes of romance and their martial achievements. Their quests have failed, their bravery has deserted them, and they cannot lay claim to any significant and lasting accomplishment. In Simerka's terms, the *Journal* is a "counter genre" to the romance, an "anti-romance." Its heroes are anti-heroes. The buccaneers' paralysis upon returning home de-romanticizes the martial-heroic ethos of romance, which suggests that the narrative is better read within the tradition of anti-martial discourses that emerged during the seventeenth century (48). There is something decidedly ironic about the *Journal* in this respect. It turns out exactly as it ought not have turned out. Frye labels the ironic feeling we get the *Journal's* infelicitous ending "*sparagmos*," which designates the idea that "heroism and effective action are absent, disorganized or foredoomed to defeat, and that confusion and anarchy reign over the world" (192). *Sparagmos* is the dominant theme of ironic and satiric discourse, which are not typically associated with the romance tradition. In fact, Frye argues that "irony has little place in romance" because the romance itself is so cleanly bifurcated into the categories of good and evil that there is little to no room for indeterminacy regarding characters or their actions (195). Irony plays a crucial role in the *Journal*, though, because it is precisely through the conflict between its romance and anti-romance themes that the ideological consequences of the narrative emerge.

The romance valorizes individual freedom and heroic action. As Maravall has argued, the romance's celebration of the individual signifies a rejection of the

increasingly hegemonic power of the modern state, which opposes all power but its own (*Utopia* 49). The idea of the romance quest harkens back to a time before the state's rigid delineation of the individual's rights and responsibilities had taken hold. Before the consolidation of the modern state, the chivalric ideal flourished because the knight served a useful social function as the guarantor of peace. The adventures of the knight-errant were politically useful to the feudal state, and moreover, they were enabled by the fact that the state had not yet seized control of the entirety of its territory. All of that changed with the formation of the centralized, territorial modern state.

Post-Westphalia, the state regulated its space much more effectively through an increasingly bureaucratic system of governance. Territorial regulation diminished the sphere of the knight's influence, limiting his ability to run freely in search of adventure. The formation of the modern standing army had a similar effect: the disciplined soldier replaced the knight as the primary means of securing peace and order in the state (Nerlich 14). The forced obsolescence of the knightly class in Europe, however, did not mean the end of the chivalric ideal. The opening of the American theater revived the dying ideal of the romance hero. The territorial domain of the European imperial state had been integrated into its systems of governance in an incomplete and uneven way, which meant that America offered far greater prospects for the fulfillment of the romance ideal of the heroic quest than Europe did. De Lussan recognizes this fact very early on in the *Journal*. He expresses his desire to leave France for America as a strong internal compulsion to pursue the life of errantry. This decision carries with it the tacit realization that the growing power of the centralizing French state was foreclosing on the individual freedom to choose one's path in life. The *Journal's* abundant scenes of collective and individual

heroism suggest that de Lussan and the buccaneers had achieved their goal of securing fame and fortune as modernized romance heroes.

As the ending of the narrative makes clear, though, the *Journal* does not fit easily into the ideological program of romance. The traumatized buccaneers we meet at the end of the *Journal* bear little resemblance to the chivalric heroes whose actions drive its plot. In Frye's terms, heroism and effective action are absent. In their place is the disquieting realization that the romantic form is incapable of organizing the anarchic world of violence that defines the imperial domain. While the wandering itinerary of the romance is itself a form of anarchy, its plot is unified by the culminating action of the heroic deed, which gives meaning to the series of adventures that punctuate the knight's errant wanderings.⁶³ Such closure is missing from the *Journal*—there is no final recognition of the knight's heroism. Instead, there is a tragic sense that the violence inherent in the romance quest serves no higher or nobler purpose, but rather cripples the narrative's "heroes" and ironizes their quest for glory.

The intrusion of anti-romance themes into the adventure-world of the *Journal* reveals the "ideological faultlines" of its romance poetics (Simerka 53). Such faultlines emerge, Simerka argues, when narratives deploy conflicting generic forms without offering a means for their resolution (53). In the *Journal*, the conflict between romance and anti-romance manifests itself as the tension between the view of war as a heroic feat and the view of war as a tragic event. In the narrative's opening scenes, we recall de Lussan's celebration of war during the siege of Saint-Ghislain. "Here," he says, "I could not desist from finding warfare more alluring than ever, deadly as it was. The engagement cost the lives of many of our men, without, in the slightest way, jeopardizing

mine.” As his lust for war grew, de Lussan’s mind became “engrossed with voyages, the longer and more dangerous, the more attractive” (33). The distance from which he observed the siege of Saint-Ghislain allowed for the idealization of war. War is aestheticized as “alluring,” and “attractive.” Insofar as the *Journal* maintains this image of war as a heroic act, it follows the pattern of romance. But concept of war as heroic achievement sounds far better in theory than it seems in practice. The very idea of heroic achievement in war loses its intelligibility as de Lussan is exposed to lengthier and more disturbing scenes of violence. While the buccaneers were passing through Pueblo Viejo, de Lussan observes that:

[The buccaneers] found it absolutely uninhabited, abandoned by the anathema which they had pronounced on it of their own volition. Such a strange occurrence may seem odd; nevertheless it is a fact, for, when buccaneers have attacked one town several times, their prelates place a ban on it, pronounce an anathema upon it, and abandon it. They do not even bury what dead we may have killed for they consider those who have fallen, for this same reason, unworthy of burial. (102-103)

The scene describes the Spanish “scorched earth” policy, which was an act of self-preservation whereby Spanish inhabitants pronounced frequently raided towns anathema and fled, leaving their belongings and their dead behind. The image of the bloodied, unburied dead leaves a lasting impression on the reader, and on the author as well. Scenes such as this one are impossible to aestheticize. We recall as well the scene where de Lussan relates the buccaneers’ strategy for negotiating an exchange of prisoners and a ransom payment with the residents of Panama City. Upset that several of their own men

had suffered injuries during the siege of the city and were dying from their wounds, the buccaneers decided to “send the president the heads of twenty of his men with the warning that if, by the twenty-eight, he had not returned our comrades, we would send him the heads of our remaining prisoners.” The shipment of severed heads, de Lussan admits, “was, to tell the truth, rather violent,” though he argues it was “the only possible way of bringing the Spaniards to their senses” (164). While de Lussan tries to rationalize violence as necessity, this scene, too, is impossible to aestheticize. De Lussan makes no such attempt, admitting that the buccaneers’ strategy was base, though “necessary” to facilitate the agreement they sought with the Spaniards.

These scenes highlight the human face of war, which Simerka identifies as a marker of anti-epic discourse, which I argue is also characteristic of the anti-romance (60). Whereas the romance celebrates the heroism displayed in battle, the anti-romance emphasizes the tragedy of war, the “haunting evocation of the price of conquest” (60). The buccaneers’ psychic disturbance at the end of the narrative suggests that the de Lussan’s desire to romanticize his violent past cannot be carried through. De Lussan notes that he himself could not sleep for fear of being taken back by his subconscious to the deathscape from which he had fled. As Philip Mason has observed of the ideological justification of violence in the context of the epic genre, its aim is “that the rulers should sleep without bad dreams” (qtd. in Simerka 46). The same could very well be said of the romance’s desire to idealize violence as an ethical achievement. The problem for de Lussan, and for the rest of his company, is that their dreams remain haunted by the specters of war. By ending with the image of so many fractured psyches, the *Journal* collapses its own generic structure without offering another framework to replace it. Its

generic indeterminacy forces readers to reckon with the narrative's simultaneous condemnation of imperial cultures of violence and the attempt to escape them through the idea of the romance quest. The convergence of romance and anti-romance illustrate what I call the tragedy of empire—the sense that no matter which position one occupies within the imperial nexus, one never escapes the powerful, distortional violence that defines it. In the absence of a resolution of the conflict between the romance and its negative image, the *Journal* leaves us with what Simerka calls a “polyphonic scrutiny of imperialism,” whereby the author sounds the depths of the literary form of the romance and is haunted by the distorted reverberations of his own echo (53).

William Dampier, whose *New Voyage Round the World* was published nearly a decade after de Lussan's *Journal*, harkens back to Raleigh's *Discoverie* in its attempt to link the adventures of the individual knight-errant to the geopolitical aims of the English empire. In Raleigh's case, as I have shown, marrying the romance narrative of the self with the corporate narrative of imperial history can be a tricky matter. Unlike Raleigh, Dampier is more successful at this task, mostly, as I will argue, because he is willing to let go of his attachment to the romance of piracy when he realizes that maintaining that attachment will ouster him from the company of the Royal Society, which he desperately seeks as a mode of social advancement.

Dampier's romance quest follows the pattern of Raleigh's and de Lussan's narratives in offering a strong sense of the author's own experience as a pirate-knight, rather than simply relating observations about the actions of others, as Exquemelin largely does. Writing as far from the metropole as the Spice Islands allows Dampier ample space to envision his travels as errant quests—much more space than the ever

more crowded and more highly bureaucratized Caribbean did. Within the expansive space of the South Sea, Dampier exercises his romance imagination, envisioning a pirate society capable of conquering the region and establishing its own trans-oceanic economy. This romance narrative of the self is embedded within a larger, competing narrative of the self in which Dampier acts as a forger of economic inroads into the Spanish- and Dutch-occupied East Indies, as well as a colonialist, suggesting potential sites for settlement and planting in the Pacific. While the Raleigh, Exquemelin, and de Lussan negotiated the political tensions inherent in their choices of literary forms with little success, Dampier is able to endear himself to the Society and London's scientific elite because of the copious notes he took during his extensive travels. Dampier's ultimate decision to abandon the idea of an individual, heroic existence at the edge of empire in favor of the corporate project of empire-building effectively ends the strain of resistance to empire that the previous authors in this study have forged through their adaptations of the romance form to Atlantic contexts. The *New Voyage* thus marks the end of the pirate-author's project of refashioning the romance as an early modern maritime genre as a tool for economic and social advancement. Those opportunities would not arise again until the War of Spanish Succession (1701-1714), whose beginning would mark the high point of the buccaneers' power in the Caribbean, and whose ending would signal their ultimate demise.

Chapter Four: “Golden Dreams”: Science, Empire, and Romance in William Dampier’s *New Voyage Round the World* (1697)

When William Dampier returned to England from his twelve-year circumnavigation, he carried in his possession the pages of a journal that would become the most popular of the English buccaneer narratives of the late seventeenth century. That journal was published in 1697 under the title *Dampier’s Voyages; Consisting of a New Voyage Round the World, a Supplement to the Voyage Round the World, Two Voyages to Campeachy, a Discourse of Winds, a Voyage to New Holland, and a Vindication, in answer to the Chimerical Relation of William Funnel*. The *New Voyage* enjoyed immediate and widespread fame: there were seven English editions as well as translations into French, Spanish and Dutch during Dampier’s lifetime alone.⁶⁴ Its international popularity was due in large part to its focus on events in the South Sea, which was beginning to supplant the Caribbean as the prime target for piracy by the end of the seventeenth century.⁶⁵ For the English in particular, the *New Voyage* was important because it covered a critical period in the development of England’s policy toward piracy in the Caribbean and in the articulation of its global economic strategy.

During the 1670s, the English Caribbean was a friendly place for pirates, who were welcomed by colonial governors and merchants because they acted as couriers of necessary goods, and because their prize money boosted local economies. The 1680s saw a drastic change in policy: piracy was becoming a capital crime from the Caribbean to New England because the crown had decided that the threat pirates posed to regular commerce outweighed their utility as forgers of new markets, and that their general disregard for legal authority was in fundamental conflict with the its goal of consolidating

governmental authority.⁶⁶ The South Sea, however, was another matter. England wanted to join the Spanish, Dutch and French as economic powers in the South Sea, but had been unable to do so. Without a permanent base of operations, the English relied on the efforts of seamen to provide intelligence about geographic, economic, and military matters. Privateers and pirates were the main agents in the advancement of English knowledge of the South Sea, and for this reason, South Sea pirates like Dampier could still find favor with the crown even as Caribbean piracy was being aggressively stamped out by new legislation and penal procedures.⁶⁷ The *New Voyage* formed part of a small but important corpus of English South Sea buccaneer narratives of the 1690s that pushed English understanding of the Pacific forward significantly. The quality of Dampier's work was ratified by the warm embrace it received from both the scientific community and from the Admiralty, which was apparently quite willing to endorse Dampier and his narrative despite his criminal record.⁶⁸

As historian Kris E. Lane has noted, England was pursuing a “double course” with regard to piracy at the end of the seventeenth century that harkened back on the one hand to an earlier era when the state depended upon the actions of rogue adventurers for the advancement of its economic and political causes, and looked forward on the other hand toward a slowly emerging present in which the state could extend its sovereign power in a more highly rationalized and better regulated way (124). The tension between the two ideas of empire implied by this “double course” has an important narrative dimension. Literary critics have linked the shift in the structure of the English state from the late sixteenth century to the late seventeenth century to a shift in the narrative framework within which English imperialists located their nation's history. Elizabethan

imperialists drew heavily from the romance tradition. Jonathan Lamb observes that the genre of romance was particularly appealing as a narrative resource for framing England's budding imperial history as the product of adventurers who combined both individual ambition and patriotism. By placing a dual emphasis on individualism and patriotism, and by emphasizing improvisation over regulation, Lamb argues that romance avoided the "tight necessities of the epic genre." The romance thus stood as an ideal master-narrative during the early Elizabethan era for a state whose political and economic power had not yet been consolidated and was deeply dependent on the private initiative of merchants, privateers and pirates (54).⁶⁹

In the century that separated Hakluyt's works and Dampier's, the romance lost some of its purchase as a national narrative. This was because the principle of errantry upon which the Elizabethan imperial romance was built was at odds with the principle of order that animated the English imperial imagination that began to emerge at the turn of the sixteenth century and came to dominate English imperial ideology during the seventeenth century. Following the advances in natural history brought about by Francis Bacon's empirical method, English imperialists of the late-seventeenth century preferred the scientific expedition to the knightly quest as the ideal model of imperial expansion. Figures like Abraham Cowley and Thomas Sprat, who championed the institutionalization of the Baconian New Sciences in the Royal Society of London, urged English travelers to adopt the plain, factual style of scientific discourse and to foreground natural observations over the martial achievements that took center stage in the romance.⁷⁰ They argued that doing so would allow the English to achieve a "conquest" through scientific and economic advancement that they could never achieve militarily

through the haphazard efforts of privateers and pirates. The narrative that imperial apologists such as Crowley and Sprat were fashioning aimed to render the knight-errant an anachronism and to supplant him with the naturalist as the proper hero of empire.

