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— THE NEW URBAN ATLANTIC —

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CITIES AND THE CIRCULATION OF CULTURE IN THE ATLANTIC WORLD

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From the Early
Modern to Modernism

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EDITED BY
LEONARD VON MORZÉ



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Leonard von Morzé
Editor

Cities and the Circulation of Culture in the Atlantic World

From the Early Modern to Modernism

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Editor

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Years ago Samuel Otter inspired me to think like a literary historian about the culture of cities, and though Berkeley falls far outside this volume's ambit, I like to think of Sam's office as the place where this collection got started. More recently, I have been supported by colleagues too numerous to list at the University of Massachusetts Boston who encouraged me during difficult times. I am particularly grateful for the scholarly example of Elizabeth Fay, who proposed the volume and who has once again been wonderfully supportive of my work; and for the eloquence of Nancy Stieber, who drafted a statement guiding our university's Atlantic Studies Working Group. With her permission, I have borrowed some of Nancy's formulations of the research questions with which our group was preoccupied during its active years (2009–2014). The several editors at Palgrave who oversaw various stages in the production of this book deserve thanks for their timely and conscientious assistance. To the gallery of brilliant contributors who entrusted their work to me: whether they waited years to see their words into print, or whether they contributed a crucial last-minute addition, I am humbled by their patience and generosity. Life would be much less fulfilling without the love and support of Caroline Doress Roberts, Cornelius von Morzé, and Elisabeth von Morzé. I dedicate my share in the labor that went into this book to the memory of my beloved father, whose transatlantic career surely shaped my intellectual passions in more ways than I can understand.

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ABOUT THIS BOOK

Cities and the Circulation of Culture in the Atlantic World exemplifies the comparative method in cultural history. By interpreting Atlantic urban history through sustained attention to a variety of representational forms and cultural practices, an international group of nine contributors demonstrate the power of culture to shape urban experience, even as they acknowledge the harsh realities of economic history. By putting early modern cultural productions into conversation with works from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the essays contribute to a picture of Atlantic history that does not reflect a straightforward process of modernization, and that probes the value of comparative analysis itself. Contributors establish surprising connections: between chivalric and economic discourse, between Baroque art and Spanish empire building, between antipapist discourse and warnings about slave conspiracy, between a maritime orientation and the marriage plot, between urban travel and the modern self, between theater history and the industrial revolution. Contributors' approaches will be of interest to specialists in Atlantic Studies, as well as cultural historians, art historians, architectural historians, theatre historians, anthropologists, literary critics, economic historians, social historians, and scholars in material culture studies.

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Introduction

Leonard von Morzé

Since it began to flourish 30 years ago, the field of Atlantic Studies has expanded in many directions, but the role played by cities in the Atlantic world deserves more focused study. In its early years, Atlantic Studies emphasized major themes in economic history, from colonial encounters to the maritime culture of trading vessels; more recently, the slave trade and the history of plantations have become principal research foci. This scholarly work gave rise to a model of Atlantic relations which yielded important new perspectives on seventeenth- and eighteenth-century history, but which nonetheless took the plantation economies of the Chesapeake and the Caribbean as the model for Atlantic development, instead of the port cities of the Iberian Atlantic and their relationship to the hinterlands. (This model never dominated scholarship on the Spanish

I am grateful to my colleague Nancy Stieber for permitting me to borrow, in three paragraphs of this introduction, a few crucial sentences from her unpublished notes on the field of urban Atlantic history, notes which emerged from our many discussions of the topic several years ago. This introduction would be less clear without Nancy's elegant formulations.

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Atlantic as it did studies of British America.) More recent studies have shown that urban culture in the Western Hemisphere did not bear the exclusive impress of European culture, but was shaped by the movement of thousands of Africans who, along with European Creoles, were swept up in the general tendency toward economic integration.¹ Moreover, important histories of American Indian and African cities have prompted scholars to expand their definition of what counts as a city for purposes of transatlantic comparison.² Notable collections of essays on the urban Atlantic, meanwhile, have offered chapter-by-chapter accounts of individual cities, emphasizing their self-containment even while yielding studies of impressive depth.³

For its part, the present volume aims to reveal cultural processes linking Atlantic locations. As a collaboration between historians and literary scholars, this book builds on two distinct bodies of scholarship on the Atlantic world. On the one hand, Atlantic historians usually turn to politics, economics, or kinship for an explanatory framework, and generally avoid understanding culture on its own terms.⁴ For their part, literary scholars of the Atlantic have tended, by and large, to develop connections between writers which are often surprising and illuminating but stop short of larger claims, as though the purpose of their work were merely to shake up nation-based literary histories. Endeavoring to advance both the historical and the literary wings of Atlantic scholarship, this volume features essays that engage not merely with specific instances of transatlantic representation, but also with the making of representational norms; they examine the serial repetition of cultural forms, such as circulating libraries or theatrical productions, across cities; and they treat culture in its ordinary, everyday dimensions. The contributors to this book do not assume that politics, economics, or kinship can be separated from culture; instead, they offer an interdisciplinary framework for a conception of the urban Atlantic world which would include culture. Thus the chapters might be read not only as case studies of particular urban environments, but also as investigations of the circulation of cultural forms across the Atlantic world.

Any conceptualization of the culture of cities invites questions, beginning with the problem, already mentioned, that a comparative history of Atlantic cities tends to be premised on a European imperial definition of urban space. As Ananya Chakravarti notes in the provocative argument which opens this volume, the very definition of what counts as an urban site is a product of the imperial ordering of space; accordingly, the study of Atlantic cities risks reinscribing equations of culture and urbanism which

were established only through violence. Though a focus on port cities can supplement the sometimes Anglocentric history of plantation production, urban spaces were no less a part of the matrix of imperial power than plantations, and the addition of culture adds another loaded term to the mix. By connecting Atlantic cities and culture, do we risk endorsing that classical equation of city and *civitas*, of urbanism, political participation, and civilization, which—as another contributor to this volume has noted—underwrote the cultural ideology of the Spanish empire?⁵ That equation was hardly unique to Spain; the literary culture of London was a central location for producing what have been called “the papers of empire.”⁶

A no less problematic ideal of urban Atlantic identity operated during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, when political elites in the North Atlantic found psychological reassurance in the idea of a common Atlantic culture, which now served as the hegemonic signifier of the moderation and urbanity that would take worried readers through periods of political crisis. At a moment of national fragmentation in the United States, the opening number of Boston’s *Atlantic Monthly* (1857) disavowed “party or clique,” and subsequent issues cultivated American writing while also looking across the Atlantic toward the presumed stability of British literary culture.⁷ A similar ideology of moderation, once again concealing violence, underlay the Occidentalizing discourse of Cold War historians who spoke confidently of an Atlantic civilization “from Plato to NATO.”⁸ Lest we be too confident that the long-standing cultural hegemony of the Atlantic or even of the *translatio studii* is behind us, let us recall that the idea of the “transatlantic” remains a point of emotional cathexis for cosmopolitan generalist readers of the London and New York *Reviews of Books*, publications which have been accused of validating a sense of readerly “urbanity” by offering a fortnightly overview of the world, as seen through the eyes of a rotating pool of recognizable authorities who remain aloof from political struggles.⁹ Transatlantic urban identity is manufactured through the genres of the survey and the synthesis; perhaps, as it has been claimed, the synthetic mode of cultural history satisfies a need for comforting totalizations and downplays conflict.¹⁰

In a volume on the Atlantic world, synthesis is an inevitable historiographical mode, but perhaps it would be more accurate to introduce the chapters that follow as different accounts of *circulation*, of the links that were forged between Atlantic cities, as well as between urban and nonurban spaces. The present volume certainly does not aim to validate any equation of urbanism and culture, or to make any pretense to offering a total picture of Atlantic culture, though care has been taken to include African and

South American sites still underrepresented in English-language scholarship. Our interest in circulation means that the contributors are concerned not only or even primarily with what happens within cities, so much as with the movement of people, goods, and ideas between them and, by extension, the formation of networks linking cities simultaneously to each other and to nonurban hinterlands. Particularly in the next three chapters, on the Early Modern period, the aim is to sketch the grounds by which the equation of city and culture became possible, beginning with the creation of a spatial system in the colonial world.¹¹ This system witnessed a tension between local contexts and proto-global representational norms which were continually contested, resisted, and broken.¹²

For the later period, starting with the eighteenth century, volume contributors critically examine the process by which cultural works contributed to what Stefan Brandt, following Paul Giles, calls the “transatlantic imaginary.” In the chapters by Brandt, Steven Bellomy, and others, culture has a cognitive function, serving as a reaction against the unsurveyability of the Atlantic world and the ungovernable diversity of its cities.¹³ The transatlantic circulation of cultural works could provide a spatial orientation, a way of seeing connections that might otherwise have escaped historical actors. Culture may be seen as offering, in Ed White’s memorable reversal of Raymond Williams’s phrase, a “feeling of structure,” or as serving a project of systematization that, for most of the historical agents studied in this volume, realized imperial or national ends. White draws critical attention to the development of a governing urban elite in both hemispheres

who came to understand that one could not think about farmers, or Native Americans, or the British Empire, or cities, in isolation from one another; who came to see in the *relational links between these ensembles* the basic elements of New World modernity; and who finally came to realize the potential for modification and metamorphosis of such elements.¹⁴

If culture is one source of these “relational links,” then it, too, can be defined only a mediating concept, encompassing both the practice of everyday life as well as scholarly and artistic achievement.¹⁵ While culture remains an imprecise concept here, the chapters offer working definitions linked by the common assumption that culture can be a conceptual marker for the connective forces that, beyond purely economic, political, and familial ties, linked cities in the Atlantic world.

Taken together, the 10 chapters in this volume demonstrate the power of culture in the making of Atlantic urban experience, even as they acknowledge the harsh realities of economic history. The contributors are inspired by that dimension of Atlantic Studies which has made us pay new attention to the processes by which cultural systems, not to say people themselves, moved through the world. This might, indeed, be one of the key claims of Atlantic Studies: to have moved scholarly discussion beyond the comparison of “colonial identities” across Atlantic empires. Following the influential work of Joseph Roach, scholars now seek to understand the ways that African, European, and Native American inheritances commingled in ways less reflective of their origins than of their transatlantic transformation, less marked by the replication of tradition than by radical discontinuities.¹⁶ Like Roach, these scholars have turned to urban settings for examples of circulation, and have found an alternative scale of analysis in cities, as opposed to empires or nations. While scholarship on colonial identity yielded insight into topics such as Creolization and nationalism, the study of Atlantic urbanism promises to show how a shared Atlantic location was embodied in the organization of space, in the construction of identity, and in the public institutionalization of memory.

Studies of urban circulation can help us address a number of questions that can continue to guide Atlantic Studies scholarship. To what extent is culture responsible for producing an account of the difference between a city and a settlement? Does the history of urban sites reflect a process of integration or of differentiation in the Atlantic world? Are models premised on the idea of uneven development, that study a metropolis’s relation to its colonial satellites, adequate to the task of cultural analysis, or do we need to think about other possible models? How did cultural production in Atlantic cities challenge the norms being contemporaneously established in more narrowly national traditions in literature, architecture, or painting? To what extent is the history of cities a history of international spaces, rather than of national cultures? To what extent can a history of cities diverge from an older imperial history? The contributors do not, of course, have the answers to all of these questions, but their work constitutes a set of case studies that will hopefully set an agenda for further research.

The essays in Part I, “Spatial Organization in the Early Modern Atlantic,” consider how the creation and administration of the Atlantic frontier was a cultural enterprise insofar as it involved the codification of a

representational idiom through colonial literature (epic, drama, exemplary dialogue), or through theatrical spectacles which helped to establish colonial spaces *as* cities. While the chapters examine Portuguese, Spanish, and English imperial ventures in that order, they do not suggest that Atlantic cultural productions expressed distinctive national traditions so much as they reflected opportunistic responses to the contested Atlantic frontier. Ananya Chakravarti's opening reflections replace the colonizer-centered narrative of urban "development" with the study of the spatial logics of colonialism and the violence of demographic displacement that it requires. The sixteenth-century Portuguese construction of the Atlantic frontier did not merely describe but also organized space. Thus, to avoid replicating an imperial structuring of space, the project of comparing Portuguese colonial settlements must, for Chakravarti, first expose the underlying ideology of spatial organization which defined the city against the hinterlands. Alejandra Osorio's chapter reveals how urban space in Spanish-controlled territories was defined through a circulating cultural convention: by producing representational equivalents for the monarch's body, the Spanish baroque turned cities into provincial courts. Theatrical spectacles produced an imperial urban geography of power which was global yet also remained in certain ways precolonial. In a chapter that applies fresh archival research to an overview of the Atlantic frontier, Malcolm Smuts recognizes the cultural mediation of the hard-headed financial and political power of English capital investment in territorial exploration and oceanic piracy. Smuts's examination of poetry and narrative demonstrates that information gathering about the Atlantic world should not be understood simply as a rationalizing process, but as establishing representational expectations that allowed English financiers and adventurers to evaluate their highly speculative investments.

Part II, "Figures of the Circulating Self," suggests that the rise of individualism during the long eighteenth century and its classic generic representations (the novel and the autobiography) can usefully be understood against the backdrop of Atlantic history. The cultural legacy of the Elizabethan Atlantic is at the core of Steven Bellomy's chapter, which traces the circulation of images of Guy Fawkes in the Atlantic world. Solidly established in British minds through ritual urban commemoration, the oft-repeated history of the Gunpowder Plot furnished a surprising model for how slave insurrections were represented in print. The ideological function of representing rebel slaves under the mask of Guy Fawkes, and urban insurrection as the new Gunpowder Plot, was to circulate an

idea of slave rebellion as isolated, failed revolt. By virtue of his racial and sexual privilege, Benjamin Franklin circulated a counterimage of individual mobility, as liberating rather than isolating, through his *Autobiography*, as Betsy Klimasmith demonstrates. Franklin's text elevates his empirical account of his city adventures into a theory of circulation which equates the maximization of the self's mobility with personal and communal advancement. Franklin refers his reader to the circulating library and the chess board as illustrations of the cosmopolitan self's movement through urban spaces. Elizabeth Fay traces Jane Austen's formally similar, albeit more topographically varied account of the circulating self in *Persuasion*. Austen's novel valorizes the mobility she associates with life in the British Navy (marked as it was by meritocracy, mapping, and ethical individualism), rather than with the culture of the plantation or the landed estate.

Part III, "Imagined Cities and Atlantic Modernism," considers the construction of the Atlantic world in the Modernist cultural imaginary. Cultural as much as architectural constructs, argues Stefan Brandt, explain the reputation of the nineteenth-century US city for "openness." By narrating the experience of the difference between American cities and European walled cities, transatlantic characters in Modernist fiction validate the impression of American openness and freedom, though a subversive countertradition in the novel prefers to represent the US city through the image of the labyrinth. Tracing the ways in which theatrical celebrities entered the limelight of transatlantic Anglophone culture, Cecilia Morgan argues that the Edwardian period marks a new age in actresses' professions, as they enjoyed the heightened mobility afforded by ocean and rail travel and negotiated career opportunities in the United States, Britain, and Canada. Even though the central actress in the chapter never appeared on an English stage, her career exemplifies the ways that the iterative nature of stage performance linked urban sites in a common Anglo-American theatrical culture. Canadian female stars moved from theater to theater performing British identities on American stages; their theatrical circuits prefigure, perhaps, the virtual cultural networks traversed by Hollywood films. The Atlantic channels influencing Modernist architecture inform Mark Hinchman's concluding chapter on the historically layered design of the Art Deco building which now houses Dakar's central museum of African art. The French architect followed a complex Atlantic route to his final design, synthesizing various sources of knowledge, including observations of buildings from different regions of Africa and of colonial expositions in Marseilles. These

fused styles drew on a set of representational conventions signifying “West Africa” to a diverse urban elite, conventions that the architect mixed with an Art Deco style which had, in turn, arguably drawn on African Modernism. Part III, then, considers how various manifestations of urban Modernism, whether in literature, theater, or architecture, reflect the circulation of culture through the Atlantic world.

NOTES

1. See the essay collections *Urban Identity and the Atlantic World*, ed. Elizabeth Fay and Leonard von Morzé (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), which is a predecessor to the present volume; and *The Black Urban Atlantic in the Age of the Slave Trade*, ed. Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra, Matt D. Childs, and James Sidbury (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013).
2. Two influential studies are Roger G. Kennedy, *Hidden Cities: The Discovery and Loss of Ancient North American Civilization* (New York: Free Press, 1994), and John Thornton, *Africa and Africans in the Making of the Atlantic World, 1400-1800* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1998). For an important case study of interactions in West African castle-fortresses controlled by the British, the Danish, and the Dutch, see Holger Weiss, “The Entangled Spaces of Oddena, Oguaa and Osu: A Survey of Three Early Modern African Atlantic Towns, ca. 1650–1850,” in *Ports of Globalisation, Places of Creolisation: Nordic Possessions in the Atlantic World during the Era of the Slave Trade*, ed. Holger Weiss (Leiden: Brill, 2015) 22–67.
3. See, for example, the essays in Peggy Liss and Franklin Knight, ed., *Atlantic Port Cities* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1991), or the regionally based case studies in David Shields, ed., *Material Culture in Anglo-America: Regional Identity and Urbanity in the Tidewater, Lowcountry, and Caribbean* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2007).
4. For an interesting recent study of the Atlantic book trade among coreligionists and extended family, see Jordan Landes’s *London Quakers in the Trans-Atlantic World: The Creation of an Early Modern Community* (New York: Palgrave, 2015). On the circulation of drama among Atlantic cities, see especially Elizabeth Maddock Dillon’s *New World Drama: The Performative Commons in the Atlantic World, 1649–1849* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2014).
5. Alejandra Osorio discussing Anthony Pagden in *Inventing Lima: Baroque Modernity in Peru’s South Sea Metropolis* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 3.

6. Myra Jehlen, "The Literature of Colonization," in *The Cambridge History of American Literature, Volume 1: 1590–1820*, ed. Sacvan Bercovitch (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 11–36.
7. On the journal's moderate politics, see Ellery Sedgwick, *A History of The Atlantic Monthly, 1857–1909: Yankee Humanism at High Tide and Ebb* (Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 2009), and Susan Goodman, *Republic of Words: The Atlantic Monthly and Its Writers, 1857–1925* (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 2011).
8. The earliest appearance of this phrase in print that I have found dates to the year 1966.
9. While citing D.A. Miller's brilliant "Sontag's Urbanity" out of context here invites the very critique of generalist knowledge it makes, I cannot think of an account of the "transatlantic intelligentsia" that more powerfully describes one feature of the psychological cathexis underlying the idea of Atlantic urban identity today. See *October* 49 (Summer 1989): 98–99.
10. An entire school of cultural theory takes aim at "grand narratives," but as an early Americanist I am more persuaded by a critique of synthesis which is, so to speak, less grand: Ed White's specific analysis of eighteenth-century American historiography. White takes aim at synthesis as both a historical phenomenon and a scholarly agenda, noting that the elite Founders, as well as the scholars of the "republican synthesis" who wrote about them, made an invidious distinction between systematic and random ideas: the former, generally articulated by an urban elite, were and continue to be seen as making history, while the latter, generally articulated from the backcountry, remain(ed) incoherent and insignificant. The ideological function of this distinction was to render invisible continuing class and racial antagonisms which made the post-revolutionary period arguably no less "colonial" than the years leading up to 1776. See *The Backcountry and the City: Colonization and Conflict in Early America* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2004), 10.
11. In addition to Chakravarti's work on Portuguese Brazil, see Kathryn N. Gray's analysis of the rhetoric of spatial organization in Puritan discourse during the era of "praying towns" in Massachusetts in *John Eliot and the Praying Indians of Massachusetts Bay: Communities and Connections in Puritan New England* (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 2013) 59–88.
12. An important study of the tension between "representational norms" at various scales (local, Atlantic, and global) is Ananya Chakravarti's "In the Language of the Land: Native Conversion in Jesuit Public Letters from Brazil and India," *Journal of Early Modern History* 17.5/6 (2013): 505–24.
13. For an attempt to locate this cognitive function in a specific outpouring of early Atlantic literary culture, the literature of free-labor Georgia during the period of its ban on slavery, see my "The Silkworm and the Bee: Georgia,

Cognitive Mapping, and the Atlantic Labor System in Boltzious and Thomson,” in *The Edinburgh Companion to Atlantic Literary Studies*, ed. Leslie Eckel and Clare Elliott (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2016), 17–30.

14. White, xiv, 56. Italics in original.

15. Raymond Williams, “Culture is Ordinary,” in Norman Ian MacKenzie, ed., *Conviction* (London: MacGibbon & Kee, 1958), 76.

16. Joseph Roach, *Cities of the Dead: Circum-Atlantic Performance* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996).

Leonard von Morzé volume editor, is an associate professor and director of Undergraduate Studies in the English Department at the University of Massachusetts Boston, USA. He is the co-editor of *Urban Identity and the Atlantic World* (Palgrave, 2013) and, since 2015, of *The New England Quarterly*. He has published articles and reviews on Atlantic topics in *Early American Studies*, *Symbiosis*, and *The Wordsworth Circle*.

PART I

Spatial Organization in the Early
Modern Atlantic

Invisible Cities: Natural and Social Space in Colonial Brazil

Ananya Chakravarti

In late May of 2014, an act of vandalism occurred in the Rosa dos Ventos in Lisbon. The compass which decorates the Praça do Império has at its center a vast map of the world depicting the extent of the Portuguese empire at its zenith, and leads to the monument of a caravel which serves as a memorial to the Portuguese age of discovery. One can spend a lazy afternoon near the Rosa dos Ventos, by the banks of the Tejo, watching tourist groups, snapping pictures of each other while standing on their countries of origin. Occasionally, one can also see groups of Portuguese children, standing around in bored clumps, listening to teachers speak of the history of the empire (Fig 2.1). Unobserved (or perhaps encouraged) by their companions, the vandals had scrawled along the western coast of Japan “Korea” in the Korean alphabet and “East Sea” and “Dokdo Korea” in Latin script. On the official website of the Monument of the Discoveries, an article reporting the vandalism of the Rosa dos Ventos explained that *Dokdo* in Korean refers to the islets in the Sea of Japan, known alternatively as *Takeshima* in Japanese and “the Liancourt Rocks” in the Anglophone parlance of international relations. The proliferation of

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Fig 2.1 Rosa dos Ventos, Lisbon. Image used with the permission of its owner, Professor Marc Oliver Rieger of the University of Trier

names alone suggests the disputed nature of the territory. The article concluded thus:

Since the conflict continues to the present day, it is natural that it should arouse the attention of those who are part of these cultures [to it]. It is equally natural that these kinds of conflict should provoke efforts to affirm [one's] positions; what is unacceptable is that this [conflict] should express itself through acts of vandalism, as was found [here].

This fact should lead to reflection on the importance that national monuments, in this case the Rosa dos Ventos, have in Portuguese society. Whatever the motive behind the act of vandalism may be, it is necessary to understand that this [monument] is a symbol of celebration, which seeks to generate consensus around historical events, and not a symbol of discord.¹

The article is accompanied by a close-up of vandalized map, displaying Japan.² While the scrawled words of the vandals are faint, what leaps out at

the viewer is the engraved figure “1541,” commemorating the year in which a Portuguese ship first drifted ashore in Japan. The image reflects the uneasy ways in which imperial pasts live in the national present. The inscription of alien national narratives upon this monument “representing the Portuguese maritime epic [*epopeia*]” is profoundly unsettling in itself; the quiet amnesia of the empire more so still.

That a map of the world could be deemed a *national* monument, much less a “symbol of celebration, which seeks to generate consensus around historical events” is a matter of no small irony. Yet, it illustrates in some ways the methodological difficulties facing the historian of premodern empire who seeks to avoid encompassing the globe through imperial and specifically metropolitan narratives.

The problem is especially acute when one considers the field of the urban Atlantic, in which the unit of study is often those cities wrought by the empire. As Alison Games noted in her seminal essay defining the field of Atlantic history, this very unit of historical geography is constituted by the empire. Temporally, its *terminus post quem* is the European age of discoveries, beginning with the Portuguese expansion into Africa in the fifteenth century. Simultaneously, particularly for the early modern era, its spatial contours are in practice constituted less by the four continental landmasses that hem the edges of the ocean than by specific imperial flows of people, commodities, and ideas underpinned by European imperialism, of which the most influential and paradigmatic has been the slave trade. The sheer diversity and size of this region, as Games remarked, makes it difficult to produce a truly encompassing circum-Atlantic history, one that does not privilege specific areas or depend on the particular expertise of the historian. It is thus hardly surprising that empire so often provides a coherent analytical framework to make sense of this vast world.³

The gravitational force toward imperial, if not Eurocentric, narratives is further intensified, at least for the early modern era, when one focuses on the urban spaces of the Atlantic world. For many parts of what would come to constitute the Atlantic world, the organization of social space did not take the paradigmatic form of the city until the arrival of Europeans. To put the question more precisely for the purposes of this chapter: for a specialist of the Portuguese world, can a history of the urban Atlantic be more than a comparative or connected history of the cities wrought by the Portuguese empire on the edges of the Atlantic ocean? Can such a history be more than a history of spaces such as Lisbon or Salvador da Bahia or São Jorge da Mina?

In the past two decades, historians have found remarkably creative ways to overcome the imperial foundations of the Atlantic world as a unit of analysis and to resist in particular the Euro-centrism that seems in some ways constitutive of it. Nowhere has this been more apparent than in the remarkably rich historiography of the slave trade, which has sought to place the African at its center as agentive historical actor, beginning with Paul Gilroy's seminal 1993 work, *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness*. Yet, what of those peoples who remained confined to the shores of the Atlantic Ocean, unable by dint of imperial conditions or technological capacity to traverse those waters? Are they not to be admitted into the theater of Atlantic history, which Games correctly defines "as a *slice* of world history," but to remain circumscribed to particular colonial histories, with all the geographical and historiographical parochialization that may often entail?⁴

This chapter is thus an attempt to excavate those invisible cities of the Atlantic world, peopled by groups who did not, by and large, enter intraoceanic flows of migration and whose worlds were papered over by the rise of other imperial cities. The "cities" I will excavate in this case belong to the Amerindian world of sixteenth-century coastal Brazil. Moreover, I will seek to show how these indigenous modes of occupying space were disrupted by colonial and imperial patterns of civility, even as the Amerindian world was brought into the purview of the Atlantic imagination of the Portuguese. In doing so, I hope to show that the history of the indigenous peoples of Brazil should not be confined to the narrowly national field of colonial Brazilian history but is better understood within the broader framework of the Atlantic world.

The chapter is divided into three sections. The first uses the work of the explorer Gabriel Soares de Sousa (1540–1591) to attempt to reconstruct Amerindian modes of occupying space. Here, I suggest in particular that the early "natural histories" of the Americas as a genre may serve as a fruitful source for the social history of indigenous peoples. The second section uses the dramatic corpus of the Jesuit José de Anchieta (1534–1597) to map the colonial order of space that sought to disrupt indigenous settlement patterns. The final section considers the epic poetry of Bento Teixeira (1561–1618) to explore the ways in which the Amerindian world was brought into the Atlantic imagination of the Portuguese (Fig 2.2).

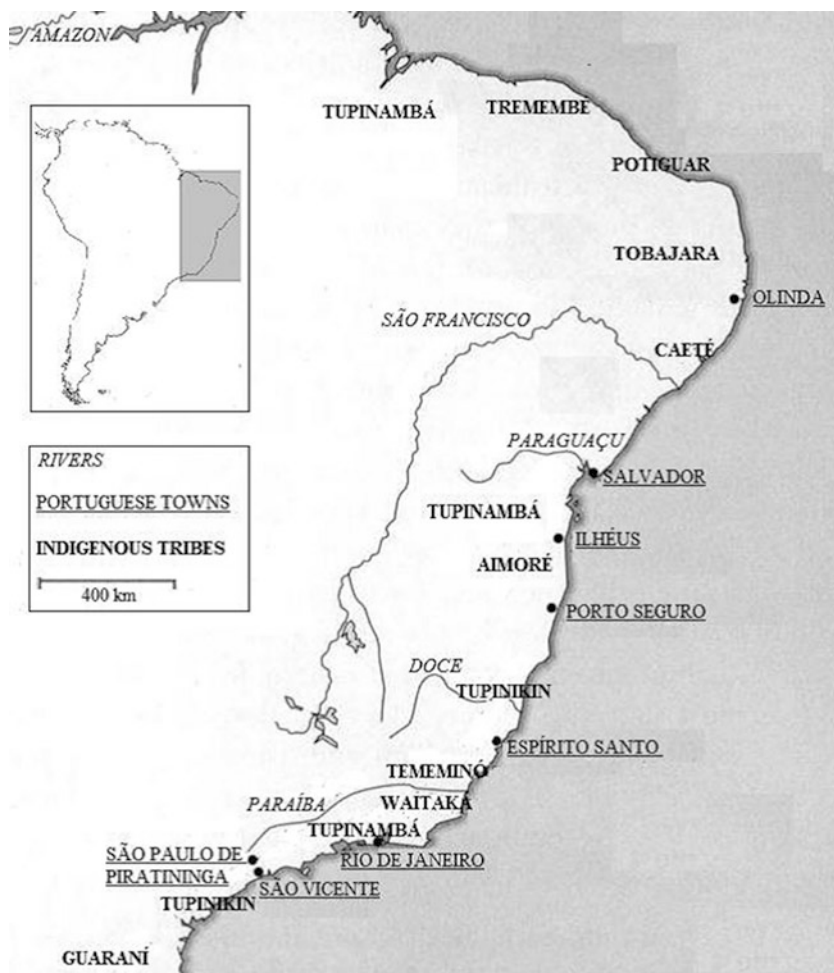


Fig 2.2 Coastal Brazil, mid-sixteenth century

Source: "Indigenous People in Sixteenth-Century Brazil," *The Cambridge History of the Native Peoples of the Americas*, Vol. 3, Part 1, (Cambridge, 1998), 976. Map is slightly modified

THE INVISIBLE CITIES OF COASTAL BRAZIL

*[Y]ou come upon the ruins of the abandoned cities,
without the walls which do not last,
without the bones of the dead, which the wind rolls away:
spider-webs of intricate relationships seeking a form.*⁵

While advances in archaeology from the 1960s onward, particularly on the Tupí-Guaraní linguistic group, have uncovered fascinating patterns of Amerindian occupation of land, for the textual historian precolonial Amerindian models of relationships to space are difficult to glean.⁶ It requires reading through the lines of colonial documents, which were themselves artifacts of a process which entailed the destruction of these indigenous modes of civility.

One particularly intriguing source in this regard is the famous *Tratado Descritivo do Brasil* of 1587, written by the planter Gabriel Soares de Sousa. Of limited circulation in manuscript form till the nineteenth century, this is one of the richest sources on sixteenth-century Brazil. Soares, born in the mid-sixteenth century in Portugal, set sail for East Africa in 1569, as part of the armada headed by the former governor of India, Francisco Barreto, to displace Muslims from the area and seize gold mines. For unknown reasons he ended up in Salvador, settling down with his brother to establish a sugar mill near Jaguaripe, in the plantation area south of the bay. He penned the treatise in Portugal on a visit to the court to secure royal titles and favors, before returning on a doomed expedition to find and exploit elusive mines in the interior. His treatise was enriched by his experience as a plantation owner and explorer, allowing him contact with the Amerindian slave populations captured in the interior, the mixed-race *mameluco* brokers who facilitated expeditions into the interior, as well as with the colonial establishment.

The second part of the treatise is entitled *Memorial e declaração das grandezas da Bahia*, a comprehensive account covering the natural history and social geography of the region. The treatise begins with the armada of the first governor of Brazil, Tomé de Sousa, charged with reviving the moribund Brazilian lands which had largely failed to flourish under private captaincies in the first half of the sixteenth century. Not only was his arrival the signal of a new Crown-directed initiative of colonization but it also represented the importation, quite literally, of the city of Salvador, which

Soares affirms was brought piecemeal on three ships sailing in successive years from 1549. Soares describes the establishment of the new city, how its site was chosen at a distance from the original settlement of the Portuguese residents of the captaincy, fortified and then built up with residences and church buildings.

The treatise evolves in widening concentric circles, first describing the city and its environs, including the plantations that had developed around it. The next few sections are ostensibly a natural history of Bahia describing its rich fauna and flora in meticulous detail. The next two sections are ethnographic, describing first the Tupinambá and then other tribes, in decreasing order of contact with the Portuguese. The last sections are devoted to the mineral wealth of Bahia, with special attention to resources for fortification and shipbuilding, and finally a rather wistful description of the precious gems and metals to be discovered there.

This encyclopedic work provides many insights into patterns of Amerindian relationships to space. Soares himself offers a thesis claiming that, at the intertribal level, the history of coastal Brazil was one of the successive displacement by victorious tribes, with the vanquished retreating to the interior. Though he claimed he gained his information with interviews with the oldest Tupinambá, the account must be read, as John Monteiro has cautioned, in light of his personal apologetics of Portuguese colonialism.⁷ In this version, after all, the Portuguese merely continue and complete a historical pattern of warfare and displacement, rather than creating a rupture in Amerindian history.

My interest in the text is precisely in those sections that function almost as a “natural” barrier between the Portuguese and the Amerindians in Soares’s text. The chapters devoted to the *natural* history of the region, particularly of the hinterland or *sertão* into which the Amerindian world retreated from the colonial littoral, are paradoxically important evidence for the reconstruction of Amerindian patterns of lived space. After the description of the Portuguese world of the coast, a transitional section, beginning in the thirty-third chapter, first establishes the fertility of Bahia and the success with which Iberian plants and animals had been transplanted there. It then provides a description of the agricultural plants of Bahia, with particular emphasis on manioc. From the world of cultivated nature, Soares moves on to describe the various indigenous plants that grow wild, enumerating their properties, whether medicinal, comestible, or otherwise.

Yet, this is far from *mere* natural history. Consider, for example, Soares's description of the *umbu* tree:

Umbu is a tree that is hardly a joy to behold . . . This fruit is found ordinarily in the *sertão*, in the woods called *caatinga*, which are at least twenty leagues from the sea, which is dry land, of little water, where nature creates these trees as a remedy for the thirst of the Indians who pass through there. This tree puts forth roots . . . And the gentile, knowing where these roots are, walks about, beating the ground with a stick. [B]y the sound [made by the stick] he recognizes where to dig and remove the roots . . . [T]he taste [of these roots] is very sweet and so juicy that it melts in the mouth into extremely cold water . . . With this, the people who walk the *sertão* kill their thirst when one cannot find water to drink, and kill their hunger by eating the root, which is very healthy and has never hurt anyone who has eaten too much of it. Some of these trees are found in the plantations of the Portuguese, which were born from the kernels of the *umbu*, where they give [forth] the same fruit and root.⁸

The description of the tree reveals in fact a complex of Amerindian social practices of mobility and knowledge, as well as Portuguese processes of appropriation. The wilds of the hinterland emerge not as untouched nature but inhabited social space. The tell-tale signs of Soares's reliance on native informants in constructing his detailed, carefully categorized natural history are there to be seen in the way a social landscape bleeds through the pages of his botanical catalogue.

Occasionally, this resulted in the wholesale adoption of Amerindian cosmologies into the natural history of Bahia. Consider, for example, the opening of the chapter devoted to mermen in the section on marine creatures, in which Soares affirms: "There is no doubt but that in Bahia and the bays one finds many mermen [*homens marinhos*], that the Indians call in their language *upupiara*, who walk through fresh water rivers in the summer, where they cause much hardship to the Indian fishermen who travel in *jangada* [native rafts]. . . ." The fishermen were often too afraid to return to fishing after an encounter with these creatures. Moreover, the mermen assaulted black slaves too. Soares averred that he himself had lost five of his Amerindian slaves in this way. On one occasion, the foreman of his sugar plantation, looking out from the window of the factory which was on the river, upon hearing some black female slaves shouting one night as they were washing sugar, saw a figure higher than a man on the edge of the water which quickly threw itself into the water. The slaves told him that the phantasm had come to take them, and that he was a merman, by which they were haunted for many days.⁹

The last entry in Soares's treatise before he begins his ethnography of the Amerindians of Bahia is particularly intriguing. He begins the chapter by admitting that he had struggled over where to place his discussion of the creatures known as the crab of the woods [*caranguejos-do-mato*]. To place them in the section on marine animals seemed preposterous since they had never been near the sea, yet they did not neatly fit with terrestrial animals since they resembled seafood. The crabs, called *guoanhamu* locally, grew in humid lowlands, not far from the sea but in the vicinity of sweet water. To catch the reclusive creatures was difficult work: an Indian, Soares tells us, would have to stick his entire arm and shoulder deep into the ground where the crabs would bite mightily with their rock hard pincers. Yet, in season, the crabs were caught and eaten with joyful abandon; indeed, Soares's description of the gustatory joys of the crab is almost orgiastic:

In the month of February until mid-March, the females are all filled with very red coral, and even have it on their shell like langoustines, which is all most delicious. [The Indians] remove the gall or tripe, which is full of very bitter black ink, because it embitters everything it touches.

In August, which is the depth of winter, the males and females emerge into the sunlight, with which the earth is covered. In this time, they walk from one part to another in the sun and are thus easy to grab. And in this junction, the males are fat with a yellowness like the yolk of eggs, which are marvelously delicious. And the Indians remove them from their pits with no work or trouble, by covering [the pits] with a sauce of herbs which suffocates [the crabs]. When they come up for air and do not find an unobstructed path, they die drowned in the mouth of the pit. Some people died from eating this *guoanhamu* and the Indians say that when they [the crabs] do evil they have eaten a fruit, which they call *araticumpaná*, of which we have already made mention, which is poisonous.¹⁰

The fact that, despite describing the physical difficulty of catching the crabs, Soares could simultaneously refer to this exercise as "no work or trouble" is significant, suggesting that crab-eating served symbolic functions within Amerindian communities which exceeded the labor for or reward of mundane sustenance. The blue crustaceans are still known in Brazil today as *guaianamu*, derived from the old Tupí. The anthropologist Susana Matos de Viegas, in fieldwork conducted among the Tupinambá of Olivença, a *caboclo* community that claims descent from the original inhabitants of coastal Brazil, came to find that the crabs played a key role in marking social

geography. In fact, she found a similar dynamic of a physically demanding activity that nonetheless symbolized joyful abandon. She writes:

Although the mangrove is next to the sea and far away from most of the areas where the Tupinambá live, they all love to collect crabs seasonally in the mangrove... The descriptions I heard of the joy and happiness of their stay... for five days eating crabs, day after day, in the mangrove area, is particularly meaningful when we realize that... the activity of collecting crabs is considered physically demanding. Crabs are caught no more than four times a year in the mangrove, at the time of year when the crabs come out of their hiding places in the earth, and walk about on the land. The Tupinambá of Olivença call this the “crab-walking period” (*andada do caranguejo*)...¹¹

Viegas conducted the research as part of an effort to map out the territory which would form the basis of a future reservation for the *caboclo* community. The map she developed came to include coastal strips where seasonal crab-eating occurred, a highly contentious demand given the value of the land for touristic and other real estate developments. Since the Tupinambá did not occupy these lands continuously, their claims here were the most tenuous under Western conceptions of land use and proprietorship. Yet, Viegas came to see these humid lowlands as an integral part of the social landscape of the community, for the seasonal eating of crabs was a joyous ritual of excess and abundance that served to cement social ties.

The present-day Tupinambá are in no way identical to their sixteenth-century namesakes. Nonetheless, without telescoping the distant past into the present, Soares’s description of crab-eating in light of Viegas’s findings is suggestive. At the least, it draws our attention to the fact that in order to map Amerindian relationships to space in the colonial period, we must not look for settlements, but understand that mobility and cosmology profoundly conditioned land use.

THE VILA AND THE ALDEIA

*It consists of two cities...
Both change with time,
but their relationship does not change;
The second is the one
about to free itself from the first.*¹²

If reconstructing Amerindian relationships to space must remain conjectural and incomplete, we are on firmer ground regarding the nature of the rupture caused by Portuguese colonization. Whether enslaved in the plantation complex or enclosed in the *aldeias* of the Jesuits, the essential feature of this rupture was the end of Tupí habits of mobility, intimately tied to their warrior-centric cosmology. The continual raids upon enemy villages, crucially mediated by shamans, formed not only the basis of an agonistic sociality among tribal groups, but also allowed men to attain full personhood as warriors capable of salvation.

The image of the perennially bellicose, not to mention anthropophagic, Tupí obsessed all early European observers, whether missionaries or adventurers. Though Tupí warfare has been a perennial preoccupation of Brazilian anthropology, the full extent to which it subtended all aspects of Tupí cultural life was first explicitly noted by Florestan Fernandes. Imposing a Maussian sacrificial model upon Tupí anthropophagy, Fernandes posited that the central imperative which drove the cycle of vengeance and sacrificial anthropophagy was the need to ameliorate the heteronomic magic created through the death of a member of the social group through the restorative mystical process of vengeance—that is, warfare and its associated ritual cannibalism. The failure of this mechanism—upon which depended the ongoing capacity of a tribe to produce full social persons—had catastrophic consequences, not just for personal and social eschatology, but in the material and political realm, since “the incapacity to invert, through warfare, the state of heteronomic magic could lead a tribe to two extremes—either the loss of demographic vitality or the compulsory abandonment of a particular region.”¹³

Nonetheless, this model views death with an insistently vitalist pessimism: death through warfare for Fernandes is essentially a reactive, not a productive mechanism. If this were indeed so, as Eduardo Viveiros de Castro perspicaciously sees, by restoring equilibrium, the act of cannibalism would theoretically end the cycle of vengeance. In Viveiros de Castro’s words:

Against death, the Tupinambá adopted the best defense: attack. Making a virtue of necessity and a necessity of virtue, they transformed the natural given of death into a social necessity and a personal virtue: warfare vengeance was a method of instituting society. Indeed, vengeance was not made necessary *because* men die and need to be rescued from the flux of time; rather, it was necessary to die *in order that* there could be vengeance—and to die, preferably, in enemy hands. This was what Anchieta called “the handsome death,” unwittingly echoing the *kalos thanatos* of the Greeks.¹⁴

Whatever the exact mechanism, it was indubitable that the Tupí pattern of forming and reforming small mobile settlements through warfare had cosmological importance. For the Jesuits, the end of these habits of mobility and bellicosity became essential to the business of conversion. In his three short years in Piratininga, the Amerindian nucleus of São Paulo, the Jesuit José de Anchieta (1534–1597) had come to see in the itinerant habits of the Tupí one of the greatest obstacles to conversion.¹⁵ Anchieta, born in the Canary Islands, came to Brazil as part of the third wave of Jesuit missionaries in 1553. He quickly put his distinct flair for and educational background in the humanistic arts into the service of the evangelical mission, learning Old Tupí and eventually providing an orthography and grammar for the language. Among his extant works, he left a remarkable corpus of pedagogical plays in a mixture of languages, including Old Tupí, Castilian Spanish, Portuguese, and even Latin, which provided a blueprint for the emerging colonial order in Brazil.

Indeed, Anchieta's own role in the production of this order was not merely one of literary observer. He took an active part in Portuguese attempts to pacify hostile Indians, particularly those allied to the French, even serving as hostage during tense negotiations with hostile groups. The sacrifices were not without evangelical reward: after Governor Mem de Sá's brutal pacification campaigns, one of the great prizes sought and received by the society was the institution of *aldeias*, which Dauril Alden has succinctly described as "Jesuit-controlled Indian communities situated near white settlements, models of European civilization and Catholicism as well as markets for Indian-produced goods and Jesuit-supervised Indian labor."¹⁶ That settlements in the villages were enforced through coercion and physical violence is undeniable.¹⁷ However, the fact that this was not simply a project of physical confinement but one of intentional cosmological effect can be discerned from the remarkable dramatic corpus Anchieta penned for the edification of converts.

Anchieta's understanding of both the cosmology of the Tupí and the profound meaning of mobility in their culture can be gleaned from a fascinating letter detailing the natural history of São Vicente, describing in detail the climate, fish, fowl, and fauna, as well as their culinary, medicinal, and other uses. The letter also included this description of the demons that populated the forests of that land:

It is known and on everyone's lips, that there are some demons which the *Brasis* call *corupira*, which often afflict the Indians in the woods, and wound

them with whips, tormenting and killing them. Witnesses of this are our brothers who sometimes saw the dead [killed] by them. Therefore, the Indians, on a path which goes to the *sertão* through the harsh woods and steep hills, go to the top of the highest mountain, usually leaving feathers, fans, arrows, and other similar objects, begging them not to do them ill. There are others in the rivers, which are called *igpupiára*, that is, “the villagers of the water” (*moradores de água*) that similarly kill the Indians. In a river, which is near us, when the Christians went there before, they drowned many times . . . the devil wants to become feared by these *Brasis*, who ignore god, and to exercise his cruelest tyranny against them.¹⁸

What is noteworthy about this description is not so much that the missionaries believed wholeheartedly in the efficacy of these local entities or viewed them as manifestations of the Christian devil’s will. Rather, what is most particular here is the relationship to space the demons seemed to circumscribe for the Tupí. If venturing into the woods could lead to affliction, placating these spirits equally required an excursion away from the village, this time into the mountains which occupied such an important place in Tupí cosmological thought. The spirits of the rivers, Soares’s mermen whose name Anchieta intriguingly translated as *moradores de água*, resembled nothing more than villagers of an enemy village; to row upon these waters bore consequences not unlike excursions into enemy territory. In all cases, encounters with these demons were intimately associated with Tupí habits of mobility.

The *aldeia*, by ending this relationship to space, marked deep cosmological rupture. In Anchieta’s *aldeia* plays, this was turned to evangelical advantage quite explicitly. If the demons that had peopled the world of the Tupí before conversion marked their relationship to the *sertão*, Anchieta’s reimagining of these demons instead circumscribed their relationship to the *aldeia*.

One example of this reimagining can be seen in the piece Anchieta wrote in Old Tupí on the occasion of the raising of the image of the Assumption of the Virgin in Reritiba, an *aldeia* he himself founded in Espírito Santo and where he wrote much of his corpus.¹⁹ The opening dialogue took place on the road, where an angel is praying, “Come, Virgin Mary, mother of God, visit this village and expel from it the demon.” The devil in turn countered: “No, you come to remove me from the village in vain. All, in tobacco, love me and preserve me. Turn back on your path; I do not consent that you enter. Like these Amerindians of the mountain, I am here in my home and they do not

sympathize with you.” The angel remained unmoved, and referring to himself as “custodian of the village,” warned the devil of the arrival of the Virgin. The devil, in rather anticlimactic fashion, dissolved into self-pity, declaring the Virgin to be his enemy, the one who would “liberate” the land from him, and turning to his companion demons, urged that they should flee, carrying away their sins.

Variations and elaborations of this almost schematic exchange in the play Anchieta wrote for the Dia da Assunção can be found throughout his Old Tupí corpus.²⁰ While the most complex of these variations is *Na aldeia de Guaparim*, the skeletal nature of the dialogue quoted above serves to clarify the intention behind many of his works in Tupí. The angel as “custodian of the *aldeia*” approximated the role in which the Jesuits served and saw themselves with regard to the Tupí. The devil, as indicated by the reference to tobacco, central to shamanic rituals, was a particularly Tupí instantiation of the figure of Satan, a representation made incumbent by the language and setting of the performance in Reritiba. Yet, as the conspicuous absence of a Tupí human in this roadside scene indicated, the Tupí convert was no longer to encounter the demon or placate it in the *sertão*: rather he remained confined to the *aldeia*, under custodial care, while his spiritual “liberation” depended on the displacement of the demon by the arrival of Christian holy entities. The loss of agency needs no emphasis here.

These *aldeias*, far from being Amerindian villages, were crucial to the demise of their traditional forms of settlement and land use, as much so as the slave-plantation complex. One may think that this was due to a misrecognition on the part of the Portuguese of these other modes of human relations to space, as suggested by the classification of spaces with which Amerindians clearly had social relationships as natural history in Soares’s accounts. Nonetheless, Anchieta’s corpus suggests that this rupture was no accident but rather a conscious strategy of cosmological colonization.

In Anchieta’s vision, the demons at the gates of the *aldeias* were those vices associated with Tupí warrior culture which stood as the greatest obstacle to Christian civility. In *Na Vila de Guaparim*, for example, he dramatized this explicitly in the figures of the four antagonists: Añhangaçu, the great demon associated with the wandering souls of the dead, a “spirit of death [that] is a mixture of images of savagery, bellicosity, rottenness and cadaverous appearance”²¹; Tatapytéra, the one who throws flames; Kaúmondá, the thief of wine; and finally Moroupiaroêra, which translates roughly to “the old and feared enemy too accustomed to fighting.”

By contrast, the *vila* of the Portuguese was beset by the old enemy, Lucifer, who posed a rather different threat to Christian life in Brazil. One can see this best perhaps in *Na Vila de Vitória*, a play written *not* in Old Tupí but in Portuguese and Spanish around 1584–1586 and performed in the patio of the church of that Portuguese settlement. Whereas the exigencies of language and audience required a Tupí incarnation of the Christian devil and his minions in the *aldeia* of Guaparim, the devils of Vitória were of a different ilk. In the Portuguese town, the Tupí *añanga* of Guaparim were transformed (back) into Lucifer and Satan for the residents of Vitória.

The play began with a scene structurally very similar to that found in the opening conversation between the demons in the play *Na Vila de Guaparim*, who plotted to recover their supremacy in the face of Christian advances. It opened with Satan comforting Lucifer, assuring him that “With Mahoma [Prophet Muhammad] and with Luther, with Calvin and Melancthon, you will cover all with such malediction that you will burn everything entirely . . .”²² Ever boastful with the *superbia* proper to him, Satan, speaking Spanish, reminded Lucifer of his various accomplishments all over the Old World:

If you knew what I did
in Portugal and Spain!?
It is something to wonder
how, by right or wrong,
I raise so much strife!
Here I make them renege,
there I move them to swear,
some I make perjure, others to always play
to steal and kill.
My solace
is to call myself “Satan,”
the adversary of the supreme God,
the great corsair of souls,
destroyer of peace and enemy of all good.
I will stir up shortly
Asia, Africa and Europe.
Thus I will devour all people,
as burning fire
can swallow any hemp.²³

Much like Añhangaçu in Guaparim, Lucifer, replying in Portuguese, remained unconvinced of his interlocutor’s ability to win over Brazil,

reminding him dourly that while “Such exploits will you do in Germany that they will believe your lies in France and in Spain . . . in Brazil, your wiles will thrive very little.” Satan replied with apoplectic outrage:

For sure you are as subtle
as an ass with discolored loins!
You have hit the mark nicely!
Any land of Brazil
I swallow in a mouthful!
Thus, this Captaincy
called Espíritu Santo,
I give it such a battering
that, day and night,
they sin at every turn! . . .
Well these wars,
Waged throughout these lands
by those who call themselves “Christians”
against the pagan *brasíles*,
through seas, rivers and mountains,
where are they born?—From my hands.²⁴

While Añhangaçu aspired only to the specific *aldeia* on whose outskirts he lurked, the Satan of the *vila* sketched a global imperial vision, in which Brazil was only a part of his campaign. In this schema, the tribal warriors of Brazil were as much a tool in his hands as the Muslim prophet or the Protestant heretics of Europe.

Satan appeared here as a mirror and foil of Philip II of Spain, who had recently ascended the Portuguese throne after the disastrous loss of D. Sebastião in an ill-fated crusade in North Africa. Philip II, as the preeminent Catholic emperor of the age, led the charge not only against the forces of the Great Turk, but also the heretic forces represented first and foremost by the rebellious Dutch. The devils of Vitória thus reminded their audience of the larger world of which they were a part and whose Catholic character they threatened both locally and globally.²⁵

The entry of Saint Maurice, the patron saint of Vitória, prepared the way for the second pedagogical act, in which the cosmopolitan representation of the devils of Vitória was given concrete political substance. The town of Vitória, apostrophized, reminded the listeners of her storied past, she who was of “old in Brazil, [her] children and residents were always victorious, with manly effort, the swallows of the Indians.”²⁶ The governor who

encountered her, speaking in Portuguese, asked with astonishment how, being Portuguese, she spoke in Spanish. Vitória replied in Spanish that it was “because I wish to give glory to Philip, my lord, he who is always a victor. . . .” She went on to declare that she was his, “without strife, and he is my king of truth, to whom the supreme goodness wishes to give the monarchy of all Christianity.” The governor, continuing to speak in Portuguese and referring perhaps to a live debate in the town at the time, claimed that he knew that this was why Vitória’s people, “with loyal hearts,” wished to give her a new name along with a new government.²⁷ Vitória rejected his proposition emphatically, implying that such a cosmetic change was unnecessary despite the circumstances of the Spanish takeover of the Portuguese crown. In other words, Anchieta emphatically denied that the town of Vitória, as a Christian town, was in any essential way changed by the transfer of sovereignty from one Catholic monarch to another. Moreover, the vigor of Catholic civility and its ability to withstand its enemies depended upon the obedience of its subjects both to the rule of a devout Catholic king, without regard to his nationality, and to the precepts of natural law. Vitória, as the dialogue indicates, was in turmoil after the traumatic loss of Portuguese sovereignty but ultimately the disorder and weakness of the settlement was a reflection of the moral turpitude of its denizens.

The jingoistic sentiments of the Portuguese citizens were expressed by the apostrophized Ingratitude, who enters, belligerently declaring that she would never give up the bones of the martyr she held in her possession.²⁸ A Spanish-speaking ambassador then enters the scene, claiming that they had heard in Paraguay of sacred relics kept in Vitória but he found that this town had no more devotion than that which lasted through the duration of a sermon and then quickly passed from the heart.²⁹ A pitched war of words ensued in which the ambassador accused Ingratitude of typically Portuguese vanity and she in turn accused him of being a “Castilian devil.”³⁰ Eventually two companions of Saint Maurice interceded on behalf of the ambassador. Though they spoke in Spanish, despite the ambassador’s insistence, they nonetheless refused to identify themselves as being either Portuguese or Castilian but rather claimed to speak for Saint Maurice and his squadron, the “royal lieutenant, patron of this town.”³¹ The ambassador finally issued an ultimatum threatening either to take the relics over the river (to Paraguay) or to kill Ingratitude.

The companions of Saint Maurice humbled the ambassador, reminding him of the many evils perpetrated by the Spanish in Paraguay who had killed great numbers of the Guaraní unjustly and without repenting. When

Ingratitude dared to insult the ambassador, the companions turned upon her and eventually banished her, thus appeasing the ambassador. He accepted the companion's request that he remain in Vitória with their captain Maurice for the general benefit of the town.³² The Portuguese governor then returned to the scene with Vitória, rejoicing that peace had been restored by the two helpers of Saint Maurice, the Fear of God and the Love for God.

Na Vila de Vitória allegorized the need Anchieta perceived in Portuguese Brazil to set aside the political divisions caused by the Spanish takeover of the Portuguese crown.³³ As a Jesuit whose own native language was Spanish, such an argument may have appeared self-serving. However, his concern was precisely to set aside such nativist squabbles and instead to unite his listeners under a Catholic banner in order to defeat the various enemies of the Church, both locally and globally. Anchieta's Vitória was thus a model of Christian civility in Brazil, a town peopled of old by "swallowers of Indians" and a loyal part of the Catholic empire of Philip II.

It should be noted that Anchieta, with his profound lifelong dedication to the language, culture, and evangelization of his Amerindian charges, was by no means equating *all* Amerindians with the devil. Indeed, one of the criticisms leveled at the Spanish governor in *Na Vila de Vitória* is the ill-treatment of the Guaraní under their charge. This was a failure of the promise of Catholic rule in which the Amerindian convert to Christianity who accepted not only missionary but also colonial authority was to be protected as a ward. By contrast, the untamed Amerindian, autonomous and threatening, was the devil incarnate, whose domain could not be left alone but instead must be swallowed by the ever-expanding behemoth of Catholic dominion. In Anchieta's mapping of colonial Brazil, there were only two admissible forms of social space: the *aldeia* of the subjugated Amerindian, and the autonomous *vila* of the Europeans, and both were inextricably part of the global empire of the Catholic church.

THE IMPERIAL REVENGE OF THE AMERINDIAN WORLD

*[I]n the seed of the city of the just,
A malignant seed is hidden, in its turn.*³⁴

Despite the fact that Amerindians were almost entirely confined to their own shores, for European observers of the vagaries of the

Portuguese empire from the vantage point of Brazil, their indigenous antagonists were fully imbricated in the wider workings of the world. If Anchieta, as a Castilian-speaking missionary, took a particularly quietist attitude toward the captivity of the Portuguese crown by Philip II, many colonial observers recognized the loss of the crown instead as an epic tragedy.

One intriguing example of such an epic vision of the loss of imperial autonomy can be seen in the *Prosopopéia* of Bento Teixeira. Teixeira seems to have arrived in Brazil as a child, and an inquisitorial investigation for Judaizing from 1593 indicates that he was of new Christian origin. Though the facts of his life remain somewhat nebulous, this epic poem, first published in 1601, is the only work to be definitively attributed to him. The work, dedicated to the third donatary captain and governor of Pernambuco, Jorge d'Albuquerque Coelho, consisted of 94 strophes in decasyllabic rhyme, and the dedicatory preface indicated Teixeira's ambition that this was a preparatory sketch for a larger work. The influence of Luis Camões's *Os Lusíadas* on the work is apparent, not least in its mixture of classical mythology and Portuguese imperial history.³⁵

The epic opens with an exhortation to the governor to suspend "for now his high mind from the various cases of the people of Olinda" and to see the valorous exploits of his brother and himself. In the poem, Teixeira promises, he would see this bold spirit executed "upon the bodies of Lutherans/their standard torn at the feet of victorious Catholics" and also "the chivalry and great brio of the famous Albuquerque, your uncle."³⁶ This epic, therefore, like Camões's pioneering work, wove the personal history of its protagonist with a larger narrative of the glories of the Catholic Portuguese Empire.

The following section describes a gathering of Triton and other maritime divinities of classical mythology on the shores of Recife. There follows, in precise detail, a description of Recife, located:

[i]n the south, where Ursa Minor
Is seen surrounded by guards
Where the luminous Sky, most serene
And tempered has its influence;
Alongside New Lusitania,
Nature, most attentive mother,
Has ordered a port, so quiet and secure,
That harbors the curved ships.³⁷

The description, proper to the many natural histories that were sent by Europeans from Brazil and in contrast to the fanciful classicism of the previous section, continued in this historic vein. It noted, for example, the indigenous roots of the name for the harbor, indicating the ways in which Amerindian histories broke through colonial geographies:

[A] mouth broke the swollen Sea,
Which, in the language of the dark barbarians,
Is called by all Pernambuco,
From Para'na, which is Sea; Puca, rupture,
Made with the fury of this salty Sea,
Which . . . is called Cave of the Sea in our language.³⁸

The poem then moves on to the main narrative section of the poem in which Proteus sang of the glories of the Albuquerque family to the gathered divinities. Speaking in prophetic mode, he first spoke of this land where

the opulent flourishing Olinda
[would] reach the summit of a supreme state.
With a bellicose and fierce people
Its vast expanse will be populated.
It will be named New Lusitania.³⁹

Proteus then introduces the figure of Duarte Coelho, the governor's brother, whose virtues he described through a cascade of classical comparisons.⁴⁰ Beyond these formulaic encomia, however, Duarte and Jorge Albuquerque Coelho represented a crucial historical process in Brazil—the subjugation of the land and its peoples to the sole authority of the Portuguese empire and the Catholic faith:

I see the undefeated arm which threatens
The hard neck [*cerviz*] of the insolent barbarian,
Instructing in the Faith, giving hope
That good lasts forever and is present;
I see . . . it accost the French, impatient
To see it achieve victory
So capable and worthy of remembrance . . .
The beginning of their youth [*primavera*]

[they] spent wandering their province,
 Domesticating the cruel barbarians and austere people,
 with singular means.
 And before using the smooth and fierce sword,
 With a thousand ways of mild love,
 They sought to tear them from error
 And if not, to bring all to fire and iron.⁴¹

Yet, this violent process of colonization in Brazil was not without widespread and reverberating consequences. Indeed, the climactic heart of the narrative—the disastrous battle of 1578 in Alcàcer-Quibir which resulted in the loss of D. Sebastião and of Portuguese autonomy—was itself morally tied to the colonial activities of the Coelho brothers, who had later distinguished themselves in that very battle. What is intriguing is the mythological mechanism through which Bento Teixeira imagines the connection between the Amerindian world of Brazil and that fateful battlefield across the Atlantic:

For cruel Vulcan [Lémnio], from whom descended
 the barbarian, progeny and insolence,
 Seeing that Albuquerque so offended
 The people that had descended from him
 With a thousand illicit ways intends
 To mount irreparable resistance
 To the fair Jorge...⁴²

When the enraged Vulcan's machinations to shipwreck his prey failed, his revenge took on imperial rather than merely personal proportions. As the ill-fated D. Sebastião went forth to confront the Moorish armies, with the Albuquerque brothers at his side, Vulcan finally found his opportunity to avenge his Amerindian children:

But ah! invidious luck, how uncertain
 are your goods and how certain [are its] changes...
 Thus shall it happen in this battle
 To the ill-fortunate King
 To whom will prove of no worth either armored mesh
 or the shield of the workers of Vulcan.⁴³

In this epic moment of the loss of the Portuguese crown in the Moorish lands of North Africa, Vulcan fulfilled the vengeful promise, made out of injured pride and rage at the ill-treatment of his children in Brazil:

If Dite afflicts souls with cruelty
 And you, three Cyclops, with living fire,
 If Jove throws [*vibra*] [lightning] rays, irate and fierce,
 I, in the forge of the mountain, will temper them.⁴⁴

Teixeira's epic imagined, not incorrectly, an intimate relationship between the brutal colonization of the Amerindian world of coastal Brazil and the wider engagements of the Portuguese empire across the Atlantic Ocean. For the historian, therefore, his epic is more than an archival source, to be mined instrumentally. Rather, it has methodological importance, pointing us to new ways of framing and understanding the various corners of the Atlantic world. For when the city of Salvador arrived on the shores of Brazil on the ship carrying the Portuguese, it came in part to destroy the world of the Amerindians. By extension, in mapping the Atlantic world traversed by the Portuguese, we cannot forget to include these invisible cities.

NOTES

1. João Bandeira, "Vandalismo na Rosa-dos-Ventos," 21 Oct 2014, Available online: <http://www.padraodosdescobrimentos.pt/pt/2014/10/dokdo-takeshima/>.
2. For an image of the vandalized portion of the Rosa dos Ventos, see *ibid.*
3. Alison Games, "AHR Forum: Atlantic History: Definitions, Challenges and Opportunities," *American Historical Review* 11.3 (June 2006): 741–57.
4. *Ibid.*, 748.
5. Italo Calvino, *Invisible Cities*, trans. William Weaver (Orlando: Harcourt Brace & Company, 1974), 76.
6. The standard and still exemplary ethnohistorical work on the Amerindians of Brazil remains the pioneering *História dos índios no Brasil*, ed. Manuela Carneira da Cunha (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras), 1992.
7. John M. Monteiro, "The Heathen Castes of Sixteenth-Century Portuguese America: Unity, Diversity, and the Invention of the Brazilian Indians," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 80.4 (November 2000): 697–719.

8. Gabriel Soares de Sousa, *Tratado Descritivo do Brasil em 1587*, ed. Francisco Adolfo de Varnhagen (Rio de Janeiro: Typographia de João Ignacio da Silva, 1879), 172.
9. *Ibid.*, 256.
10. *Ibid.*, 276–77.
11. Susana Viegas, “Ethnography and public categories: the making of compatible agendas in contemporary anthropological practices,” *Etnográfica* 14.1 (2010): 149–50. I am grateful to Christina Toren for referring me to Viegas’s work.
12. Calvino, *Invisible Cities*, 155.
13. Florestan Fernandes, *A função social da Guerra na sociedade Tupinambá* (São Paulo: Editora da Universidade de São Paulo, 1970), 357.
14. Eduardo Viveiros de Castro, *From the Enemy’s Point of View: Humanity and Divinity in an Amazonian Society* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 286–87.
15. Anchieta to Provincial, Piratininga, end of December, 1556, in *Cartas: Correspondência Ativa e Passiva (Obras Completas, Vol. 6)*, ed. Hélio Abranches Viotti (São Paulo: Edições Loyola, 1984), 113.
16. Dauril Alden, *The Making of an Enterprise: The Society of Jesus in Portugal, its Empire and Beyond, 1540–1750* (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 1996), 73.
17. Ananya Chakravarti, “In the Language of the Land: Native Conversion in Jesuit Public Letters from Brazil and India,” *Journal of Early Modern History* 17 (2013): 517–18.
18. José de Anchieta to Diogo Laínes, São Vicente, 31 May, 1560, *Cartas*, 144–45.
19. José de Anchieta, “Dia da Assunção, quando levaram sua imagem a Reritiba,” *Poesias*, ed. Maria de Lourdes Paula Martins (São Paulo: Museu Paulista, 1954; 2nd ed, 1989), 578–85.
20. The most famous example is in the first dialogue of the *Pregação Universal*, Anchieta’s first piece and one performed repeatedly across the Brazilian littoral; however, the device is also used in the piece Anchieta penned for the occasion of the reception of the relics of the 11,000 virgins in Espírito Santo as well as that for the arrival of the Provincial Marçal Beliarde around 1587 in Guaparim. It is worth noting that this dialogue and its variations were performed in both Tupi and Portuguese.
21. Viveiros de Castro, *From the Enemy’s Point of View*, 248.
22. José de Anchieta, “Na Vila de Vitória,” *Poesia*, 782.
23. *Ibid.*, 783–84.
24. *Ibid.*, 784–85.
25. *Ibid.*, 792–94.
26. *Ibid.*, 797.
27. *Ibid.*, 798.

28. *Ibid.*, 806. This was a reference to the relics of Saint Maurice as well as of the 11,000 virgins of Saint Ursula which had been given to the town by the Portuguese court in days past.
29. *Ibid.*, 807.
30. *Ibid.*, 815.
31. *Ibid.*, 816.
32. *Ibid.*, 817–19.
33. Anchieta's enthusiasm for the Spanish king, in whose power he saw "an inestimable help for extending and propagating the religion of Christ across the length and breadth of the New World," is evident from his brief correspondence with Philip II soon after his ascension. See Antonio Rumeu de Armas, "Una carta inédita del Apostol del Brasil, Beato José de Anchieta al Rey Felipe II: La expedición de Diego Flores de Valdes al Magallanes," *Hispania* 45.159 (1985): 7.
34. Calvino, 162.
35. See Bento Teixeira, *Prosopopéia* (Lisbon, 1601), Canto X, in which Teixeira alludes explicitly and by name to Camões.
36. Teixeira, *Prosopopéia*, Canto III–IV.
37. *Ibid.*, Canto XVII.
38. *Ibid.*, Canto XIX.
39. *Ibid.*, Canto XXVI.
40. *Ibid.*, Canto XXVII.
41. *Ibid.*, Canto XXVIII, XXX.
42. *Ibid.*, Canto XLV. The moniker for Vulcan is explained in the work of the medieval commentator Remigius thus: "Vulcan is well called Lemnius . . . because *lemnius* is the name for the obscene fire of Venus [his wife], which means nothing but that Venus always dwells in dirty minds." Quoted in Jane Chance. *Medieval Mythography: From Roman North Africa to the School of Chartres, A.D. 433–1177* (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1994), 374.
43. Teixeira, *Prosopopéia*, Canto LXXI–LXXII.
44. *Ibid.*, Canto LI.

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Courtly Ceremonies and a Cultural Urban Geography of Power in the Habsburg Spanish Empire

Alejandra B. Osorio

The public celebrations that are devoted to the prince resemble political sacrifices of the Majesty whose temples are plazas and theaters. They are celebratory manifestos when the people authenticate their fidelity through joy, and to the prince is given the praise of sovereignty . . . Beloved [is] what pleases; printed [is] what is repeated; and, thus, the name of the monarch [is] pleasantly repeated, and his triumph harmoniously celebrated, in a wonderful feast of theater.¹

The global Spanish Habsburg Empire, where the sun never sets as Philip II noted in the 1580s, was a vast space with kingdoms and provinces in Asia,

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America, Europe, and Northern Africa, physically articulated through a complex web of cities, towns, and ports. Within this intricate matrix of urban spaces, a rich ceremonial life united the Habsburg world, both culturally and politically, in a common ritual grammar that borrowed from and traveled across many spaces, geographies, and times. As noted in the above epigraph by the late seventeenth-century Lima intellectual Pedro Peralta Barnuevo, this political culture was actively made in the cities and its plazas that constituted the urban theaters (or temples) for the exercise of power and endorsement of kingly legitimacy, and which were perpetuated in the annals of history in the various printings of their repeated performances. The organizing principle of this ceremonial political grammar was the Spanish king, omnipresent in his simulacra everywhere in his empire. The king's presence was deployed and present in buildings and architecture, art, ceremonies, and various objects that contained his essence: royal seal, coat of arms, official paper signed *I the King*, royal banner, royal house, and his royal portrait. Royal simulacra were always publicly displayed in elaborate ceremonies and understood to contain the king's aura and essence.² Indeed, as far as his subjects throughout his vast empire were concerned, these objects *were* the king.

Few works to date have undertaken the study of this royal presence in the imperial political culture that unified the empire across oceans and continents and its role in the creation of allegiances (or love and obedience in the parlance of the time) to a distant Spanish monarch. Studies that undertake such analysis tend to be limited by a framework closely tied to the territories of postindependence nation states, or the discrete spaces of Spain, Portugal, Naples, Mexico, Peru, and so on, often losing sight of the larger field of interactions that was the empire proper. One result of such an approach has been to reproduce a center-periphery model of cultural production where Spain (i.e., Madrid) is seen as the generator of a political culture that was later adopted and (at most) imitated in its overseas possessions.³

Scholars of the baroque have suggested that the culture that characterized the seventeenth-century Spanish world be seen as cultural *mestizaje*, or a cultural crossbreeding with elements that travelled the world, borrowing from their different points of contact and being transformed in the process into a hybrid style that defied a clear origin (or original). Along these lines, I suggest that the repetition of architectural forms and urban designs in the seventeenth century created a loosely recognizable common

material structure and spaces for the exercise of imperial rule throughout this vast composite empire. Furthermore, the repetition of a common ceremonial calendar, and forms of ritual celebrations centered on the king's body, created a cultural space that fostered common understandings of his political figure and legitimacy as ruler in the wider Spanish world. Such repetitions created an imperial political cultural grammar that over time allowed vastly distant and (presumably radically) different places and peoples to imagine themselves as equal members of a universal Spanish empire ruled from Madrid. This political culture was partly based on, and partly the result of, new technologies of empire that included the following: the deployment of royal simulacra, imbedded in an elaborate ceremonial matrix; the use of new urban patterns and the relocation of cities and populations; the creation of new centers of power; and the production and use of censuses (*padrones*), geographical surveys, maps, histories, dictionaries, as well as of royal paper, letters, and printed reports, all now classified and stored in newly established archives.⁴ Studies of the empire tend to see these technologies as later developments of the "modern" nineteenth-century British Empire. The study of the political culture of the Spanish Habsburg Empire, however, locates the onset of these modern technologies of the empire in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, as it was then that they first became necessary and were developed and implemented to rationally order and rule vast and diverse distant worldwide possessions.⁵

THE CITY AS THEATER OF ROYAL CEREMONY AND STAGE FOR THE EXERCISE OF KINGLY POWER

The Spanish Habsburg Empire was an empire of cities.⁶ Geographical space in the Spanish world was organized (and mapped) into a complex urban hierarchy of a network of cities, towns, villas, pueblos, and ports interconnected by intricate trade routes systems that facilitated the migration of peoples and of cultural exchanges from different and distant points within it.⁷ The diversity of peoples and places in the Spanish Habsburg realms were unified by the cultural connections and spaces enabled by a rich ceremonial life organized around the life cycle of the Spanish king and of his royal family. The geographical vastness of the Spanish possessions meant the Spanish king never visited most of them in person. As such, the

staging of ceremonies centered on the body of the Spanish king was an essential aspect of monarchical rule in the seventeenth-century empire.⁸ Kingly rituals were of great significance for establishing and maintaining political allegiances to the distant monarch as well as for establishing his legitimacy in his distant realms. The rich repertoire of kingly ceremonies celebrated in the seventeenth-century Spanish world included, among others, royal births, royal weddings, military victories, royal funerals or exequies and the successor's proclamation, as well as a wealth of royal patron saints' celebrations. As such, the figure of the king and the ceremonies that surrounded his body and image were important elements of a ritual or theatrical idiom of imperial rule that staged the political relationship between the distant monarch and his subjects as one of intimacy and benevolence.⁹ In short, these ceremonies created and managed a royal presence that could be seen, heard, and touched.

Seeing, hearing, and touching the king were important features of this new imperial political culture. While the royal ceremonies that commemorated the passing of one king and proclaimed the succession of another could be far less frequent than the ceremony of the royal standard, performed annually in the cities throughout the empire as an occasion for his subjects to renew their allegiance to their monarch, or the viceregal entries that took place with the arrival of each new viceroy, they were nonetheless central in the creation of allegiances and of obedience to the monarch and to establishing his authority and legitimacy.¹⁰ In all cases, the space for this royal theater was the seventeenth-century city, and the plaza became the stage for the exercise of imperial rule in the Spanish world.

The world in the seventeenth century was a theater, and city dwellers were "at once actors and audience."¹¹ The new theater-state of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was characterized by, among other things, grandiloquent ceremonies performed in the city. This new cultural manifestation, referred to in much of the literature as baroque, was primarily an urban phenomenon where the city became associated with the inner or enclosed space of the production of culture. One of the main features of this urban baroque culture was its love of ostentation reflected in luxurious modes of dress, lavish display of riches, magnificent and draped structures, and splendid ceremonies.¹² Official baroque ceremonies aimed to radically transform urban spaces, turning the city literally into a theater. In the seventeenth century, theater was used metaphorically to mean the place where something or someone was exposed to the regard

or censure of the world: the *Teatrum Publicum*. In this culture of public scrutiny, ostentation was the principal marker of status, power, and authority, and appearance became a highly regarded social value. As such, power was both made manifest and constituted through the external magnificence of these ceremonies.¹³ In general, urban centers in the empire became the power base of local ruling elites who partook and promoted new patterns and habits of consumption.¹⁴ In Europe, new urban centers of power such as Madrid and Paris gained importance and centrality as migration swelled their populations, monarchs made them the seats of their courts, and new economies grew around them. In Spain's overseas empire, the creation of new viceregal centers like Mexico City and Lima (linked to smaller cities and ports in intricate urban networks), and the unprecedented imperial project of indigenous relocation into Indian towns, manifested the new principle of rule as *civitas* or the political life lived in cities.¹⁵ This ancient but renewed concept of rule regarded the city as the place of civil life, cultural production, and political power.¹⁶ At about the same time the idea of "ritual" as a political sphere for the exercise of power was developed. The central urban space of the plaza and adjacent streets became a "stage" or baroque theater-state thought capable of "bring[ing] something into being."¹⁷ Neoplatonic theories based on the principle that "to see is to believe" lie at the heart of this theatrical political practice. Initially derived from religious liturgical grammar, that grammar had, by the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century, become a liturgy of state centered on the figure of the monarch.

The physical and symbolic center of imperial power in the seventeenth-century Spanish world was the plaza. In general, the New World plaza acquired a somewhat distinct form and function from Iberian and European plazas, since in most American cases (but also true in the Philippines) all political and religious power was physically concentrated around this urban core space. As Setha Lowe and Jesús Escobar have argued, the significance of the plaza as a center of political power in the New World preceded, in some cases, the arrival of the Spanish, as with Mexico City/Tenochtitlan.¹⁸ In others, such as Lima, the plaza's centrality was established upon its founding in 1535 when Francisco Pizarro, after allocating prime lots for the cathedral, the Royal Houses, the *Cabildo* (municipal building), and the jail, assigned the remaining plots surrounding it for the privileged residences of his fellow conquistadors.¹⁹ A similar process was followed in the case of Manila after its founding in 1571.²⁰ The plaza as the stage for royal ceremony, however, was not particular to

the New World, as these ceremonies were also performed in the plazas of European and Northern African cities of the Spanish Habsburg monarchy.

Irrespective of the origins (and shape) of the plaza, as cities had by the seventeenth century grown and become more economically and socially complex, this core space of political power was also enlarged to include streets adjacent to it, now occupied by increasing numbers of great churches, convents, commercial arcades, additional plazas, and in some cities, also the Halls of the Inquisition. This core space of power was ritually mapped on a regular basis by what was called the *pregón* or *publicación*, a slow-moving procession of luxuriously mounted city notables who accompanied the royal town crier in his public announcements of important events, always performed before the same buildings. Since this procession always traced the same space and stopped before the same official buildings, the *pregón* traced what Michel de Certeau calls a “field of operations” or an authorized space for the exercise of power.²¹ Over time, therefore, processions such as the *pregón* created an authorized space in which imperial power was exercised or “staged” and understood as such by all in the city, providing a historical genealogy of founding and imperial rule. This core space of power was clearly articulated by the slave Tomasa, who in 1668 explained to the judges of the Extirpation of Idolatry in Lima how in order to bolster her popular divinations, she conjured coca leaves invoking the “seven” devils, naming the streets adjacent to the main city square, calling aloud “the cathedral, the archbishop’s residence, the viceregal palace, the ecclesiastical chapter, the cabildo, and the gallows.”²²

This reach of monarchical power within the city (and metaphorically therefore in the larger kingdom) varied, however, from place to place and was conditioned by local circumstance. In Madrid, residence of the monarch and of his royal court, the space traversed by processions was much larger, including the streets that connected several lateral plazas, the plaza mayor, and the plaza of the royal palace, as well as their numerous surrounding buildings. In the case of Manila, on the other hand, a much smaller city than the capital of the empire, or either of the two American viceregal capitals of Mexico City (see Fig. 3.1) and Lima (see Fig. 3.2), the reach of the image (power) of the king was (somewhat) much reduced by the smaller field of operations created by these ceremonial performances as the space travelled by the processions was limited to a few blocks around the plaza mayor. As a fortress, Manila also had a more restricted and restrictive layout than either of the two viceregal capitals.²³ Furthermore, as the seat of only a Royal

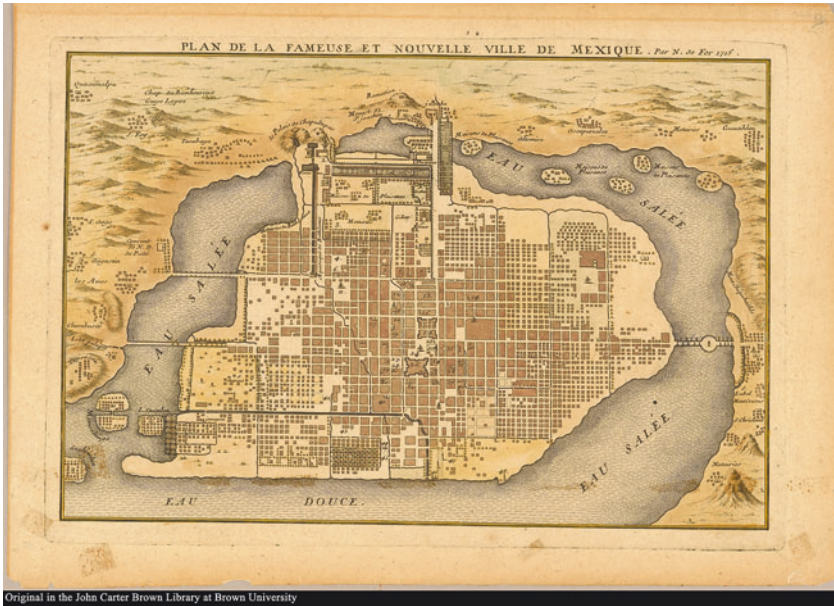


Fig. 3.1 *Plan de la Fameuse et Nouvelle Ville de Mexique par N. de Fer* [1715].
 Courtesy of the John Carter Brown Library at Brown University

Audiencia (royal court of appeals) and the Governorship of the Philippines, Manila bore a lower status, as it also had a more reduced number of Spaniards and high-ranking officials among its population than either of the viceregal capitals. Ultimately, the reach of imperial power in Manila was further restricted by the fewer resources it had to spend in these ceremonies, than those available in Mexico City or Lima, Seville or Madrid.²⁴ On the occasion of the ceremonies celebrated in Manila in 1668 commemorating Philip IV's death and his succession by Carlos II, the parish priest Francisco Deza explained that the city was unable to match the magnificence displayed for them by "the other Cities of Spain, and of the Indies," because various disasters (an earthquake, a monsoon, and the attacks from the "barbarous... Chinese king of Isla Hermosa" that had considerably reduced the Spanish population in the city to merely 15 Spaniards) had simply depleted many of its resources.²⁵

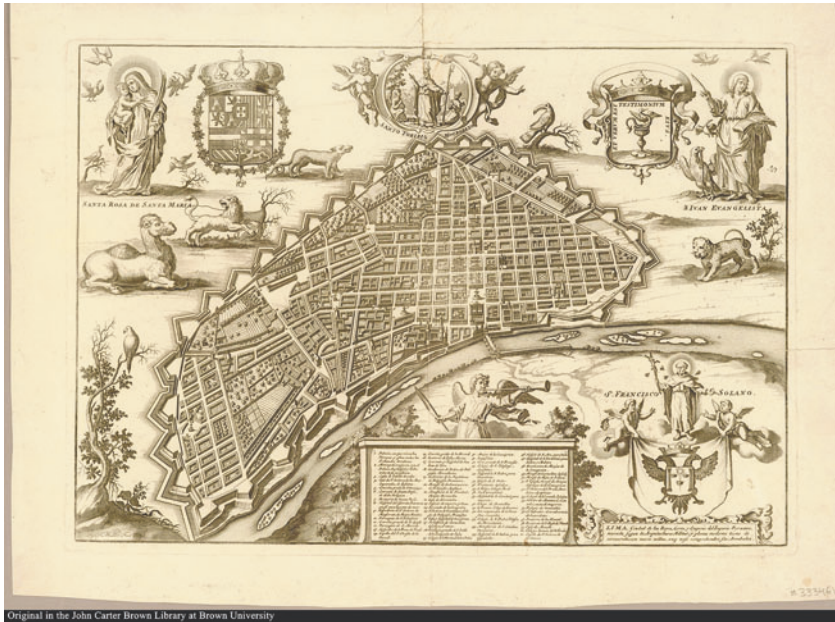


Fig. 3.2 Joseph Mulder, Plan of Lima 1688, Courtesy of the John Carter Brown Library at Brown University

In spite of these differences within the empire, the staging of these royal ceremonies was an important mechanism in the cities' self-fashioning. In the New World, viceregal capitals such as Lima and Mexico City developed and cemented their identities as the Head City (or *cabeça*) of the composite body politic or republic of their respective viceroyalties through the performance of these grandiloquent ceremonies. As I have argued elsewhere, the ceremonies of the royal Exequies and the king's proclamation constituted important currency in the production of viceregal Lima's courtly aura during the period of its dispute with the former Inca capital of Cuzco for the title of head city (capital) of the viceroyalty of Peru in the seventeenth century.²⁶ As with the case of Lima, however, cities in the empire more generally openly competed for status, favors and/or privileges, and predominance within their own jurisdictions (kingdoms, viceroyalties, provinces, and so on) as well as in the larger empire. As such, in the Italian kingdoms of Sicily and Naples cities such as Messina,

Palermo, and Naples competed with each other for royal favors and preeminence.²⁷ Likewise, Lisbon in the kingdom of Portugal, which during the union of the two crowns between 1580 and 1640 was part of the Spanish Empire, petitioned the king at least twice in that period to relocate his royal court there in the hope of replacing Madrid as seat of the monarchy and capital of the empire.²⁸ Similar competitions for royal favors, privileges, and status also took place among America cities; Tlaxcala and Puebla de los Angeles sought to replace Mexico City as viceregal capital of New Spain, and Cuzco challenged Lima as the viceregal capital of Peru.²⁹ At the core of such urban competitions were the monarch's granting privileges that increased the status and power of cities in exchange for loyalty and obedience to his royal person.³⁰ One privilege actively sought by cities throughout the empire was membership in the Cortes of Castile, the body of the 18 highest-ranking cities in the kingdom that, among other things, provided revenue to the Spanish king in exchange for privileges and status for their respective communities, privileges which were ultimately never formally granted to the cities of the New World.³¹

A crucial element in this competition for royal favor among Hapsburg cities was ceremony, as their performance and magnificence were understood to not only directly reflect the city's economic, social, and political power, but also the loyalty and obedience to the king of his subjects who staged and participated in them. This was no less true in the capital of the empire Madrid, where on the occasion of the proclamation of Carlos II in 1665, the chronicler Francisco Nieto noted how the ceremonies staged in the Villa de Madrid "if not the most populated [Court], the most gallant (*lucida*) of Europe," and in its plaza mayor, "which is the most handsome theater of the world," were meant to outshine those of any other city so as to be the first in luxury, setting the example among all others in its loyalty to the new monarch. Nieto noted further how the aldermen (*regidores*) of the villa were richly dressed for the occasion in black satin robes, the "color of sadness" for the dead king Philip IV, while their headbands encrusted with diamonds and the gold buttons and chains that adorned their robes symbolized their joy for the new king Carlos II being proclaimed. This finery in their attire showed "the finesse" as well as "the depth" of their loyalty for the king.³² Loyalty was reflected in the attires worn on these occasions as well as by the numbers of participants, and the size of the ephemera built for them (see Fig. 3.3). The central ceremony for Philip IV's Royal Exequies, celebrated in Lima in 1666, had begun when the full

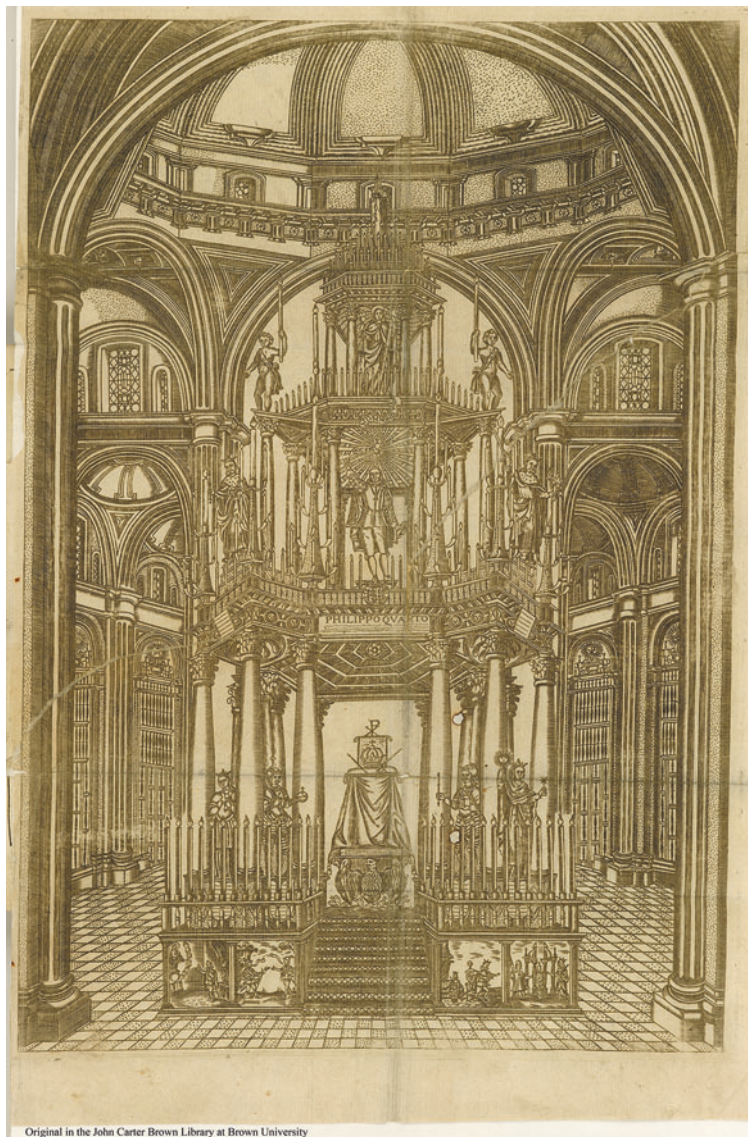


Fig. 3.3 Isidro Sariñana y Cuenca, *Llanto del Occidente*, Mexico 1666. Courtesy of the John Carter Brown Library at Brown University

community of the city's four religious orders, dressed in mourning attire and led by images of their respective patron saints, proceeded through the city streets hung with Flemish coverlets and Chinese silks to the cathedral bearing crosses. This segment of the procession was led by Archbishop Pedro de Villagómez, followed by a procession of more than 400 secular clergy in surplices, and by church prebends and cannons dressed in long taffeta cloaks. The interior of the cathedral, where stood the catafalque with a capacity to hold 3000 candles that reached the cupola of its central nave, was hung with drapings of black damask and Seville gold coins; the magnificence of the catafalque symbolized the power and grandeur of the king, the candles symbolized the fragility of life, and the black draping reflected the king's absence in his death, all which ultimately reflected the power and loyalty of Lima as officiating city.³³ Readings of royal decrees could also be surrounded by great displays of imperial power symbolizing obedience to the monarch as well as his might. In 1669, in the plaza of Mazalquivir (Al-Marsa al-Kibīr), royal decrees by the Queen Regent Mariana of Austria dealing with the expulsion of Jews from Spanish possessions in Northern Africa, were read aloud by the most senior municipal scribe (*escribano mayor del cabildo*). For this occasion, the municipal building facing the plaza was covered in "rich cloths" and a special seat and canopy were placed for the Governor and Captain General, Marquise of Los Velez. Prior to the readings of the Queen's decrees an infantry squadron and 300 mounted guards luxuriously dressed in the plaza, performed a military salute with their trumpets and "other instruments," while waving 16 flags and two royal standards to its tempo.³⁴

These performances were known to other cities in the empire through published accounts or *relaciones*, as well as letters that circulated broadly, sponsored by municipal governments, Audiencias, on occasion the viceroy, and other prominent citizens (see Fig. 3.4). They were always self-consciously written with audiences in mind who were placed well beyond the confines of their own officiating city. They often included detailed descriptions of the physical city locating the reader in space, and accounts of important events in the life of the city, thus also situating the reader in time and becoming important historical sources in the city's construction of its own constitution as an orderly republic. In some instances they also aimed at educating distant populations, such as the court in Madrid or other cities in faraway kingdoms, about their constitution, history, and degree of civility and power their city had attained and/or possessed. This was clearly articulated by Fernando de Haro in his "short book"



Original in the John Carter Brown Library at Brown University

Fig. 3.4 Solemnidad funebre y exequias a la muerte... Felipe Quarto... 1666 [Lima]. Courtesy of the John Carter Brown Library at Brown University

describing the ceremonies performed in Manila in 1712 for the proclamation of the heir to the Spanish throne, prince Luis Felipe Fernando de Borbón (vested prince in 1709). In his introduction, de Haro explicitly stated that the accounts the reader was about to find in his book would serve the dual purpose of educating him about this very distant possession, as well as dispelling any erroneous ideas he might have about the Philippines as backward and barbaric. De Haro explicitly addressed those readers “who might not have news of the City of Manila, of its greatness, authority, control (*mando*), wealth, and power (*poderío*), and who might also conceive of the cities and populations of the Indies and of the Philippines as simple [uncivilized] and poor, and filled with huts inhabited only by barbarian and ignorant men whose livelihood depends on eating human flesh, and who [in the minds of those who do not know this land] still with the blood [of that flesh] spilling out from their lips and running down their faces, [think they] take pleasure in the performance of such cruel and horrendous carnage.”³⁵ Haro ultimately hoped that reading “this truthful and short *relacion* of the elaborate ceremonies performed for the king and the description of the city in which they were performed” would serve both as a corrective to these gross misunderstandings, and stand as evidence of the city’s great love for and loyalty to its distant king (and in this case his heir) evidenced in the grandiloquence of the celebrations, reflections also of the civility of Manila and by extension of the Philippines.³⁶

The circulation among cities and officials of these printed accounts, allowed cities to compare their productions to those of other cities, providing a measure (and often models) of what might be at stake in their future stagings, particularly because, as already mentioned, these productions were thought to reflect the relative social and material wealth, degree of “civilization,” power, status, but also influence at court of the officiating city. Knowing how other cities staged their royal ceremonies was, therefore, an important element in their competition to outdo rival cities for royal favors.³⁷ This is suggested in a letter describing the ceremonies the city of Seville staged for Philip III’s death and the proclamation of his successor king Philip IV.³⁸ The letter by an unidentified author was addressed to a councilman of the city of Granada, “notifying” him of the “sumptuous” ceremonies that, for eight days, the city of Seville had performed to mark the death of Philip III and proclaim Philip IV. In his account of how the city had secured funding for these ceremonies, the author noted that the monarch’s explicit orders not to overspend in them

(which always accompanied the royal decrees announcing important events and requesting the appropriate ceremony be observed) had gone (somewhat) ignored.³⁹ Apparently, Seville had felt obliged to stage as grandiose a ceremony, including building the most *sumptuoso edificio* (opulent catafalque) with the “most attractive and of the most pleasing proportions” in the cathedral, as it had previously staged for the funeral of King Philip II, a precedent that forced the city to do no less for the Exequies of his son King Philip III. It was not only that Seville’s status as *ciudad tan insigne* (most illustrious city) required that these ceremonies be performed with outmost magnificence; it was also that, since the degree of luxury displayed in both ceremonies was a direct reflection of the greatness and virtue of their new king, the city could not spend less than it had done for past ceremonies.⁴⁰ This letter served, in the end, to put the city of Granada, itself a loyal *ciudad insigne*, on notice of what it would need to do to meet, if not surpass, the celebrations staged by Seville.

THE KING’S BODY AND ROYAL CEREMONY

The Habsburg Empire was made up of worldwide and utterly disparate composite of old principalities, kingdoms, and former empires, which had enjoyed an independent, separate existence for centuries with political institutions and traditions of their own not only in America, Asia, and Northern Africa but also in Europe.⁴¹ As noted before, due to the expanse of their dominions, the Spanish kings never visited their possessions in America, Asia, or Northern Africa; however, from the sixteenth century on their travels within Europe also became more restricted. In spite of the king’s biological absence from his dominions, the unseen king was nonetheless widely seen as the legitimate “Head” of the empire’s vast body. In the American case, historians have noted that, even as the Creole wars of independence came knocking in the early nineteenth century, this royalism of American cities persisted.⁴² I suggested elsewhere that in the case of Lima this royalism had much to do with the persuasiveness of the empire’s baroque political culture, or in the parlance of the time, its representational “machine” (*maquina*).⁴³ As it is known, in the Spanish world, political power resided in the king, evident in the Spanish political theory of the period, where the king as Head of the political body or republic constituted its driving principle, and where this principle was expressed and impressed in the elaborate ceremonials and writings that endowed his figure with an aura of sovereign power and benevolence.⁴⁴ Central to the

cultural viability of the imperial political system was the “presence” of the king in the form of simulacra.⁴⁵ From Charles V forward, a fundamental issue for the composite Spanish monarchy was how to make the monarch “present” in his many remote dominions, and in this manner unite them.⁴⁶ The deployment of the king’s simulacra was not so different from those baroque technologies of the church that reproduced and disseminated images of God Almighty, the Holy Eucharist, Jesus Christ, the Virgin Mary, the martyrs, and the saints, all enclosed in (or framed by) magnificent architecture and grandiloquent ceremonies.⁴⁷

It has been argued that, while in the seventeenth century the image (or idea) of the king was clear for a European, this was less so for a Creole or an Indian in the New World context.⁴⁸ Since the late sixteenth century, however, the clarity of the king’s image to ordinary European subjects was also increasingly mediated by simulacra. More importantly, perhaps, was the fact that this shift in the technologies of royal representation may have been linked to the political demands and lessons of imperial rule abroad. Be that as it may, from the sixteenth century on, royal ceremonies on both sides of the Atlantic increasingly privileged the king’s simulacra over his earthly biological body. The king’s invisibility was due in part to a new system of ritual life that closely resembled sacred rites and which sought to render the Spanish king more “present” in ceremonies in order to exercise his powers.⁴⁹ In addition, after Philip II established Madrid as the capital of his empire in 1561, Spanish monarchs considerably diminished their travels outside of their peninsular possessions, adopting thereafter a ceremonial style that allowed for the exercise of rule through simulacra similar to that already well established in the cities of the New World. With some exception in Madrid and certain other Castilian sites of the Spanish Habsburg royal court, in Spain itself the king became increasingly “absent” or invisible allowing him to become more powerful throughout his worldwide possessions.⁵⁰

The privileged space for the deployment of the royal simulacrum in the seventeenth century was, as previously noted, the plaza. In this public place, king and subjects often came together to celebrate and cement a political pact that bound them both in a political compromise.⁵¹ The display of the king’s simulacra (particularly his portrait but also his royal banner) in this theatrical urban space became in the seventeenth century, an important form of cultural capital for the celebrant city and its dwellers. In Madrid, the proclamation of Carlos II celebrated on October 8, 1665, took place in several plazas in the villa. The first ceremony was carried out

in the center of its plaza mayor, on a stage 5 feet in height, 30 feet in length, by 20 feet wide, with a wide staircase 12 feet in length all covered with rich carpets. The Duke of San Lúcar and of Medina de las Torres, Count of Oñate and Villa-Mediana, and Royal Postman General of Spain, carried the banner of the kingdom of Castile onto this stage accompanied by the Corregidor de la Villa, secretaries of the city council (*ayuntamiento*), and four heralds.⁵² The most senior magistrate, facing the “balconies from which his majesties witness the Fiestas” called aloud: “¡Silence, Silence, Silence! ¡Listen (*Oíd*), Listen, Listen!” to which the Duke while waving the royal standard responded: “¡Castile, Castile, Castile, for the Catholic King Don Carlos the Second; of this name, our lord, God save him!” The people on the plaza below in turn proclaimed: “¡Viva, Viva, Viva!” The discordant voices of the people proclaiming their new monarch, according to the chronicler, became harmonious in their expression of loyalty for their new king. This proclamation in the plaza mayor in Madrid was not performed before a portrait of the king, but before the aura of his body inscribed in the window (place) from which he usually watched ceremonies on the square. A portrait of the dead king Philip IV dressed in mourning was nonetheless displayed under a luxurious canopy by one of the plaza’s main gates, the *Puerta de Guadalupe*, located a few feet away from the stage used for the proclamation. The chronicler noted that, as the king’s subjects came in and out of the plaza, they gazed at this portrait of “their majesty” in bewilderment, in order to placate “the need of their eyes” to look at their beloved departed king and accept his death. Beyond this gate, the cavalcade of officials participating in the proclamation staged in the plaza mayor moved to the plaza of the royal palace, where a stage had been set up “following the model of that in the Plaza Mayor,” where the “same ceremonies as in the first were repeated.” The proclamation staged in the palace plaza, however, had been graced with the “authority of the presence of the king Carlos II,” who watched them from one of the palace balconies, making them, according to the chronicler, the “best” event of that day.⁵³

On the other side of the Atlantic, the king was also placed in the heart of the city during the proclamation ceremonies. The chronicler Roman de Herrera, noted how for the proclamation of Philip IV in Lima in 1622, the king had been “carried” by the city’s most senior alderman, Leandro de la Reynaga Salazar, from the *Cabildo* (municipal) building to a throne set for the occasion on a stage in the center of the plaza mayor. The king’s portrait, described by Herrera as a “lifelike copy of the King” (*trasunto*

vivo del Rey), had “comfortably” sat for the ceremony, on his throne placed on a stage 20 yards long, by 15 yards wide, and 2.5 yards high, richly decorated with taffetas, satins, and silks, and with a smaller one on its top, measuring 14 yards long by 8 yards wide with four Doric columns that supported the canopy under which stood his throne atop a Persian rug. His proclamation, as in Madrid, had been carried out by the most senior magistrate (*oidor*) who standing on the stage and facing the comfortably seated Philip IV, called out “¡Castile, Leon, Piru, for the King Our Lord Philip May God keep him for many years! To which, the people down on the plaza proclaimed in response: ¡Long Live the King Our Lord Philip the Fourth; May the king live for many happy years!”⁵⁴ The royal presence in Lima and Madrid sealed in the seventeenth century both of these cities’ kingly “reputations” and ranks as “Head” city of their respective republics; in the former of all other cities and towns in the Viceroyalty of Peru, and in the latter of Castile and of the wider empire.⁵⁵

KINGLY CEREMONY AND IMPERIAL LEGITIMACY

This ritual use of the body of the king in simulacra on both sides of the Atlantic during the same time period may be seen, therefore, as a logical consequence of the political challenges faced by the Spanish monarchy given the vastness (and therefore complexity), remoteness, and diversity of their empire which inevitably meant that the king could never hope to visit them all in person. To offset this impossibility, many realms were governed through the figure of the viceroy, the king’s *alter ego*.⁵⁶ The transitory figure of the viceroy as *alter ego* of the king was, however, insufficient to impress upon distant subjects the idea of a universal monarchical sovereignty above and beyond the viceregal sphere (which was, again, inevitably limited by the sheer vastness of the dominions viceroys themselves ruled over, as in the American case in New Spain and Peru, but also due to the complex nature of the figure of the viceroy himself).⁵⁷ Furthermore, in possessions such as the Philippines, a governorship part of the viceroyalty of New Spain, the absence of a viceroy altogether made this image all the more irrelevant as a venue to impress the idea of a universal monarch on his subjects.⁵⁸ One answer to this physical impossibility of rule was a ceremonial calendar centered on the king’s body, where his simulacrum contained his aura making him always present in his distant absence. In short, the shift in representational technologies for presenting the sovereign from his actual body to simulacra—almost always explained in the

historiography in terms of its internal European logic—was indispensable in the New World from the very moments of discovery and through the conquest and settlement of the American mainland, and later also central to the consolidation of Spanish rule in the Philippines.