The transition from the English imperial romance to the concept of an empire of science was an uneven one, and it was far from complete when Dampier wrote the *New Voyage*. As I have suggested, the political straddling of a quickly homogenizing English Caribbean and the relatively chaotic field of the South Sea necessitated a continued investment in the imperial romance, even if such an investment was ultimately understood as a temporary concession until such time as the state could establish a more regular economic presence there. Literary criticism of Dampier's narrative has likewise straddled the interpretive fence when assessing its place within the political and discursive shifts that were taking place at the moment of its iteration. Anna Neill has argued on the basis of the narrative's use of ethnographic discourse that the *New Voyage* participates in the imperial project of extending English claims to sovereignty through science (165). Richard Frohock has taken a similar position on the proper generic categorization of Dampier's text, arguing that his thick descriptions of natural phenomena "evinced a clear preference for science over the heroics of battle" (91). Lamb has taken a contrary view, noting that Dampier's purportedly "Methodic Discourse" was in fact prone to errantry and was perceived by certain of his contemporaries to be written "after the fashion of romances" (57-59).

My aim in this chapter is not to settle the question of whether the *New Voyage* is best read as part of the romance tradition or as part of the corpus of imperial scientific literature, but to suggest that its literary historical value lies precisely in its resistance to

tidy generic categorization. The dominance of scientific discourse in the text is readily apparent in its protracted discussions of natural history, ethnography, geography, and cartography. Moreover, the connections between the discourse of science and the politics of empire are also readily apparent through Dampier's specific address of the text to the Royal Society. There are several moments in the text, however, that suggest the presence of an alternative set of narrative codes, namely those of romance. The text's latent romance themes emerge most clearly in those sections that deal with establishing potential English settlements in the South Seas. In these sections, Dampier's commitment to empire wavers as the image of himself as a romantic conquistador overtakes the image of himself as a man of science. While literary histories have tended to minimize the importance of the romance after the early decades of the seventeenth century, I wish to argue here that the presence of these romance themes in the *New Voyage* shows that the romance played an important mediatory function in the process of English imperial consolidation clear through the century's end.⁷¹

In the following section I want to address the problem of genre in the text by examining its prefatory apparatus and the early chapters in order to show how Dampier uses scientific language to establish his trustworthiness as an author and to distance his narrative from the large mass of travel narratives that were dismissed by polite society on the basis of their association with the romance tradition. By aligning himself with the project of the New Sciences, Dampier positions himself as a modern brand of imperial hero defined by erudition rather than martial skill.

Subsequent sections will explore the dynamic relationships between science, trade, empire, and the discourse of romance in the narrative. Section two will examine

Dampier's use of ethnography to create a moral justification for imperial expansion in specifically non-martial terms. His use of natural-law theory sanitizes imperial politics by rendering "conquest" an epistemological event. Section three will focus specifically on the development of the theme of trade in the narrative, paying particular attention to the role maritime subjects like Dampier played in creating the space necessary for imperial expansion by identifying global paths of exchange capable of facilitating flows of goods and the dissemination of state power. The process of creating imperial space by connecting the metropolis to various points within the hydraulic web of global exchange requires a certain kind of subject—one who is capable not only of conquest through knowledge, but also of conquest through strength.⁷² The sections of the narrative that deal with the expansion of English trade lend themselves to conceptions of the imperial hero as a martial hero of romance, which are in conflict with the modern conception of the imperial hero as a man of science. In section four I will show how the emergence of the romance themes of martial heroism, adventure, and conquest within the text's larger narrative of scientific and cultural advancement reveals the extent to which the chaos of empire allowed imperial functionaries working on its peripheries to construct narratives of the self that operated according to the old codes of romance. In the concluding section, I argue that an understanding of the co-constitutive nature of the romance form and that of New Scientific literature in the *New Voyage* opens up a new critical perspective on the narrative's place within the evolution of the literary forms of romance and scientific literature, at the same time that it suggests a better understanding of the mediatory function of romance in the articulation of modern narrative forms.

Romance and the Science of Empire: The Problem of Genre in the *New Voyage*

Dampier speaks to the issue of genre explicitly in the dedicatory epistle, which is addressed to Charles Montague, President of the Royal Society. He begins the letter by acknowledging the obvious problem that all travel writers confronted when submitting their narratives for public consumption: veracity. The scene of his travels, he admits, “is not only Remote, but for the most part little frequented also, so there may be some Things in them New even to You” (17).⁷³ Sheer physical distance created problems for the reception of travel writers’ texts because metropolitan readers were faced with the difficult task of having to choose to believe or disbelieve a given writer’s assertions without having any personal experience against which to check them.⁷⁴ With regard to the South Sea particularly, the lack of corroborating evidence intensified this problem. Dampier’s journal was among the first of its kind. At the time of its publication, there were only two other English buccaneer narratives in print that dealt with similar topics: Bartholomew Sharpe’s 1684 *Voyages*, and Basil Ringrose’s narrative of the Sharp expedition, which was appended to the 1685 English edition of Alexander Exquemelin’s *The Buccaneers of America*.⁷⁵ This meant that there were simply not many narratives against which readers could check Dampier’s findings. Even such widely read purveyors of travel narratives as Montague, whose institutional position in the Royal Society afforded him access to a wide range of natural historical travel literature, found themselves confronted with new and incredible things when reading the works of those whose travels were as extensive as Dampier’s. Imaginative tales of fantastic wealth and monstrous races continued to make regular appearances in late-seventeenth century travel literature, straining the credulity of metropolitan readers.⁷⁶ Dampier attempts to distinguish himself from writers of such tales by assuring his readers that he has “not so

much of the Vanity of a Traveller as to be fond of telling Stories,” and that his chief design is the promotion of “useful Knowledge, and of any thing that may never so remotely tend toward my Countries Advantage” (17).

By acknowledging the truth problem, Dampier confronts directly the potential charge that his narrative is just another romance written by an overly imaginative and attention-starved traveler. The *New Voyage*, he argues, is not to be regarded as a piece of imaginative fiction. Rather, it is to be regarded as the product of a scientific expedition of the sort called for by the Royal Society.⁷⁷ To establish this point, Dampier lays out the plan of the work in terms consistent with the epistemological and methodological project of the Society. He speaks first to the issue of narrative structure, arguing that an underlying concern with methodological precision underwrites the text’s at times incoherent and unwieldy feel. The “mixt Relation of Places and Actions” it comprises has been rendered chronologically to create a sense of order. Likewise, Dampier’s thick descriptions of the flora and fauna of the various places he visits creates a sense of epistemological order by following the Baconian injunction to investigate nature directly and vigorously. Thus, while his remarks on natural history may be “more particular than might be needful,” the exhaustive principle behind them is consistent with the desire of the New Sciences to bring the entire natural world into view.

Having articulated the organizing principles of his relation of “places,” Dampier turns to the principles guiding his relation of “actions” in the narrative. The category itself presented rhetorical problems for authors and readers alike because the generic question about whether a narrative fit best within the romance tradition or within the corpus of scientific literature could turn on the author’s definition of “action” and the

relationship s/he took to it. Within the romance tradition, narrative “action” was martial; the purpose of its relation was to establish the heroism of the protagonist. Proponents of the New Sciences preferred authors who were self-effacing and focused on the material they were observing (Shapin 223). The main “action” of the ideal scientific travel narrative is the act of observation itself; all other actions are of secondary importance. Dampier makes it clear that “action” in his narrative is to be understood in the latter sense in the following passage:

As for the Actions of the Company among whom I made the greatest part of this Voyage, a thread of which I have carried on thro’ it, ’tis not to divert the Reader with them that I mention them, much less that I take any pleasure in relating them: but for methods sake, and for the Readers satisfaction: who could not so well acquiesce in my Descriptions of Places, &c. without knowing the particular Traverses I made among them. . . And as for the Traverses themselves, they make for the Readers advantage, how little soever for mine; since thereby I have been the better inabled to gratify his Curiosity; as one who rambles about a Country can give usually a better account of it, than a Carrier who jogs on to his Inn, without ever going out of his Road. (20)

Dampier distances himself from the romance tradition here by making the buccaneers’ actions a matter of secondary importance. In place of the heroic battles that constituted the main action of romance narratives, Dampier offers only the most essential details of the buccaneers’ movements. This strategy helps redefine narrative action in scientific terms: the diminished importance of martial-heroic action helps focus the reader’s

attention on the natural scientific observations Dampier makes in the course of his travels. Where details of the buccaneers' raids are included, they are not intended for the reader's pleasure or distraction. Rather, they are included as a methodological prerequisite for the production of scientific knowledge. In other words, in order for the reader's scientific curiosity to be properly satisfied, s/he would naturally need some proof that Dampier has been where he says and has seen enough to make significant additions to the existing corpus of scientific knowledge.⁷⁸

Generally speaking, the body of the narrative follows the plan set forth in the dedicatory epistle and the preface of emphasizing scientific discoveries over martial action. The layout of the introduction is a good example of the way Dampier establishes this narrative hierarchy. In the introduction he recounts the history of his two-year sojourn with Bartholomew Sharp, who gained notoriety for his assaults on Panama and Peru from 1679 to 1681. Sharp's attacks were remembered by the Spanish for their excessive brutality, but we see none of this in Dampier's text. Instead, Dampier sanitizes this history, stating simply that the buccaneers "took" the towns of Portobello, Santa Maria, and Ilo (30). By omitting the particulars of these raids, which had already been published by Ringrose and others, Dampier is better able to help his reader "perceive where I mean to begin to be Particular," which, as he has already suggested, is on matters of scientific import (31).

At the beginning of the narrative proper, Dampier leaves off the history of the Sharp expedition and begins the story of his second journey to the South Sea. Chapters one through three are particularly important for establishing the text's narrative direction. The relationship these chapters establish between the buccaneers' movements and matters

of scientific interest are representative of the way that Dampier's narrative method generally plays out. For that reason, I want to examine their structure here briefly and use them as a basis for examining the multiple functions of scientific discourse in the text.

Chapters one and two narrate Dampier's journey from the South Sea to the North Sea via the Isthmus of Darien. For such a narrow tract of land, the Panamanian Isthmus had a rather violent history. It was the site of inter-European conflict between the Spanish and the buccaneers; it was also the site of conflict between European buccaneers the Native tribes who controlled the interior. Dampier's experience in crossing the Isthmus was deeply implicated in this history of violence. As a member of Sharp's crew, Dampier crossed the Isthmus for the express purpose of plunder. When all was said and done, Sharp's expedition resulted in the murder of several hundred Spanish colonists, the desecration of sacred spaces, and the unlawful seizure of persons and goods. Dampier's subsequent crossings were similarly entangled in violence. The passage recorded in chapter two was also undertaken for the purpose of seeking plunder, and as Dampier acknowledges, it necessitated conflict between the buccaneers, the friendly Native guides who met them on Panama's Pacific coast, the hostile Native tribes who inhabited its Caribbean coast, and of course, the Spanish (54). Dampier chooses to push this violent history to the margins of his text. His accounts of his crossings of the Isthmus eschew violence as the organizing principle of its space. Instead, he projects onto it the cartographer's gaze and offers the reader a map of the region "For the better apprehending the Course of the Voyage, and the Situation of the Places mentioned in it." While Ringrose had already published a map of the Isthmus, Dampier argues that his own will be found "more agreeable" to the region because it incorporates contractions of "a

larger Map which I took from several Stations in the Bay itself” (22). The superior precision of Dampier’s map is immediately evident: it contains numerous improvements to the representation of ports and rivers, as well as soundings and notations on the points of the compass (Masefield n. 1). Its polish and precision belie the chaotic conditions of its production, and this is precisely the point of its inclusion. The abstraction of political conflict that takes place in the drafting of Dampier’s map helps to systematize an otherwise chaotic space and thereby render that space useful to both science and empire. The prominent placement of this map and of the others that populate the narrative helps establish the structuring function of scientific discourse in the text.⁷⁹

Chapter three narrates the buccaneers’ entrance into the Caribbean and covers their year-long stay in that sea before returning once more to the South Sea. Dampier begins the chapter with an enumeration of the buccaneers’ forces and follows the general course of their voyage up the Bluefield’s River in Panama in search of hostages who can provide intelligence on Spain’s local defenses. Following the same strategy he deploys in the introduction, Dampier keeps the narrative of buccaneers’ progress as sparse as possible, choosing to focus instead on the studies of nature he makes along the way. For example, instead of zooming in on the buccaneers’ interrogation tactics, Dampier chooses instead to focus on one of the local prodigies of nature: the manatee. The buccaneers are often given manatee to eat by their Indian guides when in this region. Observing one of the buccaneers’ meals gives him the opportunity to remark on the animal’s peculiar form. He describes the manatee as having the approximate size of a horse, with the mouth of a cow, beady eyes, pinhole ears, and an abnormally large neck and shoulder area. Some achieve monstrous size, the largest on record allegedly weighing 1,200 lbs. Their odd

appearance aside, Dampier claims that manatee flesh is an “extraordinarily sweet and wholesome meat” (67). Beyond providing sustenance, he notes that the manatee offers numerous other uses, including the use of its skin for creating canoe strapping and for making horse whips.

Later in the chapter we find a similar example of this kind of narrative focalization as Dampier relates the story of the buccaneers’ unsuccessful attempts to establish themselves as contraband traders. Having taken a Spanish cargo ship near Cartagena, the buccaneers shipped its goods to the Dutch at unsuccessfully at Curaçao and Bonaire before moving on to poach on the Spanish cacao crops at Caracas. The buccaneers’ errant path from the Venezuelan coast through the Dutch Caribbean affords Dampier the opportunity to make observations about native Caribbean fowl. Most curious are the boobies who live on the Isle of Aves. These birds are about as big as a hen. Their distinguishing features are duck-shaped feet and a long, crow-like bill. Those living on the Isle of Aves are of particular interest to Dampier as a naturalist because they are whiter than the normal grayish color associated with the species, and because they are the only ones he has seen that build their nests on the ground instead of in the trees. While they are not so sweet as manatees, boobies are edible in a pinch. The privateers, he notes, have availed themselves of their black, fishy flesh on numerous occasions (79). In these examples, Dampier uses the discourse of natural history to assert a measure of narrative control over an otherwise disorderly sequence of events.

We can see from this brief examination of the prefatory material and early chapters of the *New Voyage* that Dampier uses a number of rhetorical strategies ranging from the adoption of the plain style to the use of cartography and natural history as a

means of bringing the text into line with the English imperial scientific project. These strategies help push the narrative away from the principles of heroism and the quest that govern romance toward a new chronotope that organizes its spatio-temporal sequences according to the progressivist narrative of imperial history propagated by members of the Royal Society.⁸⁰ Apologists for the Society consistently articulated a vision of an imperial space-time that posited Europe as the source of a historical process of global scientific and political enlightenment that was to be achieved through political and economic expansion. Cowley, for example, exhorted his countrymen to take the knowledge they gleaned from Newton and Bacon and “plant” it among the world’s “*Barbarian climes*” in order to bring savage cultures by degrees onto the proper path to wisdom. Sprat drew out the economic and territorial implications of this model when he urged explorers to re-examine Spain’s territories for “*Native Riches*” that had been ignored in Spain’s search for gold but could still be exploited by others (Frohock, *Heroes* 85, 89). The imperial vision of figures such as Cowley and Sprat linked concerns with establishing a plain rhetorical style and a new version of the national hero as a man of science to more overly political interests of expanding trade and extending governmental authority. The discourse of ethnography played a critical role in establishing these connections between science and empire, figuring imperial expansion as part of the process of enlightenment, for in order to construct a narrative of empire guided by reason, one had to demonstrate that those who inhabited the world’s “barbarian climes” were needful of and receptive to enlightened government and economic practices.⁸¹ In the following section I will focus specifically on the way Dampier uses natural-law

philosophy to differentiate civilized European subjects from their uncivilized, non-European others and create a justification for expansionist ideology.

Ethnography, Natural-Law and the Geography of Empire

In his study of the ethnographic writings of Jean de Léry, Michel de Certeau draws an important connection between ethnography and empire. The goal of ethnography, he says, is to establish a “hermeneutics of the other” whereby Europeans understand non-Europeans in relation to themselves. Cultural “understanding” does not take place in the abstract or for its own sake, of course. De Certeau notes that ethnography aims at directing the plurality of cultural beliefs and practices it represents toward a single, productive end: economic exploitation (218). Neill elaborates on the specific connections between ethnography and empire in Dampier’s journals, focusing on the connections between the New Sciences and the natural-law philosophy of the seventeenth century. Natural-law philosophers posited a divinely sanctioned hierarchy between enlightened European nations and their non-European others. This hierarchy was based on the superior development of the faculty of reason, which expressed itself through advances in science, as well as the development of capitalist economy and the political form of the modern state. The “gift” of enlightenment carried with it what Neill calls a “national responsibility” to bring savage nations under the power of a European sovereign so that they could be taught good government and be ushered into Europe’s emerging global economy (168).⁸² Dampier’s *New Voyage* offers an example of the important role the maritime class had in articulating natural-law philosophy. In order to track how this philosophy develops in the *New Voyage*, I want to examine Dampier’s ethnographic rhetoric in the specific context of his comments on the Miskito of Darien

and the Mindanayans of the Philippines. His analysis of these tribes creates a justification for imperial expansion by exposing their “need” for English government.

Dampier’s first ethnographic study focuses on the Miskito Indians who inhabit the Central American corridor ranging from Honduras to Nicaragua. While small geographically, the stretch of land they inhabited was strategically significant for the buccaneers. To the north of their lands lay the Bay of Campeche, where many buccaneers made a fortune trading contraband logwood. To the south lay the Isthmus of Panama, which offered easy passage to the South Sea. It was in the buccaneers’ best interests to maintain a healthy relationship with such well-situated allies, especially given the success the Mosquito had in resisting Spanish authority. Likewise, it was in the best interest of the Mosquito to maintain alliances with Europeans such as the buccaneers, who shared their hatred for the Spanish and were willing to supply guns and ammunition. The two groups had enjoyed such a mutually beneficial relationship for half a century by the time Dampier took to writing the journal.⁸³ Dampier’s description of the Mosquito acknowledges the two groups’ shared history, but he makes some critical distinctions on matters of government and culture that shift the historical relationship of mutual dependency toward a more one-sided view of cultural exchange.

The Mosquito, he says, are “tall, well-made, raw-bon’d, lusty, strong, and nimble of Foot, long-visaged, lank black Hair, look stern, hard favor’d, and of a dark Copper-colour Complexion.” They have “ingenious” skill when it comes to the use of their native lances for hunting; they are also remarkably adept at the use of European firearms (39). These characteristics made them excellent military allies, in addition to being excellent guides and hunters. With regard to politics and culture, Dampier claims that the Mosquito

are eager to embrace English ways. His description bears quoting at length, as it establishes the basic ideological framework for the remainder of the text's ethnographic passages:

These Moskito's are in general very civil and kind to the English, of whom they receive a great deal of respect, both when they are aboard their Ships, and also ashore, either in Jamaica, or elsewhere, whither they often come with the Seamen. We always humor them, letting them go any whither as they will, and return to their Country in any Vessel bound that way, if they please. They will have the management of themselves in their striking, and will go in their own little Canoa, which our men could not go in without danger of oversetting: nor will they then let any white man come in their Canoa, but will go striking just as they please: All which we allow them. For should we cross them, tho' they should see Shoals of Fish, or Turtle, or the like, they will purposely strike their Harpoons and Turtle-irons aside, or so glance them as to kill nothing. They have no form of Government among them, but acknowledge the King of England for their Sovereign: They learn our Language, and take the Governour of Jamaica to be one of the greatest Princes in the world . . . While they are among the English they wear good Cloaths, and take delight to go neat and tight; but when they return again to their own Country they put by all their Cloaths, and go after their own Country fashion, wearing only a small piece of Linnen tied about their Wastes, hanging down to their Knees. (41-42)

We should note immediately that Dampier's description is humanizing. Not only are the Mosquito possessed of an impressive degree of physical vitality, but they are also skilled at arms and well-mannered in their dealings with others. These last two observations are important ones because they suggest a basic affinity between the Mosquito and the English in their shared practice of civility. Unlike Hobbes's savage tribes, who live in a state of total war, the Mosquito have the ability to know when to turn the violence switch on and off. Their bravery and skill at arms are regularly deployed, for example, in defending themselves against Spanish attempts to subjugate them. Their diplomatic capacity, on the other hand, is evident in their ability to deal charitably with members of other nations (like the English) with whom they are not presently at war. While the Mosquito are like the English in this regard, they are not entirely the same. Dampier suggests that the concept of civility is in fact a point of significant difference that the English can use to their advantage in the inter-imperial contest for supremacy in the Caribbean.

While the Mosquito behave well enough in the presence of the English, they lack a proper governmental structure, and thus are not fully constituted members of civil society in the same way that the English are. The Mosquito insist on the "management of themselves" while they are hunting for the English, but they can hardly be said to possess the sophisticated social order that defined the post-Westphalian state. As far as Dampier can tell, they have no concept of sovereign power, no social contract regulating its exercise, and no regulatory apparatus governing the political relationships between themselves and the Spanish, English, French, Dutch or Portuguese. Dampier interprets the absence of these defining features of civil society as a tacit submission to the

authority of English government. They are happy, he suggests, to accept the rule of the English crown and its colonial governors. Proof of the Mosquitoes' acceptance of English rule can be found in their willingness to learn the English language and to take on the English dress so long as the two "nations" are keeping company.

Dampier's use of the concept of "civility" to render the Mosquito both familiar and foreign to European cultures mimics the pattern de Certeau identified as the archetype of colonial ethnography in his study of Léry. As distant objects to European readers, the Mosquito are brought close to home through their performance of rituals of civility. However, they are made distant once again through their imperfect embodiment of the forms of civil government. The trick for the ethnographer is how to find a way to articulate a cultural difference or set of differences that is significant without being absolute—a difference, in other words, that can be reconciled to the state and be rendered *useful to it* without being completely erased. Dampier accomplishes this task by representing the Mosquito as almost-civil-subjects of the English crown. His account suggests that they have the inclination toward civility necessary to become subjects of empire at the same time that it underscores their fundamental difference from the English by insinuating that they cannot keep their society organized for any significant period of time without oversight. If Dampier's assessment of the situation were correct, English imperialists would have in the Mosquito an invaluable asset: a territorial and jurisdictional extension of English sovereignty into the most hotly contested and strategically important spaces of the Caribbean theater.

In this case, we can see how ethnography serves empire by creating new points of entry for sovereign power within already existing socio-political spaces. A subsequent

encounter with the Mosquito on the island of Juan Fernandez develops the connection between ethnography and empire by foregrounding the issue of territorial expansion into unsettled spaces. Under the command of Captain Cook, Dampier and a company of roughly seventy buccaneers convened in Virginia and fitted themselves out for a voyage into the South Sea.⁸⁴ After passing Cape Horn, the crew stopped in at Juan Fernandez to pick up a Mosquito striker named Will who had been left on the island some three years prior during the Sharp expedition. The stop affords Dampier an opportunity to relate Will's history and expand on his earlier remarks about Mosquito culture while also allowing him to reflect on the economic potential of Juan Fernandez for England. Dampier tells us that Will had been left on the island accidentally as the buccaneers were fleeing the Spanish *guardacosta*, with nothing on his person but a gun, a knife, some powder and some shot. Despite the odds, Will was able to survive the period of his desertion due to the native "ingenuity" and "sagacity" he possessed at traditional hunting methods, in addition to his skill at wielding European-style arms. Using his flint and a piece of the barrel of his gun, Will constructed a makeshift anvil, using the rest of the gun's pieces to fashion harpoons, lances, hooks, and another knife, which he then used to secure himself a steady supply of food. Will's "ingenuity" also allowed him to manufacture domesticity within the island wilderness—using goatskins and sticks he constructed for himself a "little House or Hut" (112-113). These markers of civility are accompanied by deferential gestures to English authority similar to those Dampier observed while among the Mosquito of Darien. Dampier says that Will prepared a welcome feast when he saw the buccaneers approaching because he had a hunch that they were Englishmen. Will's hospitality toward the English is consistent with the general

practice of his countrymen, whom Dampier assures the reader have readily embraced the English as their superiors. Dampier works to re-establish this point through his relation of Will's heartfelt reunion with one of his fellow countrymen named Robin, who was serving the buccaneers at that time as a striker and a guide. When the two men saw each other, Robin "leap'd ashore, and running to his Brother Moskito Man, threw himself flat on his face at his feet, who helping him up, and embracing him, fell flat with his face on the Ground at Robin's feet, and was by him taken up also." Dampier notes the buccaneers' surprise at the exchange that "We stood with good pleasure to behold the surprise, and tenderness, and solemnity of this interview, which was exceedingly affectionate on both sides; and when their Ceremonies of Civility were over, we also that stood gazing at them drew near, each of us embracing him we had found there." This encounter is defined by native civility and an indigenous form of "national" affiliation.

Dampier reframes the event rather quickly, though, in Eurocentric terms. After he has finished his account of these "Ceremonies of Civility," Dampier gives the reader their English names and explains their significance. He says Will and Robin were given their names because "they had no Names among themselves; and they take it as a great favour to be named by any of us; and will complain for want of it, if we do not appoint them some name when they are with us: saying of themselves they are poor Men and have no Name" (114). Like the Mosquito of Central America, who are politically impoverished for want of government, Will and Robin claim that they are culturally impoverished as well. Dampier forwards the same resolution in both cases: a benign form of imperial conquest figured as political and cultural advancement.⁸⁵

This account repeats the themes of civility and incivility introduced by Dampier in his earlier description of the Mosquito, but it does so in a different geopolitical context. Panama was of course an *occupied* space. The Mosquito and numerous other indigenous tribes inhabited the region, as did Spanish colonists, and occasionally, interloping merchants, contrabandists and pirates. By contrast, Juan Fernandez was unsettled. The island, which lay off the coast of Chile, had been discovered by Juan Fernandez on a trip from Lima to Valdivia. Fernandez recognized its strategic value immediately. He requested a patent to settle it and even left livestock so that future colonists would have a head start when gathering provisions. The patent never came and the island fell into disrepair, being “destitute of inhabitants” by the time Dampier and his crew arrived. Like Juan Fernandez himself, Dampier found himself enticed by the possibility of settling the island. His description of its geography and produce seems geared toward convincing the English to avoid making the mistake the Spanish made of underestimating its strategic value.