In the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Spanish world the “sworn faith” to the king as sovereign lord entailed the obligation to assist not only with “actions and riches” but to commit one’s life to defend Him. What is significant here for our analysis is the act of “swearing” rather than the “faith.” In cities throughout the empire the oath of allegiance to the king was renewed annually at the ceremony of the Royal Standard. In the New World this was celebrated in Lima on January 18, to commemorate the city’s founding by Francisco Pizarro in 1535; in Mexico City on August 13, or the day that Tenochtitlan finally “fell” to Spanish forces lead by Hernán Cortes in 1521; and in Manila on November 30 (Saint Andrews), the day the Chinese pirate Limahong had been defeated in 1574 after nearly destroying the city and its inhabitants.⁵⁹ The oath was central in European royal entries. In 1619, on his way to Lisbon to take possession of the kingdom of Portugal after his father’s death, Philip III of Spain (Philip II of Portugal) took oaths upon entering various cities on his journey from Madrid. In Elvas, the first city he entered in the Portuguese kingdom, its officials asked the king that their old privileges be kept, that new ones be granted, and that the king be liberal in his disposition to do so. After hearing their demands, the king noncommittally thanked them for all they had said in the name of their city and kingdom, and noted that he would carry it in his memory for future reference. When Philip later entered the larger and more powerful city of Évora, however, his responses to a very similar speech and set of requests from the city’s officials was met with the monarch’s promise that he would look at their requests and grant them (*yo los mirare, i os hare merced*).⁶⁰ The king’s oath seemed to reveal an urban hierarchy in his choice of words and promises to keep and grant new *fueros* (or rights and privileges) made to the different communities he visited along his journey. These oaths closely resembled those followed by his viceroys in their entries to cities and towns in the New World, where requests made by cities were also granted or not based on whether their status merited them or not.⁶¹

The oath was also central to the King’s proclamation celebrated during the observance of a period of mourning for the dead king, and after his Exequies had been completed. In general, the royal funeral ceremonies allowed city and vassals to publicly display their grief and sorrow over the

death of their beloved king while the king's proclamation required a public affirmation of allegiance to, and love for, his successor. In short, the ceremonies marking death and succession linked in ritual time public demonstrations of grieving and celebration while also renewing a political pact throughout his empire, always cast in the language of the obligation the vassals had incurred with their king (for the favors granted by him or simply for his protection) and which needed to be repaid at the time of his death. In an account of the ceremonies celebrated by the *nacion Española* in Rome on the occasion of the death of the queen consort of Philip III, Margarita of Austria, the chronicler noted how the ceremonies marking the queen's passing were publicly undertaken to "fulfill an obligation as well as to [allow to] breathe a little and find solace in each other by crying together and communicating to each other the feelings caused by such great loss of their beloved queen," thus creating a common destiny.⁶² On the occasion of the death of the wife of Philip IV, Queen Isabel of Bourbon, the chronicler of the ceremonies celebrated in Saint Mark's royal chapel in Salamanca in 1644 began his account by recounting at length, the privileges granted to the chapel by various monarchs as a preamble to noting the "great obligations" the chapel had incurred to "serve his majesty, in repayment for the numerous and great privileges [the monarchy had] granted in the past," and continued to receive from it at present. In repayment, the chapel staged a funeral ceremony that included numerous masses, and great displays of luxury and grandeur on the day of the Exequies involving all the churches in the city and attended by all the prominent citizens of Salamanca.⁶³

Royal Exequies were exterior manifestations of both loyalty and power, and those who benefitted most from God and the king were expected would make greater demonstrations of sadness or ostentation. This sentiment was expressed in a eulogy delivered in Lima on the occasion of the Exequies of Queen Margarita of Austria by Pedro Ramírez, who argued that although all people were indebted to God, their debt was contingent on how much they had received from him, and since monarchs obtained the most, they had a larger obligation to make greater displays of grief (and so on down the hierarchy).⁶⁴ Sadness, however, much like loyalty, was not only expressed by a show of emotion, but also by a show of ostentation reflected in the size of the catafalque, the length and quality of the mourning robes, and the numbers of candles lit in the numerous masses and processions that were celebrated as part of the mourning and funeral ceremonies. For the

Exequies of Philip IV celebrated in Lima in 1666, 2031 pounds of wax were consumed in the catafalque alone, and as religious orders in the city walked into the cathedral to pay their respects by saying mass or singing a responsorial, each received 100 pounds of additional wax (100 candles of one pound each), while the rest of the parishes in the city were given 50 one-pound candles for their own ceremonies.⁶⁵ In Seville, for the Exequies of Philip III, allegedly 1600 large ceremonial candles (*bachas*) were used, close to 4000 smaller candles of half a pound each were given to clergymen and the members of religious orders, in addition to the countless white candles placed around the urn in the catafalque.⁶⁶ Candles were also used to celebrate joyful occasions, such as royal births. In 1659 in Manila 200 large candles were lit outside the royal houses during the *pregón* announcing the news of the birth of the royal heir prince Felipe Próspero. As the church bells tolling spread the happy news throughout the city and its surroundings, fires were also lit on the rooftops of city buildings, followed by fireworks that, according to the chronicler, lit up the city skies making it seem to be “on fire” akin to an eruption of the volcano Etna.⁶⁷ These rituals as such allowed vassals a space for establishing emotional ties to, and identification with, the sovereign and his city of residence, Madrid, often referenced in these accounts, while the different ceremonial garments worn by all marked the social hierarchy at work in the city, while at the same time reflecting their obedience and respect for their absent king.⁶⁸

The grammar that governed these representational technologies was from early on based on European forms and functions. Over time, however, they were also shaped and transformed by local conditions and circumstances. In the seventeenth century, in the American case, this royal presence, for example, seems to have been more dramatic in Lima than in Mexico City. In Lima the king’s proclamations in the seventeenth century coincided with interim governments of the *Real Audiencia* (royal court of appeals), which meant that there was no viceroy present in these ceremonies, allowing the king to preside over his proclamation “comfortably seated” in a luxurious throne on the stage in the plaza mayor.⁶⁹ In Lima the king’s simulacrum (his portrait), therefore, took unmediated center stage in the seventeenth century as the true and only sovereign with a direct relationship to his subjects in the city. Unfettered by the bodily presence of his *alter ego*, at these moments of political truth the king was truly present in The City of the Kings, as Lima was then also known.⁷⁰

In Mexico City during the Exequies and proclamations in the seventeenth century the presence and image of the king was, on the other hand, mediated by the presence of his alter ego the viceroy.⁷¹ In addition, the Mexico City proclamation also had a set of elaborate wooden structures, larger and more complex than the often-single stage built in the center of the Plaza Mayor in Lima. The typical torrential rains that too often flooded Mexico City created extremely muddy conditions that necessitated the introduction of structures that allowed participants to protect the very expensive garments worn for such occasions. Official ceremonies in the city from early on, therefore, included *pasadiços* or tunnel-like wooden streets built along the city streets for the numerous processions that took place during these celebrations. Alongside these (movable) *pasadiços*, bleacher-like wooden seating was also built to accommodate the attending public in an orderly manner, thus constraining their movements while watching the passing processions.⁷² It could be argued that in addition to ordering and protecting the viewing public, these structures also transformed them into a more-or-less passive and captive audience, thus further distancing the king's subjects from his image.⁷³

Staging royal ceremonies such as the royal Exequies or the king's proclamation were always expensive endeavors for the officiating city. The monarchy repeatedly attempted to curb the lavish displays of luxury and expenses these royal ceremonies required, attempts that generated an endless procession of royal decrees that came and went for the most part ignored by the cities. This noncompliance was due in part to understandings that celebrated the virtues of ostentation as fount of order, justice, and greatness of those who exhibited it.⁷⁴ Chronicles of this period all coincide in their emphasis on the social virtues of luxury, grandeur, and power characteristic of ostentation. Ostentation was also an important part of the competition of cities for royal favor, as previously mentioned, as well as part of an economy of favors that regulated all social and political relations. Cities (and individuals) across the empire often went into great (personal) debt to stage these ceremonies in the "appropriate manner required by the occasion" instructed in royal decrees. Being contingent on social and economic context and on the political needs of each officiating city, understandings of what exactly constituted "appropriate manner" varied widely throughout the empire.

The importance of the royal ceremonies in this economy of favors is evident in the actions of the city of Tlaxcala in New Spain, when it decided in 1701 to celebrate Exequies for Charles II's death and proclaim his

successor Bourbon King Philip V. In the New World, only principal cities (*cabezas de reynos y de provincias*) enjoyed the privilege to stage royal Exequies with a catafalque. Tlaxcala, a *República de Indios* (Indian Republic) considered by the monarchy to be vassals of exception (*vasallos de excepción*) did not enjoy such privilege. Nonetheless, and against legislation, Tlaxcala staged a grand ceremony to mark these events. The city's motives behind such actions were to show their love, loyalty, and gratefulness to Charles II; allegiance to the new Bourbon king Philip V, as well as press forward with their claims for representation in the Cortes of Castile—privilege they hoped would be (finally) granted by the new monarch.⁷⁵ This was also evident in the actions of Viceroy Count of La Monclova, who on the occasion of the Exequies celebrated in Lima in 1697 for the death of the Queen Mother Mariana of Austria, ignored the *Pragmática de los lutos* (royal decree regulating official mourning practices) of 1693, which strictly regulated the ceremonial to be followed in royal funerals and severely limited the amount that could be spent.⁷⁶ Notably, the king had specifically ordered that this *Pragmática* be strictly observed on this occasion. The viceroy, however, did not honor the king's wishes, arguing that the decree was “too recent” and the form of ceremony it proscribed still “too uncertain.” To circumvent the royal orders and continue with the Exequies as per custom, the viceroy personally assumed the costs of designing and building of the catafalque and of the rebuilding of the cathedral's cupola, destroyed by an earthquake earlier that year.⁷⁷ By financing this rebuilding the viceroy gained stature and power in the city, at the same time that the action allowed him to repay the many favors the king had granted him, including his appointment as Viceroy of Peru. This seems to also have been the case on the other extreme of the empire. When the news arrived in Manila in 1659 announcing the birth of the royal heir prince Felipe Próspero (born November 28, 1657), the cathedral building was still in ruins after an earthquake had nearly destroyed it in 1643. The news of the royal birth and the need of the city to celebrate it with the “required magnificence,” prompted the then-governor of the Philippines, don Sabiniano Manrique de Lara, to personally cover, in repayment for kingly privileges he had received, all expenses of the reconstruction and embellishment of the cathedral and other adjacent buildings in similar state of disrepair, in order to make them and their surrounding spaces deserving of the royal celebrations.⁷⁸ In a similar manner in 1668, the governor of the Philippines Diego Salcedo donated 4000 pesos of his own funds for the celebration of the Exequies

of Philip IV in Manila, he also provided mourning dress for the royal infantry and covered all costs of an elaborate nine-day ceremony of public worship (*novenario*) celebrated in the royal chapel of the city's cathedral.⁷⁹

Although baroque displays of wealth have often been interpreted from a purely economic rationale of cost and benefit, such calculations often ignore how these public displays of wealth and luxury by cities, benefitted officials and subjects politically (and materially). Grandiloquent ceremonies were also part of a sizable economy of conspicuous consumption that fueled commerce and production of all goods related and necessary for their performance. Nonetheless, such ceremonies have been seen as great investments in superfluous material goods that ultimately only drained the local and royal coffers.⁸⁰ Such understandings, however, ignore their many productive sides, for they not only promoted commerce and consumption, but often served as occasions for urban renewal, as well. The required grandiloquence of royal ceremonies often required that new buildings be built, old ones be refurbished, painted and fixed, streets be paved, and that the city in general be cleaned up, particularly spaces such as the plazas which on a daily basis functioned as markets in many cities. Furthermore, in places like Lima and Manila, recurrently destroyed by earthquakes, or Mexico City regularly affected by floods, or Panama City frequently destroyed by the attacks of corsairs and pirates, royal ceremonies always presented new opportunities for urban renewal. Beyond capital improvements and economic gain, however, the magnificence of the ceremony also sent a strong message to rival cities of their city's economic dominance and "social magnificence." Municipal governments fostered a collective image of their cities and built a historical "memory" of their constitution as a community through these elaborate civic rituals but also their published chronicles of such events.⁸¹ Printed accounts of royal rituals in capitals cities constituted cultural capital vis-à-vis provincial cities. They often also constituted a continuation of the performances, since their elaborate descriptions were one more monument, or a form of literary architecture erected to preserve the memory of these events.

In short, the reluctance to curb ceremonial expenses should be understood in the context of the political (and economic and material/structural) significance that these lavished ceremonies and the circulation of their printed accounts had for the creation of an imperial urban geography of power. It was through the repetition of such royal ceremonies (as also noted in the above epigraph by Peralta Barnuevo), through their similar form and with common shared understandings, that cities developed and

cemented their political cultures of *civitas* as members of the larger political body that was the Spanish Habsburg Empire. Ultimately, costly elaborate ceremonies were central to the political culture of allegiance and obedience to the Spanish Habsburg king, which, as constituted in these performances, afforded the dynasty dominion and enjoyment of a very large and profitable worldwide empire for nearly two centuries.

BAROQUE MODERNITY, THE ATLANTIC, AND THE SPANISH EMPIRE

In general, the sign “Colonial Latin America” was invented as an index of everything that is *not* modern, and it is routinely opposed to the sign “Modern Latin America.” The rise and expansion of the modern, furthermore, is always associated with the rise of the West. When the political relevance of the Spanish Empire is acknowledged, the role of Spain in the “formation of the modern spirit” is nonetheless obscured (or simply ignored) by the leading roles accorded to England, Germany, France, and Italy. Elsewhere I suggest a different narrative of modernity and empire where so-called colonial or peripheral locations like Lima, Manila, or Naples were metropolitan centers with their own spheres of influence and activity.⁸² This metropolitan modern, defined at the time as *the newly made without the authority of antiquity*, was based, more importantly, not on a deep “immemorial” (original) antiquity or past, but on seventeenth-century concepts of “greatness,” as outlined by Giovanni Botero ca. 1609, that included geographical location near navigable waters, urban magnificence, the presence of a nobility, the concentration of commercial wealth, a representative and popular heterogeneity, a cosmopolitan culture and the wide availability of luxury goods for consumption by the lower strata of society, as well as new genealogies, all which was arranged differently in the various locations of the Spanish empire.⁸³ As such, this modern was a baroque instance of modernity.⁸⁴

The Spanish American baroque has been characterized as “aggressively modern” in its endless quest for “radical renewal.”⁸⁵ William Egginton argued that “the baroque must be understood as the aesthetic counterpart to a problem of thought that is conterminous with that time in the West we have learned to call modernity, stretching from the sixteenth century to the present: the problem of appearances and the reality they purport to represent.”⁸⁶ Bradley Nelson adds that “ritual is not something rationalism leaves behind” but it is instead “at the [very] heart of rationalism and modernity’s effort to mark an ontological break with the past,”⁸⁷ while

William Childers has called for an understanding of the baroque as a “distinctive modernity”: rather than an inescapable hegemonic matrix, Childers finds a baroque public sphere that worked differently from the bourgeois public sphere predicated on the transparency of print and coffeehouses, but that nonetheless afforded venues of participation and political agency in spectacle and rumor.⁸⁸ Furthermore, for Serge Gruzinski the baroque constituted a first instance of a global cultural phenomenon (or what he terms *mondalisation*) not “born” in Europe and copied in its peripheries, but created and transformed by complex cultural, social, political, and economic exchanges that cannot be best understood within a center-periphery framework of cultural production or as a derivative colonial phenomenon.⁸⁹ Along similar lines, Roland Greene adds that “[a]s first conceived, the baroque not only spanned the world that radiated outward from ... Europe, from ... Sicily to Mexico City to Macao, but operated as one of the original cultural idioms across this world, bringing these forms and ideas back to Europe.”⁹⁰ The result of these exchanges for Serge Gruzinski produced a mestizo cultural form that took and incorporated different elements that then travelled around the world.

Irrespective of its origins, the baroque and modernity were from their inception, in my view, all about distances geographical, social, political, economic, and cultural, and the quest to breach but also rationally order those distances and differences. The challenge posed by the (effective) ruling of a vast empire in the sixteenth century gave way, in the seventeenth century, to new technologies of imperial rule (simulacrum, archives, classified royal paper, and new knowledge), and to new spaces for the exercise of political power: the urban space of theatricality of the city street and its stage, the plaza. It was in this space that political cultures got made, negotiated, transformed, and perpetuated (as this term was then understood). Furthermore, ceremonies dealing with the body of the king such as his Royal proclamation and Exequies were not mere representations of monarchical power but constituted a central instance of the actual exercise of his kingly rule. In other words, the baroque spectacle did not create *an alternative* medium, it *was* rather *the* medium *in which* politics and social and cultural issues got played out, constituted, contested, transformed, and cemented into practice. This was the case not only in Europe and its Mediterranean and Atlantic kingdoms, but extended over land and seas also to the empire’s Asian realms.⁹¹

Walter Benjamin underscored the centrality of the baroque in reconstructing an “archeology of modernity,” locating the origins (or the rupture of a linear narrative of historical writing and ways of knowing) of modernity in the twentieth-century Holocaust.⁹² The case of the Spanish Empire problematizes this understanding, however, because the extension to America and Asia of the European empire of the Spanish Habsburg produced a similar rupture to that outlined by Benjamin, as it required a new epistemology: the invention of new practices of political rule, of newly made knowledge which was then modern. Understandings of this rupture in history and modernity cannot be best achieved, however, within a framework that anachronistically limits its scope of operations geographically or otherwise.

Joyce Chaplin has noted that while “the field of [British] Atlantic history has encouraged us to connect nations, peoples, and events,” it has yet to fulfill “its genuinely exciting promise to change the field,” because rather than raising new questions or introducing new methodologies, the idea of the Atlantic has simply “repackage[d] very old issues as imperial governance, maritime commerce, long distance migration, and transplantation of Old World cultures,” all which are furthermore, still “situated firmly within a national historiography and geography.”⁹³ In the case of the Spanish Habsburg Empire, with possessions located well beyond the Atlantic, this critique is not only valid, but it should also be added that a framework that privileges the Atlantic as the category of analysis (be it circum-, trans-, or cis-Atlantic) can only hope to tell at best half of its complex story, limiting how this first modern empire can be imagined and conceptualized.⁹⁴ It should be emphasized that the Spanish Habsburg Empire was a composite of various political bodies, with pre-existing political institutions and traditions of their own, which shaped and conditioned social, political, economic and cultural relations among all the different hierarchically ordered jurisdictions in complex *nonlinear* ways. The imperial relationship between these various hierarchical entities within the Spanish empire is best described “[as] a composite rule condition by an unequal *interdependence* among . . . hierarchically ordered metropolitan centers,”⁹⁵ rather than by the often-cited characterization of empire as “a relationship, formal or informal, in which one state controls the effective political sovereignty of another political society.”⁹⁶ As such, and perhaps more importantly, the notion of the Atlantic or of an Atlantic world has yet to propose the alternatives for writing the history of this empire that—throughout the seventeenth century at least—*had yet to become colonial*.

In an *American Historical Review* Forum article in 2006 Alison Games suggested that one of the more fruitful approaches to the study of the Atlantic World is that proposed by the concept of the circum-Atlantic or “the study of a large geographic region [encompassing] the four continents that surround the Atlantic Ocean and the people contained therein.” She argues further that “tracing products and people within the Atlantic introduces us to the rich and varied world that the region contained and suggests ways in which the region emerges as a logical unit of analysis, providing a geographic space, for a fixed period of time, within which we can understand processes and transformations that otherwise might remain inexplicable.”⁹⁷ Building on this argument, I would suggest the perhaps obvious point that an “Atlantic geographic region”—if there was such a thing—in the seventeenth century did not stop on the edges of the Pacific coast of America but continued through the waters of the South Sea (Mar del Sur) traversed annually by the Manila galleons (among many others), and onto the lands of those islands under Spanish control on the other side of this space inhabited by various maritime civilizations (to paraphrase Braudel in his description of the Mediterranean Sea). And perhaps the not so obvious: that the composite hierarchical jurisdictional organization of this vast space forces the rethinking of geography, place, and space, and of time in non-linear ways, all which also requires a new language to write this history. For colony is not synonymous with kingdom or province, colonial does not translate into viceregal, and New World does not imply periphery, in simple seamless and ahistorical linear ways. A notion of a circum-Atlantic or Atlantic *qua* region that would come closer to explaining the seventeenth-century Spanish Hapsburg Empire needs, therefore, to include not only distant Pacific locations such as Spanish Manila, but also a broader conceptual framework and vocabulary than simply “tracing peoples and products.” Finally, a “logical unit of analysis” (again, if there is such a thing) can only emerge when people and products are inserted in the larger framework of the political culture (broadly defined) that made these distant possessions full members of the large body politic that was the seventeenth-century Spanish Hapsburg Empire.

NOTES

1. Pedro Peralta Barnuevo, *Imagen politica del gobierno del Excmo. Senor D. Diego Ladron de Guevara: del consejo de S.M. En Lima: Por Geronimo de Contreras, Impressor real, año de 1714*, 46–47, The John Carter Brown

Library (JCBL), Brown University. All translations, unless otherwise indicated, are mine.

2. Alejandra B. Osorio, "The King in Lima: Simulacra, Ritual and Rule in Seventeenth-Century Peru," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 84.3 (August 2004): 447–74.
3. See for example David García Hernán, ed., *La historia sin complejos: La nueva visión del Imperio Español (estudios en honor de John H. Elliott)* (Madrid: Actas, 2010); and Pedro Cardim, et. al., *Polycentric Monarchies: How did Early Modern Spain and Portugal Achieve and Maintain a Global Hegemony?* (Portland, OR: Sussex Academic Press, 2012), recent works that, while promising new understandings for studying the Spanish empire, are unable to escape the nation state framework, and empires made up of original centers and derivative peripheries.
4. For relocation of cities in Europe by the Habsburg, see Peter Arnade, "Carthage or Jerusalem? Princely Violence and the Spatial Transformation of Medieval into the Early Modern City," *Journal of Urban History* 39.4 (2013): 726–48; on archives and new forms of writing and memory, Fernando Bouza's *Corre manuscrito: Una Historia Cultural del Siglo de Oro* (Madrid: Marcial Pons Historia, 2001) and *Communication, Knowledge, and Memory in Early Modern Spain*, trans. Sonia López and Miguel Agnew, foreword by Roger Chartier (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999).
5. On the modernity of the British Empire, see for example Thomas Richards, *The Imperial Archive: Knowledge and the Fantasy of Empire* (London and New York: Verso, 1993), and David Cannadine, *Ornamentalism: How the British Saw Their Empire* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2001).
6. Richard Kagan, *Urban Images of the Hispanic World, 1493–1793* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2000).
7. Rolando Mellafe, "The Importance of Migration in the Viceroyalty of Peru" (Santiago, Chile: Centro de Investigaciones de Historia de América, UCH, 1968).
8. J. H. Elliott, *Spain and Its World 1500–1700* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1989).
9. Alejandra B. Osorio, *Inventing Lima: Baroque Modernity in Peru's South Sea Metropolis* (New York: Palgrave, 2008), 81–102.
10. The viceroy's term in office was three years. Due to the cost of travel and the distances of many viceroyalties, many viceroys served longer terms in office. New World viceroyalties were also vast. New Spain included all of the southwestern United States and Florida, the nation of Mexico, all of Central America, except for Panama, the Caribbean Islands and the Philippines; that of Peru included Panama, and all of South America, except

- for a smaller section of what is Brazil and the Guiana's today, as result few viceroys ever visited their full territories; Osorio, *Inventing Lima*, 57–79, and Appendix 1. See also Tamar Herzog, “La presencia ausente: El virrey desde la perspectiva de las elites locales (Audiencia de Quito, 1670–1747),” in *Monarquía, imperio y pueblos en la España moderna*, ed. Pablo Fernández Albaladejo (Alicante: Universidad de Alicante, 1997), 819–26; Alejandro Cañeque, *The King's Living Image: The Culture and Politics of Viceregal Power in Colonial Mexico* (New York: Routledge, 2004); and Gabriel Guarino, *Representing the King's Splendor: Communication and Reception of Symbolic Forms of Power in Viceregal Naples* (Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 2011).
11. J. B. Jackson, *The Necessity for Ruins and Other Topics* (Amherst, MA: The University of Massachusetts Press, 1980), 67.
 12. José Antonio Maravall, *Culture of the Baroque: Analysis of a Historical Structure* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986), 104–25.
 13. Richard Sennett, *The Fall of Public Man* (New York: Norton, 1974), 3–5 and 12–88; and Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1984).
 14. Cátia Antunes, *Globalisation in the Early Modern Period: The Economic Relationship between Amsterdam and Lisbon, 1640–1705* (Amsterdam: Aksant, 2004); Daviken Studnicki-Gizbert, *A Nation Upon the Ocean Sea: Portugal's Atlantic Diaspora and the Crisis of the Spanish Empire, 1492–1640* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007); and Arnold J. Bauer, *Goods, Power, History: Latin America's Material Culture* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2001).
 15. Anthony Pagden, *Lords of All the World: Ideologies of Empire in Spain, Britain, and France, ca. 1500–c. 1800* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1995), 11–28, 44–45.
 16. Giovanni Botero, *The Greatness of Cities (1606)*, trans. Robert Peterson (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1956), bk. I, 230–36.
 17. Edward Muir, *Ritual in Early Modern Europe* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 7. This played on familiar liturgical ceremonies, where Christ was physically present in the host. See also Roy Strong, *Art and Power: Renaissance Festival 1450–1650* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984).
 18. Setha Lowe, *On the Plaza: The Politics of Public Space and Culture* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2000); Jesús Escobar, *The Plaza Mayor and the Shaping of Baroque Madrid* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003); and Logan Wagner, Hal Box, Susan Kline Morehead, *Ancient Origins of the Mexican Plaza* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2013).
 19. Osorio, *Inventing Lima*, 1–34.

20. Miguel López de Legazpi founded Manila on June 24, 1571, day of Saint John the Baptist, as "Head City of all others conquered and to be conquered in these lands." In 1596 the king granted the city of Manila the title of "Noble and always Loyal with the privileges enjoyed by Cities Heads of Kingdoms," and a Coat of Arms. P. Pedro Murillo Velarde, *Geographia historica, de las Islas Philipinas, del Africa, y de sus Islas adyacentes. Tomo VIII. En Madrid. En la oficina de D. Gabriel Ramirez. Año de M. DCC. LII*, 51–52, Biblioteca Nacional de España (BNE), Madrid, Spain; and María Dolores Elizalde Pérez-Grueso, "Sentido y rentabilidad: Filipinas en el marco del Imperio español," in *Imperios y Naciones en el Pacífico*, ed. María Dolores Elizalde, Josep M. Fradera and Luis Alonso (Madrid: CSIC, 2001), vol. 1, 46–53.
21. Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, trans. Steven Rendall (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 122–24.
22. Archivo Arzobispal de Lima (AAL), Section Hechicerías e Idolatrías (HI) 1668, bundle 7, doc. 6, f. 18, Lima, Peru.
23. See *Aclamacion real, y pública, de la coronada villa, y corte de Madrid; en cuyo nombre leuanto el Pendon de Castilla el... Duque de San Lucar... por su Augusto, y Catolico Rey Carlos II [1665]*, BNE; and *Prensados fastos, descriptivos mapas... nacimiento... Phelipe Prospero... Manila [1660]*, BNE. For an illustration that we were unable to reproduce here, see *Descripción geométrica de la ciudad y circunvalación de Manila y de sus arrabales al Consejo de las Indias. Por... Fray Ignacio Muñoz... Año, 1671* in the Ministerio de Educación, Cultura y Deporte. Archivo General de Indias, MP-Filipinas, 10.
24. See Francisco Moya y Torres, *Lealtad empenada finesa de amor y bizarria... Manila... festiva aclamaciones... del Rey... Don Carlos Segundo... 1678*, BNE.
25. *Cenotaphio real de la Catholica magestad de Philippo Quarto... Y del aplauso... con que celebraron la... Aclamacion... [de] Carlos Segundo... Escriuiola... Francisco Deza... En Manila... 1668*, The Lilly Library (LL), Indiana University at Bloomington, Indiana.
26. Osorio, *Inventing Lima*, 1–55.
27. See Marc Antonio Sestini, *La felicità caduuta, la costanza affinata, la repubblica disordinata. Dialoghi... In Perugia... MDCXLVII*, BNE.
28. Fernando Bouza, *Imagen y propaganda: Capítulos de historia cultural del reinado de Felipe II* (Madrid: Akal, 1998), 109–20.
29. See Jovita Baber, "Empire, Indians and the Negotiation of Status of City in Tlaxcala 1521–1550," in *Negotiation with Domination: New Spain's Indian Pueblos Confront the Spanish State*, eds. Ethelia Ruiz Medrano and Susan Kellogg (Bolder, CO: University Press of Colorado, 2010), 19–44; Alejandro González Acosta, *Crespiones y campanas Tlaxcaltecas en 1701* (Mexico City: UNAM, 2000); Osorio, *Inventing Lima*, 35–56.

30. *Dichiaratione del nuovo theatro che l'Illustrissimo Senato di questa ... città di Palermo drizzò alla Invitissima Maestà del Re Filippo IV... nella Piazza del Palazzo Reale ... Composta dal...D. Francesco Angelo strada...In Palermo... 1663*, BNE.
31. Juan Manuel Carretero Zamora, *Cortes, monarquía, ciudades: Las Cortes de Castilla a comienzos de la época moderna (1476–1515)* (Madrid: Siglo XXI, 1988); Ruth Mackay, *The Limits of Royal Authority: Resistance and Obedience in Seventeenth-Century Castile* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 10–15, 21–32; Guillermo Lohmann Villena, “Las Cortes en Indias,” *Anuarios de Estudios del Derecho Español* XVIII, no. 1, ser. 1 (1947): 655–62; Osorio, *Inventing Lima*, 45–46, 49–53, and 149.
32. *Aclamacion real, y pública... Madrid... Carlos II... [1665]*, BNE.
33. *Solemnidad funebre i exequias a la muerte del...Rei... Felipe IV... que celebro...la Real Audiencia de Lima...con licencia...año de 1666*, BNE.
34. *Breve relacion y compendioso epitome de la general expulsion de los hebreos de la Iuderia de la ciudad de Orán...* [Luis Joseph de Sotomayor y Valenzuela, 1670], ff. 15r–16, BNE. See also, Gregorio Sánchez Doncel, *Presencia de España en Orán, 1509–1792* (Salamanca: Kadmos, 1991).
35. Fernando de Haro, *Relacion de las aclamaciones festivas... Manila... Luis Felipe Fernando de Borbon... en Mexico... 1713*; see also Moya y Torres, *Lealtad empanada... Manila... Carlos Segundo... 1678*, Biblioteca Nacional de Chile (BNC), Santiago, Chile.
36. Haro, *Relacion de las Acclamaciones*, BNC.
37. See Gasparo Reggio, *Descrizione della felicissima citta di Palermo... descritta da Gasparo Reggio... 1599*, Real Biblioteca del Palacio Real de Madrid (RBPRM), Madrid, Spain.
38. The ceremonies took place in June, but no year is given. Philip III died on March 31, 1621, in Madrid.
39. These royal decrees were sent from Madrid to all the head cities of each kingdom in the empire. Head cities in turn sent copies to every provincial city under their respective jurisdictions, recording every time in hierarchical order each place where they were sent. See, for example, *Relacion verdadera, de la cedvla y carta que el Rey Don Felipe Quarto... embio... a ... Granada, en la qual... manda haga esta Ciudad para demostracion de la... muerte [Felipe III]... Impresa en Granada... 1621*, BNE; and Archivo General de Indias (AGI), Indiferente 430, L. 40, “El Rey, al virrey y audiencia, 25 de noviembre de 1675,” ff. 393–393r and “Al Duque de Berlanga, 25 de noviembre de 1675,” f. 417, Seville, Spain.
40. *Copia de la Carta, qve se escrivio a vn Veintiquatro de Granada, auisandole de los tres sumptuosos actos, que por espacio de ocho dias hizo la muy noble y muy leal ciudad de Senilla*, BNE.

41. John H. Elliott, "A Europe of Composite Monarchies," *Past and Present* 137 (November, 1992): 48–71.
42. Jaime E. Rodríguez O., *The Independence of Spanish America* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 1–35.
43. Osorio, *Inventing Lima*, 32, 73, 83, 95, 103–04, 109, 115, 117, 119, 142, 147–48, 150, 157.
44. See Diego de Tovar Valderrama, *Instituciones políticas: Alcalá de Henares, 1645*, ed. José Luis Bermejo Cabrero (Madrid: Centro de Estudios Constitucionales, 1995); and Ernst Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies: A Study in Medieval Political Theology* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1981).
45. This was a medieval political notion established in the *Las Siete Partidas del Rey Don Alfonso X [ca. 1265]*; see partida II, título I, ley V.
46. Xavier Gil-Pujol, "Una cultura cortesana provincial: patria, comunicación y lenguaje en la monarquía hispánica de los Austrias," in *Monarquía, imperio y pueblos en la España moderna*, ed., Pablo Fernández Albaladejo (Alicante, Spain: Universidad de Alicante, 1997), 232–33.
47. Fernando R. de la Flor, *Barroco: Representación e ideología en el mundo hispánico (1580–1680)* (Madrid: Cátedra, 2002).
48. Marcello Carmagnani, Alicia Hernández and Ruggiero Romano, *Para una historia de América I. Las estructuras* (Mexico City: El Colegio de México-Fideicomiso Historia de las Américas-Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1999).
49. Carmelo Lisón Tolosana, *La imagen del rey: Monarquía, realeza y poder ritual en la Casa de los Austrias* (Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1991); and María José del Río Barredo, *Madrid Urbs Regia: La capital ceremonial de la Monarquía Católica* (Madrid: Marcial Pons, 2000).
50. Carmelo Lisón Tolosana, *La imagen del rey: Monarquía, realeza y poder ritual en la Casa de los Austrias* (Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1991).
51. Antonio Anino, Luís Castro Leiva, and François-Xavier Guerra, *De los imperios a las naciones: Iberoamérica* (Zaragoza, Spain: Ibercaja, 1994).
52. The Corregidor was the chief royal agent in the city, presiding over city council meetings, and also acting as an appeals magistrate.
53. *Aclamacion real, y pública . . . Madrid . . . Carlos II . . . [1665]*, BNE. Carlos II was three years old at the time. His mother Queen Mariana of Austria ruled as regent until he became 14, the legal age for young Carlos to rule, however, due to his poor health, Mariana remained influential in the court until her death in 1696. For the announcement sent to the kingdoms and provinces of the king's having reached his legal age to rule, see AGI, Indiferente 430, L. 41, "El Rey, al virrey y audiencia, 25 de noviembre de 1675, ff. 393–393r and "Al Duque de Berlanga," 25 de noviembre de 1675," f. 417.

54. Osorio, "The King in Lima," 447–48, 467–70. The portrait of the king also graced his proclamation in Manila plaza; see *Cenotaphio real de la Catholica magestad de Philippo Quarto... Manila... 1668*, f. 12, LL.
55. See *Ibid.*; Río Barredo, *Madrid Urbs Regia*, 124.
56. The kingdoms ruled by viceroys in the seventeenth century included Brazil (1640), Cataluña, Goa (1580–1640), Mallorca, Naples, Navarra, New Spain, Portugal (1580–1640), Peru, Sardinia, Sicily, and Valencia. See Pedro Cardim and Joan-Lluís Palos, *El mundo de los virreyes en las monarquías de España y Portugal* (Madrid: Iberoamericana, 2012).
57. See Guarino, *Representing the King's Splendor*; Bouza, *Imagen y propaganda*, 33; Alejandra B. Osorio, "La entrada del virrey y el ejercicio del poder en la Lima del siglo XVII," *Historia Mexicana* LV, no. 3 (enero-marzo 2006): 809–13.
58. The Audiencia of Manila was established by Philip II in 1583, with a jurisdiction that included "the Island of Luson, the rest of the Philippines, the Archipelago of China, and the mainland of it, discovered and yet to be discovered." See *Recopilación de las leyes de los reynos de las Yndias (1681)*, libro II, título XV, ley xj. The governorship of the Philippines was under the jurisdiction of the Viceroyalty of New Spain, as already mentioned. For the Northern African possessions of Mazalquivir and Oran, see Beatriz Alonso Acero, *Oran-Mazalquivir, 1589–1639: Una sociedad española en la frontera de Berbería* (Madrid: CSIC, 2000).
59. On August 13, 1528, the newly founded City of Mexico celebrated for the first time the Feast of San Hipólito, commemorating the taking of Tenochtitlan by Spanish forces in 1521. This was the first ceremony performed using the Royal standard in what thereafter became an annual ceremony. The ceremony of the Royal standard was one of several such events used to create a geography of imperial power in the city. See Francisco Cervantes de Salazar, *México en 1554 y tumulto imperial* (Mexico City: Editorial Porrúa, 1978), 34; for Manila, see Murillo Velarde, *Geographia historica*, 42–43, BNE.
60. Ioan Baptista Lavaña, *Viage de la Catholica Real Magestad del Rei D. Felipe III N.S. al Reino de Portvgal... Madrid Por Thomas Iunti Impressor del Rei... M.DC.XXII*, ff. 3, 5r, BNE.
61. See Osorio, "La entrada del virrey," 769–70, 778–79, 807–09.
62. *Relacion de las honras que la naçion española hizo en Roma ala... Reyna... Margarita de Austria*, BNE.
63. *Honras que la capilla real de San Marcos... de Salamanca celebro a la... Reyna... Ysabel de Borbon... M.DC.XLIII*, BNE.
64. *Fray Pedro Ramirez, Sermon que el Padre... Pedro Ramirez... predico en las exequias que... [el] Marques de Montesclaros, Virrey del Piru, hizo en la muerte de la... Reyna... Margarita de Austria... Lima... 1613*, BNC.

65. Josephe Mugaburu, *Chronicle of Colonial Lima: The Diary of Josephe and Francisco Mugaburu, 1640–1697* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1975), 102–05.
66. *Copia de Carta, que se escrivio a vn veintiquatro de Granada, auisandole de los tres sumptuosos actos, que por espacio de ocho dias hizo la... ciudad de Seuilla*, BNE.
67. *Prensados fastos... Phelipe Prospero... Manila... [1660]*, ff. 4–4r, BNE.
68. This royal presence and emotional identification was repeated in other contexts such as the numerous religious celebrations that took place throughout the empire. See for example, *Relacion festiva, pompa solemne... con que la... Ciudad de Manila Metropoli de las Islas Philipinas celebra... obediente al mandato del Rey N.S. Philipo IIII... la... fiesta del Patrocinio de la Virgen... Joseph Millan... Manila [1658]*, BNE; and *Descripcion de los altares, colgaduras... de la coronada Villa de Madrid... en las calles, y plaças... a honor del Santo Rey Don Fernando, asistiendo a verlas sus Magestades... en... la Plaza Mayor, [1671]*, BNE.
69. See for example, Archivo Histórico Municipal de Lima (AHML), Cédulas y Provisiones, book 3, part 2, *Relacion de la solemnidad y fiestas... en el nombre del Rey nuestro Señor Felipe quarto... [Lima, 1621]*, Lima, Peru.
70. Osorio, “The King in Lima.”
71. See Linda Curcio-Nage, *The Great Festivals of Mexico City: Performing Power and Identity* (New Mexico: University of New Mexico Press, 2004).
72. JCBL, *Llanto del occidente... exequias del Rey... Felipe IIII... en la... Yglesia metropolitana de Mexico... escribelas... Isidro Sarinana... Mexico... 1666*, f. 98r, 133r.
73. See Strong, *Art and Power*; and Paul Friedland, *Political Actors: Representative Bodies & Theatricality in the Age of the French Revolution* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2002), 53–4.
74. See Diego de Saavedra y Fajardo, *Idea de un príncipe político-cristiano representada en cien empresas* (Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1945), 21, 31.
75. Gonzalez Acosta, *Crespones y campanas*. As previously noted, this right was ultimately never granted to the city.
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Pirates, Politicians, and Urban Intellectuals: Toward a Cultural History of the Atlantic Frontier

R. Malcolm Smuts

In 1579 Thomas Churchyard published verses celebrating a recent voyage of discovery led by Sir Humphrey Gilbert as a chivalric adventure:

I marveled how this knight could leave his lady here,
His friends and pretty tender babes that he did hold so dear
And take him to the seas where daily dangers are.
Then weighed I how immortal fame was more than worldly care;
And where great mind remains, the body's rest is small.

But Gilbert not only explored, he also initiated commercial relations with the rude inhabitants of a distant shore, so that Englishmen might “traffic there, where never yet was trade.” This made him what we now call a job creator:

Perhaps in idle days you would set men a' work,
And call them to account in haste that close in corners lurk:
And ask in open place how they would spend their time.

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He drew mariners into his pursuit of adventure and profit, so that “for wealth and fame, / They fare along the seas,” enduring constant toil, bad food, and the risk of shipwreck for the sake of self-advancement and England’s greater good.¹

This poem encapsulates how, in celebrating Atlantic voyages, Elizabethan writers drew simultaneously on medieval concepts of knight errantry, an unapologetic profit motive, and the hope that expanding trade exploration would generate employment and promote social stability. These aspirations shaded off into Christian humanist ideas about combatting the debilitating moral effects of idleness. Creating wealth through physical and mental toil was a Christian duty, Churchyard asserted in another tract, a matter of “redeeming of time that our ancestors have lost (and gaining of knowledge that makes our posterity both rich and honorable),” while making “the barren ground fruitful and the idle people to become laborious.”² When work involved danger it also demonstrated a masculine “invincible courage and fortitude of the mind”; and when it spread Christianity it saved souls. Churchyard thought Englishmen fully entitled to gain “great wealth” from the labors of New World natives, in exchange for “manifesting God’s mighty word and majesty among those that feed like monsters [and] rather live like dogs than men.”³

But do the words of a writer toiling at his desk, removed from both the dangers of life at sea and the financial risks taken by investors in Atlantic projects, tell us anything significant about the motives of those who participated in or patronized oceanic ventures? Recent scholarship has tended to treat early literature about the Atlantic as a separate subject from actual voyages. A minor academic industry has developed around the writings of Richard Hakluyt the younger,⁴ while several monographs have appeared on individual sea captains,⁵ but these bodies of scholarship have mostly remained separate from each other. This essay explores how we might begin to construct a more holistic approach by focusing on relationships between the maritime communities that sailed and equipped ships, the sponsors of privateering and exploration, and the scholars, writers, mathematicians, and cartographers who gathered and codified information about the ocean and its distant shores.

This will involve a kind of cultural history that perhaps requires an initial word of explanation. I define culture broadly, as the totality of forms that people develop and share with others. It is therefore embodied not only in texts, representations, and symbolic rituals but practical tools,

acquired skills, habits of thought and action, and bodies of knowledge characteristic of particular societies or groups. Since all tools and knowledge are culturally constructed, the processes through which they are constructed and disseminated require serious attention from cultural historians. And as recent work in the history of science has shown, this in turn requires that we pay attention not just to intellectual and aesthetic processes but to social, economic, and political motivations and conditions that shaped how new discoveries were made, and theories and methodologies formulated.⁶ Atlantic exploration, I will argue, was a highly collaborative enterprise, requiring the active participation of people who differed widely in their material interests, daily experiences, and educational backgrounds, and thus to a considerable degree also in their culture. It therefore required exchanges, not only between the Europeans and inhabitants of distant parts of the world, but between different groups and subcultures within English society.⁷ This chapter attempts to identify these groups and briefly examine how they came to work together during the earliest phase of English expansion into the Atlantic world, before 1600.

Port towns and cities will emerge as nodal points for the collection of information and mobilization of resources that drove the process of opening the Atlantic forward. This chapter therefore also examines urban history, although again in an unconventional way. It will have little to say about developments within individual cities, since its main concern is with the early stages of a process that gave rise to trans-Atlantic commercial networks that were largely organized through urban ports and institutions, even when their influence extended far beyond nucleated settlements. Our definition of urban culture needs to include things like port facilities, letters of exchange, and the methods through which merchant factors evaluated the potential profits to be made through new forms of trade, since all of these things were essentially creations of cities, even when they affected regions with few or no towns.

I

Early modern seas were frontier regions, places of loose or nonexistent government traversed by shipboard communities possessing their own customs and rough codes of justice. Like other frontiers they appear on maps as open spaces, although in reality sailors normally traversed them along set pathways determined by winds, currents, and the location of

islands where ships replenished supplies. These pathways needed to be mastered in detail, down to the location of shoals, currents, and local weather conditions that might endanger a ship as it approached an anchorage. In the sixteenth century improved maps and sea charts, along with navigational instruments like the compass and sextant, began to reduce the hazards of voyages through unfamiliar seas. But using these tools required an understanding of astronomy and Euclidean geometry, which even educated people did not always possess, since these disciplines were not yet part of the standard school curriculum. In addition many coasts remained unmapped or recorded only in unpublished charts. A good pilot familiar with local conditions was therefore indispensable, and when venturing into unfamiliar waters captains would sometimes try to kidnap one, as Drake did to the Portuguese Nuño de Silva off the coast of South America in 1578. Drake also captured maps revealing previously secret Spanish routes in the Pacific.⁸

But however much they ventured into mysterious distant seas, mariners ultimately remained dependent on a supporting infrastructure on land, almost always centered in Atlantic ports. These had many characteristics of frontier outposts, including rough drinking establishments, brothels where sailors relaxed between voyages, and numerous businesses involved in outfitting voyages and selling the goods they brought back. Many port economies supported significant numbers of foreign nationals, reflecting their ties to places across maritime frontiers. Such transplants included factors who managed the commercial interests of overseas merchants and sailors on temporary shore leave, as well as tradesmen and craftsmen. A network of Jewish families controlled much of the sugar trade between Europe and America from bases in Lisbon, Amsterdam, London, and Brazil, while a larger and more heterogeneous diaspora of Scots spread through the North Sea and Baltic regions, working as merchants, sailors, soldiers, and itinerant salesmen (the Polish word for a Scot also meant a peddler).⁹ English merchant factors similarly resided in ports from Archangel to Crete. The sixteenth century's wars of religion created new diasporas.¹⁰ By the 1590s nearly a third of the population of Norwich consisted of Protestant migrants from the Low Countries, while even the small coastal town of Rye had a French congregation of 642 members in 1572.¹¹ In an age when most social and economic activity still took place on a local scale, seaports were marked by the movement not only of goods but people over long distances. This greater openness to the outside world

led their residents to think and behave in ways substantially different from most inhabitants of the countryside.¹²

Ports were also outposts where governments and merchant syndicates attempted to impose order and authority over the rough culture of the seas, sometimes by claiming sovereignty over bodies of water, as Venice did over the Adriatic, Denmark over the Danish Sound, and Stuart kings over the Narrow Seas around Britain. The Iberian crowns of Spain and Portugal—united in a single monarchy between 1580 and 1640—famously claimed monopoly rights over European commerce in the western Atlantic, Indian Ocean, and Pacific: effectively most of the globe. But in reality states lacked the ability to police even relatively small seas effectively. Although Denmark did secure control of the Sound, Venice never eradicated piracy in the Adriatic,¹³ any more than England did in the Channel and North Sea. Alternatively governments attempted to exert control by regulating the sale of cargoes on land and punishing anyone caught selling smuggled or plundered goods. Every European maritime power established admiralty courts for this purpose. Since commerce was easier to regulate if concentrated in one port and relatively few hands, governments also granted monopolies to merchant consortia, like the syndicates in Seville and Lisbon through which Iberian monarchs funneled trade with America and Asia or the Merchant Adventurers in London. (These monopolies could also be tapped for loans in time of war.) In the mid-sixteenth century the growth of the great entrepôt port of Antwerp focused the trade of Northern Europe. Large merchants usually supported state-regulation and trade concentration, since they benefitted from it but there were sometimes disadvantages. England's mercantile fleet shrank in the 1550s, both in numbers of ships and tonnage, because so much English trade had become concentrated in nearby Antwerp. This worried Elizabeth's Council.¹⁴ The movement of commerce between ports had strategic as well as commercial ramifications. The trade regulations of one state might threaten the vital interests of others.

Although in principle no respectable merchant or magistrate approved of lawlessness at sea, in practice attitudes varied. Smuggling and piracy benefitted not only smugglers and pirates but middlemen who fenced stolen cargoes, customers who bought them at bargain prices, officials who collected bribes to look the other way, and monarchs seeking to weaken a rival prince. Illegal commerce generated its own human networks and geographic patterns. Sometimes it moved outside the ports, into nearby coves and creeks that were more difficult to police.¹⁵ An

English royal commission of 1579 complained of entrepreneurs who outfitted pirate ships in such inlets, going so far as to erect breweries, slaughter houses, and warehouses for the purpose.¹⁶ The Isle of Wight, midway along England's southern coast, had a particular reputation for favoring pirates. It served as a base of operations for the Sea Beggars (Dutch Protestant pirates) in the 1560s and long remained a place where captains disposed of illicit goods. London retailers sent agents to the island to purchase commodities for transshipment to the capital under cover of darkness.¹⁷ The surrounding waters were reportedly "haunted" by pirates who "robbed and spoiled many of our [English] merchants even at their own doors."¹⁸ Other infestations were reported around Newcastle in the Northeast and Dorset, where some pirates allegedly enjoyed the protection of the Queen's favorite, Sir Christopher Hatton, who exercised admiralty jurisdiction along a stretch of the coast.¹⁹

Pirates also unloaded illicit cargoes in outlying regions like Ireland and Wales, where coastal inhabitants grew accustomed to rewards for their cooperation, as illustrated by the nearly identical stories of two privateers that entered Welsh ports with cargoes of captured wine. Both ships were immediately boarded by people carrying empty bottles and cans, demanding free samples, followed by magistrates who wanted entire barrels of wine as presents. When the captains unwisely refused, they were imprisoned, along with their crews, on suspicion of piracy, whereupon the locals boarded the ships and helped themselves. One vessel became the scene of a three-day drunken revel.²⁰

During wars and trade disputes governments legitimated piracy by issuing letters of marque. In an age when large ocean-going navies were just beginning to come into existence this allowed governments to privatize maritime conflict.²¹ The French and Dutch wars of religion extended the practice. Calvinist rebellions in both countries drew strong support in coastal towns, whose mariners happily took to pillaging Catholic ships. By incorporating captured vessels Calvinist pirate fleets grew steadily, "much as boys' snowballs get bigger as they roll," in the words of a disgusted Spanish diplomat.²² Protestant leaders—the Prince of Orange in the Netherlands and Admiral Coligny and Henry of Navarre in France—held offices giving them admiralty jurisdiction. This allowed French Protestants to organize piracy and tax it as a source of revenue. The Dutch developed a different system of selling licenses to merchants trading with the enemy and authorizing privateers to prey on any ships that failed to purchase them.²³ Philip II's forcible annexation of Portugal in 1580

created another group of pirates, loyal to a rival claimant to the Portuguese throne named Dom Antonio, who took refuge in France and England. Mariners in his entourage had considerable knowledge of the sea routes to Portuguese Africa and Brazil.²⁴

Commerce raiding became internationalized as French, Dutch, and Portuguese privateers found refuge in English ports, while English captains obtained letters of marque from Dom Antonio, William of Orange, and Huguenot leaders.²⁵ Spanish ships attempting to trade with Northern Europe had to run a gauntlet of urban Protestant pirates' nests, from La Rochelle on the Bay of Biscay to Hull and Amsterdam on opposite sides of the North Sea. By the late 1580s even neutral vessels bound for Spain from German ports increasingly took the longer and more dangerous route west of Scotland and Ireland to avoid piracy. Catholic pirates retaliated, sailing from Dunkirk in the Spanish Netherlands or setting up temporary bases in remote areas beyond effective state control, like northern Scotland.²⁶

Most research on privateering has remained embedded within frameworks of national history, obscuring the degree to which maritime predation generated alliances and conflicts that cut across lines of nationality.²⁷ French and Dutch pirates frequented each other's ports and cooperated at sea, while English merchants engaged in legitimate commerce complained about their depredations and lobbied Queen Elizabeth to crack down. In May of 1585 Philip II impounded all English and Dutch ships in his ports in a panicky response to news that Francis Drake had sailed with a powerful fleet to attack his American sea lanes.²⁸ In retaliation Elizabeth issued letters of marque and many English merchants previously engaged in trade with Spain turned to privateering, both to recoup their losses and because plundering Spanish and Portuguese cargoes now provided the best way to obtain the products in which they had long specialized.²⁹ But even after 1585 Anglo-Spanish commerce continued illegally, in Dutch, German and other foreign ships whose masters agreed to disguise the English origin of their cargoes. We even hear of a Portuguese physician named Hector Nunez, living in London as a naturalized English subject, who partnered with his brother-in-law, a Lisbon merchant, to hire an English ship for a slaving voyage to Angola and Brazil.³⁰

Since it was the nationality of a cargo rather than a ship that determined whether it was a legitimate prize, captains often had difficulty knowing which vessels they encountered at sea were legally subject to seizure. One privateer captured a large Hamburg ship bound for Spain by severing its mast with a cannon shot during a prolonged

bombardment. Eventually the German ship sank. Only then did the privateer captain learn to his horror that the cargo belonged to London merchants, including an alderman's widow, who would certainly sue for damages in an English admiralty court.³¹ Of course many privateers ignored legal niceties. They tortured crews of captured ships to force them to reveal or fabricate evidence that cargoes belonged to Spanish merchants, or else disposed of illegal prizes in Ireland, La Rochelle, or a Muslim port in North Africa.³² They also resupplied themselves at sea by robbing other ships of victuals and useful items, like anchors, cannon, and even rigging.³³

A few privateers sailed with crews of mixed nationality, like the ship commanded by a Dutch captain, manned by eight Dutch and 35 English sailors that plundered a German vessel in 1584.³⁴ Another ship captured near Newcastle had a crew of English, Dutch, and Scots, while a third sailed from Plymouth with 23 Dutch and 11 English mariners.³⁵ A French pirate vessel in 1581 had an English gunner and at least two other English sailors.³⁶ Pirates also conscripted crews of captured ships, integrating them with their own men as they sailed in search of additional prizes. A small fleet of La Rochelle privateers picked up both English and Portuguese sailors in this way, who eventually cooperated to steal a ship and escape.³⁷ Although in this case the captives obviously resented their enforced service, some sailors liked being pressed into piracy, since it allowed them to enjoy all the benefits while giving them an excuse if their vessel was captured.³⁸ Frequently privateers of different nationalities encountered each other at sea and agreed to "consort" together, dividing any prizes taken. Drake first learned to raid the Caribbean while consorting with French pirates in 1571; a few years later he teamed up with the French corsair, Guillaume Le Testu, to ambush mule trains carrying silver across the Isthmus of Panama. But French, English, and Dutch privateers also preyed on each other. A small English sloop that had taken a prize in the Channel in 1590 was captured in turn by a larger Huguenot ship, which was then overwhelmed by three heavily armed English ships before it could return with its booty to La Rochelle. The captain of one of the English ships initially decided to continue on to the Huguenot port and share the prizes with his captives, so as not to jeopardize his trade there. But he changed his mind after inspecting the cargo, saying "the sugar were good sugar and it was pity the knaves should have it at Rochelle."³⁹ Religious solidarity and commercial ties mattered to sea captains but sometimes greed trumped all.

Human relationships became even more complicated in America. The relatively small number of English ships that penetrated the Caribbean routinely sold plundered Spanish goods to willing Spanish colonists. The presence of African and Native American populations added further complications. They sometimes became innocent victims of intra-European rivalries, as when African pearl divers off the coast of modern Venezuela were abducted from their canoes and held for ransom by French and English raiders. But “intelligence from some negroes” helped an English raiding party find a “great store [of] pearls, jewels, reals of plate, bolts of silver [and] rich apparel” on one island. Drake allied with Cimarron communities of escaped slaves on the Isthmus of Panama in 1576. One escaped slave joined his crew, serving under him for at least six years. Drake told a Spanish prisoner “that the negroes were brothers,”⁴⁰ while he and other English also sought alliances with Native Americans. In 1595 an English party landed on Trinidad, offering to return the next year and free its inhabitants from Spanish control if they would become English subjects. In return, a native guide assisted an attack on a Spanish settlement.⁴¹

II

Raids on Spain’s American colonies were, however, atypical of privateering ventures, which mostly involved small-scale hand-to-mouth operations, carried out within European waters. Privateer crews normally served without wages in return for a share of the booty, while suppliers sold food and drink at a discount but expected a cut of the profits. Although these methods allowed hundreds of small ship masters to outfit privateers, most lacked the resources and desire to undertake long and dangerous voyages to America or Africa. Others did attempt to raid the Caribbean but with single vessels or small fleets normally capable of inflicting only limited damage.⁴²

Any serious attempt to challenge Iberian control of the Atlantic required fleets of large ships and very substantial investments. Three potential sources of such backing existed: great merchants in large ports, especially London; nobles and wealthy gentry, many with connections to the Privy Council; and the Queen. All these potential investors cared about profit, while Elizabeth and her council were also motivated by strategic considerations. Spain’s head start in colonizing America provided King Philip II with two major advantages: a steady supply of New World silver whose value

exceeded Elizabeth's entire revenues and a colonial trading empire that, if ever fully consolidated, would allow his subjects to dominate European trade with the rest of the world. Philip's annexation of Portugal and its empire in 1580 extended this latter advantage, while his efforts to reconquer the rebel Dutch provinces, by using American silver to finance his army, threatened to clinch it. For the first time in history, American resources became critical to the European balance of power.

The long sea routes connecting Spain to Asia and America looked like a potential weak point in the Iberian system. But taking advantage of this weakness required not only money and ships but better knowledge of the Atlantic region. Most of the American coast north of Spanish settlements remained unmapped, while even in the Caribbean areas like the Orinoco valley in modern Venezuela were essentially unexplored. And much that the Spanish knew was kept secret from other Europeans. Attempts to overcome these deficiencies generated another set of cosmopolitan networks connecting politicians to scholars and professional cartographers.

Huguenots played an especially important role in pioneering strategic thinking about the ocean.⁴³ French ships had conducted raids in the Caribbean long before the English appeared on the scene and the French also preceded the English in attempting to plant American colonies, in Brazil, Florida, and the Carolinas, and in collecting and publishing accounts of America. Although the leading expert on this subject, André Thevet, was a Catholic, he drew heavily on Huguenot sources.⁴⁴ They anticipated several key themes of later English treatises on New World colonization, including the concept of American colonies as refuges from religious persecution. Huguenots also quickly recognized the potential of colonies along the North American coast as privateering bases against Spanish ships sailing north to catch the prevailing westerly winds for the return trip to Europe. The leading Huguenot thinker Philippe du Plessis-Mornay, drew up a plan to cut Spanish sea lanes for the French king, Charles IX.⁴⁵

The Huguenots' alliance with England quickly led to a sharing of ideas about the Atlantic. A recent study of Mornay concludes that he worked out his strategic plans in consultation with "an international group of Protestants" that included Elizabeth's Secretary of State, Sir Francis Walsingham, Sir Philip Sidney, and possibly Francis Drake.⁴⁶ The earliest published account of a short-lived Huguenot colony in Florida appeared in an English translation from a London press before it was printed in France.⁴⁷ In 1568 Elizabeth discussed a plan with the Prince of Condé, for

sending a combined fleet of English and French ships to the West Indies; 10 years later another Huguenot leader conferred with Elizabeth and the Earl of Leicester about a scheme to rob the Spanish silver flotillas.⁴⁸ Dutch political leaders and geographers, including the great Flemish cosmographers Gerard Mercator and Abraham Ortelius, were also drawn into this network.

Although lagging the French, the English had not been entirely inactive in Atlantic exploration. In the 1550s under the boy king Edward VI the government encouraged a voyage in search of a northeast passage to Asia. The expedition instead found a new route to Russia through the White Sea port of Archangel, which gave rise to the first English joint-stock company, the Muscovy Company. The dominant figure on Edward's Privy Council, John Dudley Duke of Northumberland, strongly backed this venture, as did the Secretary of State, Sir William Cecil. Twenty-five years later Cecil, now Lord Burghley, was Elizabeth's Lord Treasurer, and Northumberland's son Robert Earl of Leicester was the Queen's favorite and chief military leader on her Council. Burghley, Leicester, and Leicester's brother Ambrose Dudley Earl of Warwick all promoted Atlantic voyages during the 1570s and 1580s, while many other figures involved in Atlantic projects had long-standing ties to Cecil or, more usually, to the Dudley family. Edward Clinton, who commanded the English fleet during a war with Scotland under Northumberland's leadership in the 1550s, later became Elizabeth's Lord Admiral and Earl of Lincoln. Another loyal Northumberland client, William Winter, rose to become Elizabeth's Surveyor of the Navy. The humanist scholar John Florio, whose father had taught Northumberland's daughter-in-law Jane Grey Italian, translated a rare treatise on the East and West Indies into English in 1579, claiming that it contained information the Spanish crown had tried to suppress. The single most active English translator of Spanish and other European manuals of navigation and books about the New World, Richard Eden, had been one of Cecil's secretaries in the 1550s.

Ambrose Dudley's tutor, the mathematician and polymath John Dee, studied cartography in the Low Countries under Mercator. In the 1570s, under the patronage of Leicester, Hatton, and the Queen, he produced a series of tracts dealing with navigation, Atlantic geography and historical bases for English claims to sovereignty over much of the Northern Hemisphere, based on fanciful stories about the Empire of King Arthur and Atlantic voyages by medieval Welshmen. Most of Dee's tracts remained in manuscript as policy memoranda for the Privy Council but

one reached print anonymously in 1577, under the title *General and Rare Memorials pertayning to the Perfect Arte of Navigation*. It adopted Pericles as a model, an implicit reference to speeches attributed to the Greek leader in Thucydides's *History of the Peloponnesian War* arguing that Athens's maritime empire enriched not only the city as a whole but individual citizens, who profited from the commercial opportunities conferred by control of the seas. Athenians therefore had a rational interest in making sacrifices to maintain their city's sea power.⁴⁹ Dee argued along similar lines that the creation of a strong royal navy would benefit English subjects by fostering the creation of a British Empire (a term he coined) that would bring innumerable commercial rewards. Several younger courtiers allied to Leicester studied under Dee, including the Earl's nephew, Sir Philip Sidney, who contracted to settle 30,000 acres in America in 1583,⁵⁰ and Sidney's friend and fellow-poet, Sir Edward Dyer, who invested in Sir Martin Frobisher's expeditions to the Canadian arctic and warmly supported the research of Richard Hakluyt.⁵¹

England's expansion into the Atlantic was, in short, aggressively promoted by clients of one of the period's great court dynasties, the Dudley family, and its Elizabethan head, Leicester, whose wealth, social connections, and access to the Queen enabled him to mobilize financial and human resources on an enormous scale. In the late 1570s and early 1580s he invested thousands of pounds in sea voyages, while lobbying his aristocratic friends to venture their money. By drawing sea captains, navigational experts and scholars into his clientage network, he also connected them to each other and to his allies within the kingdom's ruling group. We catch a glimpse of how the system worked in the diary of a clergyman named Richard Madox, who presented himself to the Earl in January 1582, seeking employment. Leicester invited him to dinner, where Madox found himself in the company of seamen and merchants including Drake and the Master of the Muscovy Company, George Barne. They arranged for him to serve as chaplain on an upcoming voyage, ostensibly bound for the East Indies, although this may have been a pretext to disguise a privateering venture. Over the next several days Madox was introduced to Burghley and the future commander of the English fleet against the Armada, Lord Charles Howard. He supped with Secretary Walsingham, dined with a bishop, and evidently spent a night in the house of John Dee.⁵² Madox probably owed his warm welcome to traits that must have become evident during dinner conversation. In addition to his eagerness to serve and devout Protestantism he had a

serious interest in mathematics and navigation. He must have seemed an ideal choice as chaplain on a long expedition, and had he not died at sea within a year, he might well have developed into a minor nautical expert in his own right. His story suggests how Leicester went about constructing a network of people with complementary talents to advance his Atlantic projects. The Earl's close ties to Dutch and Huguenot leaders and to Dom Antonio must have ensured that European intellectuals and mariners were also included.

Other members of the council, including Hatton, Walsingham, and Burghley, also promoted Atlantic enterprises, as did a few other aristocrats like the Earl of Cumberland. Although most sea captains lacked the social standing and education needed to act as patrons or scholars of the Atlantic in their own right, there were exceptions. Drake acquired so much loot in his raids of the 1570s that he was able to invest fairly significant sums in future expeditions. His successes also led to his inclusion in high-level discussions of maritime strategy. Gilbert belonged to a fairly prominent gentry family connected to other Protestant families interested in maritime affairs, Irish plantations, and Europe's religious wars. Educated at Eton and Oxford, he developed a strong intellectual interest in oceanic exploration even before his first sea voyage, publishing a tract arguing for the existence of a Northwest Passage to Asia and advocating English colonization of the Americas in 1566.⁵³ He also promoted a scheme to erect an academy in London to train young gentlemen and noblemen's sons in "chivalric policy." Elizabethans associated the concept of policy with the sort of pragmatic, secular, and strategic political analysis—often informed by a knowledge of economics, technology and military strategy—that was becoming theorized in a growing European literature on "prudence" and "reason of state." Chivalry, of course, harked back to a medieval code emphasizing adventure, exertion, and personal courage. Gilbert's desire to combine the two, by applying academic knowledge to political and military affairs, while preserving a romanticized sense of his role as an English knight, was broadly typical of a cultural outlook exemplified by figures like Leicester and Warwick, as well as by a significant segment of the English-landed elite who wanted a more muscular assertion of English power in both Europe and the Atlantic.⁵⁴

A partner in Gilbert's colonial project, Sir Richard Grenville, shared his commitment to the pursuit of knowledge through a life of action. He departed on a voyage in 1580 with his ship cabin stocked with books and sea cards.⁵⁵ Gilbert's half-brother, Sir Walter Raleigh, continued the

tradition after Gilbert's death at sea in 1583, sailing on voyages to the Caribbean, sponsoring the ill-fated Roanoke colony, and also writing about America. By attracting Elizabeth's favor he acquired the means to form his own clientage network of sea captains and scholars. It included the period's most talented English mathematician, Thomas Harriot, who taught navigation to sea captains at Raleigh's London mansion, Durham House, and compiled the first dictionary of the Algonquin language. He briefly joined Raleigh's Roanoke colony in 1585 and published *A Brief and True Report of the New Found Land of Virginia* in 1588. Aware of the importance of visual representations in recording and disseminating information about America, Raleigh patronized the Huguenot artist Jacques le Moyne Morgues, who proposed to publish sketches of America he had made while part of a short-lived French colony in Florida in 1564–1565, and the Englishman John White, whose drawings of Algonquin natives near Roanoke are now famous.⁵⁶ George Clifford third Earl of Cumberland was another aristocratic courtier whose interest in the ocean, while also involving a large admixture of chivalric ideals, originated in his early fascination with mathematics and techniques of navigation while a student at Cambridge University. He invested heavily in a series of privateering expeditions. In 1599 the Dutch ambassador to England, Noel de Caron, attempted unsuccessfully to interest the Estates General in one of Cumberland's expeditions to the Caribbean.⁵⁷

Some men of mercantile background also became patrons of Atlantic exploration and related branches of scholarship. Although not immune to the chivalric revival of the period, which left its imprint on urban culture, their upbringing would also have given them a deeper appreciation for the practical opportunities and risks involved in maritime trade. These figures included William Bourne, who published treatises on navigation and gunnery under the patronage of Lord Burghley, William Carleill, and the earls of Warwick and Lincoln. The son of a London merchant and grandson of a Lord Mayor, whose mother married Secretary Walsingham after the death of William's father, Carleill received a good education before pursuing a career of military service on both land and sea. In the early 1580s he tried, with the help of Walsingham and Richard Hakluyt, to raise money in London and Bristol for the founding of an American colony. When this project failed, he turned to privateering, joining Drake's expedition to the Caribbean in 1586.⁵⁸ The London merchant William Sanderson was another substantial investor in oceanic exploration, by Frobisher and Raleigh among others.⁵⁹

The single most interesting example of a merchant who became an active promoter of Atlantic exploration is probably Michael Lok. Born in 1532 into a family that had been active in London trade for nearly a century, he attended a grammar school until age thirteen, before being sent abroad to learn the trade of a merchant factor. He spent the next 15 years, he later recalled, "passing through almost all the countries of Christianity, namely out of England into Scotland, Ireland, Flanders, Germany, France, Spain, Italy and Greece," mastering their languages and acquiring a "knowledge of the state of all their commonwealths, chiefly in all matters appertaining to the traffic of merchants." He must have learned about shipping routes, commodity markets, and currency exchanges, while keeping a close eye on events like wars, epidemics, and harvest failures that affected trade. For a merchant factor this was all essential practical information.

While resident in Seville from 1552 to 1554, Lok had watched in awe as scores of ships departed each year for Spain's American colonies, while others returned laden with gold, silver, and additional precious commodities. He then moved to Lisbon where he witnessed the arrival of "jewels [and] spices" from Africa and Asia.⁶⁰ These experiences inspired him with "an ardent desire to know the state of that new world." At the beginning of Elizabeth's reign he returned to London and joined the Muscovy Company. But the idea of expanding English commerce to America and other distant parts of the globe remained his private obsession, which he tried to "satisfy by studying and reading of histories and otherwise searching and enquiring . . . twenty-four years continually." By his own reckoning he spent £500 on "books, maps, charts and instruments," and consumed a ream of paper taking notes on his readings and conversations with mariners.⁶¹

In 1574 the Muscovy Company selected him, along with two colleagues to deal with a petition by a little known sea captain and reputed pirate named Martin Frobisher, who wanted to search for a passage to China in the Northwest Atlantic. Although initially skeptical, Lok soon came to see Frobisher as the man who would turn his dreams into reality. He eagerly showed Frobisher his collection of sea charts, maps, and notes, "and daily instructed him therein to my own skill."⁶² He invested £800 in Frobisher's project and used his connections to other merchants to attract additional backers. After two years he scraped together just enough money to outfit three small ships. He also drafted articles of incorporation for a Cathay Company to manage the commerce he hoped Frobisher would

initiate. Unfortunately these were never legally ratified.⁶³ Lok anticipated that even if Frobisher did not reach Asia he might find societies willing to trade other profitable commodities, perhaps similar to those the Muscovy Company obtained in Russia. Frobisher's ships therefore carried a miscellaneous stockpile of English goods to discover what the people he encountered wanted to acquire.⁶⁴

Frobisher sailed in 1576 and returned with encouraging reports of a strait he had found in the vicinity of Baffin Island. He also brought back a black rock as a souvenir. This intrigued Lok, who hoped it might contain precious metal and sent pieces to several assayers. Three returned negative reports but one, an Italian immigrant named Giovanni Batista Agnello, claimed to have extracted a few grains of gold. When asked why he had succeeded where others had failed, he replied *bisogno sapere adulare la natura*—one needs to know how to cajole nature. He pressed Lok to keep the discovery secret while setting out a second voyage to bring back a large quantity of the ore. Instead Lok informed the Queen, who instructed Walsingham to investigate. He was initially dismissive, thinking “it to be but an alchemist matter.”⁶⁵ But Agnello meanwhile tried to interest another potential investor, Sir William Berkeley, who in turn told Sir William Winter about Frobisher's rock. Winter somehow obtained his own samples, which he sent to another assayer, a Saxon immigrant named Jonas Shutz, who reported that the rock contained even more gold than Agnello had thought. Since Saxon metallurgists had a reputation as the best in Europe his assertion, which soon reached the ears of the Privy Council, created a flurry of excitement.

From this point Frobisher's projected second voyage received high-level backing. Elizabeth invested £1000—mostly in the form of a royal ship whose value was over-assessed—while Burghley, Leicester, and Walsingham all agreed to purchase shares. The Council took over planning the expedition, determining the number of ships and the men and equipment they would carry. It also attempted, unsuccessfully, to attract additional mercantile investors. Even with the Queen's participation, Lok remained the single largest shareholder. He also became the accountant and financial manager of the venture, taking out loans to cover cash-flow problems, purchasing a ship on credit, and contracting with suppliers. This was common practice in the period: royal agents often employed their own credit on the Crown's behalf, expecting later repayment.

Frobisher's second arctic voyage eventually returned with 158 tons of ore. After testing it Shutz lowered his estimate of the gold content and

claimed he needed a bigger furnace, at an additional cost of £1900. The Council decided to raise the money by levying a surcharge on existing shareholders; anyone who refused to pay forfeited his stock. Since the lowered estimates of the ore's gold content meant that more of it would be required to cover expenses, the Council also resolved to send out a third expedition, at a further cost that soon rose above £8000. This time the levy on existing shares amounted to 135% of their original value. Worried that another state might try to seize Frobisher's mine, the Council decided to secure it by establishing a permanent English colony. Frobisher therefore departed on his third expedition with 30 soldiers to guard against Inuit attacks and a dismantled house. Fortunately this was lost at sea, giving the prospective colonists an excuse to return home.

Although Frobisher completed his mission and returned with more ore than instructed, it turned out to be worthless. As creditors closed in several shareholders, including members of the Council, quietly forgot to pay for the stock they had agreed to purchase. Frobisher and other investors turned on Lok, accusing him of embezzling funds. Although eventually exonerated, Lok was arrested eight times for debt before finally extracting himself from the debacle, his finances in ruins. Although he lived on into the seventeenth century, serving for a time as an English trade representative in Venice and Aleppo, he was never again a wealthy man.

Modern accounts have described this episode as a costly fiasco, a triumph of hope and gullibility over common sense.⁶⁶ But this is a retrospective judgment. If Frobisher had discovered a gold mine his expeditions would not only have repaid investors many times over, they might conceivably have altered the strategic equation in Europe. For the Queen and Privy Council, if not necessarily Michael Lok, the potential rewards justified risking a few thousand pounds. Even the Council's decision to send out a costly third expedition before it had thoroughly tested Frobisher's ore was not entirely irrational, since news of the purported mine had leaked and the English needed to consolidate their claim. Atlantic ventures always involved high risks. Drake's circumnavigation in 1577–1580 netted the Queen a profit that covered her losses from Frobisher's voyages 40 or 50 times over. But if his ship had perished in a Pacific typhoon, as might easily have happened, it too would have been a total loss.

Michael Lok's sad story instead illustrates two other points. First, even for the best informed Elizabethan scholars of the Atlantic accurate knowledge remained bound up with a large amount of misinformation,

speculation, and ignorance. Large investments were therefore put at risk not only from ocean storms and hostile encounters with Spaniards and American natives but mistaken beliefs about what ships would encounter upon reaching the New World. Second, efforts to remedy this problem required not only geographic exploration but forays along other frontiers of knowledge, in this case the science of metallurgy. Europeans still did not entirely understand the chemical processes involved in smelting metals and experimentation did sometimes yield spectacular results, as with the so-called mercury amalgam method that had revived production at the great Bolivian mine of Potosí only a couple of years before Frobisher sailed. In other contexts, thorough exploration required advances in botany, zoology, or pharmacology, as well as linguistics and ethnology, to enable negotiations with native societies. Since it was impossible to predict in advance where opportunities for profit might lie, explorers needed to remain alert to multiple possibilities, including those only evident to trained experts.

Preparations made for long voyages show that some investors understood the need for such broad investigation. The intended voyage to the East Indies on which Madox sailed departed with a jeweler, presumably sent to evaluate precious stones encountered along the way, as well as several apothecaries, to examine medicinal drugs. One of Raleigh's captains, Thomas Cavendish, recommended sailing to America with a physician, a "good geographer," a painter to record flora and fauna, an apothecary, a lapidary to evaluate stones, and an alchemist.⁶⁷ A commonplace book compiled by the courtier Edward Hoby includes a list of things to observe on a voyage to America, probably drawn up for one of Frobisher's voyages.⁶⁸ The items include "springs with their diversities in color or taste . . . islands, their bigness, commodities and havens . . . fish . . . beasts and their differences in kind or color with or from ours in Europe . . . bees wax, honey, cochineal . . . all sorts of earths, with their differing color and taste and fertility and bareness thereof . . . metals and sub minerals with the place where they shall be found . . . trees, fruits and gums . . . herbs seed and apothecary drugs." The expedition was also instructed to collect ethnographic and political information about American societies, noting "the manner of their planting and manuring the earth," their "statuses" and social ranks, ways of preparing food, "the greatness and quantity of every distinct king's countries, people and forces . . . in what manner they arm and order themselves in wars," along with alliances and rivalries among native groups.

Like other Europeans, the English fully appreciated the importance of learning native languages. Dee advocated public support for experts who would study not only European and Asian tongues but “Canadian and Islandish,” as he termed the Inuk and Inuit languages of the people Frobisher encountered. Hoby recommended that someone bring a dictionary to America, in which to note the Native equivalents of English words. The Privy Council arranged for Frobisher to carry several convicted felons on his second voyage to the arctic and leave them behind with instructions to befriend the natives and learn their language.⁶⁹ Although the convicts got no farther than Plymouth before Frobisher unloaded them, the intention is revealing. A few years later Raleigh dropped off two English boys on Trinidad to learn the local language.⁷⁰ An alternative method, widely employed, was to kidnap natives and bring them back to Europe, before returning them to America to act as translators and go-betweens after they had learned European languages.

But in the sixteenth century the English never stayed in America long enough to test their observations thoroughly and translate them into viable colonial economies. Proponents of colonization like Richard Hakluyt made wildly optimistic assumptions about how easily English merchants might profit from trading with America. He reasoned that contact with Englishmen would rapidly teach American natives the benefits of civility, and that when savage people begin to grow civil they always develop a keen desire for colored garments. America would therefore rapidly become a vast market for the English cloth industry. Observing that a species of mulberry tree grew wild in Virginia, he believed that by releasing a few silk worms and teaching the natives that they might trade cocoons for colored beads, it would be practical to furnish an English silk industry with ample raw material. Yet despite its naivety, Hakluyt’s discussion demonstrates how far a preoccupation with tradable commodities had spread beyond merchant factors such as Lok, to become a general preoccupation of scholars interested in the Atlantic. Like Hoby’s instructions, Hakluyt’s treatise also reflects the early emergence of a systematic comparative interest in agriculture and horticulture that would gradually transform English farming practices during the next century.⁷¹ That is why Hoby advised explorers to conduct taste tests of American dirt.

What English and other Europeans discovered in America depended not only on where they went but on the techniques of observation and habits of mind they brought with them. The harder we try to understand the mentalities that shaped explorers’ observations, the more we will be

led back to developments in the intellectual and cultural history of Europe that may seem at first glance to have little relation to Atlantic or American history. I would especially stress several convergent developments, beginning with the strong emphasis in Tudor elite culture on the application of learning acquired through books in active service to the monarch and commonwealth, often with an additional emphasis on acts of valor, as in Gilbert's concept of "chivalric policy." This had institutional as well as intellectual ramifications. Although Tudor England lacked the organized academies that had already started to develop in Italy, the patronage of members of the Privy Council and a few other wealthy peers did lend a measure of support and organization to certain kinds of intellectual activity considered useful to the state. Political historians have lately begun to explore the role of humanist scholars employed as the Council's "men of business" in gathering intelligence, writing policy memoranda and tracts for the press in defense of official policies, and sometimes taking independent action to promote policies in which they believed.⁷² Although not often considered in this context, Dee, Harriot, and Hakluyt—and on a lower level White and Madox—were also "men of business," employing highly specialized forms of knowledge to shape and promote initiatives by the Crown and individual councilors acting on their own. In a sense so were Drake and Frobisher, who advised the Council on maritime strategy and mobilized public support both by recruiting and training mariners who served on their expeditions and through the celebrity status they achieved. Our picture of relationships between high politics, intellectual life, and public discourse will expand considerably if we include nautical experts, mathematicians, and men of action in the picture.⁷³

This emphasis on the practical application of knowledge was reinforced by advances in mathematics that facilitated improvements in cartography, surveying and navigation and by developments in other fields of natural philosophy that shaped observations of the flora, fauna, geology, and geography of distant regions. Attitudes toward the Atlantic were also shaped by a widespread belief in governing circles that commercial expansion would benefit not only individual merchants but the public, by increasing national wealth, breeding mariners, generating employment and thereby countering the disruptive effects of vagrancy and poverty. This meant not only that figures like Burghley and Walsingham sought to partner with merchants in promoting voyages that promised to open new commercial opportunities, but that gentlemen who considered it their duty to serve the commonwealth began to interest themselves in the sort

of specialized knowledge of commodities and markets that had long been the preserve of merchant factors like Michael Lok. Gradually a few land-owners also began experimenting with ways to “improve” the value of their estates by experimenting with new crops and rotations, often with an eye on an urban appetite for luxury foods.⁷⁴ The habits of mind associated with these trends, which took hold during the period when English colonization of America began, affected how more alert colonists responded to the challenges of settlement.

To all of this we also need to add the effects of competition and then war with Spain and the related desire to promote Protestant Christianity among American natives. Churchyard’s celebrations of Gilbert and Frobisher therefore do point to attitudes that motivated men who led and invested in Atlantic projects. It is harder to gauge the outlook of ordinary mariners but the desire for gain and a quest for adventure must have influenced many, while the preaching of chaplains who accompanied many voyages and the fact that sailors were in the front line of conflict with Catholic pirates would presumably have encouraged a kind of religious partisanship, whether or not sailors absorbed the fine points of Calvinist theology.

Ultimately we also need to understand how non-European goods, social practices, and long-distance networks became incorporated within both the Atlantic economy and the fund of knowledge that guided colonial and commercial projects. No one could have predicted in advance that the Virginia colony would become economically solvent by exporting to England the Algonquian social ritual of tobacco smoking, along with vast quantities of the addictive weed it required, or that the fur trade would be lubricated by an exponential expansion in the production and distribution of ritual beads fashioned from clam shells harvested on the shores of Long Island Sound, made possible in part by the alacrity with which native inhabitants of the region adopted more efficient metal drills that Europeans had introduced.

America in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was a “new” world only in the sense of being a place where several older worlds collided and interacted in unpredictable ways, producing both fruitful and enormously destructive changes. Understanding it properly requires attention to deeply rooted historical processes originating on both sides of the Atlantic, as well as interactions among multiple European and First Nation peoples and cultures over extended geographic spaces.⁷⁵ These interactions gave rise to networks of trade and communication that crossed the ocean and penetrated far inland

that, at least on the European side, required towns and urban institutions to function properly. As they penetrated America and began trading with its inhabitants in the period following that covered by this essay, the English and other North Europeans created chains of nucleated settlements along sea coasts and navigable rivers that extended the oceanic frontier hundreds of miles from Atlantic shores. Some of these, like the trading post at Albany, were barely the size of European villages. But they nevertheless functioned as nodal points within an extended trans-Atlantic urban web. They had their own specialized merchant factors to handle trade with natives in their hinterlands. They reproduced instruments of European urban commerce, such as notarized contracts and letters of exchange. Some of their inhabitants continued to collect information about America for transmission through trans-oceanic networks of scholarly communication. Cities also played a central role in spreading tastes for novel American and Asian products like tea, coffee, and tobacco, and in the distribution of European goods and technologies like firearms to Native Americans. On both sides of the ocean people who lived in the country and never ventured out to sea came into contact with the Atlantic world through an array of goods, services, technologies and information that flowed through towns. Atlantic history is essentially a history of continuously developing human networks that took shape in royal courts and urban hinterlands as well as in towns. But urban settlements played pivotal roles and they were among the chief beneficiaries of the expanded horizons that resulted.

NOTES

1. Thomas Churchyard, *A discourse of the Queenes Majesties entertainment in Suffolk and Norffolk . . . Whereunto is adjoynd a commendation of Sir Humfrey Gilbert's ventrous journey* (London, 1578), sigs. H3v, H4v, I2v, K1r.
2. *A prayse and reporte of Maister Martin Froboisher's voyage to Meta-Incognita* (London, 1578), sig. Avi.
3. *Ibid.*, sig. Avi–vii.
4. See, for example, *Richard Hakluyt and Travel Writing in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Daniel Carey and Claire Jowitt (Farnham: Ashgate, 2012); Ken Macmillan, “Benign and Benevolent Conquest? The Ideology of Elizabethan Atlantic Expansion Revisited,” *Early American Studies: An Interdisciplinary Journal* 9.1 (2011): 32–72; David Harris Sacks, “Richard Hakluyt and his Publics, c. 1580–1620” in *Making Publics in Early Modern Europe: People, Things, Forms of Knowledge*, ed. Bronwen Wilson and Paul

- Yachnin (New York: Routledge, 2010); and Peter Mancall, *Hakluyt's Promise: An Elizabethan's Obsession for an English America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007). The online *Bibliography of British and Irish History* published by Brepols lists 54 items on Hakluyt published between 2007 and 2013.
5. E.g., Harry Kelsey, *Sir Francis Drake: The Queen's Pirate* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998); idem, *Sir John Hawkins: Queen Elizabeth's Slave Trader* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003); and James McDermott, *Martin Frobisher: Elizabethan Privateer* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001).
 6. Among many works that might be cited see e.g. Pamela Smith, *The Body of the Artisan: Art and Experience in the Scientific Revolution* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), and *Merchants and Marvels: Commerce, Science and Art in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Pamela Smith and Paula Findlen (London: Routledge, 2002).
 7. In this respect it may be compared to fields of early modern science, explored by scholars like those cited in the previous note, that derived from the cross-fertilization of academic theorizing and artisanal craft mysteries.
 8. For a good general survey of this topic in a European perspective see Eric H. Ash, "Navigation Techniques and Practice in the Renaissance," in *The History of Cartography*, vol. 3, *Cartography in the European Renaissance*, ed. David Woodward (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), 509–527. For England see the same author's *Power, Knowledge and Expertise in Elizabethan England* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004), chapters 4 and 5.
 9. Arthur H. Williamson, "The Nation Epidemical: Scoto-Britannus to Scoto-Polonus" in *Britain and Poland-Lithuania: Contact and Comparison from the Middle Ages to 1795* (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 287–304; Steve Murdoch, *Network North: Scottish Kin, Commercial and Covert Associations in Northern Europe, 1603–1746* (Leiden: Brill, 2006); and idem, *Scotland and Europe* (Dundee: Dundee University Press, 2006).
 10. *Immigrants in Tudor and Stuart England*, ed. Nigel Goose and Luu Lien (Brighton: Sussex Academic Press, 2005).
 11. Hugues Daussy, *Les Huguenots et le Roi: Le combat politique de Philippe Duplessis Mornay (1572–1600)* (Geneva: Droz, 2002), 87.
 12. Although focused on a later period Carl Estabrook, *Urbane and Rustic England: Cultural Ties and Social Spheres in the Provinces, 1680–1780* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998) explores these differences in depth.
 13. Fernand Braudel, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II*, trans. Siân Reynolds, 2 vols. (New York: Harper and Row, 1966), vol. 1, 113.

14. For Antwerp and its place in the English commercial economy see Kenneth Andrews, *Trade, Plunder and Settlement: Maritime Enterprise and the Genesis of the British Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 6–8.
15. Kenneth Andrews, “Elizabethan Privateering,” in *Raleigh in Exeter: Privateering and Colonization in the Reign of Elizabeth I*, ed. Joyce Youings (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 1985), 1–17.
16. B[ritish] L[ibrary] Cotton Mss. Otho E viii, fols. 280–84.
17. T[he] N[ational] A[rchives], Kew, SP12/149/53; HCA1/41, fols. 11, 22, 32; HCA13/28, fol. 25.
18. TNA SP12/156/43.
19. TNA HCA14/20; Wallace MacCaffrey, “Christopher Hatton,” in *The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* [Hereafter ODNB] (London, 2004); TNA HC1/41, fol. 116, recording a conversation among pirates who boasted “that they had better friends in England than any merchant or alderman in London had, naming Sir Christopher Hatton, during whose life, they said, they knew whither to go.”
20. TNA HCA13/28, fols. 365–67; cf. the story of the spoiling of a French ship by the English captain Sir John Norreys in Ireland in HCA13/25, fols. 194–96.
21. James McDermott, *England and the Spanish Armada: The Necessary Quarrel* (New Haven, Yale University Press, 2005), 3–146. For the slow rise of national navies see Jan Glete, *Warfare at Sea, 1500–1650: Maritime Conflicts and the Transformation of Europe* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2000).
22. *Calendar of State Papers Spain (Simancas)*, [Hereafter CSPSp] 4 vols (London: Her Majesty’s Stationary Office, 1892–98) vol. 3, 210.
23. See Michael Augeron, “Coligny et les Espagnols travers la course (c. 1560–1572): Une politique maritime au service de la cause protestante,” and Yvo van Loo, “Pour la liberté de la fortune: la course néerlandaise pendant la guerre de religion aux Pays Bas 1568–1609,” both in *Coligny, les protestants et la mer*, ed. Martine Acera and Guy Martinière (Paris, 1989).
24. For various notices see TNA SP12/149/53 and SP89/1/21, 24, 54, 57, 58, 73, 78, 85.
25. Sir William Cecil encouraged English sailors to seek letters of marque from La Rochelle: see Andrews, *Trade, Plunder and Settlement*, 128.
26. For pirates in Scotland see TNA SP52/48/26.
27. Andrews, *Trade, Plunder and Settlement*, 118–41, does recognize the role of French mariners and writers in stimulating English interest in America.
28. Simon Adams, “The Outbreak of the Elizabethan Naval War against the Spanish Empire: The Embargo of May 1585 and Sir Francis Drake’s West India Voyage,” in *England, Spain and the Gran Armada 1585–1604: Essays from the Anglo-Spanish Conference London and Madrid 1988*, ed. M. J.

- Rodriguez-Salgado and Simon Adams (Edinburgh: John Donald, 1991), 45–69.
29. On Anglo-Spanish trade, see Pauline Croft, “English Commerce with Spain and the Armada War,” in *England, Spain and the Gran Armada*, 236–63.
 30. TNA HCA13/28, fol. 333.
 31. TNA HCA13/28, fol. 116.
 32. For examples see TNA HCA/13/28, fols. 287v–88, 391.
 33. Among many examples, TNA HCA13/28, fol. 295.
 34. TNA HCA13/25, fol. 149v.
 35. TNA HCA13/28, fol. 90v; HCA13/25, fol. 323.
 36. TNA HCA1/41, fol. 46v.
 37. TNA HCA13/25, fol. 216.
 38. BL Cotton Mss. Otho E VIII, fol 332v.
 39. TNA HCA13/28, fol. 52v.
 40. BL Cotton Mss. Otho E viii, fol. 64v.
 41. BL Additional Mss. 36136, fols. 153v–158, 177–79, transcripts of reports from Spanish archives.
 42. Kenneth Andrews, *Elizabethan Privateering: English Privateering During the Spanish War, 1585–1603* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1964).
 43. See, e.g., Andrews, *Trade, Plunder and Settlement*, 129–41.
 44. Frank Lestringant, *Le Huguenot et le sauvage: L’Amérique et la controverse coloniale en France au temps des guerres de religion* (Paris, 3d ed., 2004).
 45. Daussy, *Huguenots*, 87–89, 282–23.
 46. *Ibid.*, 88–89.
 47. Jean Ribaut, *The whole and true discoverye of Terra Florida* (London, 1563).
 48. Mickael Augeron and Laurent Vidal, “Refuges ou réseaux? Les dynamiques protestantes au xvi^e siècle,” *D’un rivage à l’autre: Villes et Protestantisme dans l’air Atlantique (XVI^e–XVII^e siècles)*, ed. in Guy Martinière, Didier Poton and François Souty (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale), 30–61 at 46; *CSPSp* vol. 2, 591.
 49. *General and Rare Memorials pertayning to the Perfect Arte of navigation* (1577), 6, 8, 11 and *passim*. For Dee see Glyn Parry, *The Arch Conjuror of England, John Dee* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012).
 50. *Calendar of State Papers Domestic Series, Reign of Elizabeth [vol. 2] 1581–90* (London, Longman, 1865), 116.
 51. Steven May, “Sir Edward Dyer (1543–1607)” in *ODNB*; for Dyer’s support of Hakluyt see *Principal Voyages and Navigations* (1589), 4.
 52. E. G. R. Taylor, ed., *The Troublesome Voyage of Captain Edward Fenton 1582–1583*, Hakluyt Society Publications, second series 113 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1959), 150–51, 155; Madox reports spending a night “at Mr. Dee’s house” without giving a first name.

53. *A Discourse of a Discoverie for a New Passage to Cataia*. This paragraph draws heavily on Rory Rapple, "Sir Humphrey Gilbert (1537–83)" in *ODNB*.
54. For brief surveys containing references to other relevant studies see Alexandra Gajda, "The Gordian Knot of Policy: Statecraft and the Prudent Prince," and Richard Cust, "Chivalry and the English Gentleman," both in *The Oxford Handbook to the Age of Shakespeare*, ed. R. Malcolm Smuts (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 306–21 and 458–76.
55. SP63/74/58.
56. Richard Hakluyt, dedicatory epistle to René Laudonnière, *A notable historie containing foure voyages made by certayne French captaines unto Florida*, trans. Richard Hakluyt (London, 1587), n.p. For an extensive discussion of White, as well as Raleigh's entourage of experts on the Atlantic and early visual images of America, see *A New World: England's First View of America*, ed. Kim Sloan (London: British Museum Press, 2007); Morgue is briefly discussed in the chapter by Christian Feest, "John White's New World", 65–92 at 68.
57. *Johan van Oldenbarnevelt: Bescheiden Betreffende zijn Staatskundig Beleid en zijn Familie. Eerste Deel: 1570–1601*, ed. S. P. Haak Rijks Geschiedundige Publicatien 80 ('S-Gravenhage: Martinus Nijhoff, 1934), 549.
58. David Trim, "Christopher Carleill (1551?–1593)," *ODNB*; *The Voyages and Colonising Enterprises of Humphrey Gilbert*, ed. David Quinn, 2 vols (London: Hakluyt Society, 1940), vol. 2, 350.
59. Nita McConnell, "William Sanderson (1547/8–1638)," *ODNB*.
60. TNA SP12/119/29.
61. *Ibid.*
62. *Ibid.*; TNA SP12/129/44i.
63. TNA SP12/110, f. 51.
64. The most up-to-date account is James McDermott, *Martin Frobisher, Elizabethan Privateer* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), chs. 6–8, on which the following account relies.
65. TNA SP12/112/25.
66. McDermott, *Frobisher*, ch. 13, is especially harsh.
67. Kim Sloan, "An Elizabethan 'Governour' in Virginia," in *A New World*, ed. Sloan, 39–50, at 41–42.
68. BL Add Mss. 38823; Sloan, *ibid.*, associates the list with Frobisher.
69. BL Cotton Mss. Otho EVIII, Instructions for Frobisher's voyage of 1578, fols. 108, 110.
70. BL Add. Mss. 3615, fol. 119, 36316, fol. 288v (two Spanish reports of these boys).
71. *Culture and Cultivation in Early Modern England: Writing the Land*, ed. Michael Leslie and Timothy Raylor (Leicester: Leicester University Press,

- 1992); and *Agricultural Change: Policy and Practice 1500–1750*, ed. Joan Thirsk (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).
72. E.g. Michael Graves, “The Management of the Elizabethan House of Commons: The Council’s “Men of Business,” *Parliamentary History* 2 (1983): 11–38; and Patrick Collinson, “Servants as Citizens: Robert Beale and Other Elizabethans,” *Historical Research* 79 (2006): 488–511.
 73. For a parallel argument involving professional military officers see David Trim, “War, Soldiers and High Politics under Elizabeth I,” in *Age of Shakespeare*, ed. Smuts, 82–102
 74. See note 68.
 75. Africa and Africans must also be incorporated in the analysis, although constraints of space and limitations in my own expertise have prevented me from doing so here. John Thornton, *Africa and Africans in the Making of the Atlantic World, 1400–1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), is a valuable and provocative survey.

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PART II

Figures of the Circulating Self

“Blazing Effects”: The 1605 Gunpowder Treason and the Rhetoric of Slave Conspiracy

Steven Bellomy

On his path to the presidency, Abraham Lincoln delivered his “Cooper Union Address” in New York City on February 20, 1860. Through a series of extensively researched arguments he painstakingly made the case for the government’s right to regulate slavery in the federal territories. In the speech he also worked to debunk the South’s claim that the Republican Party had contributed to slave resistance. Charges against the North of “Black Republicanism”—which Lincoln understood as contributing to “insurrection, blood and thunder among the slaves”—were misguided and historically inaccurate. In fact, Lincoln felt the threat of slave uprisings had dramatically decreased. He claimed, “In the present state of things in the United States, I do not think a general, or even a very extensive slave insurrection is possible. The slaves have no means of rapid communication . . . The explosive materials are everywhere in parcels; but there neither are, nor can be supplied, the indispensable connecting trains.” Lincoln maintained the success of the Haitian Revolution some 60 years prior was unique; a better and less alarming historical example was

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to be found in the 1605 Gunpowder Plot: “The gunpowder plot of British history, though not connected with slaves, was more in point,” he suggested, for in that instance secrecy was betrayed and the plot discovered.¹

The story Lincoln cited remains a familiar one. The Gunpowder Plot’s popular history tells of how on November 5, 1605, authorities seized Guy Fawkes moments before he detonated 36 barrels of gunpowder under Parliament in an attempt to assassinate King James I.² A slightly more detailed history describes a group of Catholic plotters led by Robert Catesby that included among others Thomas Wintour, John Wright, Thomas Percy, Father Henry Garnet, the two-faced Francis Tresham, and a munitions master fighting for the Spanish army, Guido (Guy) Fawkes. Although not the primary engine fueling the plot, it was Fawkes who proposed detonating gunpowder tucked away in the undercroft beneath the House of Lords (in 1605 Parliament did not have a subterranean cellar). The explosion was to trigger a Catholic uprising in the Midlands, so to overthrow the country’s reigning Protestant monarchy and replace it with a protectorate supporting the Church of Rome. The plan failed: authorities seized Fawkes and tortured him in the Tower of London; Catesby and Percy died fighting to the last at a siege at Holbeach House; and in the discovery’s wake other co-conspirators scrambled for clemency through political backchannels. On January 31, 1606, outside Westminster Hall, authorities hung Fawkes until almost dead, then quartered him and sent his remains to the four corners of the kingdom as a gruesome warning to any would-be conspirators.³

Lincoln was of course right to claim the Gunpowder Plot originally had nothing to do with African slaves. He was also right to call it a failure. By figuratively locating revolutionary sentiment into geographically disconnected, and thus innocuous, parcels of powder, Lincoln attempted to ease anxieties regarding slave insurrection. The lack of cohesion amongst slave insurrectionaries—represented by gaps in the “indispensable” trains of gunpowder—recalled for Lincoln the ill-fated 1605 Plot. The claim is to a degree characteristic of how the antebellum period generally understood the Fifth of November, which was by then as likely to evoke in Americans thoughts of unruly English children reciting folk verses as they paraded through town with their squibs and homemade effigies of Guy Fawkes, as it was malicious conspiracies against the state. And yet, Lincoln’s imagery belies a history wherein references to the Catholic conspiracy, alongside mentions of gunpowder as a key component of slave insurrection, did not bolster such confidence. During the eighteenth century, British colonists

understood what was then more commonly called the Gunpowder Treason as an urgent model of conspiracy that was consequential for both the real and figurative architectures of slave plotting. In the colonies, an English cultural imaginary confronted new anxieties about the overlaps between mobility, religion, and race. Historical memory could either inform a sense of Englishness, or transfer ideas to other groups who were interested in pushing against the conditions produced by British imperialism.

It was out of this nexus that the images associated with the Gunpowder Treason registered and ultimately helped colonists in early America reckon with the prospect of slave conspiracy. By tracing the Fifth of November's circulation in the Atlantic world, we get a clearer picture of how the cultural legacy of Guy Fawkes and the holiday commemorating his capture came to underscore the potential for plots against colonial authority. To explain the phenomenon, this chapter begins by outlining the emblematic features of seventeenth-century responses to the Gunpowder Treason. Secondly, it reads those features and their rhetorical purposes in reports of the 1736 Antigua Plot and the New York Conspiracy of 1741. Both events were deeply unsettling and evoked a sense that the colonies were rife with Catholic influence, clandestine meeting places and hideouts, and the necessary material means required to conceive of and execute a large-scale revolt. These reports speak to the implications of British commemorative culture when translated across changing geographical and social conditions, and reveal to what extent remembering the old English story of “gunpowder, treason, and plot” found new life as a model of slave insurrection during the eighteenth century.