Dampier describes the island as “full of high Hills, and small pleasant Valleys; which if manured would probably produce any thing proper for the Climate.” Its many savannahs are “stocked with Goats in great Herds” and are filled plentifully enough with good grass to nourish themselves and then some. In fact, Dampier estimates that the land could sustain a thousand extra head and yield corn, wheat, yams and other staples enough to support four- to five-hundred families (114-116). Such a settlement could thrive without serious threat of Spanish incursion because there are only two hospitable bays on the whole island, and these are laid out in such a way that “50 men in each may be able to keep off 1000.” As evidence of this point, Dampier relates the story of five valiant

members of one Captain Davis's crew who, were left on the island to fend for themselves. These men, he says, were able to fend off the Spanish for a period of three years until they were rescued by Captain Strong. An island fully-stocked with English families and only minimally garrisoned certainly would have been capable of matching the efforts of these five sailors.

Will's story suggests that the feral island of Juan Fernandez could be tamed with relative ease—without any real resources he was able to make himself a house and practice rudimentary forms of industry. His story also suggests, though, that it is not the Mosquito but the English who are most fit to the task. The Indians' dependence on the English for systems of political and cultural organization makes them better subjects than sovereigns. Representing the Mosquito in this way allows Dampier to minimize the dependency of the buccaneers on them and emphasize instead the various ways English contact with the Mosquito could parley itself into a stronger imperial presence in the Caribbean and South Seas. We can see from this example how Dampier's ethnographic commentary on the Mosquito slides into natural historical commentary on the island's productions and geography and terminates in an argument for territorial expansion. When read alongside his earlier claims that the Jamaican governor had effectively drawn the Mosquito of Darien into a peaceful subjection, we can see how Dampier's discussion about Juan Fernandez is connected to a larger vision which seeks to incorporate a range of types geopolitical spaces into empire through the discourses of science and natural-law philosophy. In the section that follows, I want to draw out the connections between these various types of imperial space and the theme of trade that emerges alongside Dampier's ethnographic rhetoric.

The Hydraulic Web: Global Economy and the Space of the State

The imperial geography Dampier articulates by connecting juridical spaces such as Darien and territorial spaces such as Juan Fernandez is geared toward establishing networks of economic and political exchange capable of sustaining a truly global English empire. Henri Lefebvre has observed that Western European socio-political space from the Renaissance onward took a distinctively modern shape that coincided with the rise of the merchant class and the development of early capitalism. Early capitalism developed within what Lefebvre calls a “hydraulic web” that connected the rivers and ports of Europe to those of nations across the globe via a massive network of sea-lanes and trade routes (226). States laid claim on various points along this web by asserting sovereign power over particular routes or paths of exchange. Such proprietary claims implied the state’s ability, or at least its desire, to impose its own chronotope upon the spaces its merchants and factors traversed. The commodity, the exchange, the contract, and the time of transport all defined the early capitalist space-time of the state that Lefebvre describes (277-278).⁸⁶ Sprat’s remarks on the connection between science and trade testify to the power of this sort of spatio-temporal formation. Sprat imagined when writing his *History* that “in a short time there will scarce come a ship up the Thames that does not make some return of experiments, as well as of merchandise” (qtd. in Neill 168). In his view, “history” was measured by the continuous flows of science and economy from the metropolis to all of the spaces in empire and back. While usually oriented toward different goals than those of the early capitalist state, the buccaneers’ movements also ratified the notion that global space had become fundamentally economic space. Their movements followed the paths of exchange established by the Spanish galleons and those

established by the inter-colonial trade that flourished on both the Atlantic and Pacific coasts of America. The imperial network Dampier articulates is similarly oriented toward trade and conceptualized as a kind of hydraulic web.

The scientific interest figures like Sprat had in the regions traversed by figures like Dampier was always linked to the issue of economic production. The connection between science and economy evinced by the above quote from Sprat is evidenced in Dampier's narrative as well in his discussions of the Mosquito lands, which offer interesting subjects for ethnographic study as well as prized access to logwood in the Bay of Campeche. Likewise, Dampier's scientific interest in the geography of Juan Fernandez is tied to its economic utility as point of access to major port cities such as Arica, Lima, and Quito, as well as its potential as a jumping off point for trips to the East Indies.

There are other places as well where the intersection of scientific, political and economic interests is explicitly registered by Dampier. His remarks on the cacao trade offer one such example. In the course of a scouting mission along the Venezuelan coast, Dampier takes a narrative detour from his chronicle of the buccaneers' movements in order to describe the natural history of the region. Of particular interest is the cacao-nut, which the Spanish used to make chocolate. Cacao production was largely concentrated in the Bay of Campeche in Mexico, the Guayaquil region in modern Ecuador, at Jamaica while it was under Spanish control, and in the areas surrounding Caracas in Venezuela. Dampier launches into a lengthy natural historical description of the peculiarities of the Venezuelan nut and the manner of its preparation before moving on to a discussion of its economic utility. He notes that the citizens of Caracas are generally wealthy and that they owe their wealth primarily to the high fetching price their cacao nuts command (89). The

Spanish had discovered from their conquest of the Aztecs that cacao nuts were highly valued by Native Americans and thus could be used as currency among them.⁸⁷ Dampier observes that the Indians of Campeche still valued the nuts as currency at the time of his writing. In addition to its high value among indigenous inhabitants, cacao had become a prized commodity among Europeans. The colonial Spanish elite had a strong preference for drinking chocolate, leading to a robust inter-American trade between the Spanish viceroyalties. A trans-Atlantic cacao trade emerged as well due to Peninsular Spaniards' affinity for the drink. While the early trade was protected by a Spanish monopoly, Spain's imperial rivals, particularly the Dutch, perceived the value of the cacao market rather quickly. The English, by contrast, were missing what Dampier perceived to be a golden opportunity. He laments the short-sightedness of his countrymen, noting that:

The *Dutch* have a very profitable trade here [in Caracas], almost to themselves . . . They carry hither all sorts of *European* Commodities, especially Linnen; making vast returns, chiefly in Silver and Cacao. And I have often wondered and regretted it, that none of my own Countrymen find their way thither directly from *England*; for our *Jamaica*-men Trade thither indeed, and find the sweet of it, though they carry *English* Commodities at a second or third hand. (93)

Dampier's lamentation that the English had not yet established a direct line of trade to Caracas registered at a moment of particular national frustration regarding the cacao trade. The capture of Jamaica from Spain in 1655 brought England into possession of the cacao walks planted there by the Spanish, but the massive crop failure during the 1670s left England on the outside looking in while Spain and Holland continued to profit. The

subsequent recuperation of the Jamaica crop at the end of the seventeenth century offered a promising opportunity to compete in the marketplace, though the rejuvenated crops generated little wealth for the crown, since, as Dampier suggests, Jamaican colonists preferred contraband trade with the Spanish colonies to any form of state-regulated trade that would cut into their profits. Rather than taking up a posture of resignation toward this potentially lucrative but already tapped trade, Dampier suggests that metropolitan authorities should establish a direct line of trade with Caracas. He goes as far as to hint at taking the city permanently, noting that the town's fort had already been taken by an English privateer by the name of Captain Wright in the recent past (92-93).⁸⁸

In this example, Dampier takes a mediatory position in the process of articulating a particular economic connection between the metropolis and a specific colonial port. It is important to note at this point that Dampier frames his observations in clearly nationalist terms. While he reveals that the buccaneers went ashore and took "7 or 8 Tun of Cacao" and "3 Barks" filled with hides and European commodities, Dampier places the narrative emphasis on what his own countrymen can and should do with the tremendous economic opportunity the region affords. Dampier's focus on the articulation of new paths of exchange within imperial space serves an important function in the production of the space of the empire itself. As Lefebvre argues, the state produces imperial space by appropriating territories and transforming the things within them into economic goods. However, imperial space is also *produced by* the spaces in which it exists in the sense that the flows of ideas, goods, and peoples that the empire requires are conditioned by the space across which they are transferred (85). Dampier's call to exploit the cacao market at Caracas performs the latter function; it serves as the connective tissue between the

imperial center and the commercial spaces scattered throughout the colonial domain that make the very notion of a trans-Atlantic empire possible. The implicit criticism this call for direct trade makes about the corruption of the Jamaican government also helps produce imperial space in this particular locale because it points out a strategy for re-regulating the trade space of the English Caribbean.

Legal historian Lauren Benton further develops the ideas Lefebvre forwards about the way the spatial construction of the modern state entails the production of imperial space by making two critical observations. First, the construction of the modern state in conjunction with the 1648 Treaty of Westphalia emphasized the articulation of national borders, and hence the appropriation of territory. The step from the creation of the modern state as a territorial entity governed by a single sovereign to the creation of the imperial state whose territorial claims could be extended globally through extensions of sovereign power was a short one (*A Search For Sovereignty* 281). Second, the project of laying claim to and organizing the various spaces in empire was always uneven, incomplete and contested because states could not simply occupy oceanic space. Rather, states were forced to settle for the hope of creating proprietary trade routes that could be protected from invasion by rival entities (2). These points reinforce our sense of the importance of figures like Dampier to the creation of imperial space, which depends on the persistent efforts of mariners to articulate paths of exchange that could transect or circumvent existing European non-European political geographies without being subject to their rules. In the *New Voyage*, these paths of exchange extended from the Caribbean to the South Sea as far as the Philippines, following the English desire to expand its existing trans-Atlantic web of trade into the Pacific theater. Dampier aids in this process

in the same way that he does in the Caribbean context: he identifies relevant markets, assesses their value, and suggests ways for the English to profit from them via the creation of trade corridors. His description of Mindanao in the Philippines illustrates the scope of the imperial network Dampier imagines, as well as the rhetorical continuities between his arguments for the exploitation of Caribbean markets and those aimed at the exploitation of global markets generally.

After an unsuccessful attempt to catch the Spanish Manila galleons off the Mexican Coast, Dampier and the buccaneers decided to head to the Philippines to try their luck cruising for booty there. The crew landed at Mindanao in search of provisions, leading Dampier to remark on the island's natural history and its economic potential. Spanish bullion aside, one of the chief economic draws of the Philippines and the Far East generally was the spice trade. Dampier shows interest in the nutmeg trade, which he argues can be tapped by the English for a good profit with some effort. As was often the case, though, the English would have to find a way through or around the Dutch, who had already settled themselves in the Spice Islands. He states the problem thus:

I have not seen the Nutmeg-trees anywhere; but the Nutmegs this Island produceth are fair and large, yet they have no great store of them, being unwilling to propagate them or the Cloves, for fear that should invite the Dutch to visit them, and bring them into subjection, as they have done the rest of the neighboring Islands where they grow. For the Dutch being seated among the Spice-Islands, have monopolized all the Trade into their own Hands, and will not suffer any of the Natives to dispose of it, but to

themselves alone. Nay, they are but so careful to preserve it in the uninhabited Islands, but send Soldiers to cut the Trees down. (325)

Despite the dominance of the Dutch, Dampier believes that the English can compete economically by finding loopholes in the Dutch trade system and exploiting them. He relates intelligence gathered from English and Dutch merchants that suggests one such loophole lay in a small island near Banda, which produces enough cloves for the English to purchase a ship's load of spice from the natives there. For whatever reason, this particular island gets overlooked by the Dutch soldiers when making their crop-killing run. While this strategy may work on a smaller scale, it is hard to imagine that much profit could come from it. Dampier suggests as a more profitable alternative a second potential loophole, this one involving a set of territorial and jurisdictional claims on the island of Mindanao similar to the ones made on Mosquito lands in the Caribbean.

Dampier observes of Mindanao that "This island is not subject to one Prince," but is instead subject to the rule of minor regional authorities. He identifies the tribe inhabiting its coastal region as "the greatest Nation in the Island" because they have a natural inclination to trade. He notes that they carry on small commerce with European travelers and with the neighboring islands, but the island's commerce has not reached its full potential because of the oppressive measures levied on its inhabitants by local governors and by the Dutch. Dampier calls the island's sultan a "poor Prince" on account of his lack of economic vision and fiscal sense. The geographic location of Mindanao and the rich stories of silver and gold in the interior should have made the people and their ruler rich. The sultan's failure to capitalize on the economic value of the island's natural resources by establishing a regular commerce with European and Chinese merchants,

however, has left the island in a state of permanent economic recession. To make up for the lack of regular revenue from trade, the sultan siphons off what little profits his people gain through their own small-scale commerce through forced loans. As a result of this extremely exploitative fiscal policy, the native industry of the Mindanayans was so dampened that “they never [strove] to have any thing but from Hand to Mouth” (334, 342).

The troubles visited on the island by local rulers were exacerbated by the oppressive measures of the Spanish first and then the Dutch. The Spanish had attempted to conquer the island and master the spice trade and would have done so had their forces not been drawn off by a conflict with China. The people of Mindanao resented the Spanish incursion, but were currently much more afraid of the Dutch, whom Dampier suggests have usurped the title of the Western Europe’s cruelest empire from Spain. He says that the Mindanayans “are now most afraid of the Dutch, being sensible how they have enslaved many of the Neighboring Islands. For that Reason, they have long desired the English to settle among them, and have offered them any convenient Place to build a Fort in, as the General himself told us; giving this Reason, that they do not find the English so incroaching as the Dutch or Spanish” (338-339). Dampier suggests that the Dutch had claimed possession of the surrounding islands in a manner similar to that exercised by Spain during the era of conquest in the Americas. In the American context, territorial possession was followed by enslavement and then economic exploitation. In the Philippines, Dutch possession of the Spice Islands seemed to be following a similar path: the islands’ inhabitants were subjected to control by the Dutch East India Company and their natural productions were exploited. The connection Dampier draws between the

Spanish and the Dutch associates the latter with the model of martial-heroic conquest that had been celebrated in the romance tradition but had subsequently been decried with international force through the articulation of the Black Legend.