THE IMAGERY OF TREASON: CATHOLIC CONSPIRACY AND THE GEOGRAPHY OF GUNPOWDER

In 1606 Parliament passed “An Act for a Public Thanksgiving to Almighty God Every Year on the Fifth Day of November.” Annual commemorations of the Gunpowder Treason's discovery helped consolidate national memory, and inspired an array of textual productions and ritual practices: from sermons, broadsides, tapestries, and cushion covers, to bonfires, effigies, pyrotechnics, and bell-ringing. These means of remembrance integrated the plot's discovery into a larger series of providential mercies demonstrative of God's divine favor toward Protestant England. They also served as a reminder and a warning to Protestants that conspiratorial

Catholics were organized, creative, and mobile. That the target was England's House of Lords spoke to the vulnerability of centralized power: a plot involving gunpowder could decimate an entire government with a single explosion. As England's imperial presence expanded, so did the Gunpowder Treason's ability to register emergent threats away from London. By the eighteenth century a cultural shift had occurred, wherein recollections of the plot, which was originally aimed at a single location, could now speak to larger, harder to detect networks shaping dispersed acts of rebellion. In the British Atlantic, where English commemorations met the realities of colonial systems of slavery, citing Guy Fawkes and his trains of explosive sentiment suggested connections that not only linked various populations, but ones that reached farther back and tied an early modern story of Catholics and gunpowder to more immediate concerns about insurrectionaries and their influences.

Three features dominate the early commemorative imagery of England's deliverance from the Gunpowder Treason. Providential mercy toward Protestants, conspiratorial Catholics, and the image of gunpowder became intertwined in an assemblage of verbal and visual cues that helped shape the Fifth of November's place in English commemoration. What the 1662 English Book of Common Prayer called "the most traitorous and bloody-intended Massacre by Gunpowder" also gave history its most notorious triggerman in Guy Fawkes, a Spanish sympathizer born in York, England. Fawkes was disconcerting because he was an Englishman whose faith and foreign loyalties made him a national alien. Concerns over Catholicism's mobility, through both conversion and itinerant Catholics, kept the specter of Guy Fawkes a transient and powerful marker of insurrection across temporal and geographical boundaries. Indeed, as Richard Hardin notes, seventeenth-century literature often describes Fawkes "more as a presence than a person."⁴ Taken together, the era's diverse representations of Fawkes fixed him as a dehumanized figure of Catholic plotting. And although the custom of burning Fawkes in effigy would not truly cement his public legacy until somewhere around the early-nineteenth century, after his capture his name and image became aligned with conspiracy and violent resistance more broadly conceived.

Instances of God's merciful deliverance or "special providences" were hallmark events on the late Tudor and early Stuart calendar. England's deliverance from the Gunpowder Treason entered the canon of earlier providential mercies, such as Queen Elizabeth's accession and the defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588, in articulating a collective and divinely

sanctioned sense of English national identity. These red-letter days on the calendar inspired an English grammar of commemoration. During the reign of James I, popular renditions of the Gunpowder Treason in ballads and broadsides contributed to what Alexandra Walsham refers to as a “flourishing industry” of textual productions devoted to God’s merciful deliverance. Providential language was fundamental to these expressions. Lancelot Andrewes, Bishop of Winchester, pronounced, “this day of ours, this fifth of November, a day of God’s making; that which was done upon it was the Lord’s doing.”⁵ But as Walsham maintains, providential deliverance was by no means a static religious principle. Like the holiday that gave it its strongest expression, the act of invoking God’s mercy was subject to changing ideas and landscapes.⁶

Cracks in the veneer appeared early on. For some, Providence’s defeat of the Gunpowder Treason on behalf of Protestants raised the specter of historical contingency. What would England look like *had* Guy Fawkes succeeded? The question strongly resonated with English commentators like Thomas Vicars, who in 1633 imagined the impossible:

the joynts and members of all worthies of our land, rent and torne and scattered one from another, the walls of the streete bedawbed with men’s blood... your houses ravished, your wives abused, your children slaughtered; God’s temple profaned, the King’s authority debased, the Pope’s powere advanced, the pure preaching of the word abolished, the Idolatrous Superstition of the Masse established.⁷

Vicars offers an apocalyptic vision of an England overturned by the Gunpowder Treason. Here, the dreadful consequences of success reach worthies and extend to commoners, their homes, wives, and children. Gone is the king’s authority, in its place the idolatry and superstition of the Catholic Church. The “Pope’s power” means the violent institution of the Latin mass, idol worship, and ceremonial oaths. Moreover, the passage’s urgency confirms the need of Providence when confronting the ruthlessness of the Church of Rome. Remembering the Fifth of November, then, was a double-edged sword: on the one hand, it reminded Protestants of their special place in God’s cosmic order; on the other, it annually highlighted the precariousness of that position.

Protestants had long used the loaded term “popery” or one of its variants—popish, papal, or “Romish”—as shorthand for the myriad facets of Catholic treachery. The first and most popular anti-Catholic text of the

early modern period was John Foxe's *Actes and Monuments*, more commonly known as *The Book of Martyrs*. The book's description of Protestants being tortured by Catholics led to several editions and a wide readership that through their encounter with Foxe's text came to associate wickedness with France, Spain, and especially Rome. Richard Smith's early 1615 engraving calls Guy Fawkes and his co-conspirators "The Popes salt-peeter Saints," a tradition continued in Thomas Barlow's 1679 reprint of King James's speech to Parliament. In the preface to *The gunpowder-treason: with a discourse of the manner of its discovery*, Barlow refers to the "Popish Powder-Plot," "Popish Powder-Traytors," and the "pernicious violence of Gun-powder" as proof that the "Gun-powder Conspiracy was hatch'd in hell."⁸ The Gunpowder Treason was horrible, hellish, and for William Leigh in Standish, Lancashire, "most detestable, devilish, and damnable."⁹ The paranoia had purpose; Protestants began to understand their anti-popery as a means to solidify their own sense of national belonging. Francis Cogliano notes, "By the mid-eighteenth century it was impossible for Englishmen in Britain or America to divorce anti-popery from their notion of what it was to be English."¹⁰

Guy Fawkes's *materia operandi* rounds out the definitive features of texts and illustrations devoted to the Gunpowder Treason. Gunpowder and its frequent associations with Catholicism are the least discussed aspects of the plot despite the combustible's longstanding narrative history in relation to Catholic barbarism, conspiracy, and political subversion.¹¹ These perceived connections were at once material and mystical. Early modern humoral and alchemical sciences strove to reveal the secrets of gunpowder and understand its mysterious legacy in the Far East.¹² Was it a destructive compound produced in hell by "suttle Art," as John Milton described it in Book IX of *Paradise Lost*, or did it have life-affirming qualities because of saltpeter's nitrous chemical nature? Perhaps both. Either way, in the hands of Catholics gunpowder was a dangerous mode of cruel and unusual execution. Thomas Harris's *Popery and slavery display'd*, in its fourth edition by 1745, worked in the tradition of Bartolome de las Casas's 1689 treatise, *Popery truly display'd in its bloody colours*. Harris details one such popish massacre: "*Daniel Salvagiol* and his Wife, *John Durant*, *Daniel Revel*, *Lewis* and *Bartholomew Durant*, Brothers, and *Paul Valguichiard*, had Gunpowder cramm'd down their Throats, and into their Mouths, and set on Fire, which blew out their Brains, and tore their Heads in Pieces, to please their inhuman Murderers." Of course, no condemnation of Catholic violence would be complete without reflecting

on the Gunpowder Treason. “Whence came that execrable *Powder-Plot* in the Reign of King *James the First*,” Harris asks, “but from *Rome*?”¹³

Gunpowder was a worldly material with combustible energies powerful enough to turn the world upside down and strange enough to challenge God’s transcendent oversight. Its prevalence amidst the currents of Atlantic trade exacerbated fears that the combustible could be used in slave revolutions. Gunpowder thus became a key metaphor of slave dissent. While by the nineteenth century the volcano had become the most sensationalized image of revolutionary sentiment, historically the image of gunpowder proved equally if not more effective in creating paranoid visions of foreign rebellion and dissent.¹⁴ Like the volcano, gunpowder could ignite at any moment, a characteristic feature that renders periods of dormancy threatening. Both images came to be haunting reminders of the explosive nature of slave plotting. Trains of gunpowder, however, also suggested secret connective networks of communication that, once lit, could quickly spread and gain momentum. Unlike the containment of a volcanic eruption, trains of gunpowder worked like dominos, figuratively linking geographically disparate groups along highly combustible (and largely hidden or imperceptible) lines of shared sentiment.

Visual and verbal remembrances of the Gunpowder Treason sensationalized images of the Catholic conspirator Guy Fawkes, lantern in hand, nearing a stockpile of gunpowder under Parliament. Guarding against the danger was Providence, there to deliver England from an act of early modern terrorism. As David Cressy has argued, during the early modern period the very term “Gunpowder Treason” “implied a horrifying linkage” of explosive destruction and subversion of the state that “each year must have induced fearful associations, if only subliminally.”¹⁵ In 1605, when British colonial expansion was just getting underway after James I negotiated the Treaty of London, the scale and ramifications of these linkages had yet to reach their full potential. Imperial expansion greatly altered the scope of English dominion, and subsequently the avenues and influence of its cultural ideas and practices. Over time depictions of the pivotal moment of discovery turned into a transatlantic phenomenon as the imagery associated with the Gunpowder Treason crackled amidst fears of widespread slave insurrection in the West Indies and North America.¹⁶ Providential deliverance, Catholic influence, and the metaphorical implications of gunpowder all became subject to the effects of new

geographical conditions and the cultural and racial heterogeneity that accompanied them.

ATLANTIC COMMEMORATION AND GUNPOWDER PLOTS

The Fifth of November found its cultural expressions across the Atlantic via England's colonial enterprises. Beginning in the early-seventeenth century, remembrances of the fateful day outside of England introduced new parameters of celebration. In his *Generall Historie of Virginia, New-England, and the Summer Isles* John Smith describes an early observance in Bermuda in 1620: "The fift of Nouember the damnable plot of the powder treason was solemnized, with Praiers, Sermons, and a great Feast . . . neither was the afternoone without musicke and dancing, and at night many huge bone-fires of sweet wood."¹⁷ In 1684 the Assembly, Council, and governor of Barbados attended a "Gunpowder Treason day" church service.¹⁸ Patrician and plebian alike in British North America celebrated the Fifth as what came to be known as Pope Day or Pope Night. In October 1667, the Massachusetts Bay government proclaimed November 5 an official day of thanksgiving. By the early eighteenth century, almanacs in New England usually recognized the Fifth of November, as Daniel Leeds did for New York and Newport in 1713.¹⁹ Especially in northeastern seaport towns and cities, Pope's Day meant public processions, effigies, bonfires, and revelry. The indisputable hub was Boston, Massachusetts, although New York's Pope's Day traditions were also very strong—the day had been celebrated there since at least 1689 during Leisler's Rebellion, and was officially established in 1700 by the city's Common Council.²⁰

The Gunpowder Treason thus became a phenomenon that circulated across Atlantic cities.²¹ Spanish colonization and the Eighty Years' War (1568–1648) had already imbued the Atlantic world with concerns over Catholic treachery. Correspondence, trade, and print circulation connected cities in North America to colonies in the Caribbean, and exacerbated fears of how Catholicism might reach new audiences and influence new plots. If the Fifth of November worked to maintain a British worldview in the colonies, it did so with the added consequence of familiarizing other populations with the details of the Gunpowder Treason. The Fifth of November's story provided an applicable blueprint and, if it did not inspire, at least allowed slaves to consider the means by which they could formulate similar challenges to power. How commemoration might

translate to other populations came to the fore on the island of Antigua in 1736.²² Colonists discovered a large-scale slave plot to kill the island’s white population and establish black independence. The details of the Antigua Slave Plot suggest that the Gunpowder Treason in the hands of slaves had the power to overturn plantation slavery in the minds of a fearful and increasingly minority white population.

Every October the gentry on the Leeward Island colony of Antigua commemorated the coronation of George II. In 1736, their preparations were interrupted by the discovery of a slave plot, the plan of which was to murder the island’s white inhabitants and implement a new form of government to manage an island society comprised of former slaves. Antigua’s general committee largely pieced together the details of the plot through slave testimonies and confessions. The plot was to occur in early October at a commemorative ball. Two conspiratorial slaves, a Coromantee named Court and an island-born Creole named Tomboy, developed a plan to blow up a large house belonging to Christopher Dunbar on the night of Monday, October 11, 1736. Tomboy, a carpenter, was to secure the job of crafting ballroom seats in Dunbar’s mansion and use his access to smuggle in barrels of gunpowder. As “a gentleman in Antigua” reports in a letter, “they were to convey a great Quantity of Gunpowder into the Cellar, and blow the House up.”²³ The chaos of the explosion’s aftermath would allow roughly 1000 slaves to ransack the town and “put all the White people there to the sword.” The plot was found out; news spread as Antigua’s white population spoke and wrote letters of “the Happy Discovery of an accursed Negro Plot.”²⁴

The Antigua Plot circulated more widely in print. In the spring of 1737, Peter Zenger’s *The New-York Weekly Journal* related its particulars in a serialized piece titled *A full and particular Account of the Negro Plot in Antigua, as reported by the Committee appointed by the Government there to enquire into the same*.²⁵ The committee’s reconstruction of Antigua’s “unparallel’d Hellish Plot” almost immediately invokes Catholicism as a driving force of the slave conspiracy:

But the most Active Incendiaries under Tomboy, were *Freeman’s Secundi* and *Sir William Codrington’s Jacko*, both *Creoles* of *French* Parentage, and initiated into Christianity according to the *Romish Persuasion*. Of these Chiefs and Principals, we can assuredly say, that they had Hearts and Minds capable of conceiving, Heads fit for contriving, and Hands and Courage for executing the deepest and most bloody Crimes, even that unparallel’d Hellish

Plot formed by them, against his Majesty's Government of this Island, and our Lives and Fortunes.

The "Romish Persuasion" corrupted the hearts, minds, heads, and hands of potentially insurrectionary slaves. Part of the reason this association was possible had to do with evidence on the ground suggesting likenesses between traditionally African religions and Roman Catholicism. Protestant colonists rightly believed French Catholics converted a great number of slaves either in Africa or en route to the colonies.²⁶ Creole slaves from French parentage were also suspect. Evidence of Afro-Catholic "syncretism" was a factor, too, in other contemporary accounts of slave rebellion in North America. The 1739 Stono Rebellion in Charleston, South Carolina, for instance, was at least partially inspired by the proximity of Spanish St. Augustine; the freedom Catholic Spain offered runaway slaves weighed heavily on the minds of South Carolinians, who remained committed to tracing slave resistance to "outside agitators."²⁷ This commitment kept Catholicism a prime target for scapegoating and helped frame the ways slave conspiracy was detected and explained throughout the colonies, in Antigua, Charleston, and later in New York City.²⁸ With their suspicions of religious syncretism in place, the committee continued to rely on specters of Catholicism to help shape the intentions and scope of Antigua's "Romish" slaves and their plot.

White colonists came to learn the power of ceremonial oaths and cryptic rituals to quickly spread revolutionary allegiance amongst insurrectionary slaves. The committee found proof that the plot was "undoubtedly in Agitation, about *November, 1735,*" when a slave named Jemmy "was brought in to take an Oath of Engagement, as one of the Conspirators." Jemmy was valuable because, the report maintains, he was a Creole, and hence of the most numerous and strongest-bodied slaves on the island. After centuries of honing their anti-Catholicism, Protestants were attuned to a sworn oath's ability to quickly generate allegiance. Oaths were also tied to how Antigua's slaves coded their signals in public. The entire second installment describes a Coromantee dance and oath-taking ceremony performed one afternoon in early October. Through confessions, the committee learned that the incorporation of an oath-taking ceremony shifted the African dance ritual from entertainment to a declaration of war. The public ceremony proved to be the "Master-Piece of the Plot," performed in broad daylight to recruit Creoles and convey to those in the know that war was inevitable "against the Whites."

References to gunpowder work alongside those regarding Creole slaves' popish initiation into Christianity and Coromantee oath-taking rituals to sensationalize the Antigua Plot. If echoes of the Church of Rome provided the spiritual impulse, gunpowder provided the material means for a slave insurrection against “his Majesty's Government of this Island, and our Lives and Fortunes.” The third of the report's five installments—now front-page material of Zenger's *Journal*—elaborates the shuddering details of precisely how the slaves planned to take over Antigua. “The method first proposed for executing the Plot” involved “laying a quantity of Gun-Powder in the House; and when the company was Dancing, Fire was to be set to Three Trains, upon the Notice of firing a Gun and Beating a Drum.” On November 11, 1736, a year after the plot's initial discovery, another coleader named Ned acknowledged his receipt of a “half Barrel of Powder (and his Distribution thereof to several Negroes).” The parenthetical remark is of particular interest here because it underscores the judges' attention to gunpowder's figurative power to represent bonds of affiliation through material means. The partial confession—he “disappointed them and continued obstinate”—did not satisfy the judges' wishes to know the full details of how slaves provided themselves with arms and ammunition. Ned, the human property of Jacob Morgan, died nine days later after being hoisted on the gibbet, his body then burnt, his head fastened to a pole on Morgan's estate.

The details of the plot rang familiar. A “Romish” scheme hatched in November—a conspicuous month during which insurrectionary slaves were inspired to formulate their own gunpowder plot—hinted at the potential links between the details of the Gunpowder Treason and those of the plot in Antigua. French colonists in the region recognized that an attempt to ignite gunpowder smuggled under a notable home likely had an antecedent in English history. The governor of the neighboring French island of Guadeloupe compared the Antigua plot to the 1605 Gunpowder Treason and mentioned that it was, perhaps, spoken of too frequently in the presence of slaves.²⁹ Historians of the period too have recently maintained that slaves in Antigua were likely familiar with the Fifth of November through their exposure to the traditions of royal holidays.³⁰ Of course, Court and Tomboy's actual influence remains a matter of conjecture. Nevertheless, the report out of Antigua does suggest the Gunpowder Treason offered some crucial imagistic details that were no doubt on the minds of British colonists when they discovered the plot against them. It is not my claim, then, that Antiguan slaves were familiar

with the 1605 Gunpowder Treason, although it certainly is a possibility. Rather, it is useful to identify how the exploits of Guy Fawkes over a century earlier had become, through retellings and commemorative ritual, a cultural form that helped incite and codify in print anxieties regarding slave insurrection.

Those correlations extended to its aftermath, when providential deliverance was both celebrated and to a certain degree scrutinized. As one Antiguan put it, “the Goodness of GOD wrought our Deliverance from the Execable [*sic*] Massacre.” But despite God’s intervention, the colony’s place on the periphery forced England’s imperial subjects to confront questions regarding the extent of providential reach in the West Indies. The report continues in a skeptical vein: “The Discovery was wonderfull, but not more so than we think the Concealment for so long a Time, of a Plot.” At another point the committee voices concerns over their own corporeal limitations when praising God’s mercy: “but tho’ we were far from a penetrating into their secret Villanies, GOD’s all-seeing Eye look’t thro’ them; and his mercifull Providence laid them open to our View.” Both instances speak to observational limitations, even to the surprising extent that God’s hand in the “wonderfull” discovery of the slave plot is only equal to (or perhaps even less than) the slaves’ collective ability to conceal the secret for “so long a Time.” The report suggests New World slave plots tested an absolute belief in providential order, that perhaps colonists on the periphery of the English empire needed to rethink how much they could rely on God’s all-seeing eye to deliver them from evil.

The flux of the Atlantic world broadened the scope of potential insurrection.³¹ Whereas the Gunpowder Treason registered specific tensions between Protestants and Catholics, during the eighteenth century “popish” threats grew to include mobs, marooners, pirates, sailors, and slaves. These mobile populations embodied the conspiratorial influence adrift along the currents of Atlantic exchange. Out of this highly charged context, and with the Fifth of November becoming a stronger commemorative feature of colonial life, the legacies of Guy Fawkes and the Gunpowder Treason attained more diverse associations. However sensationalized, the events in Antigua suggested slaves could cull inspiration from English history and the stories it told. Catholicism, gunpowder, and slave plotting—each of these highlighted the transmission of incendiary people, ideas, and goods in and through the West Indies. This nexus coalesced in the Antigua Plot, which in turn circulated in New York through Zenger’s *The New-York Weekly Journal*. The report created a bridge between a

vibrant if ill-fated Caribbean colony and a burgeoning North American city, both of which confronted and contended with the prospect of slave revolt. Only five years after the Antigua Plot made news in New York, that city experienced its own series of events that, in an example of the culture of suspicion fostered by transatlantic networks of influence and exchange, pointed to the reality of a slave conspiracy in North America.

On March 18, 1741, the governor's mansion at Fort George in Manhattan burned alongside the fort's chapel and barracks. The military fort's destruction coincided with the War of Jenkins' Ear, a conflict between Britain and Spain largely staged in the Caribbean, exacerbating fears of a coordinated foreign invasion with intentions to turn over the British colony to Catholic rivals. A subsequent string of fires prompted suspicions of an elaborate plot against New York City and its inhabitants. The court based their case largely on the testimony of Mary Burton, a 16-year-old indentured servant. Initially, the city's inhabitants believed the plot to be regional, orchestrated by a disgruntled tavern owner named John Hughson and a handful of rebellious slaves. However, the subsequent sequence of trials increasingly interwove coerced evidence with alarming reports of foreign invasion and secret Catholic upheaval. As the trials continued, prosecuting attorneys continued to allege connections between the insurrectionary slaves and broader threats against colonial security, including Spanish Catholic priests bent on burning powder magazines and itinerant sailors. These specters of Catholic infiltration also created rhetorical avenues back to much older antagonisms that could better shape the severity of what English colonists were facing in the mid-eighteenth century.

The Gunpowder Treason's influence on the discourse of slave conspiracy is best exemplified in the eighteenth century's most sensationalized report of urban slave insurrection. In 1744 Daniel Horsmanden published an extensive account of the 1741 trials as *A Journal of the Proceedings in the Detection of the Conspiracy Formed by Some White People, in Conjunction with Negro and other Slaves, for Burning the City of New-York in America, and Murdering Inhabitants*.³² The journal transcribes the trials of those insurrectionaries the judges, Horsmanden included, felt were part of an international conspiracy. Condemning those suspected of the “chimerical, wicked, abominable and inhumane” (194) plot echoed idiomatic patterns that repeated some of the era's most provocative terms.³³ A familiar constellation of conspiratorial discourse labeled forces against which Protestants (and Providence) diligently battled. Like the

Antigua report that had circulated in New York seven years earlier, Horsmanden relied on older, sensational narratives of popish plots, gunpowder, and the Protestant recourse to Providence. Within this prescribed framework, Guy Fawkes and the Gunpowder Treason shaped the way Horsmanden and others crafted the narrative of the slave conspiracy.

Like in the Antigua report, gunpowder was a prominent feature of networked conspiracy. Testimony repeatedly confirmed that Quack, a slave, had visited the city's Powder-House shortly before the first fires at Fort George. Mary Burton claimed to have seen "a Bag of Shot, and a Barrel of Gunpowder, there [Hughson's tavern, where the plot was supposedly hatched]" (56). Success seemed to hinge on the acquisition and strategic management of powder. Hughson—initially thought the "Principal, Engine, Agent and Instigator of these Deeds of Darkness amongst the Slaves"—provided conspiratorial slaves with "Arms and Gunpowder," and eventually amassed "many Barrels of Gunpowder at a Time" (194). According to the documented testimony, Hughson also understood the importance of discretion when it came to gunpowder. An accused slave named Othello confessed, "That *Hughson* promised to give him a Gun and a Cutlass, but as to Powder, or what Quantity of Arms or Ammunition *Hughson* had, he [Hughson] never told" (145). References to gunpowder, of course, do not immediately imply recollections to the 1605 Gunpowder Treason. And yet, gunpowder does illustrate not only the dangers to centralized colonial power but also invisible networks organizing dispersed acts of rebellion. It is a suggestive image that helps expand the scope of associations between slavery, conspiracy, gunpowder, and treason.

Indeed, at the time gunpowder was a signal concern of North American security and population management. The 1722 Negro Act in South Carolina, for instance, explicitly detailed the punishment slaves would receive if caught collecting "arms, powder, bullets, or offensive weapons in order to carry out such mutiny or insurrection."³⁴ A letter written to New York's lieutenant general from General James Oglethorpe regarding suspected Catholic actors working in North America marked an interpretive leap during the trials from domestic uprising to international conspiracy. In 1741 Oglethorpe feared a "popish Plot" involving Spanish priests in disguise and revolts designed "to burn all the magazines and considerable towns in English North America."³⁵ Accusations flew against itinerant populations and those susceptible to their influence, including local

slaves, Spanish prisoners, and traveling schoolteachers like John Ury. Ury's knowledge of Latin, the language of the Catholic Church, made him suspicious enough to be called a papist, priest, spy, and finally mastermind of the plot. In turn, Ury provided the foreign (i.e., Catholic) agitation that narratives of slave insurrection often turned to for explanation.

In the minds of the judges, John Ury bridged the gap between Catholicism, with its established tradition of plotting, and New York's insurrectionary slaves. Slaves may have had subversive intentions, but had little guidance in how to effectively act upon them. With Ury now a focal point, the prosecuting attorney William Smith concluded popery was the engine driving the slave conspiracy:

Tho' this work of Darkness, in the Contrivance of a horrible plot, to burn and destroy this city, has manifested itself in many *blazing effects*, to the Terror and Amazement of us all; yet the secret springs of this mischief lay long concealed . . . But now . . . we have at length great reason to conclude, that it took its rise from a *Foreign Influence* . . . yea, what more savage and barbarous, than what Popery has attempted, and sometimes executed, for the Extirpation of that, which the *Papists* call *Heresy*? (169)

Smith was clearly working within a rhetorical tradition. The passage aligns anti-Catholic language—rife with darkness, plotting, savagery, and fire—with a struggle for revelation and disclosure. Smith's phrase “secret springs of mischief” conflates language borrowed from the empirical sciences addressing the tensions between secrecy and discovery, with the elusiveness of Catholic plots. It was a timely gesture. As Serena Zabin has argued, “Finding the ‘hand of popery’ in a slave conspiracy made the uprising seem both more terrifying and more deplorable.”³⁶

For Smith, the historical event most synonymous with that “hand” was obvious. Smith presented to the court “a formidable Idea of Popery” by cataloguing Catholicism's treachery throughout English history. First up, the Gunpowder Treason: “Witness that execrable Design to blow up King, Lords and Commons, in the *Gun Powder Treason*, contrived by the *Papists*.” This “bloody religion,” Smith continued, “in order to promote its interests, never boggles at the *vilest means*, can sanctify the most *execrable Villainies* . . . and . . . will canonize for saints, a *Guy Faux* and others, some of the greatest Monsters of Iniquity that ever trod upon the face of the earth!” (170). Smith's reference suggests Fawkes's universality translated to confrontations with subversion away from the

homeland. The Gunpowder Treason and Guy Fawkes gave a form and face to the “secret springs” of dissent underpinning the “*blazing effects*” New Yorkers experienced during the conspiratorial panic. Moreover, by recalling the inequity of Fawkes in relation to a North American conspiracy, Smith underscored the widespread concerns regarding popish designs. It took the jury only 15 minutes to find John Ury guilty, and on August 29, 1741, he was hanged for his involvement in the plot to burn the city, joining in his fate 33 other would be conspirators and their supposed ringleaders.

Smith’s invocation of Fawkes and Catholic plots resonated with a community simultaneously versed in anti-popery and suspicious of black resistance. As the anonymous editor of the later 1810 edition of Horsmanden’s journal claims in his prefatory remarks, colonial-era Protestants held a “holy hatred of the Roman catholics” alongside their regard of “every negro slave as an incendiary and an assassin.” The 1810 preface continues by conflating the two threats: “The pomp and pageantry of the Romish church powerfully appealed to the senses of the rude savage, who could not so easily comprehend the abstract truths of the protestant religion.”³⁷ In the first half of the eighteenth century a large number of Gold Coast Africans—Akan and others—arrived in New York City as both Caribbean trade imports and alongside owners who had relocated north from the West Indies.³⁸ Like the writers of the Antigua report, the editor recognized the emergence of Afro-Catholicism during the era and hinted at Catholicism’s influence on newly arrived slaves in North American colonies. Gold Coast slaves were the most likely to adopt Catholicism; in turn, they quickly became targets. According to commentators of eighteenth and nineteenth century, these “rude savages,” unable to conceptualize and comprehend the cerebral nature of Protestantism, turned to the idols and outward rituals of Catholicism.

Remembrances of Guy Fawkes and the Gunpowder Plot during the trial also established a connection between the legal sphere and that of public commemoration. Eighteenth-century Pope’s Day celebrations intensified xenophobic sentiment by hoisting up effigies of the Pope, the Devil, and the Pretender. By the mid-eighteenth century, the threat of popery in North America became, according to Alfred F. Young, “far more political than religious.”³⁹ Pope’s Day emerged as an opportunity for collective action amongst the lower classes. Gary Nash suggests that by the 1760s the holiday functioned as “a school for training lower-class leaders, for organizing men who worked with their hands, and for

imparting to the lower element a sense of its collective power.”⁴⁰ Nowhere more so than in Boston where during the Stamp Act Crisis of 1764–1765 Pope’s Day companies helped provide the “scaffolding, symbolism, and leadership” for the eventual unified resistance against Britain.⁴¹ In New York City in 1741 such politicization was in its earliest stages in North America. Nonetheless, the growing power and popularity of November 5 kept the image of Guy Fawkes a recognizable point of incendiary characterization.⁴²

Concluding the account of the trials required Horsmanden to synthesize and make manageable the testimony given to the court. Again, the 1605 Gunpowder Treason proved an important anecdote from history. For William Smith in 1741, the image of Guy Fawkes evoked the Catholic Church’s infectious penchant for violence he felt to be circulating in New York City. Looking back, Daniel Horsmanden recognized further the analogical potential of the Gunpowder Treason. In his conclusion, Horsmanden quotes certain “remarkable Pieces” from the French-Protestant Peter Jurieu’s history of popery. One such episode explains why conspirators vigorously maintain their silence. On this subject, Jurieu found it “proper to call to mind what Mr. Mezeray says upon the Gun-powder Plot in 1606” (197) regarding the power of oaths in keeping conspiracies secret. In 1682 the French historian François Eudes de Mézeray used the Gunpowder Treason to explain silence amongst conspirators facing execution. Conspirators, Mézeray claimed, “should have Resolution to keep ’til Death a Secret whereon depends not only their Honours, but the Preservation of all the *Roman Catholiques* in *England!*” (197). His critique of the Church of Rome continued with near-formulaic evidence: “When the Powder-Plot was discovered in 1605, not one of the Confederates would confess; and they had known Nothing from their Mouths, without the Industry of the Judges” (197). For Mézeray, guilty conspirators kept secrets out of loyalty to their accomplices and duty to their faith. Case in point, the oaths of silence and secrecy amongst those affiliated with the 1605 Gunpowder Treason.

Horsmanden surely found solace in Mézeray’s praise of the “industry” of judges, and his historical explanation of why conspirators are willing to die without confessing. For after the trials concluded the judge’s skepticism grew regarding Mary Burton’s testimony, and he must have at least entertained the question, as others did, of whether there really was a plot. Horsmanden incorporates historical evidence regarding the Gunpowder

Treason to both illustrate the power of sworn secrecy and to legitimate the court's executions. These sources proved that a commitment to deceit was to be expected from the popish sort. "The other White People executed, as well as *Ury*, like true *modern Romanists*, pretended to maintain (and did protest) their Innocence to their last Breath" (205), Horsmanden reports. These "modern Romanists" represented during Horsmanden's moment in history the treachery and collusion of a deeper Catholic past. The Gunpowder Treason closed the historical distance between that past and Horsmanden's immediate present, creating in the prospect of New York's slave conspiracy a multidimensional threat that overlapped tactics, religions, races, and ultimately histories.

Authorities in New York took comfort in providential deliverance and commemoration to finally reckon with the complexity of slave collusion. In one sentence of execution, the Third Justice exclaimed, "we ought to be very thankful, and esteem it a most merciful and wondrous Act of Providence, that your Treacheries and Villanies have been discovered; that your Plot and Contrivances, your hidden Works of Darkness have been brought to Light" (45). In no uncertain terms, slave conspiracy presented an epic battle between light and darkness on a cosmic scale, deliverances from which were blessings that, like the Gunpowder Treason, should never be forgotten. For Horsmanden, remembrance kept the lessons learned from conspiratorial plots and their discoveries preserved for posterity. His final remarks endorse the original proclamation by New York's lieutenant governor making September 24 "a Day of publick Thanksgiving, for the Deliverance of his Majesty's Subjects here from the Destruction wherewith they were so generally threatned by the late execrable Conspiracy" (177). Concerned some New Yorkers had forgotten the vast conspiracy during the three years between the first blaze in 1741 and his publication of the trial records, Horsmanden concludes,

If the other Frights and Terrors this City was alarmed with . . . are, as to some amongst us, so soon slipt into Oblivion, yet surely others will think we ought once a Year at least, to pay our Tribute of Praise and Thanksgiving to the Divine Being, that through his merciful Providence and infinite Goodness, caused this inhumane horrible Enterprize to be detected, and so many of the wicked Instruments of it to be brought to Justice . . . though we have not been able entirely to unravel the Mystery of this Iniquity; for 'twas a dark Design, and the Veil is in some Measure still upon it! (205)

Horsmanden's nondescript language marks the troubling lack of clarity that largely defined the era's responses to slave conspiracy. Plotting was an enterprise both bold and imaginative, performed by “wicked Instruments” still veiled by gaps in observation and perception. Colonists in Antigua and New York City attempted to codify in language the elusiveness of insurrection when forged at the cultural intersections of the Atlantic world. As a response, public remembrance served as a reminder of the continued possibility of plots and plotters. They also integrated the colonies' deliverances into England's tradition of secular holidays dating back to the late-sixteenth and early-seventeenth centuries; the spiritual model of plot and deliverance, textually reified by the outpouring of responses to the Gunpowder Treason, shaped how colonists understood their own confrontation with the dizzying confluence of Catholicism, slaves, and plots involving gunpowder.

As the century progressed Pope's Day continued to provide opportunities to align the Fifth of November with thoughts and images of racialized violence. In 1765 *The Boston Post-Boy & Advertiser* reported on the Fifth of November's role in giving public expression to the political turmoil caused by the Stamp Act. The newspaper also made a point to identify Pope's Day as one of exceptionally brutal violence amongst black revelers. First addressing the stage pageantry attending the holiday's celebrations, the piece continues, “these shews of late years has been continued in the Evening, and we have often seen the bad Effects attending them at such a Time; the Servants and Negroes would disguise themselves, and being armed with clubs would engage each other with great Violence, whereby many came off badly wounded.”⁴³ And while the violence here is turned toward “each other,” the paper's conflation of Pope's Day, disguises, and black violence recalls visualizations of slave conspiracies in the 1730s and 1740s.

Considering the Fifth of November's complicated afterlife amidst the synergy of the Atlantic world prompts questions regarding the consequences of commemoration and the far-reaching potential of incendiary historical images. Read as an extension of English commemorative history, the haunting images generated from the Fifth of November offered more than rhetorical ammunition for reports of slave conspiracy. There is a sense, instead, that the Gunpowder Treason performed a crucial role in imaginatively formulating and historically legitimating slave plots. Reports out of Antigua and New York City echo the Gunpowder Treason's lurid details. The Fifth of November contributed to this resurgence of image and sentiment in the

British Caribbean and North America, where commemorations recalled for Protestants a host of associative possibilities. Nor did the Fifth remain strictly the province of white colonists who saw in the Gunpowder Treason's discovery an instance of "special providence," for the legendary story might have been something of a shared resource available for insurrectionaries as well. Against the fluctuating backdrop set by Atlantic print, trade, and commerce, Guy Fawkes and the "the most traitorous and bloody-intended Massacre by Gunpowder" stand in sharp relief as historical referents that gave a form to the veiled indecipherability of what Daniel Horsmanden termed "dark Design."

NOTES

1. Abraham Lincoln, "Address at Cooper Institute, New York City," *Abraham Lincoln: Speeches and Writings, Part 2: 1859–1865*, ed. Don E. Fehrenbacher (New York: Library of America), 124.
2. The most recent histories of the Gunpowder Plot are Alice Hogge, *God's Secret Agents: Queen Elizabeth's Forbidden Priests and the Hatching of the Gunpowder Plot* (New York: HarperCollins, 2005); Antonia Fraser, *Faith and Treason: The Story of the Gunpowder Plot* (New York: Doubleday, 1996); and Mark Nicholls, *Investigating Gunpowder Plot* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1991). See also Francis Edwards, S.J., *Guy Fawkes: The Real Story of the Gunpowder Plot?* (London: Rupert Hart-Davis, 1969).
3. James Travers, *Gunpowder: The Players Behind the Plot* (Kew: The National Archives, 2005), 132–34.
4. Richard F. Hardin, "The Early Poetry of the Gunpowder Plot: Myth in the Making," *English Literary Renaissance* 22.1 (1992): 68.
5. Lancelot Andrewes, XCVI. *sermons by the Right Honorable and Reverend Father in God, Lancelot Andrevves, late Lord Bishop of Winchester. Published by His Majesties special command* (London, 1629), 89.
6. See David Cressy, *Bonfires & Bells: National Memory and the Protestant Calendar in Elizabethan and Stuart England* (Stroud: Sutton Publishing, 2004); and Alexandra Walsham, *Providence in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 243–80.
7. Thomas Vicars, *Edom and Babylon Against Jerusalem* (London: E. Purslow for Henry Seyle, 1633), 2–3.
8. Richard Smith, *The powder treason, propounded, by Sathan. Approved, by Antichrist. Enterprised, by papists. Practized, by traitors. Reveled, by an eagle. Expounded, by an oracle. Founded in hell. Confounded in heaven* (London, c. 1615); Thomas Barlow, "To The Reader," in James I, *The Gunpowder-treason with a discourse of the manner of its discovery, and a perfect relation of*

the proceedings against those horrid conspirators... (London: Printed by Tho. Newcomb and H. Hills, 1679), 1–6.

9. William Leigh, *Queen Elizabeth Paralleled in her Princely vertues, with David, Iosua, and Hezekia* (London, 1612).
10. Francis D. Cogliano, *No King, No Popery: Anti-Catholicism in Revolutionary New England* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1995), 5.
11. Joyce Chaplin notes, "The use of the word "gunpowder" to label the Catholic plot against King James in 1605 continued the English association among gunpowder, foreignness, and treachery." See Chaplin, *Subject Matter: Technology, the Body, and Science on the Anglo-American Frontier, 1500–1676* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001), 91.
12. For more on the scientific history of gunpowder, see William R. Newman, *Promethean Ambitions: Alchemy and the Quest to Perfect Nature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004) and Brenda J. Buchanan, "'The Art and Mystery of Making Gunpowder': The English Experience in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries," in *The Heirs of Archimedes: Science and the Art of War through the Age of Enlightenment* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2005), 233–75.
13. Thomas Harris, *Popery and slavery display'd: containing the character of popery, and a relation of popish cruelties... to which are added, the demands of the pope and pretender, on this nation...* (London: Printed for C. Corbett... [etc.], 1745), 30, 53.
14. Jonathan Arac, *The Emergence of American Literary Narrative, 1820–1860* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005), 220. Arac's claim suggests that insurrectionary populations carried the threat of sudden, unexpected eruption, catastrophic to the landscape and social order. For the volcano's relationship to shipboard slave revolts and rebellious masculinity, see Maggie Montesinos Sale, *The Slumbering Volcano: American Slave Ship Revolts and the Production of Rebellious Masculinity* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1997).
15. Cressy, *Bonfires & Bells*, 146.
16. Much has been said regarding the "patterns" of slave resistance. See David Barry Gaspar, *Bondmen & Rebels: A Study of Master-Slave Relations in Antigua, With Implications for Colonial British America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985), especially Part III, "Patterns of Slave Resistance." Michael Craton discusses the Antigua Plot in relation to "The Barbadian pattern of slave resistance" in *Testing the Chains: Resistance to Slavery in the British West Indies* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1982), 115–25. For a reading of slave resistance in relation to Atlantic-world economy, see Douglas R. Egerton, "Slaves to the Marketplace: Economic Liberty and Black Rebelliousness," *Journal of the Early Republic* 26, 4 (2006): 617–39. Also see Peter Wood's chapter "Patterns of Black

- Resistance,” in *Black Majority: Negroes in Colonial South Carolina from 1670 through the Stono Rebellion* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1974), 285–307.
17. John Smith, *The Generall Historie of Virginia, New-England, and the Summer Isles [1584–1624]* (London: I.D. and I.H...., 1624), 197 (<http://docsouth.unc.edu/southlit/smith/smith.html>).
 18. Nicholas M. Beasley’s *Christian Ritual and the Creation of British Slave Societies, 1650–1780* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2009), 47.
 19. Daniel Leeds, *Leeds, 1713. The American Almanack for the Year of Christian Account 1713* (Newport and New York: William Bradford, 1712).
 20. Historians often discuss Pope’s Day alongside the rise of urban street politics leading up to the American Revolution. See Coglianò, *No King, No Popery*, 23–41; Gary B. Nash, *The Urban Crucible: The Northern Seaports and the Origins of the American Revolution* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1979), 164–75; Paul Gilje, *The Road to Mobocracy: Popular Disorder in New York City, 1763–1834* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1987); and Alfred Young, *The Shoemaker and the Tea Party: Memory and the American Revolution* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1999). Brendan McConville reconsiders these approaches in “Pope’s Day Revisited, ‘Popular’ Culture Reconsidered,” in *Explorations in Early American Culture* 4 (2000): 258–280. To date, the most comprehensive study of the Fifth of November’s rhetorical legacy in early America is Kevin Doyle’s “Rage and Fury Which Only Hell Could Inspire”: The Rhetoric and the Ritual of Gunpowder Treason in Early America” (PhD diss., Brandeis University, 2013).
 21. Atlantic Studies has renewed our interest in the processes through which people, ideas, beliefs, and customs extended from the metropole to the periphery. The foundational work is Paul Gilroy’s *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double-Consciousness* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1995). See also Bernard Bailyn’s *Atlantic History: Concept and Contours* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005); Jack P. Greene and Philip D. Morgan, *Atlantic History: A Critical Appraisal* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009). Introducing a recent work devoted to urban identity and the Atlantic world, Leonard von Morzé notes what draws the volume together is a collective investment in exploring “the interstitial connections, the links between local, urban, regional, and indeed national kinds of belonging.” See *Urban Identity and the Atlantic World*, ed. Elizabeth Fay and Leonard von Morzé (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 2.
 22. The standard study of the Antigua plot is Gaspar’s *Bondmen & Rebels*.
 23. “Extract of a Letter from a Gentleman in Antigua to his Friend in Boston, dated October 18, 1736,” *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, 16 December 1736.

24. "Extract of a Letter from Antigua," 24 October 1736, reprinted in *Virginia Gazette*, 18 April 1737.
25. My main source for the Antigua plot is "*A full and particular Account of the Negro Plot in Antigoa, as reported by the Committee appointed by the Government there to enquire into the same,*" which appeared in Peter Zenger's *New-York Weekly Journal* in 1737 from March 28 through April 25. The pages are not numbered.
26. Eugene Genovese contends Catholicism provided Akan and Coromantee slaves with a set of religious tenets that corresponded more easily with West African beliefs than did Protestantism: "The West African belief in a pantheon of gods passed to drastically different political settings in the New World. Without doubt it syncretized much better with Catholic than with Protestant Christianity." Eugene Genovese, *Roll, Jordan, Roll: The World the Slaves Made* (New York: Vintage, 1976), 210.
27. Wood, *Black Majority*, 303. See also Herbert Aptheker, *American Negro Slave Revolts* (1943; New York: International Publishers, 1993), 85–86.
28. For more on Afro-Catholicism, see Eugene Genovese, *Roll, Jordan, Roll: The World the Slaves Made* (New York: Vintage, 1976), 209–32, and Mark Smith, "Remembering Mary, Shaping Revolt: Reconsidering the Stono Rebellion," *The Journal of Southern History* 67.3 (2001): 513–34.
29. Gaspar citing Oruna D. Lara in *Bondmen & Rebels*, 262n.
30. Brendan McConville maintains, "[T]his plan bears more than a superficial resemblance to Guy Fawkes's plot to blow up James I and Parliament," that "[S]ince the conspirators were aware of the royal holidays, it is entirely possible they drew some inspiration from that conspiracy." Brendan McConville, *The King's Three Faces: The Rise & Fall of Royal America, 1688–1776* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006), 179–80. Natalie Zacek also notes the conspirators may have "planned to take a leaf from Guy Fawkes's book." Natalie Zacek, *Settler Society in the English Leeward Islands, 1660–1776* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 38. See also Nicholas M. Beasley's *Christian Ritual and the Creation of British Slave Societies, 1650–1780* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2009), 47.
31. Antigua was part of what Peter Linebaugh and Marcus Rediker call a "Caribbean Cycle of Rebellion" rippling throughout Atlantic colonies in the 1730s and 1740s. Linebaugh and Rediker's work investigates Atlantic-world proletarian rebellion, situating insurrections in British Caribbean colonies alongside those in French, Spanish and Dutch territories, as well as North American port cities like New York. They maintain the primarily African American revolts of the period branched out to include "other areas . . . and other actors." See Linebaugh and Rediker, *The Many-Headed*

Hydra: Sailors, Slaves, Commoners, and the Hidden History of the Revolutionary Atlantic (Boston: Beacon Press, 2000), 193–198.

32. The New York Conspiracy of 1741 and its subsequent trials have garnered a fair amount of scholarly attention. See Thomas Davis, *A Rumor of Revolt: The "Great Negro Plot" in Colonial New York* (New York: The Free Press, 1985); and Jill Lepore, *New York Burning: Liberty, Slavery, and Conspiracy in Eighteenth-Century Manhattan* (New York: Vintage Books, 2005). For the conspiracy's Atlantic context, see Peter Linebaugh and Marcus Rediker, *The Many-Headed Hydra*, 174–211. Graham Russell Hodges situates the plot in a "Thirty-Year Rebellion" in *Root & Branch: African Americans in New York & East Jersey, 1613–1863* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999), 91–98. Also see Andy Doolen's reading of the conspiracy in the context of the War of Jenkins's Ear in *Fugitive Empire: Locating Early American Imperialism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005), 1–39. For a reading of the role of black testimony in the rhetorical shaping of the plot, see Richard Bond, "Shaping a Conspiracy: Black Testimony in the 1741 New York Plot," *Early American Studies* 5.1 (2007): 63–94.
33. All page references are to Daniel Horsmanden, *A Journal of the Proceedings in the Detection of the Conspiracy Formed by Some White People, in Conjunction with Negro and other Slaves, for Burning the City of New-York in America, and Murdering Inhabitants* (New-York: Printed by James Parker, 1744).
34. Qtd. in Wood, *Black Majority*, 299.
35. Qtd. in Linebaugh and Rediker, *The Many-Headed Hydra*, 190.
36. Serena Zabin, "Introduction," *The New York Conspiracy Trials of 1741, Daniel Horsmanden's Journal of the Proceedings, with Related Documents*, ed. Serena R. Zabin (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2004), 23. For an extended reading of the anti-Catholicism of the trials, see Zabin, *Dangerous Economies: Status and Commerce in Imperial New York* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009), 142–49.
37. Horsmanden, Daniel. *The New-York conspiracy, or, A history of the Negro plot, with the journal of the proceedings against the conspirators at New-York in the years . . .* (New York: Southwick & Pelsue, 1810), i–ii.
38. Kwasi Konadu, *The Akan Diaspora in the Americas* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 195.
39. Alfred F. Young, "Ebenezer Mackintosh: Boston's Captain General of the Liberty Tree," in *Revolutionary Founders: Rebels, Radicals, and Reformers in the Making of the Nation*, ed. Alfred F. Young, Gary B. Nash, and Ray Raphael (New York: Vintage Books, 2012), 22.
40. Gary B. Nash, *The Urban Crucible*, 165.
41. Alfred F. Young, *The Shoemaker and the Tea Party*, 94.

42. See Paul Gilje, *Liberty on the Waterfront: American Maritime Culture in the Age of Revolution* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004), 101.
43. *The Boston Post-Boy & Advertiser* [Boston, MA], 11 November 1765.

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Circling the Squares: City-Building in Benjamin Franklin's *Autobiography*

Betsy Klimasmith

As a boy growing up on the edge of a circulating world, Benjamin Franklin's earliest ambition was to leave Boston and go to sea. In Franklin's *Autobiography*, the idea of going to sea is vague, full of the open-ended possibility that the Boston of Franklin's youth could never offer. His father forbids his seafaring plan, preferring Benjamin to follow him into the tallow trade. "But," Franklin writes in his *Autobiography*, "my dislike to the Trade continuing, my Father was under Apprehensions that if he did not find one for me more agreeable, I should break away and get to Sea, as his Son Josiah had done, to his great Vexation" (17).¹ Hoping to find a more appealing land-based occupation, father and son walk around colonial Boston to watch different tradesmen at work. Although none of the trades he sees appeals to him, walking with his father demonstrates to Franklin that interpersonal connections are fundamental to economic success in the small-town setting. Circulating both enlarges and circumscribes young Benjamin's horizons; he and his father witness a panorama of activity and forge connections, but the circulation itself aims at keeping the boy in his place. Soon enough, Franklin would be apprenticed to his brother James, a printer, and eventually forced to leave

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Boston (at least, as the *Autobiography* tells it) after James foreclosed his younger brother's career options by "going round and speaking to every Master, who accordingly refus'd to give me Work" (25). Impeded from economic mobility by his brother's circulation, Franklin leaves town in order to circulate anew.

Whether physical, economic, or both, circulation becomes a guiding metaphor throughout the *Autobiography*.² On his arrival in Philadelphia, Franklin tests his theory that circulation begets economic success—and impeded circulation leads to failure—by walking in circles around Philadelphia's gridded streets until he establishes the personal connections that will bring him gainful employment. As a young man in London, Franklin learns a new mode of performative urban circulation based on personality and reputation. Back in Philadelphia, he uses this mode of urban circulation to build a public persona that he then leverages to transform the physical city through which he circulates. As Franklin circles the squares—of gridded streets, of his chart of virtues, of the pages of the *Autobiography*—he enacts a theory of recursive improvement that extends from the body to the physical spaces of the city to the body politic, in which even the most grand and abstract transformation is grounded in physical movement. As it structures the *Autobiography*, I argue, circulation enabled Franklin's engagement with the Atlantic world he inhabited and helped to shape.

Perhaps because it is so widely read, the *Autobiography* can be simplified and even parodied as the prototypical narrative of individual self-making and, at the same time, the making of what Ed White calls, "the paradigmatic American."³ White calls for, and enacts, readings that intervene in this "bifocal vision" of Franklin that has "effectively *blocked* . . . divergent readings—of Franklin as class agent, as booster, as local organizer, as practical revolutionary and/or reactionary."⁴ We can see this bifocal vision at work when Alan Houston writes, "Franklin's delight at improvement leaps from almost every page he wrote. Large or small, moral or material, he relished every step forward."⁵ But as Houston rightly clarifies, improvement is not the same as "progress." The grids of improvement included as illustrations in the *Autobiography* through which Franklin attempts to achieve more virtuous behavior are often read as visual representations of a linear quest. But as with so many other incidents narrated in the *Autobiography*, change comes about through the recursive act of circling the squares of the gridded chart, the gridded streets, or the printed matter that Franklin sees as perpetually revisable. And significantly, the "improvement" Franklin experienced and

enacted by circling the squares was more collective and social than the typical focus on Franklin's individuality acknowledges.

Franklin was not the only author to manipulate Philadelphia's grids for literary purposes. As Samuel Otter notes, "Many [Philadelphia writers] used the grid to disorient and reposition their readers. They twisted the trope. Figurative play with the grid helped to structure literary responses to Philadelphia, as writers charted the gap between abstract and actual space."⁶ Though Otter limits his discussion to Franklin's famous grid of virtues, there is much to be gained by investigating the powerful connections between abstract and actual space in Franklin's *Autobiography*. The text itself offers a model for reading that knits these imaginary and concrete spaces together. By showing how Franklin physically and rhetorically circulates through gridded blocks whose geometry becomes transformative only through human experience, I attempt here to help refract the bifocal vision of Franklin as individual. As we will see, in the tension between the circle and the square, the street and the wheel, lines of type and the circulation of ideas that print makes possible, Franklin develops and enacts a mode of urban circulation in which "culture" is a process that transforms the individual, the community, and the city itself.⁷

BOSTON

Franklin's theory of circulation, simply put, is that we move forward by going round. The *Autobiography* repeatedly demonstrates this theory at work. But in the Boston section of the *Autobiography*, Franklin demonstrates circulation's power by portraying himself as powerless to circulate. With his father, he circulates among the professions as a mere observer; when his father finds him a genial occupation as a printer, the trade that enables the written word to circulate, it comes at the cost of Benjamin's indentured servitude to his brother James. As an indentured servant, Franklin cannot circulate as himself, but only as his brother's property. He can circulate his writing, but only incognito—or dead. Small wonder Franklin dreamt of going to sea and circulating endlessly on the ocean currents.⁸

In 1728, while bound to James, Franklin articulated his recursive theory of self-making in his famous "epitaph":

The Body of B. Franklin, Printer; like the Cover of an old Book, Its Contents torn out, And stript of its Lettering and Gilding, Lies here, Food for Worms.

*But the Work shall not be wholly lost; For it will, as he believ'd, appear once more, In a new & more perfect Edition, Corrected and amended By the Author.*⁹

Here we see at once how recursive revision can improve an individual, and note as well Franklin's total inability to improve his life as he lives it. Only after he is "food for worms" can the next "corrected and amended" edition be released. He publishes under his own name here, but from the imagined grave.

The young Franklin learns about the intellectual community he longs to enter from his brother's "Writing Friends" when they visit the house he and his brother/owner share. At about the time Franklin wrote his fictional epitaph, he recalls:

after having worked in composing the Types and printing off the Sheets, I was employ'd to carry the Papers thro' the Streets to the Customers. He had some ingenious Men among his Friends, who amus'd themselves by writing little Pieces for this Paper, which gain'd it Credit and made it more in Demand; and these Gentlemen often visited us. Hearing their Conversations, and their Accounts of the Approbation their Papers were receiv'd with, I was excited to try my Hand among them; but, being still a Boy, and suspecting that my Brother would object to printing any Thing of mine in his Paper if he knew it to be mine, I contriv'd to disguise my Hand, and, writing an anonymous Paper, I put it in at Night under the Door of the Printing-House.

It was found in the Morning, and communicated to his Writing Friends when they call'd in as usual. (23)

As a young apprentice, Franklin circulates through the streets of Boston on his brother's behalf. He must conceal his identity for his writing, in this case, the Silence Dogood essays, to circulate in the pages of his brother's lively and controversial newspaper, the *New-England Courant*, and, perhaps, allow him to join the group of men who actively shape Boston's intellectual scene.¹⁰ Learning that readers appreciate his writing brings Franklin "exquisite Pleasure," but it is a pleasure he can only experience by erasing himself.

Franklin's Silence Dogood essays grapple with contemporary issues through the persona of a recently-widowed woman, a far cry from the identity of the teenage boy apprentice Franklin then inhabited. When Franklin's authorship was revealed, James was not pleased. Franklin

threatened to leave James's print shop, but recalls that James "took care to prevent my getting employment in any other Printing-House of the Town, by going round and speaking to every Master, who accordingly refus'd to give me work" (25). Circulation is powerful. It can unleash desire; it can shut down opportunity. When James circulates, he binds the community together to enforce a collective punishment far more stinging than one he could enact alone. While in Boston Franklin must hide his name in order to succeed as a writer; revealing his identity destroys his nascent career. Successful circulation, then, requires the circulator to have autonomy, to control his path, to own the identity under which he circulates, and to nurture the connections he makes. Only then can the force of the collective be ignited to determine an individual's—and thus the community's—future.

PHILADELPHIA I: GOING ROUND THE TOWN

In the early sections of the *Autobiography*, circulating—or "going round" as Franklin puts it—is linked to urban success; impeded circulation, to failure. When Benjamin, James, or their father Josiah Franklin move through Boston, they navigate the landscape of a colonial town in which they are known. Circulation happens face to face; when James speaks to "every master," we imagine that he speaks personally to familiar people. Shut out of work by James's circulation, Franklin moves to Philadelphia, which, like Boston, "was a dynamic, growing town."¹¹ There, he begins by imitating his brother: circulating in order to make the personal connections that will establish him in his new locale.

Franklin arrives in Philadelphia knowing no one, a situation he immediately works to remedy. After purchasing "three great Puffy Rolls," he "goes round" the waterfront neighborhood.

Thus I went up Market Street as far as Fourth Street, passing by the door of Mr. Read, my future Wife's Father, when she standing at the Door saw me, and thought I made as I most certainly did a most awkward ridiculous Appearance. Then I turn'd and went down Chestnut Street and part of Walnut Street, eating my Roll all the Way, and coming round found myself again at Market Street Wharf, near the boat I came in. . . . (29)

As he walks Philadelphia's gridded streets, Franklin's recursive route turns rectilinear space into a circle, one he can "go round" much as he did through Boston's famously tangled streetscape. Yet already he constructs Philadelphia as a different kind of space from Boston, a space in which his present, writerly self reflects on his past self through the eyes of an anonymous spectator. Though Deborah Read's impression of Franklin may be apocryphal, clearly Philadelphia is a place where appearances matter. But importantly, through recursive circulation initial impressions may be overcome; the impression of his "Future Wife" can be remade as Franklin repeats—and improves—his performance.

Through physical movement, Franklin demonstrates that circulation is repetition with a difference. Having gone round the grid once, he goes round again, slightly revising his aims. Instead of seeking bread, he "walk [s] again up the street" and finds a place to rest by joining the "clean dress'd People in it who were all walking the same Way"—to the Quaker Meeting House. After his nap, he continues to travel his circuit, this time with a third goal in mind—interpersonal connection:

Walking again down towards the River, and looking in the Faces of People, I met a young Quaker Man whose Countenance I lik'd, and accosting him requested he would tell me where a Stranger could get Lodging. We were then near the Sign of the Three Mariners. Here, says he, is one Place that entertains Strangers, but it is not a reputable House; if thee wilt walk with me, I'll show thee a better. He brought me to the Crooked Billet in Water Street. (29)

In connecting with the "young Quaker man," Franklin undergoes a conversion from "Stranger" to acquaintance. The young man addresses Franklin as "thee," the familiar form of address commonly used by eighteenth-century Quakers as part of "plain speech" that attempts to avoid distinctions of rank. Having put Franklin on a par with himself, the young man walks Franklin to the Crooked Billet, a tavern just one street off of Franklin's original circuit. All of the other important locations in Franklin's first Philadelphia life are located on the original circuit he travels on his arrival: Bradford's shop; the Reads' house; Samuel Keimer's printing shop, where he got the job that would provide his entrée into Philadelphia society; and the Indian Head Tavern, where Franklin's Junto club met to share their books and circulate their essays.

As Franklin completes these three early circuits, he layers experiences like stacks of printed paper: they define him yet are always available to be revised. In circling the squares, he moves from viewer to participant, outsider to insider, stranger to friend. His first circuit is one of orientation. He begins as an independent actor free to choose his future, the possibilities of which emerge when he encounters a new place and immediately understands that his old identity will not work in his new community. Franklin does not understand the currency or the language Philadelphians use, which is why he spends all of his money to buy more bread than he can possibly eat. Franklin has to become Philadelphian in order to succeed in this new place. Though in this episode Philadelphians use their own currency, practice an unfamiliar religion, and speak a different language—at least where bread is concerned, Philadelphia's economy clearly resembles Boston's in the necessity for circulation marked by face-to-face interaction. To adapt to this new place and become the new version of himself that will thrive there, Franklin draws on an old method: he goes round.

During his second circuit, Franklin chooses the hallmarks of his new identity. Transforming the idea of baptism (and foreshadowing the *Autobiography's* motif of swimming), he drinks from the Schuylkill River, ingesting its water to become Philadelphian, making the place a part of himself. He gives his extra roll to a woman and child, highlighting that his new Philadelphian self will be marked by charity and generosity. After imbibing the river water, he jumps into the river of humanity flowing through the streets, traveling with the current anonymously and silently. Both a part of and apart from the group, he sleeps through Quaker meeting but emerges from it with a friend.

Franklin's third circuit happens the next morning, when he goes to seek employment with Andrew Bradford, whose father he had met while job hunting in New York. Though Andrew Bradford doesn't have work for Franklin, the elder Bradford, much like Franklin's father had, goes round with Franklin to Keimer's printshop, where his Philadelphia career will begin. "And when we found him, Neighbor, says Bradford, I have brought to see you a young Man of your Business, perhaps you may want such a One" (30). Though Keimer was relatively new to Philadelphia's printing community, Bradford addresses him as "neighbor" and implicitly vouches for Franklin's ability by accompanying Franklin in person to Keimer's shop, highlighting the multiple personal connections that must preface a business discussion. Philadelphia at this point is a town like Boston, where one must circulate and personally connect with others in order to thrive. In

this third circuit, Franklin learns from others, deepens personal connections, and establishes himself in his new community. But it is clear that circulating has changed him. He now experiences personal connection as mentorship instead of the ownership exerted by his Boston indentures.

As he circles the squares, Franklin gradually improves his situation, gaining both independence and connections by circulating as a new and improving self who changes in relation to others. This was impossible in Boston, where his circulation was impeded, but in Philadelphia the gridded streetscape organizes and facilitates his circulation. Linearity allows for circulation even in a place where Franklin is a stranger and enables him to begin joining his new community. The grid allows him to orient himself so that he always knows where he is. For instance, he can always find the water by looking down a long street to the port. The grid's ability to situate a newcomer in place translates to Franklin's ability to circulate freely—but always in the company of others—through space, a pattern that will expand through the *Autobiography* to encompass urban and later national improvement.

ROUND-TRIP TO LONDON

One recurring problem with Franklin's recursive social improvement is this: at a certain point the situation toward which he has strived becomes as constraining as the life he worked to escape. The community that initially fosters a process of growth eventually hinders it. After working in Philadelphia for several years, when Franklin wants to move from employee to owner of a print shop, he has to jump out of the groove his Philadelphia circuit has worn. As was true in Boston, moving beyond his well-traveled path means boarding a ship, this time to London. Franklin's main objective in London is to purchase a new set of type, a commodity unavailable in the colonies, that will allow him to open his own print shop. But circumstances conspire to keep him in London, where he quickly marks out a new circuit. By circulating through the spaces and scenes of the capital city, Franklin transforms himself again, this time into a cosmopolitan young man.

Yet this journey will be circular in an even broader sense; almost as soon as he arrives in London, Franklin's errand is framed as a round-trip voyage from which he will return transformed. The trip to London is initially conceived as a shopping errand: with the backing of Governor Keith, Franklin plans to buy the "Press and Types, Paper, etc." he needs to set

up his own business. But when he arrives in London, Franklin learns that Keith never sent the letter of credit necessary to purchase his inventory, an omission that leaves Franklin only slightly less destitute than when he first arrived in Philadelphia. His British friend Denham sympathizes, but casts Franklin's disappointment in a positive light. "On my expressing some Concern about what I should do: He advis'd me to endeavor getting some Employment in the Way of my Business. Among the Printers here, says he, you will improve yourself; and when you return to America, you will set up to greater advantage" (42). Historian Julie Flavell notes that "a London apprenticeship was an invaluable start for a colonial newspaperman"¹²; Franklin's brother James had served his own apprenticeship in London years before. Denham's prediction that Franklin would return to Philadelphia a better businessman does come to pass, but London also transforms Franklin in ways Denham does not quite foretell.

Franklin transforms himself not simply through labor, but by circulating through cosmopolitan London's many social and cultural pleasures. Franklin first made an imaginative circuit through literary London as a teenager, when he taught himself to write by revising articles he read in the *Spectator*, then London's leading intellectual periodical. He immersed himself in literary culture, but only internally—and this individuated mode of culture was a pale imitation of urban culture in action. Franklin's imagined London—like the *Spectator*—was already an intellectual space filled with the conversation of the day's leading thinkers. The reality is far better; London's cosmopolitan offerings are simply too tempting for even the famously frugal Franklin to resist. At the print shop, he writes, "I was pretty diligent; but spent with Ralph a good deal of my Earnings in going to Plays and other Places of Amusement. We had together consumed my Pistoles, and now just rubb'd on from hand to mouth" (43). This circulation through the city, while entertaining and no doubt edifying, also traps Franklin in a cycle of consumption that keeps him in London far longer than he initially anticipated: "In fact, by our Expenses, I was constantly kept unable to pay my Passage" (43). His inability to return to Philadelphia forces him to keep "going round" London. As he does, he internalizes a new way of circulating appropriate to "the largest city in the western world, with a population more than twenty times the size of colonial towns like Boston"¹³—a method of public circulation that he will use to transform Philadelphia on his return.

Franklin commits several "errata" while in London, but in his typical style, these seem not to have lasting effects. No circulation is completely

unproductive, and each new turn offers the potential for revision. Once in London, he socializes with the very writers whose names and ideas he encountered in Boston and Philadelphia when he “met” them in the pages of the *Spectator*. He follows their example, making a name for himself by circulating it in text and in cosmopolitan space. As Benjamin Franklin, he publishes pamphlets, frequents coffee shops, makes friends with book-sellers and philosophers, and almost agrees to travel “all over Europe” with a new friend. He learns from London a mode of circulating as a process in which one’s name travels in print, building one’s reputation, as one’s body circulates through urban space and mingles with others to become a cosmopolitan person. With the London circle mastered, Franklin jumps back to encounter a familiar place anew. Franklin’s friend Denham “dissuaded me from [the European travel plans]; advising me to think only of returning to Pennsylvania, which he was now about to do,” and Franklin agrees (48). With Denham’s financial backing, Franklin returns to Philadelphia a young cosmopolitan, ready to develop a public persona by circulating it through the town.

PHILADELPHIA II: CIRCULATING AN URBAN PERSONALITY

After Franklin returns from London, he walks around Philadelphia, recalling his initial circuit there and reflecting upon how circulation—in this case of paper currency—has improved the townscape he first encountered in 1720.

I now saw all the old Houses inhabited, and many new ones building, whereas I remember’d well, that when I first walk’d about the Streets of Philadelphia, eating my Roll, I saw most of the Houses in Walnut Street between Second and Front Streets with Bills on their Doors, to be let; and many likewise in Chestnut Street, and other Streets; which made me then think the Inhabitants of the City were one after another deserting it. (63)

It is 1729 when Franklin revisits the scene of his first Philadelphia circuits and revises his initial impressions through the lens of the cosmopolitan he has become. During those first rounds, he made connections with other people that were necessary for him to eat, sleep, and work in a town structured by neighborliness. As he recalls that initial encounter from a post-London perspective, he sees urban space as structured by occupancy rates, real estate transactions, and the circulating currency that has

brought renewed life to the area. The scene, written in 1771, is narrated by an older Franklin, the Franklin who had debated paper currency with his Junto club, argued for essays that circulated among powerful readers, and profited from these argument as the currency's printer. As the *Autobiography* moves into the post-London era, Franklin re-sees his 1720 encounter through new and cosmopolitan eyes that move back and forth through time as his body circulates through space.

This moment, when Franklin reconstructs his environs from a neighborly townscape to a cityscape defined by capital, immediately precedes one of the *Autobiography's* best-known passages, the wheelbarrow episode, in which a newly cosmopolitan Franklin, having returned from London and set up his own printing business, conspicuously wheels a cart laden with paper through the Philadelphia streets in an episode of shameless self-promotion.

In order to secure my Credit and Character as a tradesman, I took care not only to be in *Reality* Industrious and frugal, but to avoid all *Appearances* of the Contrary. I drest plainly; I was seen at no Places of idle Diversion. I never went out a-fishing or shooting; a Book, indeed, sometimes debauch'd me from my Work, but that was seldom, snug, and gave no Scandal: and, to show that I was not above my Business, I sometimes brought home the Paper I purchas'd at the Stores thro' the Streets on a Wheelbarrow. Thus being esteem'd an industrious thriving young Man, and paying duly for what I bought, the Merchants who imported Stationery solicited my Custom; others propos'd supplying me with Books, and I went on swimmingly. (64)

Here, Franklin creates and performs an image of industry on the city streets—a performance that, he notes, proves personally and economically profitable. Circulating through the streets, Franklin creates a name for himself. By carefully monitoring his public activities, Franklin enacts a composite performance that allows him to shape his own reputation and to become known to his fellow city-dwellers in a way that he chooses. Trish Loughran notes that “Franklin’s wheelbarrow is not really a sign of anything in particular, but just, cannily, a sign—one that Franklin uses to create and promote an appearance, among his neighbors and customers, of integrity, frugality, industry, and success.”¹⁴ The sign, however, gains real meaning through circulation; Franklin is clearly aware that in order for him to appear to be anything in particular, he needs his neighbors to see

him. Being “esteem’d a thriving young Man” allows him to thrive, to prosper in his business, to, in one of Franklin’s favorite terms, go on “swimmingly.” Circulation allows him to be known, to promote a particular self and, in moving through space, to become the role he performs.

In the Philadelphia wheelbarrow episode, then, Franklin reenacts a circulation scene from his youth but takes care to manage all of the elements over which his brother had control in Boston. In both cases, he does all of the work, taking pains in Philadelphia to perform that work “to show that [he] was not above [his] business.” But in Philadelphia he may make all of that work, as well as the profitability that accrues through named circulation, visible. He circulates “thro’ the streets” expressly to create a persona that will be known and approved in a landscape that, at least in Franklin’s mind, is urban, requiring its denizens to project a self because they may not be individually known. And Franklin’s performance, in turn, helps to transform Philadelphia’s streets from sites for friendship to stages for urban performance.

In London, Franklin learned to move through city in an urban fashion of forward motion whose momentum eventually allows him—in conjunction with his neighbors—to improve the physical city round which his wheelbarrow trundles. And as Part One of the *Autobiography* concludes, Franklin’s Philadelphia circuit widens to encompass more of the city and define it as urban space. His circulation becomes less personal and more reputation-oriented, but also imbues him with more agency. When Franklin goes round with his wheelbarrow, he may have to push, but the wheel does the work. More importantly, if Benjamin Franklin is to be seen as industrious, he must *be seen* pushing that wheelbarrow. Perhaps he sees a return after all on those pistoles he seemingly threw away on London theater; here he turns the street into a performance of self. By circulating, he has moved from possession to participant to performer of personality.

INTERSTICES: THE GRIDS OF VIRTUOUS IMPROVEMENT

In Parts Two and Three of the *Autobiography*, Franklin proposes several models of circulation that reflect the gridded spaces he traverses. In the *Autobiography*’s second section, which he wrote in 1784 while living in the Paris suburb of Passy, Franklin moves from recounting incidents of circulation to theorizing and implementing models of change that integrate circulation and improvement. Franklin outlines two of his

mechanisms for improvement: the circulating library and his grid of virtues, both of which aim at improving the user by having (in this case) him circulate through a series of “improving” experiences.

We usually think about a circulating library as an institution that allows books to circulate. But in Franklin’s description, the circulating library’s benefit accrues to the members who circulate through it, week after week, bringing their completed books in with them and taking new books home. He notes:

The Institution soon manifested its Utility, was imitated by other Towns and in other Provinces, the Libraries were augmented by Donations, Reading became fashionable, and our People having no public Amusements to divert their Attention from Study became better acquainted with Books, and in a few Years were observ’d by Strangers to be better instructed and more intelligent than People of the same rank generally are in other Countries. (75)

Here, Franklin piles phrase upon phrase in an almost poetic imitation of a cycle rolling out over time. In the next paragraph, Franklin describes the Charter that allowed the library to operate in perpetuity. As the circulating library operates—perhaps endlessly—people use it recursively, repeating the act of finding, reading, and returning books again and again. And through these cycles, they inexorably improve.

Franklin’s description of the circulating library situates Philadelphia as both a part of and apart from the cosmopolitan world of the Atlantic Rim; Philadelphians may lack London’s “public Amusements” that might “divert their Attention from Study,” yet soon enough they, and by extension Philadelphia as well, will cycle forward and come in contact with the “strangers” who will observe them to be “better instructed and more intelligent than People of the same rank generally are in other Countries.” Like Franklin himself, whose independent study of the *Spectator* only gained significance when he arrived on London’s social scene, the library’s power to improve individuals will only matter when they are “observ’d by Strangers.” According to Franklin’s theory, circulating, whether of people through libraries or of books through the populace, improves Philadelphians and gives them and their city the necessary credibility to enter the global arena as full participants in cosmopolitan culture. In reality, the model worked. In his history of circulating libraries, David Kaser notes, “The first such institution in America was also the most

successful. The Library Company of Philadelphia, established by Benjamin Franklin in 1731, thrives today, still supported largely by the subscription fees of its members.”¹⁵

Of course, the Library Company was itself a revision—in the *Autobiography* Franklin mentions borrowing books in Boston (18), in London (43), and “clubbing our Books to a common Library” among the Junto (66).¹⁶ Franklin’s description in Part Two of the *Autobiography* also importantly revises the library he describes in Part One. After some technical details about the Library Company’s charter, Franklin writes:

This was the Mother of all the North American Subscription Libraries now so numerous. It is become a great thing itself, and continually increasing. These Libraries have improv’d the general Conversation of the Americans, made the common Tradesmen and Farmers as intelligent as most Gentlemen from other Countries, and perhaps have contributed in some degree to the Stand so generally made throughout the Colonies in Defense of their Privileges. (67)

In this 1771 version, Franklin makes explicit the circulating library’s link to revolution and implicitly to nationhood. The Americans who become attuned to the “Defense of their Privileges” are merely “common Tradesmen and Farmers” whose national identity becomes folded into their ability to converse on a par with “Gentlemen from other Countries”—and unless these readers are learning other languages, we must assume that by “other Countries” Franklin means England.

By the time he revisits the circulating library, Franklin moves beyond a national context and understands the effects of the library as a progression from a subset of Philadelphians to a broader, cosmopolitan context—and turns the circulation story into a circulatory theory. In the first version, asserting nationhood as a salient effect of the library matters to Franklin; by 1784 nationhood can already be taken for granted, and now the library’s more important success is the way in which it prepares Americans of many classes to be the intellectual equals with the “People of the same rank . . . in other Countries” among whom they will circulate.¹⁷ Here at least, the *Autobiography* resembles the early American novels Stephen Shapiro describes, in that its “motivations are . . . not those of either nationality or statehood, but the expression of concerns by a particular set of middle-class interests, a bourgeoisie, rising with the tides of change within the circumatlantic world system.”¹⁸ Books

circulate, intelligence circulates, and people circulate to become part of an expanding international scene.

But the library model alone cannot account for the kind of personal transformation that also deeply interests Franklin in the *Autobiography*. The second circulatory theory Franklin explores in Part Two comes to light in his “bold and arduous Project for arriving at moral Perfection” (78). Franklin’s project involves a grid of thirteen virtues, each of which he attempts to embody in turn until his vices are eradicated, enacting the notion of culture as a process through which an individual becomes cultivated. Just as he transformed himself into an urban person by “going round” the gridded streets of Philadelphia, here the gridded plan only operates through a logic of circulation. Rows organize circuits, and as Franklin circles round and round through the squares, he imagines, he will gradually but inexorably improve.

Most critics who discuss the grid of virtues that illustrates the *Autobiography* talk about its rectilinearity and transparency.¹⁹ But for Franklin the linear grid, like Philadelphia’s gridded streets, simply and elegantly facilitates circulation. “[D]etermined to give a Week’s strict Attention to each of the Virtues successively,” Franklin cycles through the virtues at a deliberate pace (81). He terms the circuit a Course:

I could go thro’ a Course complete in Thirteen Weeks, and Four Courses in a Year. And like him who having a Garden to weed, does not attempt to eradicate all the bad Herbs at once, which would exceed his Reach and his Strength, but works on one of the Beds at a time, and having accomplish’d the first proceeds to a second, so should I have, (I hoped) the encouraging Pleasure of seeing on my Pages the Progress I made in Virtue, by clearing successively my Lines of their Spots, til in the End by a Number of Courses, I should be happy in viewing a clean Book after a thirteen Weeks’ daily examination. (81)

Franklin’s garden imagery offers yet another instance in which an apparently linear space generates a recursive, cyclical interaction that enables forward motion. The gardener here attends to each bed in turn in order to achieve results he cannot see “at once,” clearly evoking the notion of culture as a process by harking back to the agricultural sense of the word. Similarly, Franklin circulates through each course of virtues, returning over and over again until he may “clear successively [his] Lines of their Spots.” Perfection proves impossible; a few pages later, Franklin compares

himself to a speckled axe that may never be made wholly clean. The blacksmith in Franklin's analogy responds with a line that neatly summarizes Franklin's cyclical theory of improvement: "Turn on, turn on; we shall have it bright by and by" (84).

But Franklin immediately undercuts this Poor Richard-like aphorism. Like Franklin, the farmer who owns the axe decides that perfection is overrated; he "likes a speckled axe best" (84). The farmer's one-liner offers good evidence for Samuel Otter's assertion that Franklin "appears to be making a joke about the renowned grid" with his improvement chart, but while Franklin shies away from absolute perfection, the motif of circulation—and the theory of recursive improvement that the grid facilitates—remains visible. We see it in Franklin's admiration for George Whitefield's popular sermons: "His Delivery . . . improv'd by frequent Repetitions" (102–03). We see it in the coins and bills he designed as Continental currency in 1776. But most importantly, we see it in the way he describes circulating to improve himself in Part One of the *Autobiography*, and then, in Part Three, circulates the image of his improved self to transform Philadelphia from a town into a city.

PHILADELPHIA III: CIRCULATION AND THE URBAN GRID

In the *Autobiography's* third section, Franklin puts theory into action. Derived from the grid, Franklin's circulatory theory explains the mechanism that has allowed him to construct a new personality by "going round" grids both built and imagined. Part Three reveals how a circulating personality may quite literally transform the grid as it circulates, improving the landscape and the individuals who move through it. As Jennifer Jordan Baker explains, the *Autobiography's* third section enacts Franklin's circulation of himself as a sort of currency—he becomes a personality to whom government officials were willing to extend credit for public projects that would transform Philadelphia. A. Michal McMahon also notes the performative symbiosis between Franklin and Philadelphia. "Franklin emerged as an influential citizen through his work with the city: indeed, the city's physical condition and its character provided the stage and the prompts."²⁰ Two improvements of this sort that Franklin worked on stand out in the *Autobiography*, both of which drew inspiration from and facilitated urban circulation: paving the city's gridded streets and improving streetlight design.

Franklin's circulating personality allowed him to intervene at "that critical stage of a city's transition from town to city—a time when its problems became intractable and demanded amelioration."²¹ Among the many public projects Franklin describes in Part Three of the *Autobiography* was his 1757 "Bill for Paving the City," which was revised in his absence (a return to London) "with an additional Provision for lighting as well as Paving the Streets, which was a great Improvement" (118). Paving the streets was itself a revision of a subscription plan Franklin developed with his neighbors for keeping the streets outside their houses swept clean of the dust that would regularly turn to mud in the rain. "Our City, tho' laid out with a beautiful Regularity, the Streets large, straight, and crossing each other at right Angles, had the Disgrace of suffering those streets to remain long unpav'd, and in wet Weather, the Wheels of heavy Carriages plough'd them into a Quagmire, so that it was difficult to cross them" (117). Franklin's aesthetic appreciation of the grid is clear: he loves the "large, straight" streets with the "beautiful Regularity" of their "right Angles." But even the most pleasing gridded design fails if it impedes movement. By turning round, the wheels create mud that hinders circulation by foot. As Joseph Murphy notes, "By advocating pavement, Franklin recognizes and asserts the artificial plan of the city at the moment when that plan risks being reclaimed by nature."²² But it is not the grid itself Franklin seems to care about; the streets' "beautiful regularity" means nothing if they become a "quagmire" that prevents Philadelphians from circulating.

After all, Franklin learned to circulate on the twisted, curving streets of Boston and London. When he arrived in Philadelphia, his first act was to walk a circuit of streets repeatedly until they offered up—and became—a circle of familiars. This neighborly mode is a crucial underpinning as the town becomes a city. Franklin and his neighbors pool their resources and hire a man to clean the pavement outside their houses, which results not only in cleaner streets, shoes, and houses, but offers great "Benefit to the Shops by more Custom, as Buyers could more easily get at them" (118). The wheels must turn, but Franklin could not allow the wheel to block other movement—in this case the movement of customers that sustained his neighborhood's economic life. Easy urban circulation thus has direct economic benefit for the community.

The improved circulation snowballs in Franklin's recollection, inspiring even greater improvements throughout Philadelphia—transforming a neighborly space into an urban space. "All the Inhabitants of the City

were delighted with the Cleanliness of the Pavements that surrounded the Market; it being a Convenience to all; and this raised a general Desire to have the Streets paved; and made the People more willing to submit to a Tax for that Purpose" (118). The act of speaking personally to one's neighbors to elicit change on a small scale—hiring a single sweeper—leads to people working collectively as a political and economic body. They tax themselves in order to improve their own circulation, transforming the physical space of a town into a city.

Lighting the streets would allow for urban circulation to continue into the darkness of evening, and though Franklin notes that it was not he but "the late Mr. John Clifton" who installed Philadelphia's first street lamp, Franklin's improvement to the streetlamp's design allowed its light to shine more brightly. Streetlamps in London, Franklin recalls, suffered from a problem of circulation.

[T]hey admitted no air below, the smoke did not readily go out above, but circulated in the Globe, lodg'd on its inside, and soon obstructed the Light they were intended to afford....I therefore suggested the composing them of four flat Panes, with a long Funnel above to draw up the Smoke, and Crevices admitting Air below, to Facilitate the Ascent of the Smoke. By this means they were kept clean, and did not grow dark in a few Hours as the London Lamps do, but continu'd bright till Morning....(118-9)

Thanks to Franklin's improvements, Philadelphia outshines even London. By solving the problems of impeded circulation, whether the quagmire of the streets or the smoke that clouds the lamps, Franklin circulates his personality and ideas to help improve urban circulation for all. Murphy notes, "If Philadelphia's grid existed on paper before it existed on site, his plan to improve that grid circulated textually before being legislated into infrastructure."²³ Paving made circulation faster and cleaner; lamps allowed for something like perpetual motion.

Franklin gets the streets paved by bringing people together through the force of his personality. Gridded streets and bright lamps improve upon London but only become possible through the circulation of personality London taught him. But why focus on the small picture of long ago Philadelphians struggling to circulate through their city and, with Franklin's help, transforming a town into a proto-urban space

that would eventually become the new nation's capital and most cosmopolitan city? In Franklin's words:

Some may think these trifling Matters not worth minding or relating. But when they consider, that tho' Dust blown into the Eyes of a single Person or into a single Shop on a windy Day is but of small Importance, yet the great number of the Instances in a populous City, and its frequent Repetitions give it Weight and Consequence; perhaps they will not censure very severely those who bestow some of [their] Attention to Affairs of this seemingly low Nature. (121)

Through recursive repetition, eliminating a single mote of dust broadly improves a "populous City"; circulation literally makes urban spaces. Franklin would use this political model again and again, circulating his name to gain public support and buy-in for other projects—Bush Hill hospital, Constitution Hall, and the University of Pennsylvania, to name just three—that would inexorably transform Philadelphia's physical spaces and cement its status, though temporary, as a capital city. Small changes spiral forward, but also ripple outward, in the Emersonian sense, to transform individuals and the worlds they inhabit. Franklin here shows us how we must bring together mundane and grand visions of the city, turning a bifocal vision into something more, so to speak, progressive.

CIRCULATION AND COMPOSITION

Writing from Passy, France in 1784, Franklin envisioned the second part of his *Autobiography* as part of a recursive cycle. As he concludes the first paragraph of Part Two: "I will endeavor to recollect and write what I can; if I live to get home, it may there be corrected and improv'd" (74). Written after the Revolution, this section of the *Autobiography* finds Franklin in France, a country that responded much more positively than London had to the persona the elder statesman Franklin was then circulating. No longer pushing an actual wheelbarrow, as a diplomat in Paris Franklin "donned a beaver cap, wore a plain wool coat, and charmed the French with his easy confidence, bad grammar, and affable manners."²⁴ Franklin's distinctive outfit was a costume that allowed him to play the American everyman while joining a community of upper-class French intellectuals. White characterizes the *Autobiography* as "an urban masterpiece—skipping across Boston, New York, Philadelphia, and London (and written in Paris)."²⁵ While I agree that the text is an urban masterpiece, it's important to note

that when Franklin wrote Parts Two and Three of the *Autobiography* he did not live in Paris itself, which would not be transformed into a rational “city of light” by Hausmann’s boulevards for decades, but in the leafy enclave of Passy. He avoided the messy, dirty, impoverished streets of the city, preferring to retreat to a country estate where he could host his elite French friends. While he had internalized the lessons he learned “going round” London about performance, his decision to trade active physical circulation for a more sedentary lifestyle—and embrace elitism instead of a neighborly urban collective—had serious consequences.

As Franklin’s letters reveal, writing his memoirs depended on a literal form of circulation—the circulation of his blood, which was impeded by a painful case of gout. In October of 1788, when Franklin was composing what would become the *Autobiography*’s Part Two, he wrote to his friend Benjamin Vaughn, “I am recovering from a long-continued gout, and am diligently employed in writing the History of my Life.”²⁶ Still working the following June, he reported, “I received your kind letter of March 4th, and wish I may be able to complete what you so earnestly desire, the Memoirs of my Life. But of late I am interrupted by extreme pain, which obliges me to have recourse to opium, that, between the effects of both, I have but little time in which I can write anything.”²⁷ Franklin’s gout, the pain it caused him, and the opium he took to relieve it, are thus linked to the composing of the *Autobiography*. In particular, Franklin noted in the earlier letter, he connects his recovery from an episode of gout to the section treating “the year 1756, just before I was sent to England.” Franklin specifically links the alleviation of his painful gout to his representation of transatlantic circulation.

Although Franklin’s gout, not to mention the opium, slowed his work on the *Autobiography*, the painful experience directly inspired at least one hilarious piece of prose, his “Dialogue between Franklin and the Gout.” In the Dialogue, dated “Midnight, 22 October, 1780,” Franklin converses with Madam Gout, a merciless companion who berates and inflicts pain upon the suffering Franklin as a “corrective” for his bad habits, including his predilection for neglecting healthful exercise like walking (even when beautiful French women are involved) in favor of more sedentary occupations like chess. A typical passage follows.

GOUT: Fie, then, Mr. Franklin! But amidst my instructions, I had almost forgot to administer my wholesome corrections; so take that twinge,—and that.

- FRANKLIN. Oh! eh! oh! Ohhh! As much instruction as you please, Madam Gout, and as many reproaches; but pray, Madam, a truce with your corrections!
- GOUT. No, Sir, no,—I will not abate a particle of what is so much for your good,—therefore—
- FRANKLIN. Oh! eh!—It is not fair to say I take no exercise, when I do very often, going out to dine and returning in my carriage.
- GOUT. That, of all imaginable exercises, is the most slight and insignificant, if you allude to the motion of a carriage suspended on springs.²⁸

Franklin's loud protestations, complete with sound effects, alternate with Madam Gout's "wholesome corrections" in an almost sadomasochistic dynamic. Entertaining, yes, but more interesting is the theory Madam Gout weaves into her discipline for what really ails Franklin: not gout per se, but a failure to circulate.

At the end of the Dialogue, Madam Gout proposes that she is Franklin's *real friend* (italics in original) because only she can rouse him from his sedentary occupations to more active pursuits. As the Dialogue begins, Madame Gout ties the circulation of Franklin's body directly to internal circulation, which, though invisible, she presents as necessary to good health.

GOUT: [Y]our amusements, your recreation, at least, should be active. . . . But what is your practice after dinner? Walking in the beautiful gardens of those friends with whom you have dined would be the choice of men of sense; yours is to be fixed down to chess, where you are found engaged for two or three hours! This is your perpetual recreation, which is the least eligible of any for a sedentary man, because, instead of accelerating the motion of the fluids, the rigid attention it requires helps to retard the circulation and obstruct internal secretions. Wrapt in the speculations of this wretched game, you destroy your constitution.²⁹

Franklin's chess games connect him to his cosmopolitan French *amis*; chess is a sophisticated, intellectual pursuit. His "perpetual" pursuit of the game, in which the squares on the board are traveled only by chess pieces that abstract sociable circulation into precise and abstract geometries, extracts him from the process of circulatory motion that kept him healthy. Surely, Franklin argues, as a successful Atlantic rim cosmopolitan he has earned the right to be sedentary. But the "fixed" position he

occupies while “wrapt in the speculations of this wretched game,” impedes internal circulation, “the motion of the fluids” necessary to good health. Madame Gout can tell what is happening internally to Franklin’s “constitution” merely by observing his physical movement—or the lack thereof. Cosmopolitan practices tempt Franklin to be sedentary but paradoxically punish him for sitting still: “so take that twinge,—and that,” she gleefully cries.³⁰

As the Dialogue continues, Madame Gout assigns circulation a second meaning associated specifically with walking. When Franklin attempts to convince Madame Gout that she should count carriage riding as exercise, she will have none of it.

GOUT: Providence has appointed few to roll in carriages, while he has given to all a pair of legs, which are machines infinitely more commodious and serviceable. Be grateful, then, and make a proper use of yours. Would you know how they forward the circulation of your fluids, in the very action of transporting you from place to place; observe when you walk, that all your weight is alternately thrown from one leg to the other; this occasions a great pressure on the vessels of the foot, and repels their contents; when relieved, by the weight being thrown on the other foot, the vessels of the first are allowed to replenish, and, by a return of this weight, this repulsion again succeeds; thus accelerating the circulation of the blood. The heat produced in any given time depends on the degree of this acceleration; the fluids are shaken, the humors attenuated, the secretions facilitated, and all goes well; the cheeks are ruddy, and health is established.³¹

More than an eighteenth-century personal trainer, Madame Gout here proposes a connection between physical mobility and internal circulation, both of which she terms “circulation.” Visibly kinetic circulation has a double benefit: when the body circulates through the world, blood, fluids and humors circulate internally. Like the quagmire-producing wheels that impeded walking in Philadelphia, here the wheeled carriages prevent productive circulation. Walking is democratic, connecting Franklin to the “all” rather than the “few” who “roll in carriages.” Perhaps Franklin is articulating some uneasiness about his decision to remove himself from the city. Madam Gout urges Franklin to see circulating as a means by which he can avoid the pitfalls of privilege and reconnect to the many as a healthful part of his cosmopolitan life. Circulating would thus allow him to be simultaneously of the people and a member of the elite—after all, a man who needs

opium to relieve the suffering that his gout causes him can't possibly compete in the games of sophistication, intelligence and patience required at the chess table or in the cosmopolitan world of European culture the chess table metonymizes.³²

In some ways, the sedentary old man fighting with Madam Gout hearkens back to the earliest edition of Franklin—the feminine persona Franklin adopted to conceal his identity so that he could publish in his brother's paper is now fully internalized. Silence Dogood, in a sense, has become the part of Franklin that urges him to keep circulating, even as the elder statesman Franklin has become asks to rest on his laurels and lose himself in rectilinear chessboards where no piece is allowed to move in a circle. But only with physical circulation restored could Franklin complete the *Autobiography*, which in turn would allow him to circulate himself textually in ways that even he might not have been able to foresee.

CONCLUSION: TOWARD PERPETUAL MOTION

Circulation was the central paradigm through which Franklin understood—and shaped—his world. Whether he was overseeing the circulation of mail through the North American colonies and in the nascent United States as Postmaster General, attending lectures on the circulation of blood and electricity, or writing scientific papers on the circulation of ocean and air currents in the Gulf Stream and Aurora Borealis, circulation of all kinds fascinated him. In the *Autobiography* alone, circulation is key to numerous steps along Franklin's trajectory from near-poverty in Boston to "dinners with kings" in the Atlantic world: the essays he circulated with his writing club, the circulation he gained for his newspapers and for *Poor Richard's Almanac*, the circulating library he established in Philadelphia; the innovative lamps he designed for Philadelphia's streets that owed their brightness to the circulation of air, his own circulation through that city with his loaded wheelbarrow as a public relations campaign, and perhaps most obviously, his recursive path he recommends for eliminating vices en route to virtue.

As an elderly man riding in carriages, flirting with French women, and playing urbane games of chess in an ironically American coonskin cap, Franklin wrote the connected narratives that would become the *Autobiography* we know today. These narratives circle back through his life, tracing a nominally linear path that takes him from boyhood to adulthood, from provincial to cosmopolitan, from Boston to Philadelphia to the world.

But while they lead in a progressive direction, the paths Franklin follows as both author and protagonist are structured not so much (as Joseph Murphy asserts) by the grids of improvement that he traces on the “Ivory Leaves of [his] Memorandum Book” or enacts in urban space by lighting and paving Philadelphia’s gridded streets, but by the way in which these grids fall away both rhetorically and in retrospect. This recursive approach allows Franklin to imagine himself simultaneously as many Franklins, to circle the squares that nominally structure his existence, to retrace his footsteps, to move forward, and in the end, as the *Autobiography*’s recursive structure enacts, to look back and appreciate just how far he and his urban environment have come together.

As it explores and enacts circulation, the *Autobiography* proposes a model of development that always looks back even as it steps forward—that takes risks but learns from them, that will always include errata but aims to correct them in the next edition. In the *Autobiography* Franklin shows us that urban spaces demand and inspire a sort of circulation that makes its inhabitants successful and prepares them to circulate on a wider stage. In return, this circulation inspires Franklin to shape the physical spaces he inhabits—the city, the nation, the world—using circulation as a model to inspire improvements from the mundane, like street sweeping and street lights, to the revolutionary forces of electricity and politics. In the *Autobiography*, then, Franklin constructs a theory of circulation in which constant recursive motion allows for neighborly action that is both inspired by and particularly well suited to moving urban people, urban society, and urban spaces. This version of cosmopolitan culture as a process of perpetual movement refuses to sacrifice a vision of urbanity shaped by and for the “all” rather than the “few.” As it tells numerous stories of circulation—of the body, of publications, of ideas—Franklin’s *Autobiography* employs a recursive structure in order to describe and enact a theory of improvement through which urban people and urban spaces reciprocally make one another.

NOTES

1. All page references are to Benjamin Franklin, *Benjamin Franklin’s Autobiography*, ed. Joyce E. Chaplin (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 2012).
2. In a longer version of this essay, I argue that circulation theory structured large swaths of Franklin’s career including his work in electricity, ocean currents, stoves, the postal service, printing, libraries, and currency, just to name a few of Franklin’s many circulation-based interests.

3. Ed White, *The Backcountry and the City: Colonization and Conflict in Early America* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005), 177.
4. *Ibid.*, 177–78. White’s emphasis.
5. Alan Houston, *Benjamin Franklin and the Politics of Improvement* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), 15.
6. Samuel Otter, *Philadelphia Stories: America’s Literature of Race and Freedom* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 11.
7. Here I draw on the definition of culture as the process by which an individual becomes “civilized,” which Raymond Williams claims was prevalent in eighteenth-century England. “From the early sixteenth century the tending of natural growth was extended to process of human development, and this, alongside the original meaning in husbandry, was the main sense until the late eighteenth century and early nineteenth century.” Raymond Williams, *Keywords* (London: Fontana Press, 1988), 87. Generally in this essay I am thinking of culture in terms of this process, though it will occasionally overlap with two other definitions of culture: first as the ideas and habits shared by a group into which one must be inducted, and second as the particular activities (like the theater and reading) through which Franklin “improves” himself.
8. Much later, Franklin would write about the circulatory science of ocean currents in his work on the Gulf Stream. See “A Letter from Dr. Benjamin Franklin . . . Containing Sundry Maritime Observations,” *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society Volume II* (Philadelphia, 1786): 314–15.
9. This transcription is from the Library of Congress. “Epitaph. 1728.” <http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/treasures/franklin-transcripts.html#61>.
10. Leo LeMay calls the *Courant* “The first literary, lively, entertaining, humorous, and proto-nationalistic American newspaper.” J. A. Leo LeMay, *The Life of Benjamin Franklin Volume I: Journalist 1706–1730* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006), 109. Also note the name *Courant*, with its connotations of running around, or circulating.
11. A. Michal McMahon, “‘Small Matters’: Benjamin Franklin, Philadelphia, and the ‘Progress of Cities,’” *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 116 (1992): 157. While Boston did not grow as quickly as Philadelphia did during the late eighteenth century, both towns expanded during the colonial period of Franklin’s youth.
12. Julie Flavell, *When London was Capital of America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), 190.
13. *Ibid.*, 2.
14. Trish Loughran, *The Republic in Print: Print Culture in the Age of U.S. Nation Building, 1770–1870* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007), 19.
15. David Kaser, *A Book for a Sixpence: The Circulating Library in America* (Pittsburgh: Beta Phi Mu, 1980), 13.

16. On the failings of the Junto's attempt to form a circulating library, see Houston, *Politics of Improvement*, 65.
17. These recursive descriptions of the Library Company work to elide the significance of the American Revolution both in Franklin's life and in American history. For more on this, see White, *The Backcountry and the City*, Chapter 1.
18. Steven Shapiro, *The Culture and Commerce of the American Novel: Reading the Atlantic World-System* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2008), 4. Shapiro explains that "bourgeoisie" refers to a "middle-class faction" (117).
19. See Joseph Murphy, "The Loafer and the Loaf-Buyer: Whitman, Franklin, and Urban Space," *Modern Language Studies* 28 (1998): *passim*.
20. McMahon, "Small Matters," 163.
21. *Ibid.*, 158.
22. Murphy, "The Loafer," 44.
23. *Ibid.*
24. Houston, *Politics of Improvement*, 197.
25. White, *The Backcountry and the City*, 176.
26. Benjamin Franklin, "Letter to Benjamin Vaughn. June 3, 1789," in *Autobiography*, ed. Chaplin, 230.
27. *Ibid.*
28. Benjamin Franklin, "Dialogue between Franklin and the Gout," in *The Oxford Book of American Essays*. ed. Brander Mathews (New York: Oxford University Press, 1914), 9.
29. *Ibid.*, 8.
30. *Ibid.*, 9.
31. *Ibid.*, 9.
32. In the late eighteenth century, chess was far less popular in the United States than it was in Europe.

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Atlantic Thinking in Jane Austen's Novels

Elizabeth Fay

Much has been written, following Edward Said's exposé, about Jane Austen's *Mansfield Park* and the circum-Atlantic slave trade on which the Bertram fortune depends, a dependency the family veils with the drapings of the *haute bourgeoisie*. Although interrogating the interrelation of servitude and character in *Mansfield Park* continues to bear fruit, this essay is concerned with the shifts in Austen's formulations of the Atlantic world in the two novels that precede and succeed *Emma*, which I read as a land-oriented, inward turning rumination on the nature of Burkean gentility: *Mansfield Park* (composed 1811–1813, published 1814), already considerably commentated on in terms of Atlantic topics although not typically with an Atlantic Studies approach or methodology, and *Persuasion*, rarely Atlantically-connected (begun August 1815 two months after the Battle of Waterloo ends the war with France and one day after Napoleon was exiled to St. Helena, 1815 being the same year *Emma* is both finished and published).¹ If Napoleon's capture could be said to redirect Austen's attention, I would argue that redirection moves Atlantically, if not westward. The essay that follows demonstrates Atlantic thinking in Austen's last works.

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Relevant to this argument are several intriguing facts about Austen's composition history: first, that all of her novels are published after the apparently decisive Battle of Trafalgar in 1805, which was the same year her father George Austen died, dramatically changing the lives of his widow and daughters; second, that the Battle of Waterloo appears to provide the impetus for Austen to write *Persuasion*; third, that the retrospective² novel *Emma* is begun just months before—its mood perhaps anticipating—Napoleon's abdication and exile to Elba (April 5, 1814).

Although *Emma* intriguingly complicates the narrative I wish to pursue, I will focus here on the tighter relationship between *Mansfield Park* and *Persuasion*, focusing mostly on the last as the novel that celebrates the Battle of Trafalgar rather than Napoleon's abdication or the Battle of Waterloo, even though Austen begins the novel shortly after the army's victory over France and completes it almost a year to the day later, and writing in the white hot speed of a Napoleon rather than the cooler pace of her previous work. Indeed, *Sanditon*, Austen's uncompleted final novel, begun five months after *Persuasion* was finished (January 1817), actually *grieves* that Waterloo has come to displace Trafalgar from the popular imagination, so much so that the navy is felt to have lost its national pride of place "for Waterloo is more the thing now," as Mr. Parker explains.³ That Nelson has been forgotten by now in favor of Wellington requires that narrative sigh; that the nation could forget how 33 British ships defeated 41 French and Spanish ones, or how Britain lost only 458 men against France and Spain's losses of almost 3250, with total casualties on the order of 80 to one, or how Nelson lost his life in the battle, demands redress, however ironic. If maritime life appears nobler by these statistics, to which *Persuasion* pays tribute in both its admiration of the navy and its recording of anxiety experienced domestically by those who waited for news of the living and the lost, Austen's novels also valorize life bound to the land. Yet *Sanditon* troubles the waters of Austen's arguments for land-based and Atlantic-based worldviews in the novels of 1813–1816 by imagining the dystopian speculation of an ocean-side town's bogus real estate speculation, literally built on sand, and made possible only when one's worldview is neither Atlantic-oriented nor bound to the land, but is rather the space in-between the two (*Sanditon* is imagined on England's southeastern coast, where land literally can slip away, a speculative place). Had Austen lived to finish her parody of the entrepreneurial health industry, she might have connected that sand-based economy with a similarly temporal and disappearing Caribbean slave-trade economy (the

underlying matter of *Mansfield Park*), both devised as systematic exploitation schemes that thrive on urban-based corruption, whether that of risky metropolitan real estate arrangements or of port cities' notorious contraband trade at the wharves. An increasingly disillusioned Austen may have had a stake, as Charles Dickens would soon do, in exposing such hypocrisies. As it is, *Persuasion* as the last finished novel leaves us with an idealized vision of beachside towns, such as Lyme Regis, whose homey backwater approach to healthful waters—despite Louisa's headlong fall into illness—opposes vulgar Sanditon-like exploitations envisioned in the unfinished last work. At the same time, *Persuasion* assures us that it is Louisa's vulgarity that tumbles her down the Lyme Regis steps, whereas the town's oceanfront waters are under a safer, more disciplined male authority. Indeed, *Persuasion* institutes a calmer vision of men's ability to use the waterways with a nobility that in earlier novels Austen is determined to associate only with the land; yet the oceans that *Persuasion*'s naval officers inhabit are haunted by war's dangers and the war yet to come.