In contrast to the oppressive imperial politics of Spain and Holland stands the English way, which Dampier suggests the Mindanayans value because it is not so “incroaching.” A certain degree of ventriloquism is evident in Dampier’s relation of the Mindanayans’ problems with Dutch imperial politics. Benton has shown that the English during the seventeenth century were especially concerned with the legal problems associated with claiming sovereignty over ocean space. Legal theorists such as Alberico Gentili and Hugo Grotius debated whether the ocean was an essentially free space—an international commons open to all according to the principles of natural law—or whether it was a space that could be possessed in the form of jurisdictional claims on defined trade routes according to the principles of positive law.⁸⁹ Benton argues that English legal theorists sided with the natural-law position Grotius took in *Mare Liberum* (1609) precisely because they were upset at the Dutch for taking such strong command of international shipping lanes in the North and the South Seas. Dampier appears eager to establish the moral superiority of the English empire that of Spain and Holland in order to suggest that an English settlement at Mindanao is ethically necessary in addition to being financially lucrative. The lack of a strong governmental structure, coupled with the inhabitants’ apparent willingness to let the English set up a garrison on the island and establish a trading base there, make the island an ideal addition to the empire’s existing web of trade.

Dampier's rhetorical position as a man of science and as a facilitator of economic expansionism generally holds steady as he articulates the various connections between natural history, geography, ethnography, economy and empire. As I have argued, these connections are held together in the narrative by its adherence to the spatial codes established by the New Sciences and the narrative codes that attend them. The state's desire to rationalize the political space of empire by controlling the flows of goods and persons within it required an imperial subject that could be disciplined and forced to conform to order, even if far from home. The state's desire to rationalize epistemic exchange also required an imperial traveler who was willing to embrace the self-effacing rhetorical models endorsed by the New Scientists and leave off the bombastic scenes of romance-style martial heroism. In the following section, I want to draw attention to two critical moments in the text where the dominant narrative and spatial codes of the English imperial narrative of scientific and economic advancement break down, allowing the narrative codes of romance to emerge. In these moments, the martial-heroic ethos of romance asserts itself as a counter-narrative to empire. The presence of romance themes in the *New Voyage* alerts us to the existence of different chronotopes in the text, inviting us to consider the mediatory function of romance in the development of the narrative of imperial progress within which it is imbedded.

“Golden Dreams”: The Romance Chronotope in the *New Voyage*

The first serious crack in the narrative framework Dampier has constructed becomes visible during his description of the buccaneers' roving off the Peruvian coast during the fall of 1684. Captains Davis and Swan had combined their forces and decided to search for harbors deep enough to permit their ships to enter and navigate upriver in

order to make inland raids easier. Following a disappointing attempt at taking Paita, which had recently been sacked and burned by Captain Eaton, the crew set their sights on a bigger prize and headed for Guayaquil. The buccaneers put in at Punta Arena to prepare for their assault. While there, they had an incredible string of good luck that came in the form of a few well-chosen Indian watchmen who had axes to grind with the Spanish and were therefore willing to serve as guides to the buccaneers. The buccaneers were able to catch the local Puna Indian watchmen by surprise while the latter were drawing water from a river near the point. Following the advice of their native guide, the buccaneers advanced further and took the entire Indian town of Puna captive so as to eliminate the risk of the Spanish learning of their presence. On the following day, the buccaneers took a ship from Guayaquil carrying Quito cloth whose captain divulged that there were presently three barks full of African slaves coming up from Guayaquil as well. The successful capture of one of these barks gave the buccaneers all the encouragement they needed to begin their march on the city. Dampier's account of the assault and its aftermath makes visible an alternative conception of martial heroism to the one constructed by his manipulation of scientific discourse.

The buccaneers set out with a raiding party of forty to fifty men—a relatively small party given the number of their enemies. Such small parties were the norm for buccaneer raids for the simple reason that fewer fighters meant a greater share of the loot per man. Small parties also offered individual buccaneers opportunities to distinguish themselves in battle through feats of exceptional daring. Readers of buccaneer literature had been conditioned by Dampier's literary predecessors to expect in such instances as the impending raid on Guayaquil vivid images of gun smoke and burning buildings, with

brave buccaneers charging through them. The picture Dampier paints of this assault, however, goes in quite the opposite direction. He notes a peculiar lack of bravery among Captain Swan's men, who were "upbraided with Cowardize" for their unwillingness to make a direct charge in the dark of night. He also notes that one of Captain Davis's men "upbraided others with faint-heartedness" when he perceived their abnormal fear of battle (179). It appears that these remarks were enough to spur the buccaneers onward, but not without incident—one of their Indian guides managed to escape during the approach to the city, all but ensuring the Spanish would be fully prepared for their arrival. Dampier says that "This put every Man in a posture to seek the Indian, but all in vain; and our Consternation was great, being in the dark and among woods; so the design was wholly dashed, for not a Man after that had the heart to speak of going farther" (179). The complete collapse of the buccaneers' heroic spirit is evidenced by the nature of the confrontation between the buccaneers and the inhabitants of Guayaquil: "We lay still about a half an Hour, being a mile, or something better, from the Town. They did not fire one Gun at us, nor we at them. Thus our design on Guiaquil fail'd" (180).

What is interesting about this episode is the lesson Dampier draws from it. The failure of the buccaneers' courage offers a perfect opportunity for Dampier to denounce the romance ideal of martial heroism upon which their society operates as ineffective or irrelevant in the age of science. Such a conclusion would certainly be in keeping with the rhetorical position he establishes for himself elsewhere in the narrative as an outside observer of the buccaneers' actions who is primarily interested in the scientific discoveries he makes while in their company. His response, however, goes in precisely the opposite direction. Dampier positions himself in the "we" category vis-à-vis the

buccaneers, implying his own participation in the main action of the narrative. Moreover, he does not denounce the heroic ideal implied by his discussion of his colleagues' lack of courage, but rather uses their own failure to embody the principles of knight-errantry to set himself up as the buccaneer-knight *par excellence*. Dampier's romance imagination emerges in the following passage, which bears quoting at length for the scope of its vision:

There was never a greater opportunity put into the Hands of Men to enrich themselves than we had, to have gone with these Negroes, and settled our selves at Santa Maria, on the Isthmus of Darien, and employed them in getting Gold out of the Mines there. Which might have been done with ease: For about 6 Months before this, Captain Harris (who was now with us) coming over Land from the North Seas, with his Body of Privateers, had routed the Spaniards away from the Town and Gold-Mines of Santa Maria, so that they had never attempted to settle there again since: Add to this, that the Indian Neighborhood, who were mortal Enemies to the Spaniards, and had been flush'd by their Success against them, through the assistance of the Privateers, for several years, were our fast Friends, and ready to receive and assist us. We had, as I have said 1000 Negroes to work for us, we had 200 Tun of Flower that lay at Gallapagos, there was the River of Santa Maria, where we could careen and fit our Ships; and might fortifie the mouth so, that if all the strength the Spaniards have in Peru had come against us, we could have kept them out. If they lay with Guard-Ships of Strength to keep us in, yet we had a great Country to live

in, and a great Nation of Indians that were our Friends: Beside, which was the principle thing, we the West-Indies; many thousands of Privateers from Jamaica and the French had the North Seas to befriend us; from whence we could export ourselves, or our effects, or import Goods or Men to our assistance; for in a short time we would have had assistance from all parts of Islands especially would have flockt over to us; and long before this time we might have been Masters not only of those Mines (the richest Gold-Mines ever yet found in America) but of all the Coast as high as Quito: And much more than I say might then probably have been done. But these may seem to the Reader but Golden Dreams: To leave them therefore . . . (180-181)

The passage is striking for its departure from the spatial and narrative codes of the New Sciences, which, as we have seen, dominate a large portion of the text. We are struck most immediately by the primary role of pecuniary interest in Dampier's articulation of what we might call a "piratical empire." Within the hierarchy of epistemological production established by Bacon and embodied by the Society, the veracity and usefulness of travelers' writings could be called into question if it was clear that the quest for personal riches was a major motive behind their work. (Shapin 225). Material interest compromised the objectivity of scientific discourse, as well as the basic commitment of the traveler to the economic and political interests of the state in whose name he or she traveled. Profit motive was an especially sensitive issue in the reception of pirate journals, as pirates' gains were often the state's losses.⁹⁰

While Dampier's open admission of his infatuation with the notion of accumulating vast personal wealth is remarkable in the context of his purported service to the Society and the crown, the plans he makes for spending that wealth are even more remarkable still. The buccaneers were not known for their fiscal conservatism. They tended to spend what they got as quickly as possible, and often on frivolous things. Exquemelin offers a comical synopsis of the buccaneers' typical way of managing money that serves as a useful point of contrast for Dampier's plan:

[W]henver they have got hold of something, they don't keep it for long. They are busy dicing, whoring, and drinking so long as they have anything to spend. Some of them will get through a good two or three thousand pieces of eight in a day—and next day not have a shirt on their back. I have seen a man in Jamaica give 500 pieces of eight to a whore, just to see her naked. Yes, and many other impieties. (81-82)

As Frohock points out, these "capitalist impieties" called the buccaneers' civility into question because they expressed an almost incomprehensibly base and insatiable set of drives ("Exquemelin's *Buccaneers*" 64-65). In contrast to the typically myopic behavior of his fellow buccaneers, Dampier argues that the mines of Santa Maria, if managed properly, could provide the economic lifeblood for a transnational, trans-oceanic and trans-hemispheric pirate colony the likes of which the world had never seen.

The territorial dimension of Dampier's vision poses a direct challenge to the spatial codes that organized the Spanish empire insofar as it involves the occupation of its sovereign space. It poses a challenge as well to the narrative's stated purpose of extending English claims to sovereignty throughout the empire by establishing new

pathways capable of sustaining trade and disseminating scientific knowledge as well as state power. The Mosquito in particular are given a new role in Dampier's vision. Earlier in the narrative Dampier worked hard to assure his readers of their willful subjection to the English colonial government. At this point, Dampier makes the argument that he and his fellow buccaneers are now their proper sovereigns. The difference is significant because it changes the structure of English imperial space. The jurisdictional corridor from Jamaica through the Isthmus and to places like Juan Fernandez would no longer exist should Dampier's "dream" be realized. Indeed, should the buccaneers succeed in their imagined endeavor to take control of the Spanish Pacific coast from Darien to Quito, the idea of creating a specifically English jurisdictional space proximate to the Viceroyalty of Peru would be much more complicated, given Dampier's hint that "much more" would be done in the region once the first stretch of land was settled. The hydraulic web Dampier imagines surrounding the pirates' colony would further alter English imperial space by shifting the structure of command in the West Indies. The English at Jamaica and the French throughout the Caribbean would form a new nexus of political and economic power that would run through the Isthmus to the Galapagos Islands and on toward the Spice Islands.

A piratical society so conceived radically alters the political geography of the English empire. It also alters in a fundamental way the progressivist narrative of imperial history propagated by the Society and its factors by constructing an alternative chronotope to that of the state. In the eyes of the state, imperial space-time is organized by the legal imaginary constructed by natural-law philosophy, as I have shown above. Within this imaginary, Neill states, the world is "juridically transformed into stable zones

of scientific exploration” and then divided taxonomically into commercial and pre-commercial nations. As Neill argues, this taxonomy serves “to organize a chaotic field of colonial violence,” transforming “the differentiated sphere of colonial encounter and cultural exchange into a normative arena in which men of science and subjects of enlightened states were figures as civilized, impartial, and ‘natural’ citizens of the expanding commercial rule” (177). By contrast, the spatio-temporal fabric of Dampier’s dream takes the form of the Bakhtinian chronotope of the chivalric romance.

The most immediate and fundamental contrast between the chronotope of the imperial state and that of the piratical society envisioned by Dampier lies in their different conceptions of heroism. The clear preference for observation over action asserted in the prefatory material and the early chapters of the narrative is reversed as Dampier positions himself as a martial hero whose clear preference is for action, not description. In the chivalric tradition, the world is the hero’s oyster; it exists for the sole purpose of affording him the opportunity to demonstrate his martial valor. Its complete availability to the hero gives the romance world a nearly epic wholeness, as Bakhtin puts it (155). Dampier takes precisely this view of the world in the above passage. The unsuccessful raid on Guayaquil spurs Dampier’s interest in taking a leadership role in the buccaneers’ future endeavors. In his view, Guayaquil, Darien, Quito, and the surrounding regions exist as sites of opportunity for the display of heroic feats of daring. By positioning himself as the one who perceives the true nature and import of the current situation, which he says affords the buccaneers a historically unprecedented opportunity to gain riches and fame, Dampier demonstrates his “chosenness” for the life of knight-errantry and sets himself up as the ideal embodiment its martial-heroic ethos.⁹¹ His

hinting that “much more” than the conquest of the Isthmus and the nearby coast could be accomplished by the buccaneers once the settlement of that strip had been completed further evidences the sense of epic wholeness that permeates Dampier’s vision, for there does not appear to be a limit term in his imagination to the expanse of potentially conquerable space.⁹²

The reconfiguration of English imperial space as conquest space depends on the simultaneous reconfiguration of historical time as adventure-time. In the chivalric chronotope, time in the normal sense does not exist. Unlike the temporal sequences of historical narrative, moments, hours and days in the chivalric romance often occupy irregular relationships with one another—days become moments, moments become days. Time, Bakhtin says “becomes to a certain extent miraculous.” For Bakhtin, the “miraculous” is directly tied to the concept of heroism and the act of adventure: miraculous adventure-time, like enchanted space, exists to create a world in which adventure is the central event. Within this enchanted conception of time, the dream occupies a privileged position. Bakhtin says that romance time “begins to be influenced by dreams” such that “Dreams no longer function merely as an element of the content, but begin to acquire a form-generating function” in the world of the narrative. Thus, he concludes that the temporal dimension of the chivalric chronotope is generally defined by a “*subjective playing with time*” (154-155). The dream-structure framework Dampier gives to his reverie exhibits this kind of subjective playing with time. Whereas imperial time is oriented toward marking the advancement of its bureaucratic institutions, dream-time is warped toward the interests of the subject. Dampier jettisons rather quickly the temporal configuration that linked his observations on natural history to the history of the

progress of the English empire of science, launching himself into a narrative sequence defined by his own desire for mastery. He appears to recognize the incongruity of his rhetorical position in this passage with the rhetorical position he had fashioned earlier, for his closing is surprisingly abrupt. The alternative history he fashions of his piratical society is real enough to him, but he acknowledges that such a history “may seem to the Reader but Golden Dreams.” The proper response, he suggests, is “To leave them therefore” and resume the main thread of the narrative, which continues to follow the course of the buccaneers’ activities in the Caribbean.

This episode is unusual in the *New Voyage*, but it is not entirely unique. During his description of the political and economic state of the Philippines, the nationalist logic of which I have already described, Dampier makes a narrative digression into the heroic world of romance that resembles his vision for settling Panama. We recall that he had made the case for the economic importance of Mindanao when the buccaneers first careened there. We recall as well that Dampier stressed the theme of the Mindanayans’ willingness to allow the English to settle on the island, set up a garrison, and establish a permanent trading base because of their fear of continued oppression by the Dutch. In addition to advocating for an English presence at Mindanao, Dampier advocates for a settlement at New Holland, which he argues is perfectly positioned to allow English merchants easy access to the Philippines and to commerce in the Indian Ocean. At one level, the idea of settling New Holland seems like a natural extension of the nationalist argument Dampier has made for establishing military and trading bases at Mindanao: a settlement at New Holland would give England the territorial foothold necessary to challenge the Dutch economically, and militarily if necessary. There are, however,

certain incongruities between the actual terms of his argument for settling New Holland and the larger nationalist frame within which the argument for establishing a foothold at, say, Mindanao, is imbedded.

While he privileges metropolitan interest in the East Indies commerce, Dampier argues that an attempt to settle the island by metropolitan Englishmen would be an inevitable and utter disaster. He states that men straight from England, “proceed usually too cautiously, coldly, and formerly to accomplish any considerable design, which experience better teaches than any Rules whatsoever; besides the danger of their Lives in so great and sudden a change of Air: whereas we are all inured to hot Climates, hardened by many fatigues, and in general daring Men, and such would not be easily baffled” (353). Dampier performs a rhetorical pirouette here, adopting a condescending tone toward travelers who proceed with too great a concern for safety and rules of conduct—this from the man who has so clearly labored elsewhere to demonstrate his own complicity with the codes of epistemological decorum propagated by the Society, and with the legal and economic interests of the state. At this juncture, however, he implies that rules of engagement, whether political or epistemic, are inadequate. In order to accomplish any “considerable design,” travelers must be willing to plunge headfirst into the turbulent and uncertain world of imperial contestation without heed for safety or diplomacy. Metropolitans are unfit to do this because of their general inexperience—not to mention the fact that their bodies are not inured to the rigors of foreign climes or their minds to the rigors of battle. In contrast to milquetoast metropolitans stand the buccaneers, whom Dampier paints in an heroic light. Whereas the men in England are ignorant of the requirements of life on the colonial periphery, the buccaneers have long

experience in its rigors. And whereas the men in England are vulnerable to the hostilities of foreign climes, the buccaneers are hardy. And whereas the men in England are paralyzed by fear, the buccaneers are daring and dogged enough in their determination to see a task such as this to its end. The series of contrasts Dampier draws invokes once again the codes of romance to argue that there are places in empire where the narrative and spatial codes of the state simply do not apply or are not relevant. Mindanao, like Santa Maria, calls for romance-type hero capable of the serial acts of heroism that define the life of the knight-errant.

Conclusion: Toward a Negative Hermeneutics of Romance

The presence of the chivalric themes of martial heroism, errantry, adventure, and the specific spatio-temporal codes they entail threaten the integrity of the enlightenment-based narrative of scientific and economic advancement propagated by the Society and embraced explicitly by Dampier himself in the text's prefatory apparatus by exposing it as a fantasy. As we have seen, the idea of a global enlightenment emanating westward from Europe was at heart a second, "peaceful" form of the conquest narrative that implied the extension of state power through the advancement of science and trade. Benton observes that the fantasy of complete and total control over the spaces of empire was widely shared among European sovereigns in the early modern period. This fantasy expressed itself most clearly in maps, which projected sovereign power over vast and neatly bound regions, but it also found expression in other areas as well, including the narrative of imperial conquest through a universal natural history such as the Society sought to create. The problem with the idea of empire implied by cartographers, natural historians, and political economists, among others, is that the spaces of empire were not

and could never be uniform or fully regulated. As Benton puts it, imperial space was composed of a fabric that was “full of holes, stitched together out of pieces, a tangle of strings.” Maritime empires projected their fantasies of possession across oceanic spaces, but the reality was that sovereign claims on such spaces could only possibly be exercised over “narrow bands, or corridors, and over enclaves and irregular zones around them.” In other words, the political geography of empire was always “uneven, disaggregated, and oddly-shaped—and not at all consistent with the image produced by monochrome shading of imperial maps” (2-3). Dampier’s use of the discourses of empire to rationalize the spaces within it plays to the imperial fantasy of possession, but the eruption of these effusive romance visions of heroism and conquest in the text reveals the limited nature of imperial claims to discursive control over space. The partial nature of state sovereignty, expressed in Dampier’s case through the language of science and trade, meant that there were in fact spaces in empire where the old codes of romance remained intelligible and continued to function.

On one hand, the continued appeal of the romance form to travelers such as Dampier is attributable to the fact that the state still needed the adventurous sort of military hero of romance to achieve its purpose of bringing the far-flung spaces of empire into subjection. The South Sea in particular called for daring adventurers because any English advances there would require doing battle with Spain, as well as serious exertion in settling trading bases and wedging open trade avenues. On the other hand, the romance remained relevant to imperial sojourners because imperial space was porous enough to allow for imperial subjects to carve out autonomous zones that could be reorganized and re-regulated according to their own interests. Hence Dampier’s interest in Santa Maria,

which had become an “open” space with the recent flushing of the Spanish from the area by Indians, and his interest in Mindanao, which had been in Spain’s possession but was currently up for grabs, so to speak. Such spaces are able to be reconfigured according to the chronotope of romance because they could not be fully regulated by the power of the imperial state. Within such spaces, subjects could pursue a form of heroic existence that was being exterminated with increasing vigor by colonial governments in the late seventeenth century.

My aim in drawing attention to these moments of narrative rupture is twofold. First, I want to complicate literary historical readings of the *New Voyage* that reduce its generic complexity too quickly. In their unequivocal alignment of Dampier’s narrative with the poetics and politics of the New Sciences, Neill and Frohock have underestimated the degree to which its “modern” poetics are dependent on and interpenetrated by the poetics of romance. Nationalist arguments for economic expansion in the Caribbean and South Sea via increased control of the regions surrounding Darien and Mindanao sit side by side with rogue visions of pirate colonies in a way that makes it impossible to read the one without the other. Lamb’s arguments in the other direction that Dampier’s tendency to describe really random things evidences his investment in writing for personal pleasure rather than for the purpose of establishing a systematic, exhaustive natural history, and that we must read the *New Voyage* as completely disengaged from the politics of empire, is similarly reductive. It is certainly true that Dampier disengages from the project of empire at multiple points in the text. He does this, though, not because he is pursuing a purely private intellectual reverie, as Lamb suggests, but because he is pursuing a

counter-imperial agenda that seeks to re-appropriate imperial space for expressly political purposes.

Second, and more broadly, I want to suggest that the generic complexities of Dampier's narrative, which only become visible when we recognize that science and romance are mutually constitutive in the narrative, make the *New Voyage* a useful case study in the history of the transition between the narrative forms that flourished under the medieval episteme and those that would come to define modernity. Narrative moments such as Dampier's "Golden Dreams" about a pirate society in the South Sea and a potential settlement at New Holland show that the romance was still relevant as a narrative of the self in hydraulic world of the late seventeenth-century. The romance form was, however, being gradually replaced by science as a narrative of the self and as a narrative of empire. In the *New Voyage*, one can gauge this process by weighing the passages that draw on the romance tradition against those that draw on the language of the New Sciences. The balance is overwhelmingly skewed toward the latter. The dominance of Dampier's animal sketches, coastal maps, natural historical observations and ethnographic studies in the text evidences the ascendancy of scientific discourse over romance. Dampier's desire to marginalize or render anomalous those parts of the text that invoke the romance tradition signals his awareness that the two forms have contradicting ideological investments. It also signals a tacit acceptance of the fact that the pursuit of a life of oceangoing knight-errantry was coming to an end. As Bakhtin has observed of the chivalric tradition, there are certain texts that register "an acute feeling for the epoch's contradictions" and in so doing mark "a feeling for the end of an epoch" (156). The

contradictions between the romance form and the rhetoric of science on the character of the individual-as-hero and his place within imperial culture register such a feeling.

The value of the kind of formal analysis I have pursued here is that it foregrounds what Fredric Jameson calls the “mediatory function” of the concept of a genre. For Jameson the idea of genre criticism is useful because it allows for the “coordination of immanent formal analysis of the individual text with the twin diachronic history of forms and the evolution of social life” (105). With regard to Dampier’s text, an analysis of the interplay between its romance poetics and the poetics of New Scientific literature brings to light the mediatory function of the genre of romance in the process of the consolidation of imperial space and of the epistemic practices that comprise its cultural dimension.

Romance quests make the discoveries of new scientific knowledge possible at the same time that they create sites of resistance to the advancement of empirical epistemology and the imperial politics that attend it. Science works to minimize the relevance of the romance imaginary, but does so in a way that is always only partial. The struggle for dominance between these two modes that registers in the text’s drive toward a modern epistemology shows that the transition between the medieval worldview and the modern one was still ongoing in texts like the *New Voyage*. By approaching the question of genre in these terms, we are able to avoid the analytical pitfall of reductivism and are better able to understand the literary histories of romance and the literature of the New Sciences as intimately related processes.

The conditions for the figuration of the romance, Jameson argues, “is to be found in a transitional moment in which two distinct modes of production, or moments of socioeconomic development coexist.” Such transitional moments are principally defined

by “an organic social order in the process of penetration and subversion, reorganization and rationalization, by nascent capitalism, yet still, for another long moment, coexisting with the latter” (148). The transitional period during which England’s trans-Atlantic empire gained increasing amounts of institutional power in the Caribbean and Atlantic worlds, while also attempting to expand its sphere of influence into the South Sea, constituted exactly this kind of historical rupture—it required a nearly global reorganization and rationalization of space to create the necessary conditions for capitalist exchange to take place. Within the world of early capitalism, the logic of romance became anachronistic, but not all at once—as Dampier’s narrative shows, it coexisted for a much longer moment with the discourse of the New Sciences than has traditionally been reckoned. The history of romance, Jameson argues, only becomes possible when one adopts a “negative hermeneutic” that attends to the “radical discontinuity of modes of production and of their cultural expressions” from one era to the next. In Dampier’s text we see this discontinuity being forged in partial and imperfect terms: the codes and raw narrative materials of romance find themselves gradually replaced by those of the secularized, rationalized, post-feudalist order (130-131). These substitute codes, however, do not yet form a complete linguistic system in the narrative. They are “pressed into service,” to borrow Jameson’s terms, in order to render the codes of romance “so many dead languages” (131). I have endeavored to show here that the romance continues to live in the body of the scientific text as a “dying” language even as it gives life to the new forms of discourse that would define modernity. A properly negative hermeneutic of romance must recognize that the assertion of historical difference upon which the distinction between pre-modern and modern forms of

expression turns is itself a byproduct of the process of the deep entanglement between the world of romance and the modern world that succeeds it. In plain terms, there can be no “Methodic Discourse” in the *New Voyage* without “Golden Dreams.”

Notes

¹ For a discussion of the emergence of the Atlantic studies paradigm and its future prospects, see Greene and Morgan 3-34.

² On the cultural history of eighteenth-century Atlantic piracy, see Rediker, *Villains of All Nations*. See also Rediker and Linebaugh's *Many-Headed Hydra*, which links the anti-imperial politics of piracy to the broad sense of disenchantment with empire that ultimately culminated in the American Revolution.

³ A cluster of narratives emerged around Drake's career. See Walter A. Bigges, *A Summarie and True Discourse of Sir Frances Drakes West Indian Voyage* (London, 1589); Thomas Greep, *The true and perfecte Newes of the woorthy and valiaunt employstes, performed . . . by . . . Syr Francis Drake: Not onely at Sancto Domingo, and Carthagena, but also now at Cales, and uppon the Coast of Spayne* (London, 1589), *A Full Relation of Another Voyage made by Sir Francis Drake and others to the West Indies* (London, 1652); and Francis Fletcher, *The World Encompassed* (London, 1626). For an analysis of the literature devoted to Drake, see Shields. Raleigh's voyages to Guiana generated competing accounts as well. See Lawrence Keymis, *A Relation of the Second Voyage to Guiana* (London, 1596) and Francis Sparrey, *The description of the Isle of Trinidad, the rich countreye of Guiana, and the mighty River of Orenoco* (Ms. 1602) in Samuel Purchas, *Purchas His Pilgrimes*. 4 vols, in vol. 4 of *Purchas his Pilgrimes*, (London, 1625). Several competing narratives were also published in response to Exquemelin's *Buccaneers of America* (Amsterdam, 1678). Chief among those are: Basil Ringrose, *Bucaniers of America, The Second Volume* (London, 1685); Philip Ayres,

The Voyages and Adventures of Captain Bartholomew Sharp (London, 1694); and Lionel Wafer, *A New Voyage and Description of the Isthmus of America* (London, 1699).