Prior to Waterloo and *Persuasion*, the Atlantic signifies for Austen both promise and danger in terms of its land rather than water; in *Mansfield Park*, then, the risks of the Atlantic reside in the impact of abolition (though not yet emancipation) on West Indian planters and the ever-looming threat of Atlantic-borne tropical disease.⁴ In *Persuasion*, by contrast, the risks are in maintaining control of the trade routes so threatened by France's claims to dominion of the waterways; indeed, the only real maritime threat in the novel beyond the possibility of future war is that to East Indian trade and investment, and the fatiguing duties of patrolling British ports in the East Indies such as Java, indicated by Admiral Croft's uneventful but necessary stationing there and Mrs. Croft's suggestion that her single voyage there contrasts sharply with the four times she has traversed the Atlantic. As Jocelyn Harris points out, these four Atlantic trips are specifically aligned with signal events in Britain's war with Napoleon; clearly Admiral Croft's East Indian stationing carries less immediate national import than his Atlantic ones.⁵

However, if wartime encounters protected Britain from Buonaparte's grasp, trade was no less its concern. Slave revolts are a minor worry compared to loss of personal and national income from reduced sugar production and trade embargoes; the two novels depend for their sense of security on national domination in the battle of empires even as the anxieties of empire provide strong analogies for interpersonal instabilities

and tensions. Although the prolonged stay of the patriarch of *Mansfield Park*, Sir Thomas Bertram, was necessitated by the changes wrought by abolition, which required better treatment of slaves no longer easily replaced, his diligence was due to a subsequent reduction in sugar profits; a reduction much troubling for a father whose eldest son is profligate and who has two daughters in need of dowries. Yet that prolonged attention to his slaves transformed Sir Thomas's discernment. To an extent it humanized him, made him less masterly and more fatherly, and although it did not completely reeducate him in matters of interpersonal relationships, it did make him understand the fluidity of his Atlantic-based life. So too, must Frederick Wentworth, in *Persuasion*, learn to translate to the land the fluid thinking so necessary on the Atlantic waters. The Atlantic in particular required a fluidity in controlling the resources of any maritime vessel, mercantile or naval, to survive the vicissitudes of competitive trade, piracy, and military intervention; other aquatic regions were not so demanding, and could instead demand the patience of the long duration, also associated with maritime life and also demanding a fluid flexibility and adaptability.

In terms of the two iconic heroes of France's continental empire and Britain's Atlantic empire, Napoleon and Nelson, both of whom critics believe are models for *Persuasion*'s hero, Captain Wentworth must learn to be more Nelson and less Napoleon, more fluidly and inventively adaptable, less egotistically and aggressively oriented. He must do so in order to reaccommodate himself to domestic life, as Napoleon's exile to Elba—thought to terminate his career—had brought both peace and reduction of active naval personnel. Domestic life is key to the reconstruction of both Sir Thomas and Captain Wentworth, for each must learn that their future felicity is firmly in the hands of each novel's heroine, Fanny Price and Anne Elliot. In both novels it is the heroine who has absorbed and now embodies Atlantic thinking with its cosmopolitan networking, its valuing of affiliation over filiation, and its adaptability and flexibility in the face of challenges to customary thinking. It is Fanny and Anne who represent the fluid mind that will survive the exigencies of fortune and even profit from them.

In arguing for an Atlantic frame of mind, I do not want to claim that Austen imagined herself Atlanticly or was over-invested in the Atlantic world. Her fictional horizon encompasses the East Indies and China but not South America or Africa, and her novelistic universe centers more or less squarely on the lesser properties of the rural gentry. Indeed, in

Mansfield Park both the shore-bound former seaman Mr. Price, Fanny's Portsmouth father, and the urban-based Admiral Crawford, Henry and Mary's uncle, provide negative examples of proper fathering and relational habits; they are in no way flexible or fluid thinkers but act from an assumption of patriarchal right and impropriety that might more typically be associated with the army. Rather, it is the alternating focus on rural and maritime life that characterizes Austen's understanding of her times as she moved from one novel to the next in those which document the war with France and concurrent developments: *Pride and Prejudice* with its militias; *Mansfield Park* with its West Indian plantation and naval family members—particularly Fanny's beloved brother and seaman William; *Emma* with its plot complications generated from the disastrous first marriage of Mr. Weston caused by his dashing appearance in military uniform⁶; and *Persuasion* with its celebration of the British navy's great victory over Napoleon.

But why might Jane Austen be interested in the Atlantic world at all? She did have two brothers, Francis and Charles, who had naval careers, participated in the Napoleonic wars, and ended their careers as admirals. But one of these, Francis, was away for four years in the East Indies during the formative years of his adolescence, and her sister's fiancé died from yellow fever while serving as a military chaplain in the West Indies. But arguably more formative were the following familial facts: her brother Henry, with whom she was very close, was a banker; both that brother and her eldest (James) were ordained; and her third brother (Edward) was by sheer chance a large landowner. Moreover, her father was a vicar and excepting the four years in Bath and brief periods elsewhere, Austen's entire life was spent in Hampshire. However, since the reign of Elizabeth, all of Britain must be considered to have been engaged in an Atlantic enterprise. It is the Atlantic that created the conditions for England's maritime and naval success, its eventual domination of the slave trade that yielded such enormous national wealth, and some of its most important victories over Napoleon from the Battle of the Nile to the Battle of Trafalgar. The very consumption of sugar depended on the fluctuations in price caused by Atlantic conditions; the purchase of Austen's favorite Madeira was equally dependent on Atlantic variables. Life itself was framed by the transatlantic's and circum-Atlantic's deeply felt if not always acknowledged influence.

But Austen the author was equally concerned with negative influences from the European continent on British character, and with the

character-building customs and practices of English tradition. Although England had historically turned eastward toward the continent, its political network heavily inflected with personal and economic European affiliations, the eighteenth century registered Britain's need for a greater sense of autonomy and centered vision, authorized by increasing Whig confidence; the result was a growing nationalism and xenophobia.⁷ It may be this very conflux of nation-based popular and political responses that allowed the British to redirect their gaze westward to the Atlantic. The continent could no longer provide the sense of interdependency and competition that England had long shared with it; at the same time the Atlantic began to hold more promise for a strong economic and political network that would bulwark British power while providing new opportunities for growth and innovation.

However, the new confidence could only be sustained by Britain's ever increasing ability to compete with the great naval powers of the day, Spain and France. If in the preceding century the navy was too blended with piracy and corruption both at home and abroad, by Austen's day the navy could stand as an emblem of national pride, embodying all the gentrified qualities of the land, themselves increasingly identified with urban life. The urban—for Austen, specifically London, Bath, and even small towns where news and gossip commingled with cultivated civility—had come to be synonymous with the values of nobility, civil codes, and the exchange of ideas. If the urban disagrees with Anne Elliot in *Persuasion*, it has less to do with what Bath has to offer than her former memories of it; indeed, by the novel's end Bath will provide Anne with all she could ask for—the height of civility envisioned as marriage with Frederick, whose rehabilitation has made him the ideal naval officer. Yet for Austen, cities cannot be idealized, and London is still the place where Anne's friend Mrs. Smith and her husband were swindled; and Bath is still the place where Anne feels alienated and out of place. Rather, the novel can end happily because Bath becomes a kind of port city, a jumping-off place where Anne and her future husband engage to transfer their values to a maritime habitus. The suggestion is that, even if Anne is left landside, she will imaginatively inhabit the ships that Frederick commands, whose interiors she can already anticipate. The ship, freed from its mooring and afloat in the democracy of intermingling waters, becomes the locus of the civility previously associated with nonaristocratic landed wealth (the Mr. Darcys and Mr. Knightleys of Austen's imagined England), transferred to the city (in *Pride and Prejudice* Darcy rescues the Bennet honor in London; in

its mirror version, *Persuasion*, the now-ideal Frederick Wentworth rescues Anne herself while his wealth and honor arguably restore her family's credit), and then transferred through the united bodies of Anne and Frederick, to shipboard and the seas.

Austen's hopeful vision of a more equitable, water-based *civitas*—indeed a *res publica*—in *Persuasion* is countered beforehand by the dark seas of the slave trade in *Mansfield Park*, and afterward by the duplicity of seaside health-industry schemes in *Sanditon*. The peril these triangulated texts traverse arises from Britain's own strained relation to the Atlantic *per se*, and it is worth noting that the hopeful vision of *Persuasion* is of a global peace, and of globally navigable waters. Indeed, Romantic-period Britain was still struggling to solidify its imperial basis, which had been battered by the loss of its American colonies, the economic costs of abolition and then emancipation, ongoing naval and military conflicts with France, and colonial insurgencies. By the Victorian period, "The story of the British West Indies . . . was one of stagnation punctuated by misfortune," as one historian has recently put it.⁸ The Romantic-period British empire forecasts that doom by its sense of fragility and vulnerability, but the period was also characterized by a competing sense of great promise, the tenuous optimism punctuated by the naval and then military defeat of Napoleon. Austen's novels reflect this combined sense of friability and potential; *Mansfield Park* as an estate is threatened by decentered, unstable relations (illustrated by the dangers to domestic stability that London and Portsmouth evince—here the urban is but one step away from a disastrous loss of control signified by the native land). By contrast *Persuasion* offers a victorious account of British naval control of the Atlantic, and an optimistic view that global traffic will be equally of a piece. This is less a case of empire than of piecing together a home life worth dreaming on.

By then, however, the Atlantic world had already become an increasingly significant parameter of the British mental landscape, for as Emma Rothschild remarks, "the oceanic world was at the edge of the vision of almost everyone,"⁹ and as the self-styled protector of the maritime Atlantic, England was acknowledging and endorsing this influence. If Braudel had theorized the priority of the Mediterranean for the development of the Western world beginning with a "Mediterranean world," twentieth-century Atlantic historians theorized a similar Atlantic civilization also marked by "the 'permeability' of transoceanic routes and communications."¹⁰ Nevertheless, the Methuen Treaty of 1703 brought two powerhouses of the Spanish Atlantic, Portugal, and Brazil, "into a web of

economic imperialism whose center was England,” as Stanley and Barbara Stein recognized in the late 1960s.¹¹ As this fairly potted history of the Atlantic World demonstrates, the terms for rethinking Austen’s oeuvre are not new, yet Austen scholars have proved reluctant to explore its potential. Certainly Britain had every right to feel increasing confidence in its Atlantic future, one that could help underwrite a growing imperial ambition that included somewhat shaky acquisitions or occupations and politically speculative undertakings in Africa and Asia. Had Austen lived, she might have made *Sanditon*’s spa-town speculation parallel such scandalous real estate speculation abroad. She might, too, have been more skeptical of Britain’s imperial grasp, which as it is, she leaves to occasional hints by female characters that the future’s promise needs a woman’s firm guiding hand for it not to go awry.

Certainly, and for Austen as well, the Atlantic deeply influenced how the British thought about economic and political empire, and indeed about globalism, for to look West instead of East was to realize that global stretch. As Atlantic World historians have also already pointed out, Europeans were only able to sail in the Atlantic after adopting essential ocean-going technologies from Chinese and Indian Ocean sailors such as the compass and sternpost rudder. But once pulled toward the Atlantic, Britain continued its Westward gaze even as it surveyed a more global domain. The worldview developed in the Atlantic by its Western inhabitants reflects the ocean’s centripetal forces which tug its human subjects back toward its various coasts, islands, ports, riverine systems by virtue of its trade winds and currents, its spawning “prairies” of water, its untold depths and new histories waiting to be told. Although historians such as Joyce Chaplin note that the Atlantic as a unified entity is an *ex post facto* concept, as it was considered instead in the early modern period to be a series of intersecting seas, waterways as connected as any others that surround the globe, nevertheless by the early nineteenth century Britain’s long duration in it allowed for a more amalgamated understanding of “the Atlantic,” even if it was not termed as such until mid-century.¹² Bailyn writes that this “protean world” was drawn toward the ocean as its center through a “common morphology . . . however fluid and irregular, of development and change” that “transcends and subsumes” contests between nations as “passage” itself came to dominate the general pattern which was characterized by “the movement of things—the modifications, variables, gradients and speed” (62, 31). Most of all, the Atlantic world was characterized by a particular kind of passage: the estimated 81,000 slave

voyages. These were journeys characterized by radical shifts in personal and cultural identity, enormous losses and reconstitutions, and most of all fluidity. That flux was mirrored in the difficulties permeating Atlantic trade, whose every success was marked by instabilities and “clever extemporization and shrewd risk-taking” (47). Indeed, this continued to be true even as fluidity, changeable possession, social disorder and disorientation gradually transmuted into stabilized but complex commercial webs (68–71). But an increasingly stabilized Atlantic world, marked by developing senses of place and national identities that replaced the native cultures that had been displaced, decimated or reformulated, relied even as late as the Romantic period on familial, communal, and associative networks spread throughout the Atlantic that connected ports, countries, and cultures together in informal, variable, and extemporized ways. There is no better metaphor in British culture for this kind of fraternally grounded approach to a world in flux and “patterns of flow” (83) than that of the British navy.

European navies were required to gain and maintain control of particular parts of the Atlantic and to wage war on rival nations also claiming Atlantic domination; but perhaps more importantly, naval ships and fleets protected merchant ships and controlled slave uprisings. In this they paralleled the military protection used by the East India Company to dominate local populations, control or unseat their political and military leaders, and expand the base of operations whether by acquisition of more land or through expanded control of trade routes. The Atlantic world offered Britain an opportunity near at hand for unlimited expansion of this sort; moreover, the quick-witted trade leverages and extemporizations that were required for providing commodities to various and variable populations, with both the supply and demand dependent on a multiplicity of economic and environmental factors, were even more requisite during wartime. It was during the sixteenth through the eighteenth centuries that the British navy developed as a military powerhouse, giving Britain the right to proclaim eventual domination of the Atlantic. Analyses of the arms of the British military reveal that the navy could also be more open to extemporization and quick-witted leverages of available resources than could the army, in part because of its more fraternally based corps of officers. Compared to the rigid system of purchased commissions in the army, the navy offered young men opportunities to use their mental acuity, necessary indeed for saving their own vessel during storm or battle, speeding to a destination before a rival nation's ship could arrive, or

protecting a merchantman from pirates. Austen's knowledge of these realities is reflected in Admiral Croft's comment on Frederick's characteristic quick-wittedness early in his career. But quick-witted extempore action also provided opportunities to capture a pirate or enemy vessel and thereby gain prize money; neither prospect was available to army officers who operated by strict and inflexible protocols, and who rarely had the opportunity for improvisation. The navy was not entirely merit based, resorting to a permitted patronage system by which a young officer could be advanced on the recommendation of a senior in a version of the "old-boy network." A shortage of even the smallest vessels to captain relative to the number of rising junior officers inevitably led to such promotion shortcuts—represented as necessary in Austen's *Mansfield Park* and *Persuasion* for the advancement of Fanny Price's brother William—and promotion of rank was valuable in part because it meant a correspondent promotion of social status.

The contrast in Captain Wentworth's naval rank with the lesser ones of his friends Captain Harville, who has been pensioned off, and Benwick, who has recently been made a courtesy Captain, is represented in the novel socially. The wealth Wentworth has been able to amass through prize money as a result of his command of a larger vessel signals to Sir Walter and Elizabeth that he is now eligible to be noticed among Bath society, although on how he would fare in London circles the narrative remains quiet. And although Anne is democratic enough to be interested in Captain Benwick as a possible admirer, his status as a junior officer, a commander with no ship and therefore no chance to accrue prize money,¹³ would never pass muster with her father just as Wentworth had not done years earlier when he was at a similar level, having just been promoted to commander after his participation in the 1806 victory over the French near St. Domingo but not yet with a ship of his own to command. Wentworth's current higher rank is due, as he explains to the Musgroves, to his good luck in being given his first vessel, an old, small ship that could nevertheless prove his abilities, which led to a specific mission and the command of a better ship; but *the reason* he was given promotion over his fellow commanders from a small sloop to a larger vessel in the first place, and then to successively more important ships, the narrative suggests, is his own talents and quickness of mind. Yet, despite Lady Russell's original judgment of his being "a stranger without alliance or fortune" (66), having a brother-in-law high enough up in the ranks to then command a vessel in Trafalgar and to be, by the time of the novel's

opening, rear admiral of the White (one of the navy's three squadrons, and Nelson's own), opens the possibility that influence may also have had a hand.¹⁴ Although as Admiral Croft remarks, Wentworth was lucky to get his first command ("there must have been twenty better men than himself applying for her [the Asp]"), he also admits "Lucky fellow to get any thing so soon, with no more interest than his" (98).¹⁵ Clearly then, there was some influence at play, enough to give Wentworth the first step toward the advancement that his "great deal of intelligence, spirit and brilliancy" (65) would bring about.

Nevertheless, because the navy's officers generally did not come from families wealthy enough to have purchased their commissions as in the army but had come up through years of hard training and dependence on fellow officers for survival, the navy was essentially a meritocracy.¹⁶ Indeed, this is Sir Walter's principal complaint against it, "as being the means of bringing persons of obscure birth into undue distinction and raising men to honours which their fathers and grandfathers never dreamt of" (59), an objection that grounds and frames the novel's plot. Interlaced with those whose legitimated heritage permits a socially condoned ability to abuse their privilege are characters who, without the privileges of rank, demonstrate the more estimable qualities that govern Anne's own behavior: "honesty," "justice and equity," and "indispensable duty" (58–59, 53–54). Indeed, as Wentworth testifies during a conversation with his sister Mrs. Croft, these virtues are expressed at a fraternal as well as a naval level: "I would assist any brother officer's wife that I could, and I would bring any thing of Harville's from the world's end, if he wanted it" (102). Moreover, the navy was a company of fellows in a sense analogous to mercantile networks developed through trading partners and kinship associations that interlaced the circum-Atlantic. These mercantile networks were ones that overwrote the more tightly-knit and rule-governed systems of association by community that defined land-based bodies whether social or military; like them, naval officers could similarly have opportunities to display the essential Atlantic characteristic of a flexibility necessitated by a variable, fluid, and dynamic world.

Naval ships become objects of fascination in *Persuasion* not via actual life aboard ship, although Austen displays an impressive knowledge of its details¹⁷ but through the experience of life lived on land, most obviously in Anne's years of studying newspaper accounts and navy lists. (It is a commentary on the traditional worldview exhibited by the Musgrove parents that despite the placement of their younger son in naval training,

the family had not encountered the lists until their daughters' infatuation with Captain Wentworth and his career [97]). The Musgrove family's new interest in naval matters suggests that even in more rural areas the navy's heroic efforts to secure national safety are registered. I want to complicate my argument at this point by positing the naval ship as a vessel of meaning in *Persuasion*, not just in the way it is used as a synecdoche for the entire Royal Navy, but as a trope for life as it should be lived, which is to say, Atlanticity. In *Mansfield Park* we are not shown the merchantmen ships that took Sir Thomas and his son Tom to Antigua and back, and to be sure, we are never anything but imaginatively on board ship in *Persuasion*. Yet the idea of ship life, of being happy in small, contained but well outfitted spaces, dominates the narrative in this particular novel. As Mrs. Croft explains to landlubber Mrs. Musgrove, "I do assure you . . . that nothing can exceed the accommodations of a man of war; I speak, you know, of the higher rates. When you come to a frigate, of course, you are more confined—though any reasonable woman may be perfectly happy in one of them; and I can safely say, that the happiest part of my life has been spent on board a ship" (103). Even in Kellynch Hall, the Crofts as its new occupants find they must make small contrivances, accommodations, and improvements to a house otherwise too capacious, too unwieldy and wasteful, too full of its "ancient dignity" (55). Eventually they are able to make it "snug," just as they do their temporary rooms at Bath, which they like because of the way the "wind blows through one of the cupboards," just as it had done in their first small lodgings at North Yarmouth, which services the North Sea and Baltic fleets (188).¹⁸

By contrast, the rented house in Bath that the Eliots remove to, so much larger than the Crofts' temporary Bath lodging but so much smaller and contained than Kellynch Hall, is nevertheless similarly wasteful because the expenditures Sir Walter and Elizabeth make are cosmetic rather than utile. The townhouse in Camden-place is merely a condensed and updated simulacrum of Kellynch, and is therefore in Anne's eyes, dishonest. Like everything else in the Elliot's new house the drawing rooms, which Elizabeth notes are so much smaller "with walls, perhaps thirty feet asunder" (160), are presented by her as more desirable because more fashionable than those at Kellynch. The rooms are not just cosmetic but inaccurate within "the littlenesses of the town" (160), with its little white lies meant to disguise straightened budgets such as the reduction of a large dinner befitting Kellynch to the "small, but most elegant" evening party Elizabeth plans. Such cosmetic art is attuned to Sir Walter's distorted view of the world; his is a distortion rendered by an obsession with

reflective surfaces, with mirrors, possessions and faces that reflect his own self-perception back to him. Admiral Croft, with whom Anne is walking one day after she has come to join her family (the Crofts have just arrived to treat the Admiral's gout), notices a print of a naval vessel in a bookseller's window and stops to critique its distorted proportions: "But what a thing here is, by way of a boat . . . to think that any body would venture their lives in such a shapeless old cockleshell as that . . . I wonder where that boat was built!" (187). Such imprecision and white lies would cost lives on a real ocean, he suggests ("I would not venture over a horsepond in it"); Sir Walter's distortions, imprecisions, and commodified values, which are the very opposite of what life at sea requires, can sacrifice lives, as Anne knows to her own cost. Such a worldview not only requires that it be centered on and reflective of Sir Walter (or those of higher rank such as Lady Dalrymple), but that its self-mirroring simultaneously negate other possible worldviews, indeed abnegate them. Such a worldview can have no place for Anne, who does not and cannot reflect Sir Walter back as his self-centric world demands. But his negating worldview is also one in which oceans must be denied as if a bad dream, for they weather a man's face until he is untimely aged; nor does anyone or anything exist in his world except as a person or object of ugliness or beauty. There is no democracy in Sir Walter's aristocratically based world, and the only merit to be found is surface level. Sir Walter is not a connoisseur, he cannot tell good art from bad, and he cannot read value or achievement into anything whose rank and cost are not already apparent. Indeed, his landed interests reflect values opposite to those of Austen's honorable but nonaristocratic landowners, Mr. Darcy (of *Pride and Prejudice*) and Mr. Knightley (of *Emma*). The meritocracy of the navy has no meaning for Sir Walter, and *Persuasion's* metaphorical ships pass him by for that reason.

The ship functions as a vessel of meaning in *Persuasion* not just to reference meritocracy and the assertion of duty to others over self-interest, but in the way that ship life and ship missions provide a way to see differently. The shift is away from the pier glass and reflection of Sir Walter's face in other faces to a way for Anne to appear to others differently. Wentworth has to learn to see her differently in this new light; he can only do so by learning to see as Anne has done. The curious point is that it is she has learned to see differently while landlocked in her father's house, by virtue of years of imagining Wentworth's ship life, years in which he seemed irredeemably lost to her just as any seamen stationed in the East Indies or missing as a casualty of war would be to their family. Even though Wentworth has proven a skilled and admirable officer, once on land again he has reverted to the

distorted perception of the land-based surface reading exhibited by the extended Elliot family. On meeting Anne after a seven years' lapse following her breaking their engagement, he cannot discern her actual person from the girl he felt had rejected him. That she did not, properly speaking, reject him, and that she continued to love him even during the break up were facts displaced by his pride, by a rigid thinking and self-perception uncomfortably shadowing the more distorted perception of Sir Walter. In denial of her actual person, Wentworth perceives Anne as her father's daughter, one who values rank and wealth above all. He cannot see that she is different from the Musgrove girls who are superficially pretty, popular and charming; indeed, he reads them superficially without bothering to tell the difference. But, in fact, he already knows how to see differently, how to think fluidly and Atlanticly, for his best friend is Captain Harville.

In an important scene during an outing at Lyme Regis when the younger Musgroves, Anne, and Wentworth encounter Captain Harville and his wife, the Harvilles' apartment is depicted in a way that reveals two things: first, through the free indirect discourse of the passage we understand that Anne thinks Atlanticly; but second, on retrospection we understand that Wentworth does so too, for this man—of a lesser family, and lesser good fortune both in health and wealth—is his good friend, with whom he is entirely at home. But it is Anne's feeling of at-homeness that strikes us most forcibly:

On quitting the Cobb, they all went indoors with their new friends, and found rooms so small as none but those who invite from the heart could think capable of accommodating so many. Anne had a moment's astonishment on the subject herself; but it was soon lost in the pleasanter feelings which sprang from the sigh of all the ingenious contrivances and nice arrangements of Captain Harville, to turn the actual space to the best possible account . . . [he] had contrived excellent accommodations, and fashioned very pretty shelves, for a tolerable collection of well-bound volumes, the property of Captain Benwick . . . He drew, he varnished, he carpentered, he glued; he made toys for the children, he fashioned new netting-needles and pins with improvements; and if every thing else was done, sat down to his large fishing-net at one corner of the room. (*Persuasion* 127–28)

Captain Harville, albeit a minor character, is hardly secondary to the brotherhood of naval officers whose network underwrites the novel. Indeed, it is the ready entrance into his fraternal community that distinguishes Anne, whose acceptance of Captain Harville and his family is

intimated in only a “moment’s astonishment” that so many people could be expected to fit into such ship’s quarters, wherein everything must do double duty, or be minimal, ingeniously contrived. That she has indeed entered into fellowship is echoed in the climactic scene at the White Hart in Bath when, during a gathering of all the main characters Harville summons Anne aside with a smile and nod indicating “Come to me, I have something to say”: his gesture indicates “the unaffected, easy kindness of manner which denoted the feelings of an older acquaintance than he really was” (241). Harville’s own merit is then portrayed by his face, which reflects depth rather than surfaces: “As she joined him, Captain Harville’s countenance reassumed the serious, thoughtful expression which seemed its natural character” (241).

Just as Anne can read Harville’s character in his face, so too is she adept at reading the characters of others in their choice and arrangement of domestic spaces. In the Lyme Regis passage quoted above, we learn through Anne’s eyes the felicity of these cramped but thoughtful rooms; we also begin to understand that like Frederick’s sister Mrs. Croft, Anne has learned to see Atlantically. Mrs. Croft does so from experience, for as she tells Mrs. Musgrove at their first meeting, “I have crossed the Atlantic four times” and, although “I . . . never was in the West Indies,” her emendation “We do not call Bermuda or Bahama, you know, the West Indies” (103) indicates that she *has* been to those islands. But Anne can have only imagined life on shipboard, and in all of Captain Harville’s improvements to the rented rooms at Lyme Regis she recognizes the flexibility and improvisational talents she has come to admire and practice.

What remains in order to resolve the plot is for Wentworth to be persuaded to see Anne, and thus the land-based world, through Atlantic eyes. It is as though he has become accustomed to the militaristic eyes of battle in which friend and foe must be sorted out at quick notice, or perhaps has become more Napoleon than Nelson once landed, temporally forgetting how to engage otherness; he must learn to think less bifocally, to respond as fluidly on land as he does on sea. In a subsequent scene at Lyme Regis, Wentworth does not realize he has encouraged reckless behavior from Louisa, the liveliest of the two Musgrove girls he has been flirting with, and he reacts woodenly, indecisively when she falls and is concussed. It is Anne who responds flexibly, extemporizing and expedient, rescuing the situation and reversing fate. “Rub her hands, rub her temples; here are salts,—take them, take them” she cries as she struggles to support the second, fainting sister. As Wentworth becomes

incapacitated by the accident “as if all his own strength were gone” (“Is there no one to help me?”), everyone turns to Anne for decisive instruction, for it is she who has learned to extemporize under any circumstance. “Had not she better be carried to the inn? Yes, I am sure, carry her gently to the inn” (138–39). It takes Wentworth considerable time to reflect on this, to perceive things as fluidly as Anne has done, and when opportunity arises later through the good offices of his brother officer Harville, to extemporize himself in a crucial letter-writing scene that resolves the plot and rescues Anne from her life of sacrifice in her father’s self-reflecting and abnegating world.

In metaphorically learning to be comfortable, to be practicable and engaged onboard an Atlantic-oriented ship, the novel suggests that one learns to see deeply, intelligibly, and honestly. The Atlantic is represented as a place where selves conjoin with others *as* selves. By contrast the East Indies, which in the British Empire is a place where otherness is regulated and maintained, is represented as a space of stilled waters, of idling, of disconnection while distinction cannot be gained because distinctions are more generally rigidly maintained. So, if England is where others are located by place and value in the social landscape, then the only way to live differently is to live aboard ship on land, and with an Atlantic orientation. It is there that the globalized world of commodity trade in Chinese and Indian teas, Arabian coffee, and South American cacao can merge with West Indian sugar; where the port wine of Portugal, the claret of coastal France and the Canary Islands, and Spanish Madeira can mingle with Jamaican rum; and all of them finding a place at the English table alongside newly available exotic fruits such as the South American pineapple. As Admiral Croft’s experience reveals, a great deal of time spent in the Atlantic is beneficial to one’s worldview. The Admiral, whose lack of vanity, liberality and weather-beaten face puts him in such sharp contradistinction to Sir Walter’s cosmetically altered universe, is amiable, universally sociable and able to entertain foolish baronets as well as small boys; all are within his democratic purview. Yet he is as discerning as Wentworth of mappable distinctions, noting Sir Walter’s foppishness and able to dislike while forgiving fellow officers: “If you look across the street,” he says to Anne, “you will see Admiral Brand coming down and his brother. Shabby fellows, both of them! I am glad they are not on this side of the street” (188). Although Admiral Croft is in strongest contrast with the Elliots, he is also differentiated from the Musgroves, who are generally accepting of others but whose eldest daughter has learned to practice

social and rank discrimination, and whose eldest son will inherit by patrilineal succession, both demonstrating the family's still land-based and hierarchical worldview. Indeed their second son, now deceased, could expect very little inheritance, as his having been entered into the navy suggests. Yet that the Musgroves would choose a naval over army career in the first place, when they might have bought an officer's commission once their son Dick was old enough, suggests that the navy's meritocratic culture accords with their own essentially generous worldview.

Anne's fondness for the Musgroves' open-heartedness coupled with the choice of the navy for their second son, and their eldest son and heir's initial choice of Anne rather than her youngest sister Mary as a wife, positions the Musgrove family midway between the Elliots and the Crofts in a charting of the principled life that Anne represents: that which at all times engages honesty, justice and equity, and indispensable duty (53–54, as noted above) while at the same time evincing fluid, flexible thinking, and extempore behavior. The Musgroves have no higher aspiration for their daughters than a happy marriage, and are as flexibly content with a gentleman farmer as with a commander, post-captain or full-fledged captain for their daughters as long as the man in question is deserving in the sense of being meritorious, sincere, and hardworking.

Merit requires an equitable understanding of others as a part of one's worthiness. The experiential voyaging of the Atlantic world is one in which selves meet others who are other selves, acceptable within a range of differences none of which spell autonomous or disruptive difference. And if they can and do spell a supplementary or disruptive difference, nevertheless no party of selves or others would have been entirely aboriginal after the early modern devastation of Caribbean populations and the devastating effects of colonization schemes in either hemisphere. That is to say, none can claim prior understanding of the land, and certainly not any hereditary ownership of the waterways. Everything becomes negotiable. Even between contesting imperial forces, the contest itself signals just how impossible real ownership of bodies of water is. We are set up for this reevaluation of the Atlantic's different, fluid mobility in *Persuasion's* initial classificatory regime. Predicated on Burke's *Peerage*, which opens the novel at the meager entry for the Elliots of Kellynch Hall, Sir Walter, Baronet stations himself at the entryway to peerage, and devotes every thought and bodily movement to assuring himself and others of his right to perch there.¹⁹

The land that grounds this static politics is present only in its mappability as a significant resource in the lineal history of family trees; it is not lived in or known in the way that those who live on the land and by it must do. Movement on this land must be done prosthetically, antiseptically, with carriages and patters, to get from one indoor space to another, one status symbol to another. The contrast between life so disconnected from nature lived in the country and life lived so as to take pleasure in that same land, is displayed in the contrast between the Elliots and the Musgroves with whom they have intermarried: Charles who finds all his pleasure in hunting, which affords him exercise, escape from his wife (the youngest Elliot sister), and surveillance of his father's land; and his sisters who enjoy long rambles and one of whom has set her sights on a wealthy farmer's son. While the Musgroves ramble, the Elliots do not move (not even the Elliot sister married to Charles Musgrove); but contrasted with either family are the quintessentially mobile Crofts, Wentworths, and Harwicks. For these families home is merely a vessel in which to situate oneself, but never something rooted or permanent. Home is the ship rather than the castle.

As a metaphor for the Atlantic world the ship is perhaps unsurpassed. William Boelhower has argued for the endurance of the ship as metaphorical vessel to imagine and represent the Atlantic in his analysis of Shakespeare's *The Tempest* and Olaudah Equiano's *Narrative* as key texts for charting an Atlantic Studies methodology.²⁰ As Boelhower demonstrates, while the circum-Atlantic was characterized by understanding the difference between ebb and flow and standing water, as Shakespeare puts it, the way to thrive amongst aquatic conditions requires understanding oneself, or at least one's life, in terms of the vessel that sails such waters. Living in the Atlantic, it seems, requires a working knowledge of the vessel, and indeed the classificatory terminology used for distinguishing vessels and their component parts, reflected in Equiano's life story, was key to ship life. As we have seen, Anne Elliot also demonstrates a thorough understanding of Atlantic ways, developed from her earlier brief relation with Wentworth and her subsequent study through the navy lists of the naval taxonomies for both vessels and officers. What Boelhower's analysis also reveals, and Austen's novel I would argue demonstrates, is that ship life *is*, in a sense, Atlantic life. Maritime terminology provides the vocabulary required for experiencing this life; when on shipboard, regardless of the period of his narrative he is describing or the state of his civic identity, Equiano shifts to an extensive lexicon of shipping terms in order to relate the dimensions of his marine life

as opposed to his time spent on land. But most importantly, learning to navigate, as Equiano does, requires a more flexible thinking, one based on a “triangulating impulse” and a “shuttling mind” that can reconcile oppositions through adjacencies and affiliations.

Triangulation, of course, is necessary at sea in order to avoid getting lost; Anne uses it instead to avoid shipwreck amongst the Scylla and Charybdis of her family members. I want to suggest that it is this Atlantic mind that Anne Elliot has come to by the time *Persuasion* opens; as she shuttles back and forth between her father's home and her sister's, between the almost aristocratic life of baronetcy at Kellynch Hall and the more democratic but still land-based society of the Musgrove family home at Uppercross, Anne demonstrates the reconciliation of opposites and the triangulations required to maintain peace, weather emotional storms, and recover equilibrium. On land at least it is she rather than Captain Wentworth who best illustrates Atlantic thinking in her capacity for the fluid life, the affiliations and meritocracy of fellowship, and quick-witted extemporization when faced with unexpected shifts the balance of variables. It is she alone among all the novel's characters—excepting the remarkably flexible and adaptable invalid Mrs. Smith—who can configure meaning from what Boelhower calls the Atlantic's “plurality of intersecting points,”²¹ which he finds so well conveyed in Equiano's *Narrative*.

NOTES

1. Austen thus began *Persuasion* the same day (August 8, 1815) as the London papers reported that Napoleon had departed for St. Helena the preceding day, August 7. *Emma* is published by John Murray in December 1815, but the title page reads “1816.”
2. By “retrospective,” I mean to imply a land-based conservative approach to national identity that relies on custom for its authority, eschewing the more mercantile worldview that threatens it.
3. *Sanditon*, in *Jane Austen's Manuscript Works*, ed. Linda Bree, Peter Sabor, and Janet Todd (Peterboro, Canada: Broadview Press, 2012), 337.
4. Alan Bewell, *Romanticism and Colonial Disease* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999).
5. Jocelyn Harris, *A Revolution Almost Beyond Expression: Jane Austen's Persuasion* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2007), 74.
6. The plot complexities, which begin with Emma's solitude after her governess Miss Taylor becomes Mr. Weston's second wife, are greatly sped up after

his son by his first wife writes that he will visit, does not visit, suddenly visits, and becomes the unacknowledged abettor of Emma's self-delusion.

7. See Jeremy Black, *A New History of England* (Stroud, Gloucestershire: Sutton Publishing, 2000); and Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation 1707–1837* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009).
8. Piers Brendon, *the Decline and Fall of the British Empire 1781–1997* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2008), 607.
9. Qtd. in Bernard Bailyn, *Atlantic History: Concept and Contours* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005), 107.
10. Bailyn, 25.
11. Qtd. in Bailyn, 45.
12. Joyce Chaplin begins her chapter by noting the lateness of the concept in “The Atlantic Ocean and Its Contemporary Meanings, 1492–1808,” in *Atlantic History: A Critical Appraisal (Reinterpreting History)*, ed. Jack P. Greene and Philip D. Morgan (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009). However, by the time *The Atlantic Monthly* (now *The Atlantic*) was founded in Boston, Massachusetts, in 1857, the conception of the Atlantic as a body—much like the Mediterranean—had taken hold.
13. *Persuasion*, edited by Linda Bree (Peterboro, Canada: Broadview Press, 1998), 189. Further citations will be made parenthetically in the text.
14. Harris argues that Austen modeled Admiral Croft on the much younger Francis Austen; while Frank supplied Croft's amiability, Croft's success at Trafalgar and high rank provided a way to honor Frank (77).
15. Even as rear admiral, the most junior of the admiral ranks (admiral, vice-admiral, and rear-admiral), Wentworth's brother-in-law has gained such significant social status that Sir Walter decides he would not be intolerable as a tenant: “I have let my house to Admiral Croft,’ would sound extremely well” (64).
16. While Admiral Croft was “of a gentleman's family” (61), this in itself is not enough to garner Sir Walter's esteem, nor does it indicate wealth; the two Austen brothers who entered the navy were also eventually made admirals and were likewise of the gentry, but the family's choice of a naval career for them suggests the lack of funding required by a university or army career.
17. See Brian Southam, *Jane Austen and the Navy* (London: Hambledon and London, 2000).
18. *Ibid.*, 275. Southam also explains the significance of Admiral Croft's other postings, nearly all related to blockades of French goods and monitoring French fleets.
19. Sir Walter's obsessive chase of reflective surfaces in which to view his face as others might see him reveals his insistence on a static temporality in which the visage that is his self-presentation to the world, but out of which he can only see whether another reflects his self-worth or disturbs it, cannot

change. Change is what he deplors since it cannot augur good. Ironically, the seemingly premature aging of his middle daughter, Anne, is an aging that confronts him with a visible alteration of temporality, one that has condensed all of the normal aging Sir Walter should be experiencing into a visage (it is Anne's face, not his own, that has changed) or surface reflection of what he is determined to hold at bay. Sir Walter's belief that he will not age, will not lose power or attraction, is cemented in the static nature of land rights, hereditary privilege and rank, and the other carefully guarded social accoutrements of those who determined their prestige and liberties from their relation to land possession, are heavily indebted to mental schema of classification and mapping, but his denial of temporal reference belongs to the aristocratic regime to which he aspires, rather than to the landed civility of a Darcy or Knightley.

20. William Boelhower, "I'll teach you how to flow": On Figuring Out Atlantic Studies," *Atlantic Studies* 1.1 (2004): 28–48.
21. *Ibid.*, 45.

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PART III

Imagined Cities and Atlantic Modernism

Open Doors, Closed Spaces: The Transatlantic Imaginary in American City Writing from Postrevolutionary Literature to Modernism

Stefan L. Brandt

I shall resemble the traveler who leaves the walls of a great city to climb the nearby hill. [...] [P]ublic squares move out of sight; he has difficulty distinguishing the streets but his eye follows the contours of the city with greater ease and, for the first time, he grasps its overall shape.¹

It occurred to me that the city might afford me an asylum. [...] I had been there twice or thrice in my life, but only for a few hours each time. I knew not a human face, and was a stranger to its modes and dangers.²

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“Take a look at the deportees . . . Take a look at the undesirable aliens,” shouted the man with the telescopes and fieldglasses. A girl’s voice burst out suddenly, “*Arise prisoners of starvation*,” “Sh . . . They could pull you for that.”³

INTRODUCTION: TOWARD AN AESTHETICS OF CROSS-ATLANTIC MAPMAKING

When French historian and political analyst Alexis de Tocqueville set out to study prisonhouses in America in 1831 (for which he had obtained permission from the July Monarchy in France), his goal was to scrutinize the American prison system. Tocqueville’s findings, as he would later report in his two books both entitled *De la Démocratie en Amérique* (1835 and 1840), asserted a basic link between the modern correctional system and democratic culture. Nowhere does this intersection of the discourses of openness (*democracy*) and constraint (*the penitentiary system*) become more transparent than in Tocqueville’s representation of the American city. When he returned from his trip to the United States less than two years later, Tocqueville observed that the emergence of large cities (such as Philadelphia and New York) was detrimental to the development of the young republic, often advancing the formation of “serious riots.” Such social tensions, Tocqueville argued, signified a vital threat to the existence of democracy on American soil and would probably be countered with federal armed forces.⁴ The twin motif of “liberty versus control” had functioned as a narrative pattern in discussions regarding the role of great cities since the 1780s, involving the famous cultural battle between Jeffersonian Republicans (who advocated the unrestricted validation of civil liberties) and the Federalists (who favored the implementation of more instruments of control). At the heart of these debates was an ideal that accompanied the emergence of the United States as an immigrant nation: that of the *Open City*.⁵

The Open City—that is, the densely populated immigrant city welcoming settlers from different nations—epitomizes the democratic promise of the US city. As Jane Jacobs has pointed out in her study *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, the marks of “openness” in the US city have involved a rhetoric of both density and diversity.⁶ It is out of the mingling of these two elements, that the American city—at least as an ideal formulated in literary texts—created its power and vibrancy. While *density*

indicates the great appeal American cities hold for immigrants (i.e., “openness” in terms of free access), *diversity* highlights the multitude of life concepts that seem viable in urban practice (thus, alluding to “openness” in terms of a plurality of opinions). Sociologist Richard Sennett has further developed Jacobs’s observations to conceptualize the Open City as a democratic ideal that has to be (re)possessed by its inhabitants.⁷ “The open city is a bottom-up place; it belongs to the people.”⁸ As I will show later on, this vision of the Open City was already partly contained in the early rhetoric on immigration. By suggesting that cities should belong to “the people,” this rhetoric conjured up the basic principles from founding documents (e.g., most prominently, the US Constitution) and transferred them to urban practice. The claim that American cities had to open themselves to creative new forms of narrativization became especially persistent with the emergence of modernity as a guiding principle.

Since the arrival of the modern era, urbanity has been invested with two sets of contradictory notions that have both strongly influenced the dominant image of cities: the positive side of this double image consists of values associated with civilization, such as “learning, communication, light,” while the negative side refers to the counterconcepts of these ideas: degeneration, violence, darkness, obscurity, and sin.⁹ This essay aims to show how these two sets of images were deployed in the dominant literary imagination of the United States as *complementary*, yet intricately *connected* patterns of representation. The Open City of modernity, I will argue, was conceived as part of a larger transatlantic discourse that negotiated ideas of cultural identity and belonging. Designed as a counter-model to European cities (perceived as symbols of closure and fortification), the American Open City catered to the dreams and desires of many immigrants concerning openness and diversity and thus contributed to the formation of a truly transatlantic imaginary.

In his seminal study *Virtual Americas*, Paul Giles has defined the “transatlantic imaginary” as a vital form of cultural self-modeling based upon the “interiorization of a literal or metaphorical Atlantic World in all of its expansive dimensions.”¹⁰ In the rhetoric of modernity, the Open City becomes a nodal point of ascriptions, ideas, and codes through which urban experience is marked as a defining act of cross-Atlantic self-articulation. While commonly visualized as a cornerstone of the American ideology of “open space,” the motif also contains elements of closure from within, for example, in the representation of boundaries and border zones. In Brown’s novels from the postrevolutionary epoch, Philadelphia appears

an “open” and “cosmopolitan city” which, at the same time, baffles the inexperienced walker by its great number of barriers and limitations. Henry James’s transatlantic writings of the late Victorian Era are equally interested in the presence of city walls in European urban practice and in the lack of such spatial distinctions in modern America. With the emergence of the modernist discourse, the Open City becomes increasingly envisioned as a companion narrative to that of the labyrinthine city with its secret pathways and hidden limits to be explored by the urban *flâneur*. In Dos Passos’s works, the high degree of mobility within the city, activated by masses of immigrants from Europe, evokes an opposite dynamic of fluctuation that, as I will later show, ultimately results in the process of *urban shrinking*.

The term “transatlantic identity,”¹¹ coined by Deborah L. Madsen in a 1994 essay, can describe the indebtedness of American literature to a cosmopolitan imaginary: key urban writings were oriented to readers across the Atlantic, promising them that they could find self-fulfillment in the “melting pot” of the American city. Nowhere else is the concept of a truly transatlantic identity as visible as in the genre of urban writing. These texts created an outlet for the circulation of ideas and identity concepts. In the “liminal space of the transatlantic imaginary,” as described by Giles,¹² the fundamental patterns of *openness* and *closure* could be visualized and reenacted.

The transatlantic imaginary is liminal in yet another sense: in order to establish a functional text-reader relation it has to mediate between the world of the author (who is often entangled in cosmopolitan or immigrant contexts, like Henry James or John Dos Passos) and that of the reader (who is often equally attached to cross-Atlantic backgrounds). The writer of urban literature here becomes, to use Robert Tally’s term, a “map-maker.”¹³ During the process of reading, the “literary cartography” of his/her work of art is brought into contact with the “literary geography” of the reader.¹⁴ “The critical reader,” Tally observes, “becomes a kind of geographer who actively interprets the literary map in such a way as to present new, sometimes hitherto unforeseen mappings.”¹⁵ These theoretical models can be used to better understand what I call the aesthetics of “cross-Atlantic mapmaking”—namely the capacity of transatlantic literary texts to use urban border zones as demarcation points of a common cultural imaginary. What happens in works such as James’s *The American* (1876) or Dos Passos’s *Manhattan Transfer* (1925) is that the experiential spaces of the Atlantic World are brought into a dialogue

with each other through the lens of urban awareness. This aesthetics may, on the one hand, involve a negotiation of the geographic differences between American and European cities (as I will demonstrate with regard to Henry James's and Mary Antin's transnational writings). It may, on the other hand, also bring to light the hidden divisions *within* the aesthetic realm of the Open City. This is the case with Upton Sinclair's and John Dos Passos's visions of the *abyss city*, in which the theme of immigration is conveyed through an aesthetics of demarcation and expulsion.

FROM OPEN CITY TO SHRINKING CITY

It has been widely argued that the Open City was a unique invention of the modern era (beginning with the Enlightenment and reaching its peak around the turn to the twentieth century). As a result of the challenges of industrialization and large waves of immigration during the nineteenth century, American cities gradually changed their appearance. The metropolitan discourse began to adopt new modes of representation, answering to the altered needs, behaviors, and attitudes of people living in American cities and responding to the growing function that these urban centers had in the modern world.¹⁶ The image of the Open City—as we know it today—was generated during the early years of the republic when writers began to discover the pulsating metropolis as an epitome of a prospering American nation. Philadelphia, for a long time, was regarded as the most cosmopolitan city in America, harboring large numbers of immigrants from Europe and also giving shelter to many fugitive slaves. Next to Boston and New York, Philadelphia was one of the centers of European immigration in the United States and a model of lively transcultural exchange.¹⁷

In the 1840s and 1850s, it was New York City that became known as the archetypal Open City—a crossroads of transatlantic encounters between Europe and America and the paragon of world citizenship. The new function of New York, Selma Berrol explains, was that of an “Empire City,” based upon “the symbiotic relationship between the arrival of vast numbers of people [...] and the growth and prosperity itself, which attracted still more men and women.”¹⁸ One of the most energetic apostles of New York as a vibrant immigrant city was the poet Walt Whitman who represented his hometown as a herald of blooming modernity.¹⁹ In reality, however, most immigrants had to live in extremely poor conditions. “In lower Manhattan,” Burrows and Wallace

note, “cramming was the strategy of choice. Landlords converted frame houses built for single artisan families into rabbit-warren boarding-houses, jammed renters in, then jammed some more into sheds and stables.”²⁰ In 1890, three out of four residents of New York City dwelled in so-called tenements, dark and crowded buildings with multi-family apartments.²¹

The Open City as a nineteenth-century cultural ideal was widely perceived as a countermodel to the “built” reality of American urban space, reflecting an image of an “other” America imagined by a group of progressive thinkers and writers. The utopian ideal of a heterogeneous, multi-faceted, and playful society, “a place where people witness and appreciate diverse cultural expressions,”²² became an important rhetorical device in nineteenth-century US literature. Functioning, in the words of urban planner Kees Christiaanse, as “an arena in which diverse social and ethnic groups can coexist, interact, and generate complex relationships and networks,”²³ the model of the Open City was never more than an enticing fantasy, a bulwark against the sad realities of boundary maintenance and ghettoization. “City life as an openness to unassimilated otherness,” Iris Marion Young explains, “represents only an unrealized social ideal.”²⁴ In the twentieth century, the entrenchment of urban culture further increased, generating a gulf of exclusion in social and cultural practice. For Gerald E. Frug, the outcome of this development was the “divided city,”²⁵ which privileged the urban elite to the disadvantage of the lower classes:

The overall impact of American urban policy in the twentieth century has [...] been to disperse and *divide* the people who live in America’s metropolitan areas, and, as a result, to reduce the number of places where people encounter men and women different from themselves.²⁶

This also holds true for the segregation of African Americans into confined spaces within major cities such as New York or Chicago. These cities were often imagined as “open” to European immigrants, but not to the other major group of displaced people with a transatlantic background.²⁷ The politics of *division* has not only shaped the appearance of American cities, but also the self-image of individuals living in the city and the aesthetics of the urban imaginary. As Richard Sennett has contended in *The Uses of Disorder: Personal Identity and City Life* (1970), the mere existence of border zones suggests the possibility of their *metamorphosis* into livable

areas, due to their inherently hybrid and transformative character. In his study, Sennett theorizes the idea of a city which incorporates diversity, creative disorder, and even chaos into a functioning cultural practice. Accordingly, the Open City of modernity is a place which allows for anarchic sites of self-empowerment and energetically rejects “the myth of a purified community.”²⁸

As Sennett has cautioned in a more recent essay, we have to remain aware of the difference between “boundaries” and “borders” that lies at the heart of the “Open City” concept. While *boundaries* are conceived as limits which demarcate certain territories from others, *borders* (e.g., in natural ecosystems) “are the zones in a habitat where organisms become more active, due to the meeting of different species or physical conditions.”²⁹ Borders can thus be conceived as vital zones of transition. While borders may enable a sense of permeability, open spaces can, vice versa, also appear in the form of a constructed, “built” frame. If, as Sennett claims, the “basic principle of a closed system is over-determined form,”³⁰ even an “open city” can appear as “closed” as far as its aesthetic structure is concerned.³¹ In order to counterbalance the arising energies produced by the condition of closure, a given system may unintentionally set processes into motion which fundamentally alter its inner structure and lead to its collapse. In urban writings, the potential decline of the metropolis as a result of its chaotic accumulation of social energies has always been a key theme. American naturalist writers of the 1890s and 1900s, such as Stephen Crane, Theodore Dreiser, and Upton Sinclair, have pointed to this astonishing dynamic at the heart of the modern metropolis: while attracting more and more immigrants, urban centers such as New York City and Chicago also adopted elements of closure necessitated by the enormous challenges of mass immigration and social stratification.