⁴ Shapin and Shapiro elucidate the process by which the process of observation and the production of truth claims were transformed during the seventeenth century with the rise of the New Sciences. The rise of empiricism in the scientific realm was particularly impactful for travel writers, who were tasked with compiling histories of far-flung lands in ways that preserved their novelty without being overly sensational. These demands, I argue, carried a strong ideological charge for pirate-authors, who sought simultaneously to legitimize themselves as members of the learned classes and to create personal narratives that highlighted their independence from empire.

⁵ The tradition of natural history in America has deep roots in the Spanish works of Francisco Lopez de Gómara, Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo y Valdés and José de Acosta. While these works preceded the Baconian revolution in natural sciences, they are nevertheless fundamental to the literary tradition that would be carried on across Western Europe in the works of scientific travelers to the Americas. On the cultural relationship between travel narratives and the rise of the New Sciences, see Bauer and Parrish. On the relationship between Spanish natural history and the Baconian tradition, see Cañizares-Esguerra's *Nature, Empire and Nation*, esp. chapter two, and "The Core and Peripheries of our National Narratives" 1430. As Cañizares-Esguerra points out, the Baconian principle of scientific exploration as an extension of empire had deep roots in the tradition of Spanish natural history—a fact which has been long ignored in traditional accounts of the rise of modern scientific epistemology.

⁶ The *chasse-partie* was a contractual arrangement established by the buccaneers before each voyage that set the scale for distributing plunder among the crew. In addition to set portions for the captain and crew the *chasse-partie* also included standardized compensation for those wounded in battle according to the nature and severity of the injury. See Exquemelin, 70-71 for an example of such a contract.

⁷ See Maravall's *Culture of the Baroque and Utopia and Counter-Utopia in the 'Quixote.'*

⁸ Only a handful of contemporary scholars have pursued the connections between the Spanish Baroque and the Anglophone literature of the seventeenth century. See Galinsky, "Kolonialer Literaturbarock in Virginia;" Praz; Zdeněk; and Warren.

⁹ For a brief overview, see Raleigh's entry in the *ODNB*. Traveled's biography remains the most thorough.

¹⁰ As evidence of the narrative's reach, extant copies exist of a Latin version entitled *Brevis et admiranda descriptio regni Guianae, auri abundantissimi, in America*, (Nuremberg, 1599); a German edition entitled *Kurtze wunderbare Beschreibung des Goldreichen Königsreichs Guiana in America*, (Nuremberg, 1599); an English version published by Theodor de Bry in his *Collectiones Peregrinationum in Indias Orientales et Occidentales* (London, 1590), which appeared subsequently in French and German; a Dutch version (Amsterdam,)1598, which was reprinted five times from 1605 to 1747; three more German editions in 1602; and finally a French translation entitled *Relation de la Guiane, du Lac de parima et des provinces d'Emeria, d'Arromaia et d'Amapaia* (Paris, 1722). See Whitehead 10-11.

¹¹ On the reception of Raleigh's *Discoverie*, see Schmidt, "Reading Raleigh's America"

466. On the shifting definitions of national heroism in early modern English thought, see Frohock, *Heroes*. Frohock notes that English concepts of national heroism shifted in the late-seventeenth century from the military conquest figure toward the figure of the mercantilist trader (20). This shift was already underway as Raleigh was writing the *Discoverie*. For Raleigh, the choice at hand was whether to commit himself to the project of state-guided exploration, or to pursue a more individualist agenda at the risk of losing his privileged position within Elizabeth's court.

¹² As Susan Ronald has noted, the 1590s were particularly turbulent years for gentlemen adventurers such as Hawkins, Drake, and Raleigh, insofar as their work as pirates was perceived as a growing threat to stable, legal trans-Atlantic trade. See Ronald 366.

¹³ Richard Helgerson has called this evolving notion that the English state would develop its trans-Atlantic economy by trade rather than by theft "mercantile nationalism."

Following Helgerson, Claire Jowitt notes that this culture of mercantile nationalism valued the mercantilist venture over the adventure-quest, and consequently, England had little room for pirates in their expanding trans-Atlantic empire. See Helgerson 187, Jowitt 14.

¹⁴ Jowitt uses the term "semantics of 'piracy'" to define the various ways the term "piracy," and the images and figures associated with that term, functioned in political discourse during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. Here I use the term "poetics" to signify individual textual utterances—poetic acts that combine with other textual utterances to create a syntax of piracy in a given historical moment. My use of the term "poetics," then, borrows from David Quint's argument that imperial histories in the early modern period either took the form of the epic and endorsed the politics of empire,

or they took the form of the romance and critiqued imperial politics. In either case, writing imperial history was a poetic act. As David S. Shields has shown in his analysis of the literary typology of mercantilism, the acceptable poetic acts by writers of imperial history were those that focused on trade rather than territory and conquest. Raleigh's text, as I shall discuss below, fell problematically outside the bounds of this officially sanctioned discursive form. See Jowitt 1-2; Quint 8-9; and for a broad contextual overview, see Shields, *Oracles of Empire*.

¹⁵ On the conflict between England's self-conception as a mercantile state and its former reliance on gentleman adventurers and pirates for maritime supremacy, see Helgerson, esp. chapter four. Barbara Fuchs further argues that English piracy was increasingly seen as an embarrassment by the crown because it revealed that England was not simply establishing itself as a trade-based empire; rather, it promulgated the image of the English nation as a mercantile nation while also condoning acts of piracy that "supplemented" regular trade. The contempt for piracy is evident toward the end of Elizabeth's reign, and can be felt in the *Discoverie*, though it is most clearly expressed in the rule of James I. Much of the contempt Raleigh endured resulted from his performance of imperial mimesis, which Fuchs defines as the desire—on the part of England in Raleigh's case—to emulate Spain's model of empire building by military conquest. See Fuchs, *Mimesis and Empire*.

¹⁶ Stephen Greenblatt has drawn attention to the presence of this theme in the *Discoverie*, as well as in his poetry. Raleigh's works are indeed pervaded by the disenchanting sense that he has ventured all for crown and country and was met with contempt. This reception was particularly disappointing in light of the parallels Raleigh sought to draw between

himself and Spenser's Red Cross Knight, who was celebrated for bearing the English standard during his adventure-quests. See Greenblatt, *Sir Walter Raleigh, The Renaissance Man and His Roles*, 109-110.

¹⁷ As James Muldoon has argued, the relationship between the state, which is defined as a contiguous territory united by language, customs, and laws, and the vast overseas possessions of a given state's monarch, was a particularly charged topic of debate in the early modern period. In the American theater, questions about continuity of culture and law remained salient through the age of revolutions. For my purposes, I use the term "empire" to signify the trans-Atlantic territorial and economic arm of the state rather than alternate terms such as "composite monarchies," because early moderns did in fact think about national expansion into the Atlantic in imperial terms. John Dee, for example, in his 1577 treatise *Petty Navy Royall* explicitly defined England as a maritime "empire." See Muldoon 7.

¹⁸ On the *historia natural y moral* in the Americas, see Pagden and Cañizares-Esguerra.

¹⁹ An important unnamed source for Raleigh's knowledge of the Spanish history of the search for El Dorado is Pedro Sarmiento de Gamboa, who had been taken captive in 1586 by Raleigh's privateers. Joyce Lorimer suggests that Raleigh got his "reading list" on Peru from Sarmiento de Gamboa during their brief correspondence aboard Raleigh's ships (xli). At the very least, Raleigh's conversations with Gamboa about Peru acted as an inspiration, as Raleigh was looking for as much credible, hard evidence of mines in Guiana as he could possibly find.

²⁰ Raleigh borrowed his accounts of these voyages from López de Gómara's *Hispania Vitrux* and Oviedo's *Historia general y natural de las Indias*. See Lorimer 45, n. 2.

²¹ Lorimer observes that the travels of Martínez, as recorded by Juan de Castellanos, indicated that tribes of the llanos near Nueva Extremadura in fact had very little gold and silver. Moreover, Castellanos records that Martínez offers no suggestions about the precise location of Manoa (47, n. 1). The fantastic story of Martínez's exploits related by Berrío to Raleigh reflect, Lorimer concludes, the ease with which narratives of golden cities, factual or otherwise, could whip folks into a fervor and send them on blind quests with relatively little solid information to go on.

²² Jennifer R. Goodman argues on the basis of Raleigh's use of John Mandeville's *Travels* reveals a stronger connection to the English tradition of explorers rather than to the Spanish conquistadors. While it is true that Raleigh envisioned his project in connection with state interests, references to Spanish conquistadors far outnumber the single reference Raleigh makes to Mandeville. Moreover, the scenes he paints of exploration and conquest look much more like the vision Cortés offers of the conquest of Mexico than any of the material in the *Travels*. See Goodman 175.

²³ Evidence of Berrío's cruelty was related to Raleigh by a local cacique, who told Raleigh that Berrío had threatened to hang and quarter any Indians who sought to trade with the English. He further relates that local Indians, nobles included, were frequently chained for no reason and subject to torture. For an account of Berrío's conduct, see Travelyan 226.

²⁴ See Montrose, "The Work of Gender" 182, 188-190, 208-210.

²⁵ On the possible identities of the Oreiones and Epuremei, see Lorimer 142, n. 1; Whitehead 67-70, 174.

²⁶ On Raleigh's pastoralism, see Greenblatt, *Sir Walter Raleigh*, 110-111.

²⁷ Raleigh draws from the Spanish literature on the Inca empire, particularly the narratives of Pedro Cieza de León and Francisco López de Gómara. From these sources he deduces that the "Emperour now rainging [in Guiana] is discended from those magnificent Princes of *Peru*," and that the "Empyre of *Guiana* . . . hath more abundance of Golde than any part of *Peru*" (37). See Lorimer xl-xlvi.

²⁸ David R. Castillo uses the term "baroque *horror vacui*" to describe the profound sense of disenchantment that emerged as the dark, violent side of empire became visible to early moderns. Baroque horror manifests itself when individuals realize that there is ultimately nothing but a "horrifying void" behind the mask of "enlightened" society's pretensions of moral superiority and civility (17). In Raleigh's case, this horror emerges from the failure of his compulsive desire to fit the body of his experiences into a coherent tale of individual heroism.

²⁹ All citations of Exquemelin's text will come from the 2000 Dover edition unless otherwise noted.

³⁰ The foundational work in natural and moral history, which expanded the natural history into a comprehensive account of natural and cultural forms with an analysis of their causes, was José de Acosta's *Historia natural y moral* (1590). On Acosta's innovation, See Pagden, esp. chapter seven. On the political ramifications of natural and moral

history, see Cañizares-Esguerra, *How to Write the History of the New World*, esp. chapter two.

³¹ On the history of Morgan's exploits in Panamá, see Earle.

³² See Frohock, "Exquemelin's Buccaneers." Frohock argues that the critical distance Exquemelin places between himself and his buccaneer comrades helps underscore his trustworthiness by as a historian. To achieve credibility as a historian, authors like Exquemelin needed to establish an objective tone detached from the violence and mayhem of buccaneer culture. On early modern "trusting systems," see Shapin, esp. chapter six.

³³ On the problem of truth in travel narratives, see Adams, esp. chapter one.

³⁴ For an analysis of the influence of the romance tradition on the historiography of colonial Spanish travel writers, see Leonard. For a more comprehensive study on the persistence of romance in Spanish, French, and English travel writing of sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, see Goodman.

³⁵ In McKeon's schema, the progression from the fables of medieval romance through the half-historical/half-fanciful travel tales of the early modern period to the realist novels of Defoe, Fielding, and Richardson, entails an increasing skepticism toward non-mimetic discourse. In privileging the mimetic qualities of the realist novel over previous modes of literary discourse, McKeon creates a rigid bifurcation between narrative forms like the romance and the novel. This distinction misrepresents the relationship between the romance and the novel, both of which, I argue, are narrative attempts at representing "the real," although they do so in radically different ways and for different purposes.

³⁶ See Auerbach 140. Auerbach argues that “only two themes are considered worthy of a knight: feats of arms, and love.” The distinctive operations of martial-heroic narrative and scientific narrative will be discussed below. At present it is sufficient to note that romance exhibits a primary commitment to martial action, a theme that could be and often was at odds with modern scientific narratives.

³⁷ As Auerbach notes, the series of adventures undertaken by the knight-errant represent a “graduated test of election,” a testimony to the “personal perfection” of the knight through the performance of chivalric virtue. The errands of Exquemelin’s “knights” neither proceed in a graduated way toward ethical perfection, nor do they prove the worth of the protagonist; their failure to mark “progress” indicates the inability of the romance plot to represent the buccaneers’ history (136).

³⁸ Francis Bacon’s *New Atlantis* offers a useful distillation of the narrative of imperial progress to which I allude. The utopian fiction of the *New Atlantis* mixes the reformation of natural philosophy found in Bacon’s philosophical writings with a narrative of imperial expansion that extends the modern, Euro-centric culture of science across the Atlantic. The narrative is emblematic of the tendency of the period’s scientific literature to suppress the violence inherent in the act of imperial expansion, substituting the history of the violence of empire with the sanitized rhetoric of the “New Sciences.” Illustrative of this act of suppression is the narrative’s reduction of the complex and often exploitative process of trans-Atlantic knowledge production to an expression of European scientific curiosity.

³⁹ On the relationship between science and empire in the early modern period, see Bauer 15.

⁴⁰ Exquemelin's national origin is uncertain. Scholars have variously argued that he hailed from France or Holland. For an overview of the theories of Exquemelin's birthplace, see Vrijman.

⁴¹ Montrose defines "subjectification" as the process by which individuals shape themselves as "loci of consciousness and initiators of action." The production of historical narrative establishes the author as such a locus of consciousness and initiator of action through its requisite process of compiling, sorting and arranging the data of experience into a discernible form (21).

⁴² On the importance of the plain style to the New Sciences science, and to the establishment of a trustworthy narrative, see Bauer 14-15 and Galinsky 14.

⁴³ See Steinberg 99, 105.

⁴⁴ See "Exquemelin's *Buccaneers*" 58. Frohock has noted the thematic importance of the pronominal shifts in Exquemelin's narration of key raids.

⁴⁵ Frohock observes that Exquemelin's use of the detached, factual tone helps distance Exquemelin from his comrades and thereby helps to establish a reliable authorial persona ("*Buccaneers*" 59).

⁴⁶ On the literary culture of maritime society, see Blum.

⁴⁷ The extremely heavy editing and revising of the manuscript performed by Exquemelin's French translator, the Sieur de Frontignières, also suggests a disbelief in Exquemelin's competence as an historian. De Frontignières' 1686 edition supplements the comparatively sparse natural historical data in *Buccaneers* with large excerpts from Jean-Baptiste Dutertre's *Histoire générale des Antilles* (1654), and expands as well Exquemelin's descriptions of the primary characters in his history. Both editorial

interventions suggest that Exquemelin was not himself in control of the history he wrote.

On the morphology of the French edition, see Ouellet and Villier.

⁴⁸ For an account of the labor conditions of French indentures in the West Indies, see Boucher 146, 153.

⁴⁹ See Beer 4, 12-13. As Beer notes, it is important to distinguish between the formal tradition of “the romance,” which typically refers to Greek romance, the medieval romance, or Elizabethan romance, and the more general use of the term “romance” to designate the genre’s trans-historical emphasis on the expression of desires not comprehensible or representable in mainstream society. I use the term “romance” in both of the senses identified by Beer in order to highlight the genealogical continuity of medieval romance with the pirate literature of the seventeenth century, and to foreground the function of romance as a mode for articulating the hope for social reform.

⁵⁰ On the long and vexed history of colonial contact with the Miskito, see Rogers.

⁵¹ For an analysis of the role the Dutch press played in perpetuating the Black Legend, see Schmidt, “The Purpose of Pirates,” 175.

⁵² See Maravall, *Culture of the Baroque*, esp. chapter seven.

⁵³ Quint makes precisely this point in connection with *Don Quixote*, which is often read as the prototypical novel of disillusionment or disenchantment pointed at by the Spanish term *desengaño* (xii). His point remains salient for readings of much later texts than the *Quixote* because the baroque experience of *desengaño* did not travel in uniform ways, but was rather produced, as Maravall has recognized, differentially during specific historical moments. The very brief flashpoint of Caribbean buccaneering during the late

seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries was one such context in which baroque disenchantment became a widespread cultural response to the colonial process.

⁵⁴ On the definition of Golden Age society in the *Metomorpheses*, see book one.

⁵⁵ All citations will come from Wilber's 1930 translation from the original 1698 French publication unless otherwise noted.

⁵⁶ On South Sea piracy in the early modern period, see Bradley, esp. chapter seven.

⁵⁷ Bradley estimates that by 1685 there were almost 1,000 buccaneers continually raiding coastal towns in the Gulf of Panama, effectively suffocating Spain's imperial head by cutting off the circulation of the supply train from Peru.

⁵⁸ The classic study of buccaneer culture remains Haring's *The Buccaneers in the West Indies in the XII Century*. While Haring concedes that the buccaneers who ventured into the South Sea had a "remarkable history," and indeed that expeditions to the South Sea became the "prevailing practice" after 1683, the whole episode gets a mere two pages in an otherwise massive and comprehensive study. Bradley's study, mentioned above, is a welcome exception to the rule established by Haring's work.

⁵⁹ On the Franco-Dutch war and its impact in the Americas, Pritchard, esp. chapter six.

⁶⁰ Andrea Frisch makes the important point that French travel literature from the New World was different from English and Spanish Americana insofar as French travelers lacked the official institutional backing of the state and professional societies. French accounts of exploration thus defined testimonial authority in individualist terms rather than communal terms (18). In the case of the *Journal*, the letters of de Cussy and Seignelay represent an attempt on the part of the state to "re-function" the narrative, as Nerlich puts it, to serve its geopolitical interests. Thus, I would argue that while de

Lussan's voyage was not backed by the state or linked institutionally to scientific communities, his *Journal* was nevertheless appropriated by the government to inform its geopolitical strategy in both the Caribbean and the South Sea.

⁶¹ On French overseas expansion during the early modern period, see Pritchard.

⁶² On the picaresque as anti-romance, see Quint's *Cervantes's Novel of Modern Times*.

The *Journal* shares elements of the picaresque, namely the picaresque's use of the rogue as the protagonist, its emphasis on social mobility and its propensity for social criticism.

⁶³ On the anarchic function of romance, see Nerlich 14. On the unifying principle of the heroic deed, see Frye 187 and Bakhtin 152-153.

⁶⁴ On the publication history of Dampier's *New Voyage*, see Baer.

⁶⁵ On the development of South Sea piracy and Spain's response, see Lane, esp. chapter five.

⁶⁶ On the shift in English policy toward piracy in the Caribbean, see Lane, chapters five and six. On the economic utility of pirates to the English state, see Lamb 52-53.

⁶⁷ For a historical overview of English ventures into the South Sea, see Williams, "'The Inexhaustible Fountain of Gold,'" *The Great South Sea*, and *The Prize of All the Oceans*.

⁶⁸ On Dampier's place within the Royal Society and among London's scientific elite, see Shipman.

⁶⁹ England's reliance on pirates and privateers to facilitate imperial expansion waxed and waned during the sixteenth, seventeenth, and early-eighteenth centuries. Pirates and privateers helped open the Caribbean for English colonization in the first phase of England's trans-Atlantic imperial expansion. Once the Caribbean and Atlantic coast of North America had become settled and better regulated by metropolitan authorities,

pirates and privateers played a less crucial role in imperial expansion. They were, in fact, explicitly rejected as heroes of empire, as Raleigh's case demonstrates. The opening of the South Sea in the late-seventeenth century, however, forced England to depend once again on the efforts of pirates and privateers to carve out potential jurisdictional holdings and defend potential lines of trade. It is for this reason that Dampier's narrative carried the weight it did and kept him in the good graces of the metropolitan elite.

⁷⁰ See Frohock, *Heroes*, esp. chapter three.

⁷¹ This argument has been made most forcefully in the Spanish context by José Antonio Maravall in *Culture of the Baroque*, where he argues that the seventeenth century witnessed the final disenchantment with the world of romance. Frohock has made a similar, though more cautious argument in the English context, acknowledging that romantic conception of the chivalric hero retained some of its currency throughout the seventeenth century, but noting that the process of imperial consolidation and the shift in imperial rhetoric toward models generated by the New Sciences gradually rendered the traditional chivalric hero an anachronism.

⁷² Henri Lefebvre uses the concept of the hydraulic web to describe the particular form of social and economic space that attended the rise of the merchant class, the commodity, and the principle of accumulation from the late middle ages through the Renaissance. As Lefebvre observes, this transition necessitated that existing overland and inland water routes be supplemented by a new set of Atlantic networks. These routes were extensions of urban European spatial forms, but as I discuss below, they were also conducive to appropriation for purposes other than the service of metropolitan interests (262-268).

⁷³ All citations will come from Masefield's 1906 edition unless otherwise noted.

⁷⁴ On early modern trusting systems, see Shapin, esp. chapter five.

⁷⁵ Exquemelin's *Buccaneers* was adopted by English readers as part of their own national literature on account of its relation of the exploits of Henry Morgan. Morgan's career forms only half the content of Exquemelin's narrative, which is largely concerned with the international cultures of piracy in the Caribbean and thus not with a specific national tradition. For that reason I do not enumerate it here among the corpus of properly English buccaneer narratives.

⁷⁶ Within the tradition of buccaneer literature itself, Exquemelin's discussion of the apemen of Gibraltar and Wafer's hyperbolic assessment of the wealth to be gained through an English conquest of Darien exemplify this point.

⁷⁷ For further information on the connection between Dampier and the Royal Society, see Edwards 26-28.

⁷⁸ On the role of "curiosity" in the development of the episteme of the New Sciences, see Parrish, esp. chapter one. As Parrish notes, "curiosity" as a concept was under revision during the early modern period. Prior to the Baconian reforms, "curiosity" signified a sense of "anomalous wonder" toward natural events that enticed the mind to engage in fruitless speculation. With the rise of the New Sciences, "curiosity" came to denote a "new addition to an increasingly comprehensive and faithful catalog of nature" (62-63). Dampier appears to intend the latter meaning here, directing the reader's curiosity toward his accounts of particular regions covered by his traverses, not toward the traverses themselves, though I would argue that there is some rhetorical slippage here in subsequent passages.

⁷⁹ On the relationship between cartography and English empire, see McLeod. For broader view of the relationship between Cartesian representations of space and European imperialism, see Sack, esp. chapter two.

⁸⁰ See Bakhtin, esp. chapter four. Bakhtin defines the chronotope as a way of designating “the intrinsic connectedness of temporal and spatial relationships that are artistically expressed in literature”(84). He ties his understanding of genre to the idea of the chronotope, arguing that differing conceptions of space and time and different configurations of the relationships between them are what separate literary genres (84-85). While Bakhtin distinguishes between several types of romance chronotopes, one may extrapolate from them the basic conclusion that romantic configurations of space-time differ vastly from those established by the New Sciences. Whereas romance space is defined by the series of nonlinear movements that define the quest, the New Sciences propagated a Cartesian model of linear space. Likewise, whereas romance time is defined by the adventure, time for proponents of science is defined by the principle of linear progressivism.

⁸¹ On the construction of the meta-narrative of European enlightenment as a justification for imperial expansion, see McLeod and Pratt. Pratt defines three distinct forms of “planetary consciousness” that governed Western Europe’s view of the globe from the colonial period through the eighteenth century. Each of these forms configured the relationship between science and empire in different ways. The first two emerged from Europeans’ attempts to circumnavigate the globe and to map its coastal regions. These forms of planetary consciousness, Pratt argues, coincided with “a new territorial phase of capitalism propelled by searches for raw materials” (11). This territorial phase was

accompanied by a form of colonial discourse that represented American landscapes and indigenous peoples as politically and culturally uncivilized.

⁸² On the relationship between natural-law philosophy and empire, see Pagden; Muldoon's *Popes, Lawyers, and Infidels* and *The Americas in the Spanish World Order*, Williams, Jr.; and Benton's *Law and Colonial Cultures*.

⁸³ See Rogers for an overview of the role of the Mosquito in the colonial process.

⁸⁴ This was Dampier's second expedition to the South Sea, the first taking place while in the company of Bartholomew Sharp. Dampier's second voyage spans the years 1683-1691 and comprises the main action of the narrative.

⁸⁵ Pratt uses the term "anti-conquest" to describe the rhetorical strategies whereby "European bourgeois subjects seek to secure their innocence in the same moment as they assert European hegemony." As Pratt further observes, the anti-conquest rhetoric that manifested itself most fully in the scientific travel literature of the eighteenth century was constructed as a reaction against and rejection of the military models of conquest that defined what she calls the "absolutist era" (9). While Dampier is certainly not a bourgeois subject in the way that members of the Society were, his tendency to link imperialism to enlightenment suggests that anti-conquest rhetoric was an important tool for imperial functionaries from the lower classes.

⁸⁶ The connection between Lefebvre and Bakhtin is not one Lefebvre makes himself, most likely because of his general concern with reducing social and historical phenomena to textual models. Bakhtin's notion of the chronotope is a useful heuristic for describing the historical process Lefebvre outlines in a distinctively literary way. Consider, for example, Lefebvre's observation that "Time—the time appropriate to the production of

exchangeable goods, to their transport, delivery and sale, to payment and to the placing of capital—now served to measure space” (278). Lefebvre acknowledges that such codings of space give it a *texture*, but remains wary of reading history *as text*. Bakhtin’s chronotope allows for analyses of space to talk simultaneously about the textual character of spatial codes without reducing history to textuality.

⁸⁷ On the history of the cacao trade, see Jamieson.

⁸⁸ Masfield speculates that the event Dampier refers to may have taken place around 1677 (93, n.1).

⁸⁹ On the debate between Gentili and Grotius, see Benton, *A Search for Sovereignty*, esp. chapter three.

⁹⁰ Hence the prominence of the phrase *hostis humani generis* (enemy of all mankind) as a descriptor for pirates. Rediker explores the process by which pirates become defined as irreconcilable enemies of early modern nation-states in *Villains of All Nations*.

⁹¹ Bakhtin identifies the test of election as a central component to the romance tradition (107-108). Dampier’s gusto in embracing the challenge of conquest signals his embrace of his “chosen” status as the leader of the buccaneers.

⁹² It should be noted that the chronotope operative in Dampier’s dream differs from that of the chivalric romance in its conception of space. As Bakhtin observes, chivalric space is enchanted by all manner of magical beings. As such, it bears little resemblance to the disenchanted space of everyday life. The space in which Dampier operates is not chivalric space in the strictest terms, but it may be considered enchanted space when the category of enchantment is understood in functional terms. The purpose of this enchantment, Bakhtin observes, is to surround the hero with a world of miraculous

chance that can offer him the opportunity to perform the endless quests for which he exists (152-153). Enchantment in the chivalric tradition, then, serves an essentially *contextual* purpose with regard to the development of the hero's character. While the space of Dampier's "dream" is not enchanted in the sense of being filled by otherworldly beings, it is enchanted in the sense that it provides a series of contexts in which he can assert his martial bravery.

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