Upton Sinclair’s novel *The Jungle* (1906) probably illustrates this paradox best. Sinclair’s Chicago is envisioned as a thoroughly closed territory; yet, the protagonists continually seek to open up this restrictive space by exploring its weak spots and expanding the fissures in order to gain more freedoms. The main characters Jurgis and Ona have emigrated from Lithuania to the Promised Land, only to find themselves struggling for survival in the meatpacking district of Chicago. The narrative organization of *The Jungle* follows a thoroughly developed aesthetics of openness and closure: while, at first glance, constituting a space of possibility for the hopeful travelers from the Old World, Chicago is soon revealed as a destructive moloch that deprives its citizens of dignity and future

prospects. This “horrible city,”³² it turns out, constantly controls and limits the individuals’ spatial mobility. When Jurgis rebels against the inhumane conditions and almost kills his ruthless boss, he is jailed. Sinclair describes his hero’s adventures in spatialized imagery, contrasting Jurgis’s desire to trespass boundaries and move up the social scale with society’s techniques of restricting this urge. Confronted with this dilemma, Jurgis becomes a “wild beast,” reacting to the curtailment of his mobility with irrational rampaging. “Now and then in his frenzy, he would fling himself against the walls of the place, beating his hands upon them.”³³ The animal metaphor in this passage is entwined with the novel’s overall theme of the “jungle”—that ruthless environment in which the main character seems trapped. Notably, Jurgis decides to live on a farm for a while, but then returns, time and again, to Chicago. When he sees the city after a longer absence, he is immediately overwhelmed by its compartmentalized, yet threateningly premodern structures: “Past endless blocks of two-story shanties he walked, along wooden sidewalks and unpaved pathways treacherous with deep slush holes. Every few blocks there would be a railroad crossing on the level with the sidewalk, a death trap for the unwary”³⁴ Sinclair’s Chicago figures as an “urban jungle,” constraining and punishing any impulse to break out.

There was no place for him anywhere—every direction he turned his gaze, this fact was forced upon him. Everything was built to express it to him: the residences, with their heavy walls and bolted doors, and basement windows barred with iron; the great warehouses filled with the products of the whole world, and guarded by iron shutters and heavy gates; the banks with their unthinkable billions of wealth, all buried in safes and vaults of steel.³⁵

Jurgis finds himself slowly crushed by larger economic forces that he is unable to fathom or even influence. His work for Durham and Company, the major meat producer in “Packingtown” (the part where Jurgis lives with his family), is marked by intricate power relations connected to the district’s ethnic configuration. Due to varying flows of immigration from Ireland, Germany, Bohemia, and Poland, Packingtown is an ethnicized space constantly in flux. It dawns on Jurgis that these mechanisms and larger developments are constructed by the capitalist system itself and, more particularly, by his employer Durham who, as Jurgis suspects, is “responsible for these immigrations.” In Jurgis’s vivid imagination, Durham has “sent his agents into every city and village in Europe to spread the tale of the chances of work and high wages at the stockyards.”³⁶

Jurgis's self-conception of being at the mercy of contesting forces defines his fragmented sense of spatial orientation, feeling at once helpless and determined to become an agent of his own fate.

It is important to note that *fin-de-siècle* Chicago was essentially a split city, torn between the progressive side of modernity, expressed by the World's Columbian Exposition of 1893, and the extreme poverty in the city's stockyards. Chicago's "smell of modernity,"³⁷ as Mary Neuburger has aptly phrased it, had two olfactory components attributed to the two spatial fields of the city: one the one hand, that of prosperity and consumption at the World's Fair and in the residential areas, and, on the other hand, that of exploitation and inhumanity, to be experienced in the seedier districts of the city. Sinclair's protagonist in *The Jungle* tries to cope with these antagonistic worlds within the city by activating the residues of his mobility, his "old wanderslust." As a "free man [. . .], a buccaneer," he is enabled to transform the environment around him and trespass geographic boundaries. By virtue of his own will, he becomes a "man who will never more be trapped—whom no blandishments will cajole, whom no threats will frighten."³⁸ The novel's focus of attention is no longer the traditional center of urban life, but a blurred space imbued with a utopian vision and a vague promise of agency. This is the other side of the modern city—its capacity for transformation in light of the socialist project that Sinclair saw *The Jungle* as being a part of.³⁹

John Dos Passos's *Manhattan Transfer* (1925), written two decades later, endows the dynamics of urban transformation with a new twist. Mixing naturalist and impressionist techniques, the novel depicts a city of moribund questers and deportees. It thus anticipates the gradual transformation of the Open City into the "postmetropolis" (the overboarding "mega-city," with its fragmented and dislocated sections).⁴⁰ The dynamics between openness and closure is triggered in *Manhattan Transfer* by the same lack of a fixed core that already dominated the fine structure of Sinclair's *The Jungle*. In the literature of modernity, the gradual loss of a stable center represents the climax of a long experiential process, in the course of which city space has shifted its focus to the periphery. The Open City of modernity is now a place of continual transition; the *liminal zones* of urban space are established as the true markers of its metropolitanism.

The impressionistic setting of *Manhattan Transfer* draws our attention to various isolated experiences of urban life that, taken together, constitute the "body of the city" (and, at the same time, follow the bodies of the protagonists as they move through a series of border situations).

Metropolitan aesthetics in Dos Passos, I will argue, is carefully built upon a logic of inversion of spaces. In the novel, New York becomes an *abyss city*—a city marked by unsurmountable rifts and voids. One of the main characters, Bud Korpenning, moves from the countryside to the city to find work, but eventually commits suicide after almost starving to death. Another character, Ellen Thatcher Oglethorpe, finds her way from the lower middle class to the upper class, ending up as an actress, successful but unhappy (like Theodore Dreiser's Carrie Meeber a quarter of a century earlier). The emphasis on border situations is further accentuated by the fact that Ellen changes her name frequently and even marries a gay man at one point.⁴¹

Dos Passos's murky vision of New York is a perverse countermodel to Whitman's Open City with its happy immigrants and citizens. "The literary Open City of the twentieth century," one urban studies scholar explains, "descends from Walt Whitman's literary Open City of the nineteenth."⁴² Whitman's celebration of the lively, vibrant city in his 1855 collection of poems, *Leaves of Grass*, functioned as harbinger of a "free society" which welcomed immigrants from places all over the world. Modernist fiction in many ways reversed the urban dynamic negotiated in *Leaves of Grass*. Whereas the city is freely accessible to people from other countries in Whitman's verses, Dos Passos depicts this fluctuation as a painful process of bleeding out. While Whitman's "Mannahatta" celebrates the "immigrants arriving, fifteen or twenty thousand in a week," Dos Passos's *Manhattan Transfer* portrays the travelers at the ports of New York as "deportees," many of them convicted as communists by the Department of Justice.⁴³ The "numberless, crowded streets, high growths of iron, slender, strong, light, splendidly uprising toward clear skies" in Whitman's poem, are contrasted in Dos Passos's novel with images of "gorillafaced chipontheshoulder policemen" and seagulls wheeling "above the dark dingy-dressed crowd that stood silently looking down the bay."⁴⁴

The flux of jolly immigrants from Whitman's verses is replaced in Dos Passos by a ghastly scenario of expulsion. Dos Passos's struggling protagonists are not happy daydreamers but "undesirable aliens."⁴⁵ Although the gates are seemingly open in his vision of New York, the "transfer" that Dos Passos refers to in the novel's title is rather one from inside to outside, never reaching the heart of the city, that enigmatic "center of things."⁴⁶ Toward the end of the novel, Jimmy Herf, another key figure, leaves the island of Manhattan on a ferry (just as he has entered it before on a boat),

now destitute and deprived of his hopes and illusions. The metropolis of New York is portrayed as a *shrinking city*⁴⁷ which loses its inhabitants either by death or by eviction. Only a gang of rich power brokers seems to occupy its inner space.⁴⁸ Like Crane in *Maggie* (1893),⁴⁹ Dos Passos plays with the notion of the city as a closed space. *Manhattan Transfer*'s metropolis is full of abysses, class hierarchies and impasses that alienate the protagonists from society.⁵⁰ The following section will discuss the significance of labyrinthine structures in such narratives of alienation. The motif of the urban labyrinth explored by the intrepid walker goes back to postrevolutionary fiction, being intimately conjoined with the transatlantic imaginary of the early republic.

THE LABYRINTHINE AESTHETICS OF THE WALKING CITY

In his influential study *The Image of the City* (1960), Kevin Lynch has described the modern metropolis as an "alienated city,"⁵¹ in which the inhabitants have become unable to orient themselves. Since traditional indicators such as natural boundaries, monuments, and traffic knots are rendered obsolete or interchangeable, people can no longer create a mental map of either their own position or the overarching urban space in which they live. The encoding of the city forms urban identity as a structural web, comparable to the famous "grid" of New York City with its squares and blocks.⁵² Each quarter in this model city has its own laws constituting identity and shaping ways of behavior. Consequently, cities feature a multitude of identities, all of them existing at the same time and struggling for dominance. This modern urban space is conceptualized as both an *open city*, encouraging the transcendence of boundaries and the creation of zones of in-between-ness, and a *closed space*, confronting the urban dweller with limitations, detours, and dead ends.

A characteristic expression of this collision of spaces is the metaphor of the *city as labyrinth*. The maze is, first of all, an ideological construction, designed to impose a system of power onto all members of society. Second, it is also a mode of spatialization of everyday life, connected to the futile attempts of individuals to map their environment.⁵³ In urban writing, the labyrinth serves at once as an iconic representation and as a structuring pattern. As a textualized image, it may also assume the function of a metaliterary event, commenting on the acts of *text production* and *reception*. Through the metaphor of the urban maze we are confronted with the mechanisms of writing and become aware of our own difficulty in

accessing and comprehending fictional texts.⁵⁴ Similar to our unconscious, which alters its own structure in order to elude attempts of interpretation, the fictional city encourages us to trespass boundaries and explore new realms of experience. The urban labyrinth offers the *flâneur* an enigmatic assemblage of barely decipherable signs. In his 1984 article “Walking in the City,” Michel de Certeau has discussed this hidden rhetoric of the modern metropolis.⁵⁵ The complexity of the city, de Certeau argues, is perceived as a panorama of signs that offers the observer a vast number of different reading options. The most effective way of exploring the city is thus to perambulate it:

The ordinary practitioners of the city walk—an elementary form of this experience of the city; they are walkers, *Wandermänner*, whose bodies follow the thick and thin of the urban “text” they write without being able to read it.⁵⁶

The urban dweller’s “walking rhetorics,” as de Certeau calls it, becomes a strategy of decoding the ramified space of the city. Based in the semiotic field of modern urbanity, this “rhetoric of walking” facilitates the conflation of geography, textuality, and imagination into one experience: that of the city itself.⁵⁷ The urban *flâneur* is both an explorer and a creator of city space, remodeling established lines and structures.⁵⁸ The reconstruction of urban space through the figure of the walker, I shall argue, has lain at the heart of the American urban imaginary since the postrevolutionary era.

In order to illustrate this continuity from the postrevolutionary epoch to modernity, I want to draw attention to Charles Brockden Brown’s early city novel, *Arthur Mervyn, or, Memoirs of the Year 1793*. Published in two parts in the years 1799 and 1800, *Arthur Mervyn* is set in Philadelphia during the yellow fever epidemic.⁵⁹ The main character is an 18-year-old boy from the country who has moved to Philadelphia to earn a living. Arthur Mervyn experiences his trip through the city as a series of meanders, detours, and impasses which lead him, time and again, to high walls and empty houses. When Arthur finally manages to overcome all these hindrances, he is met by sheer darkness, as the following scene illustrates: “We arrived at a brick wall, through which we passed by a gate into an extensive court or yard. The darkness would allow me to see nothing but outlines.”⁶⁰

At the beginning of the novel, the protagonist is robbed of his money and ends up in a courtyard where he is deprived of his sight by darkness and other buildings. His next refuge is a domicile in which he hides, a bedroom, and—at the climax of this chain of events—a bedroom closet into which he finds himself confined. “What a condition was mine! Immersed in palpable darkness! shut up in this unknown recess! lurking like a robber!” In passages like this, Brown anticipates Edgar Allan Poe’s grim visions of being confined and buried alive. As if mysteriously attracted by such claustrophobic spaces, the character keeps stumbling into one dead end after another. “I stepped into the closet, and closed the door. Some one [sic] immediately after unlocked the chamber door.” Before Arthur actually steps into the closet, which will become his temporary grave, he ponders the advantages and disadvantages of such a leap into the unknown: “Should I immure myself in this closet? I saw no benefit that would finally result from it. I discovered that there was a bolt on the inside, which would somewhat contribute to security. This being drawn, no one could enter without breaking the door.”⁶¹ Closed rooms, *Arthur Mervyn*’s first-person narrator concludes, offer a sense of protection and inner peace, given the fact that they can be locked. Notably, Brown in the passage above operates with images of both “opening up” (*doors*) and “closing” (*bolts, closets*), suggesting that the city of Philadelphia as the location of Arthur’s odyssey consists of many segmented spaces. These spaces seem literally “interlocked” through areas of transition which either enable the walker to find his way into the open or lead to his incarceration.⁶² As if to underline this interplay of breaking free and imprisonment, Arthur’s movements through the city are marked by a circular route that hews to the city’s borders but then leads him back again to his lonely chamber:

After viewing various parts of the city, intruding into churches, and diving into alleys, I returned. The rest of the day I spent chiefly in my chamber, reflecting on my new condition; surveying my apartment, its presses and closets; and conjecturing the causes of appearances.⁶³

Arthur Mervyn’s world is marked as a territory of closets and closed rooms. Even when Arthur eventually steps outside and wanders through the city, he usually ends up in his chamber and “surveys” his apartment. The labyrinthine character of the metropolis is underlined by references to a convoluted network of streets, buildings, and yards, sometimes evoking

the image of the “fortified city” Mike Davis finds in Los Angeles 200 years later: “The doors communicating with the court, and, through the court, with the street, were fastened by inside bolts.”⁶⁴ Brown’s Philadelphia in *Arthur Mervyn* is truly a fortress, equipped with a massive bulwark to protect what seems to be the inner core of the city. Yet Arthur manages to pervade these lines of defense when he first arrives at the city limits. It is part of Brown’s metropolitan aesthetics that he portrays the city as an essentially *closed space* with only a few—often hidden or locked—entrances.

In *Edgar Huntly, or, Memoirs of a Sleep-Walker* (1799), Brown’s companion text to *Arthur Mervyn*,⁶⁵ the city of Philadelphia reappears not as a closed space, but as a site of transatlantic exchange—a center of attraction for European immigrants. One of these immigrants is the Irish worker Clithero Edny, an ambiguous figure marked as both a potential murderer and a hopeful pioneer. Clithero’s story, told in his own voice, is that of the typical émigré from the Old World, who tries his luck in America: “I at length arrived at Belfast. A vessel was preparing for America. I embraced eagerly the opportunity of passing into a new world. I arrived at Philadelphia. As soon as I landed I wandered hither.”⁶⁶ Clithero’s journey from Belfast to Philadelphia, and from Philadelphia into the depths of the American wilderness is a passage from one emotional terrain to another. Whereas Belfast stands for Clithero’s bleak homeland back in Europe, the metropolis of Philadelphia is marked as a site of hope and possibility. The city, however, is only a *transition point* on the voyager’s way into the midst of nature (“As soon as I landed I wandered hither”). The metropolitan space of Philadelphia is thus marked as ambiguous in two forms, being both *transatlantic* (harboring many immigrants from Europe) and *trans-American* (carrying elements of American urbanity as well as components of the country’s pastoral context).

OPEN DOORS AND WALLED STREETS: ATLANTIC CITIES AS IMAGINED LANDSCAPES

When Henry James began to publish his third novel *The American* as a serial in *The Atlantic Monthly* in 1876, the “international theme” did not yet exist as a fixed literary pattern.⁶⁷ A meditation on American innocence and European treachery, *The American* figures as part of what Elizabeth

Sabiston has called “the architecture of consciousness” in Henry James’s oeuvre.⁶⁸ This *architecture*, to employ Sabiston’s term, seems firmly embedded in an aesthetics of spatial division. James’s hero Christopher Newman is an American businessman who travels to Paris where he falls in love with Claire, a beautiful young aristocrat, and, as a result, becomes involved in a maze of sinister plots, duels, and affairs of the Bellegarde family.

Having grown up in the “open space” of an American city, the protagonist experiences Paris as a walled city—a site of stifling surroundings and omnipresent confinements.⁶⁹ In the character’s perception, the city is filled with “dull brick walls,” “long steep pinnacles of mossy slate,” and “streets bordered by long dead walls.”⁷⁰ As if these signifiers of urban demarcation were not enough deterrence, Newman’s attention is—time and again—drawn to barriers and other fortifications. At one point during his odyssey, he finds himself gazing at “an immense façade of dark time-stained brick, flanked by two low wings, each of which terminated in a little Dutch-looking pavilion.”⁷¹ James’s Paris appears to teem with references to other parts of the continent, thus forming the archetype of a walled European city. The streets of Faubourg St. Germain, for example, remind the protagonist of “the blank walls of Eastern seraglios.”⁷² This imagery of restraint is reflected in the appearance of the dwelling places of Parisians. Valentin De Bellegarde’s apartment is filled with a number of “oddities” that exert a distinctly claustrophobic effect upon the protagonist: “the place was low, dusky, contracted, and crowded with curious bric-à-brac.”⁷³ The image of *walls* equally dominates the domiciles of the other family members. In some of these buildings, the walls “seemed all composed of small door panels, touched with long-faded gilding,” at other times they are “ornamented with old hangings of stamped leather and trophies of rusty arms.”⁷⁴ At the novel’s climax, Newman visits Claire in the restricted space of a convent with dark, looming “prison-walls.” Shocked by the experience, he rushes out of the convent, very much to the bewilderment of Madame De Bellegarde and her son who look at him in disbelief: “Newman hurried past them, guided only by the desire to get out of the convent-walls into the street. The gate opened itself at his approach; he strode over the threshold and it closed behind him.”⁷⁵ The convent is constructed here in a metonymical relation to the city of Paris. As a *pars pro toto*, it epitomizes the same sense of claustrophobia and restriction that the character experiences when walking through the city’s streets. James’s vision of Paris as a walled city is matched by his portrayal of

London in his other writings. While in Paris the walls seem to arise as purely artificial constructions from the fabricated ground of the city, they are juxtaposed with elements of nature and Arcadian bliss in James's fictional London. In *The Princess Casamassima*, the gardens at Medley are described as having "high brick walls, on the sunny sides of which was a great training of apricots and plums, bordered with old-fashioned homely flowers, inclosing immense squares where other fruit-trees stood upright and mint and lavender floated in the air."⁷⁶ As shown in this example, city walls often arise next to these gardens—a motif reminiscent of images from the fictional Italy in American literature. At one point in the novel, the protagonist Hyacinth Robinson, a London bookbinder, feels brought to the verge of crying when looking at the stately walls that constitute the borders of the Princess's garden: "There was something in the way the gray walls rose from the green lawn that brought tears to his eyes."⁷⁷

The ambiguity and complexity that seem to infuse the city space of London recur in other novels by James. In *The Portrait of a Lady* (1881), for example, London is depicted as an unfathomable place, marked by rich and profuse structures. The main character Isabel Archer learns to cherish "the thick detail of London,"⁷⁸ the city's complex and intricate configuration through its spatial surroundings. James's allusion to London's urban density echoes Edgar Allan Poe's interpretation of the city as an *enigmatic* terrain in "The Man of the Crowd" (1840). Not coincidentally, the first (and last) sentence of "The Man of the Crowd" cites "a certain German book" which "does not permit itself to be read."⁷⁹ In such passages, Poe conveys a sense of abyssal depth and inscrutability that his fictional city seems to be filled by. When the narrator's attention is attracted by a "decrepit old man"⁸⁰ with an idiosyncratic expression on his face, he follows the stranger, suspecting him of having committed an atrocious crime. All indications that the old man is actually a criminal are later revealed as figments of the protagonist's imagination. The city resists these interpretations and presumptions, remaining ultimately inscrutable. As the restless narrator embarks on an ultimately fruitless journey through the city streets, the reader becomes a detective as well. The search of Poe's central character, one critic observes, is constructed as a pre-Freudian investigation into the human mind: "If one reads the narrator and the man of the crowd as the two elements of the split self, the 'eye' and the 'I,' then the nightly wanderings in the dark streets of London become an externalized image, and a textual manifestation, of the mental process."⁸¹

If Poe portrays London as a key symbol of the human unconscious, James concentrates on the worldly aspects of the city, being “the most complete compendium of the world.”⁸²

In his late work *The American Scene* (1907), James returns to the genre of *flâneur* literature. In a set of loosely connected sketches, the book takes us on a literary tour through various places in America (the country James had left more than 30 years earlier), many of them connected to James’s own youth.⁸³ Based on a series of extended trips the author took from August, 1904, to July, 1905, *The American Scene* strongly focuses on the *spatial* dimension of America, resonating in the choice of the term “scene” for the title (which may refer to “location” and “area,” but also to “stage” and “setting”). In James’s point of view, turn-of-the-century America seems not only characterized by an uncontrolled materialism that has permeated every facet of society, but also by the country’s conspicuous self-modeling as “the land of the ‘open door.’”⁸⁴ This becomes visible in an agenda that has defined “openness” as the sublime ideal of American domestic policy, thus destroying spatial distinctions and depriving citizens of their sense of privacy.⁸⁵ Shocked by the observation that the places of his own childhood in New York have been transformed into anonymous public spaces, James concludes that “[t]he open door [. . .] may make a magnificent *place*, but it makes poor *places*.”⁸⁶ In James’s view, this policy of a *dissolution of boundaries* can be discovered in the “open dooryards” of New England villages and the “phantasmagoric” settings of “New Jerusalem,” as he calls the community of Jewish immigrants in New York City.⁸⁷ He sees it in Boston’s “open doors and immediate accesses” and in Philadelphia’s spatial composition with its “open doors and comparatively cheerful vistas.”⁸⁸ The epitome of this ideal, for James, is a New York City that personifies an *aesthetics of openness* in its external and internal structures. With regard to the architectural design of the buildings, James detects a “diffused vagueness of separation between apartments, between hall and room, between one room and another.” Behind this appearance, he suspects a systematic strategy:

Thus we have the law fulfilled that every part of every house shall be [. . .] *visible, visitable, penetrable*, not only from every other part, but from as many parts of as many other houses as possible, if they only be near enough. Thus we see systematized the indefinite *extension of all spaces* and the definite merging of all functions; the enlargement of every opening, the exaggeration of every passage, the substitution of *gaping arches* and *far perspectives*

and *resounding voids* for enclosing walls [. . .], for all the rest of the essence of the room-character [. . .].⁸⁹

By extinguishing *enclosing walls* and by substituting them with *resounding voids*, New York's aesthetic of open space astounds and confuses the spectator. "He sees only doorless apertures, vainly festooned, which decline to tell him where he is, which make him [. . .] a homeless wanderer."⁹⁰ The *homeless wandering* described in *The American Scene* is marked by what Ross Posnock has suitably called Henry James's "mode of experimental flânerie,"⁹¹ a sense of exploring and testing the boundaries of the city of modernity. This tendency toward confusion and chaos in the American Open City stands in stark contrast to the sense of control and entrenchment James projects onto the European walled city.⁹²

A similarly dichotomous account of American and European urbanity can be found in US immigrant literature of the turn of the century. One of the most successful accounts of this era is Mary Antin's colorful autobiography *The Promised Land* (1912), which, together with Abraham Cahan's and Anzia Yezierska's writings, illustrates the omnipresence of the transatlantic imaginary in the modern era. The book is permeated by images that accentuate the divide between Europe and America. "I rode the Atlantic in an emigrant ship," the first-person narrator tells us, "I took possession of the New World."⁹³ The act of taking possession of the New World is linked to an aesthetics of mobility marked by the urge to break out of the walls of European limitation and appropriate the liberties of the Promised Land. Antin's memory of her childhood in Belarus is imbued with images of barriers and obstacles. In the everyday routine in her hometown Polotzk, Antin reports, all citizens faced "a new wall"⁹⁴ each time they were making progress in their lives. Jewish citizens, she asserts, had to cope with multiple restrictions, often expressed through geographic and symbolic frontiers:

As I look back to-day I see, *within the wall* raised around my birthplace by the vigilance of the police, *another wall*, higher, thicker, more impenetrable. [. . .] This wall within the wall is the religious integrity of the Jews, a *fortress* erected by the prisoners of the Pale, in defiance of their jailers; a stronghold built of the ruins of their pillaged homes [. . .].⁹⁵

As if to support this imagery of *fortified city space*, Antin draws our attention to the "narrow, walled garden" which flanked her birthplace

and the “low ceiling” and “bare [...] walls” in her first school.⁹⁶ The other European cities that Antin encounters during her family’s exodus seem equally marked by metaphors of restriction. The metropolis of Berlin is described as an agglomeration of “buildings, shops, people, and animals, all mingled in one great, confused mass.”⁹⁷ The experiences in Hamburg seem even more traumatizing to the narrator. Here, she finds herself put into quarantine together with other émigrés, all of them being “lined up, cross-questioned, disinfected, labelled and pigeonholed.” As a final act of humiliation, the refugees are locked into a prison for 14 days. “Two weeks within high brick walls, several hundred of us herded in half a dozen compartments, [...] sleeping in rows, like sick people in a hospital.”⁹⁸ Notably, each step of the exodus to the Promised Land is described in spatial terms. Thus, the chapter that deals with her family’s decision to go to America is resonantly named “The Boundaries Stretch.”⁹⁹ Its ending leaves no doubt that the Promised Land signifies an extension of spatial limits to the hopeful immigrants.

So at last I was going to America! Really, really going, at last! The *boundaries* burst. The arch of heaven soared [...]. The winds rushed in from *outer space*, roaring in my ears, “America! America!”¹⁰⁰

Despite being slightly disillusioned by the everyday experience of living in America, the narrator insists on the country’s emancipatory dimension. “[T]his American freedom that we talk about,” she reminds us, is “a real thing.”¹⁰¹ This *real thing*, we learn in *The Promised Land*, is indissolubly entwined with the experience of modernity. “To be alive in America,” the narrator claims, “is to ride on the central current of the river of modern life.”¹⁰² This also includes a “modern” sense of identity, disconnected from any form of national affiliation. American immigrants, Antin posits, are, in fact, “a people without a country.”¹⁰³ In a way, this observation links Antin’s cosmopolitan experience to that of Henry James, whose transatlantic imagination equally rejects any notion of national belonging.

CONCLUSION

In this essay, I have put forward the argument that the ambiguous trope of the “Open City” runs through the history of US American literature from the revolutionary period to modernism, with necessary adaptations to the respective sociohistorical and aesthetic context. Being an integral element of what

I have, in borrowing a term coined by Paul Giles, described as the “transatlantic imaginary” of US literature, the literary city of modernity constantly oscillates between its European past and the promises of the New World.

Presented in terms of an array of oppositional attributes (civilization versus degeneration, light versus darkness, progress versus stagnation, and so forth), cities have been deployed as metaphors for the ambiguous nature of American democracy itself. This is illustrated in Charles Brockden Brown’s twin novels *Arthur Mervyn* and *Edgar Huntly* which outline an imagery most characteristic of the postrevolutionary epoch. While attracting thousands of citizens and offering new possibilities of self-realization, the urban centers also seemed to display a “labyrinthine structure” which made them appear more and more suspect. In literary versions of the city labyrinth, the figure of the walker appears who pervades the cityscape with his stride and makes it legible.

The ideal of the “Open City” experienced its renaissance in the 1850s with Walt Whitman who celebrated the American Dream as an offer to cheerful masses of immigrants streaming to the urban centers of the United States. In Henry James’s novel *The American*, the innocence and openness of the American city is contrasted with the closed and almost claustrophobic character of the European walled city. With its aesthetics of *thickness* and *inscrutability*, the fictional London of James and Poe appears as another countermodel to the American Open City.

The image of the vibrant American city welcoming its new residents is replaced in turn-of-the-century naturalism (especially in Upton Sinclair’s *The Jungle*) by a more pessimistic view that pointed to the flipside of the urban dream. In Henry James’s travel book *The American Scene*, this dark side is associated with America’s “open door” policy, bound to generate a destruction of private boundaries. It is only in the genre of immigrant autobiographies, exemplified by Mary Antin’s *The Promised Land*, that the promise of openness is still kept alive as an unswerving ideal. Finally, Dos Passos interprets the Open City as a fluctuating, yet *shrinking city* in which the searchers either die or have to leave town.

The underlying structural patterns in the texts I have discussed in this essay remind us that the American urban imaginary has always been obsessed with images of ambiguity and outright contradiction. Thus conceived, the “aesthetics of cross-Atlantic mapmaking,” as I have termed the process of transnational literary self-fashioning in the United States, must be seen as a vehicle of critical self-reflection, conjoining “openness” (*freedom*) and “closure” (*restraint*) as circulating elements of American culture itself.

NOTES

1. Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America and Two Essays in America*, trans. Gerald E. Bevan (1835 & 1840; New York: Penguin, 2003), 479.
2. Charles Brockden Brown, *Arthur Mervyn, or Memoirs of the Year 1793*, ed. Philip Barnard and Stephen Shapiro (1799–1800; Indianapolis: Hackett, 2008), 17.
3. John Dos Passos, *Manhattan Transfer* (1925; London: Penguin, 1987), 263.
4. *Ibid.*, 324–25. According to Tocqueville’s data, Philadelphia had 161,000 inhabitants and New York 202,000 in the year 1830.
5. Since I am referring to the “Open City” as a concept, I will use capital letters for the term.
6. Jane Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* (1961; New York: Vintage, 1989), 195–221.
7. In particular, Sennett suggests three ways in which an Open City can be designed: (a) by means of “[a]mbiguous edges,” that is, by focusing on the productive potential of borders that exist “at the edges between communities” within city life; (b) through “[i]ncomplete form,” that is, by privileging the “dialogics” of urban practice over closure and by enabling city dwellers to fill the gaps in urban life creatively and flexibly; (c) by way of “[u]nresolved narrative,” that is, by “embrac[ing] non-linear forms of sequence” and encouraging urbanites to shape their own, real-life narratives. Richard Sennett, “The Open City” (<https://www.richardsennett.com/site/senn/UploadedResources/The%20Open%20City.pdf>, accessed January 10, 2016), 8–13.
8. *Ibid.*, 14.
9. Raymond Williams, *The Country and the City* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973), 1–8, 215–29 & passim. As far as the United States are concerned, this critical stance toward urbanity can be traced back to the country’s colonial history. The Quaker William Penn, founder and namesake of Pennsylvania, warned in a letter to his first wife Guglielma Springett Penn: “Of cities and towns of concourse beware. [...] A country life and estate I like best for my children” (August 4, 1682; emphasis in the original). Qtd. in John Fanning Watson, *Annals of Philadelphia and Pennsylvania, in the Olden Time* (New York: Baker & Crane, 1844), 102.
10. Paul Giles, *Virtual Americas: Transnational Fictions and the Transatlantic Imaginary* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2002), 1.
11. Deborah L. Madsen, “Transatlantic Identity and the Question of American Literature,” *Revista de Estudios Norteamericanos* 3 (1994): 45.
12. Giles, *Virtual Americas*, 21.
13. Robert J. Tally, Jr., *Spatiality* (London and New York: Routledge, 2013), 48.
14. *Ibid.*, 44, 79–111.
15. *Ibid.*, 79.

16. See Desmond Harding, *Writing the City: Urban Visions & Literary Modernism* (New York et al: Routledge, 2003), 1–30; and Heinz Ickstadt, “Black vs. White City: Kultur und ihre soziale Funktion im Chicago der Progressive Period,” *Amerikastudien/American Studies* 29 (1984): 199–214.
17. See Sam Bass Warner, Jr., *The Private City: Philadelphia in Three Periods of Its Growth* (1968; Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania P, 1987), 56–62. City planner August Heckscher has shown in *Open Spaces: The Life of American Cities* (1977) that US urban areas (with the examples of Dallas, Cincinnati, and Milwaukee) are fundamentally based upon a “desire for openness.” A. Heckscher, *Open Spaces: The Life of American Cities*, with Phyllis Robinson (New York: Harper & Row, 1977), 17. “The town in America, as soon as it could dispense with the stockade and exist with reasonable security, showed a liking for open vistas and an uncomplicated structural form.” *Ibid.*, 17–18.
18. Selma Cantor Berrol, *The Empire City: New York and Its People, 1624–1996* (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 1997), 50.
19. Cf. Mona Domosh, *Invented Cities: The Creation of Landscape in Nineteenth-Century New York and Boston* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996), 8.
20. Edwin G. Burrows and Mike Wallace, *Gotham: A History of New York City to 1898* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 746–47.
21. Jacob A. Riis, *How the Other Half Lives: Studies Among the Tenements of New York* (1890; New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1909), 2.
22. Iris Marion Young, “City Life and Difference,” in *Metropolis: Center and Symbol of Our Times*, ed. Philip P. Kasinitz (New York: New York University Press, 1995), 269.
23. Kees Christiaanse, qtd. in Tobias Armbrorst, Daniel D’Oca, and G. Theodore, “Community: The American Way of Living,” *Places* (September, 2009), accessed November 16, 2015, <https://placesjournal.org/article/community-the-american-way-of-living>.
24. Young, “City Life,” 251.
25. Gerald E. Frug, *City Making: Building Communities without Building Walls* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), 132.
26. *Ibid.*, 132, emphasis added.
27. The representation of African Americans in texts of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century undoubtedly complicates an immigrant-focused narrative, since African Americans, for the most part, could not be considered voluntary immigrants. See, for example, Riis, *How the Other Half Lives*, ch. 3 & 7.
28. Richard Sennett, *The Uses of Disorder: Personal Identity and City Life* (New York and London: W.W. Norton, 1970), 27–49, 172–98.
29. Richard Sennett, “The Public Realm,” in *The Blackwell City Reader*, ed. Gary Bridge and Sophie Watson (Oxford and Malden: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), 265.

30. *Ibid.*, 263.
31. *Ibid.*, 264.
32. Upton Sinclair, *The Jungle* (1906; Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1988), 368.
33. *Ibid.*, 190, 195.
34. *Ibid.*, 213.
35. *Ibid.*, 284.
36. *Ibid.*, 83.
37. Mary Neuburger, "To Chicago and Back: Aleko Konstantinov, Rose Oil, and the Smell of Modernity," *Slavic Review* 65.3 (Autumn, 2006): 427–28.
38. *Ibid.*, 265, 370.
39. *Ibid.*, 409–22.
40. On "postmetropolis," see Edward W. Soja, *Postmetropolis: Critical Studies of Cities and Regions* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2000). For a discussion of the "Mega-City" concept, see Sujata Patel, "The Making of Global City Regions. Mumbai: The Mega-City of a Poor Country," in *The Blackwell City Reader*, ed. Gary Bridge and Sophie Watson (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), 72–78.
41. *Manhattan Transfer* seems strongly influenced by a naturalist aesthetics which informs the construction of the city as "boundary space." It has been argued that the novel is pervaded by "a block of determinist, naturalist narrative" that runs "beneath an accelerated, yearning impressionism." Peter Brooker, *New York Fictions: Modernity, Postmodernity, the New Modern* (London: Longman, 1996), 53. In *Manhattan Transfer*'s plot, this determinist discourse is manifested through the erection of borders and dead ends which hinder the characters' movements and often lead them into a fatal direction.
42. Elizabeth A. Wheeler, *Uncontained: Urban Fiction in Postwar America* (New Brunswick, New Jersey, et al: Rutgers University Press, 2002), 194.
43. Walt Whitman, "Mannahatta" (1855), in *Leaves of Grass* (New York: Paddington Press, 1970), 216; Dos Passos, *Manhattan Transfer*, 262–63.
44. Whitman, "Mannahatta," 216; Dos Passos, *Manhattan Transfer*, 263.
45. *Ibid.*, 263.
46. *Ibid.*, 16.
47. For a detailed discussion of the concept of the "shrinking city," see Harry W. Richardson and Chang Woon Nam, ed. *Shrinking Cities: A Global Perspective* (New York: Routledge, 2014). It is important to note that, contrary to common belief, the *shrinking city* is not a phenomenon of the 1970s or 1980s, but has its roots in the 1920s when the first Atlantic ports in the United States closed due to "economic restructuring." Richard Morrill, "Shrinking Cities: The United States," in *Shrinking Cities*, 62.

- Dos Passos's *Manhattan Transfer* about the expulsion of unwanted citizens from New York City can be read against this social and political backdrop.
48. Dos Passos, *Manhattan Transfer*, 359–60.
 49. Stephen Crane, *Maggie, A Girl of the Streets* (1893; New York: Newlees P, 1979).
 50. For Blanche Housman Gelfant, the character Jimmy Herf in *Manhattan Transfer* has been interpreted as the modernist prototype of the “self-divided man.” *The American City Novel* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1954), 21. Having become alienated from his environment, Jimmy desperately explores the urban jungle in search for gratification.
 51. Kevin Lynch, *The Image of the City* (Cambridge, MA, and London: MIT Press, 1960), 25–32.
 52. Jürgen Trabant, “Die Stadt und die Sprache: Eine Saussuresche Analogie,” in *Konzept 3: Die Stadt als Text*, ed. A. Carlini and B. Schneider (Tübingen: Wasmuth, 1976), 79–88.
 53. Edward W. Soja, *Postmodern Geographies: The Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Theory* (London: Verso, 1989), 17–21.
 54. For a discussion of the “city as labyrinth,” see Wendy B. Faris, “The Labyrinth as Sign,” in *City Images: Perspectives from Literature, Philosophy, and Film*, ed. Mary Ann Caws (New York: Gordon and Breach, 1991), 32–41; Peter F. Smith, *The Syntax of Cities* (London: Hutchinson, 1977), 171.
 55. Michel de Certeau, “Walking in the City,” in *The Cultural Studies Reader*, ed. Simon During (London and New York: Routledge, 1993), 127.
 56. *Ibid.*, 128.
 57. *Ibid.*, 131.
 58. Walter Benjamin, in his unfinished fragments called *Das Passagen-Werk* (written between 1927 & 1940 and posthumously published as *The Arcades Project*) has argued that the *flâneur* is an “archaeologist of the streets.” Cityscape is experienced by the *flâneur* as a “colportage of space,” a place loaded with history and ideology. “Space winks at the *flâneur*, ‘What do you think may have gone on here?’” W. Benjamin, *The Arcades Project*, trans. Howard Eiland and Kevin McLaughlin (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004), 418–19.
 59. The extent to which the yellow fever epidemics of the late eighteenth century—in urban centers like New York and Philadelphia—had blemished the reputation of cities, is illustrated in a letter Thomas Jefferson, then Vice President of the United States, sent to the renowned physician Benjamin Rush on September 23, 1800: “The yellow fever will discourage the growth of great cities in our nation, and I view great cities as pestilential to the morals, the health, and the liberties of mankind.” T. Jefferson, “Letter to Dr. Benjamin Rush,” accessed December 1, 2014, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/01-32-02-0102>.

60. Brown, *Arthur Mervyn*, 28.
61. *Ibid.*, 30.
62. The first part of *Arthur Mervyn* is full of references to the character's attempts to break out of the boundaries of the city. Early into his odyssey, the narrator tells us: "I had formed the resolution to leave the city next day, and was astonished at the folly that had led me into it." *Ibid.*, 23. When Arthur finally manages to escape, he is soon drawn back, magically, to what he calls the "heart of the city." *Ibid.*, 108. These erratic excursions in and out of the limits of the city describe a symbolic space which is essentially inescapable. Even though Arthur does finally move to the country to marry Achsa Fielding, his final decision is to cross yet another boundary line and "hie to Europe." *Ibid.*, 330.
63. *Ibid.*, 49.
64. *Ibid.*, 162. See Mike Davis, *City of Quartz: Excavating the Future in Los Angeles* (1990; London: Pimlico, 1998).
65. *Edgar Huntly, or, Memoirs of a Sleep-Walker* was published right between the two parts of *Arthur Mervyn* in August, 1799. The first part of *Arthur Mervyn* appeared in May, 1799, the second part more than a year later, in September, 1800. This chronology is particularly interesting, since it generates the impression that *Edgar Huntly* is an "enframed" text, informed by both the "catastrophic" urbanity in the first part of *Arthur Mervyn* and the symbolic return to rural life in the novel's second part. On the theme of boundary transgression which can be classified as a key theme in both novels, see Steven Watts, *The Romance of Real Life: Charles Brockden Brown and the Origins of American Culture* (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994), 115.
66. Charles Brockden Brown, *Edgar Huntly, or, Memoirs of a Sleep-Walker*, ed. Norman S. Grabo (1799; New York: Penguin, 1988), 83–84.
67. By "Atlantic cities," I am referring to urban centers on both sides of the Atlantic that seem in some form—symbolically, economically, or geographically—involved in acts of transatlantic exchange (emigration, immigration, trade, shared images, etc.). Large port cities (such as London, New York City, or even Paris and Hamburg) which participated in cultural practices of the "Atlantic World" certainly qualify as such. See *The Colonial Book in the Atlantic World*, ed. Hugh Amory and David D. Hall (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2000), and Paul Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness* (London and New York, NY: Verso, 1993).
68. Elizabeth Sabiston, "Isabel Archer: The Architecture of Consciousness and the International Theme," *The Henry James Review* 7.2/3 (Winter–Spring, 1986): 29–47.
69. The conception of European cities as "walled cities" is intimately conjoined with the transatlantic discourse. In the cultural imagination of the eighteenth

and nineteenth centuries, European cities were seen as *Städte mit Stadtmauer* (cities with walls), with clear distinctions between inside and outside, while the boundaries surrounding American cities were usually portrayed as permeable (if existent at all). This perception has its roots in narratives circulated by American immigrants who were surprised to see cities without any walls. I want to thank Len Von Morzé for kindly referring me to this crucial point. For an analysis of the imagery of city walls in world literature and culture, see James D. Tracy, ed., *City Walls: The Urban Enceinte in Global Perspective* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

70. Henry James, *The American* (1877; New York: Penguin, 1986), 346, 444.
71. *Ibid.*, 345.
72. *Ibid.*, 79.
73. *Ibid.*, 144.
74. *Ibid.*, 164, 208.
75. *Ibid.*, 405.
76. Henry James, *The Princess Casamassima* (1886; Milwaukee: Wiseblood Books, 2013), 254.
77. *Ibid.*, 245. Various American fictions conjoin gardens and walls in their representation of Italian cities. Henry James's fictional Venice in his 1888 novella "The Aspern Papers" comes to mind, in which the city is marked by its secluded gardens. H. James, "The Aspern Papers," in *The Aspern Papers and Other Stories* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 44, 54. We may also think of Nathaniel Hawthorne's Padua from his 1844 short story "Rappaccini's Daughter" which synecdochically reduces the city to the motif of a private garden with its high, insurmountable walls. N. Hawthorne, "Rappaccini's Daughter," in *Nathaniel Hawthorne's Short Stories*, ed. Newton Arvin (New York: Vintage, 2011), 213–14.
78. Henry James, *The Portrait of a Lady* (1881; New York: Bantam, 2007), 124.
79. Edgar Allan Poe, "The Man of the Crowd," *The Complete Tales and Poems of Edgar Allan Poe* (London: Penguin Books, 1982), 475.
80. *Ibid.*, 478.
81. Aliko Varvogli, *The World That Is the Book: Paul Auster's Fiction* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2001), 66.
82. Qtd. in John Kimmey, *Henry James and London: The City in His Fiction* (New York: Peter Lang, 1991), 63.
83. Born in New York City, Henry James is heralded by his biographers as a true cosmopolitan. Even before reaching legal age, he had visited various places in Europe (among others London, Geneva, and Paris) and lived in a number of US cities (Albany, Newport, and Boston where he began to study at Harvard Law School). After professional stints to New York City and Paris, he finally settled in London in 1869. He would almost continually live in Britain and even acquire British citizenship in 1915, one year before his

- death. See Leon Edel, *Henry James, a Life* (New York: Harper & Row, 1985); and Adeline R. Tintner, *The Cosmopolitan World of Henry James: An Intertextual Study* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1991).
84. Henry James, *The American Scene* (1907; New York: Penguin, 1994), 49.
 85. Cf. Betsy Klimasmith, *At Home in the City: Urban Domesticity in American Literature and Culture, 1850-1930* (Durham, N.H.: University of New Hampshire Press, 2005), 12–13.
 86. James, *The American Scene*, 49.
 87. *Ibid.*, 32, 101, 103.
 88. *Ibid.*, 186, 221.
 89. *Ibid.*, 125–26, emphasis added.
 90. *Ibid.*, 126.
 91. Ross Posnock, *The Trial of Curiosity: Henry James, William James, and the Challenge of Modernity* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 284.
 92. The restless wandering that permeates James's *The American Scene* has yet another dimension: it is part of what Ross Posnock has described as the formation of a “cosmopolitan nonidentity”—in other words, a cultural self radically detached from any form of national affiliation. *Ibid.*, 191.
 93. Mary Antin, *The Promised Land* (1912; New York: Penguin, 1997), 75.
 94. *Ibid.*, 24.
 95. *Ibid.*, 26, emphasis added.
 96. *Ibid.*, 66, 94.
 97. *Ibid.*, 137.
 98. *Ibid.*, 140.
 99. *Ibid.*, 110–29.
 100. *Ibid.*, 129, emphasis added.
 101. *Ibid.*, 281.
 102. *Ibid.*, 278.
 103. *Ibid.*, 178.

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English-Canadian Actresses and the Multiple Networks of the Urban Atlantic, 1890s–1920s

Cecilia Morgan

Writing from London's Kensington to Canadian-born actress Margaret Anglin in May 1908, the English playwright Henry Arthur Jones asked her if she would consider the possibility of appearing in one of his plays in London.¹ Nothing came of it, however, but Jones persisted, asking her again in June 1910 to be in his 1911 London play.² Jones was by no means the only writer or producer to try to entice Anglin, a very well-known performer and producer, to cross the Atlantic. Sixteen years later another playwright, American Paul Kester, suggested to her that the two of them try to "place" *Lady Dedlock*, his and Anglin's adaptation of Charles Dickens's *Bleak House*, in England. Ellen Terry and Julia Neilsen, Kester thought, might wish to be involved, as "they have a following for such plays." However, he reassured Anglin that he would only proceed with this project if she approved. While her approval was not forthcoming, Kester did not abandon his desire to see the play reach a London audience, as in 1927 he suggested that the play would interest Sybil Thorndyke or the Terry family, with Fred Terry making a "fine" Inspector Bucket or

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Tulkinghorn. After all, thought Kester, who was currently in need of cash, “it would be a source of income even if it were not a big London success.”³

Anglin would not, as it turned out, appear in any London productions, nor would *The Great Lady Dedlock* be performed by the Terries. However, Jones’s and Kester’s letters are significant for a number of reasons. For one, they tell us about the degree of celebrity and cultural cachet that Anglin’s name might bring to these playwrights’ work, a reputation that had travelled beyond national boundaries and—at least in these cases—reversed the customary pattern of theatrical legitimacy emanating from Britain. For Jones and Kester, Anglin, an actress who had achieved a high degree of recognition on the American stage, might be a valuable cultural asset in the West End. The letters also, though, tell us about the multiple long-distance theatrical networks and circuits that existed during this period, ones that encompassed the urban Atlantic world but that also reached into the interior of the North American continent. While Anglin had crafted her career in theaters up and down the Atlantic seaboard, she also had appeared in venues that stretched from the American mid-west to the Pacific coast and, too, north into Canadian cities and towns. Anglin, along with her contemporary Canadian-born actress Julia Arthur, helped tie the urban Atlantic into a transcontinental and transnational cultural milieu.

While other scholars have commented on such networks and circuits, they have tended to do so in larger, more sweeping surveys or by examining the role of technologies and material culture, such as transatlantic liners.⁴ Such work has been crucial in expanding our understanding of theater as a means of global mobility and circulation; it also helps provide a framework and context in which to explore performers’ relationships with both these networks and the technologies that helped establish and facilitate them. However, by shifting our focus to the level of the individual performer, we can add an additional perspective, one that explores the ways in which such networks and technologies were put into play, mobilized and navigated by their users. Moreover, the very high degree of public scrutiny afforded actresses—part of the high visibility of female representation in urban American culture—also provides insights into the ways notions of intimacy and domesticity figured in urban Atlantic imaginaries.⁵

As Leonard von Morzé has argued, Atlantic urban centers experienced a high degree of economic integration, with banks and bankers, lawyers, markets, and newspaper agents a common feature of every port city⁶; such

an integration also had significant cultural dimensions. From the eighteenth century on, theater, along with other kinds of performances, circulated throughout these centers, through either the medium of the British garrison (in the case of British America) or that of touring companies.⁷ By the mid-nineteenth century technological changes—canals, rail, and steamship—increased the ease and rapidity of theatrical companies' movements around North America's north-eastern urban centers. Rail, in particular, played a critically important role in allowing companies to increase the geographic range of their productions, to move from centers such as New York and Boston to mid-western cities: St. Louis, Chicago, Minneapolis, and Kansas City. Furthermore, such circuits crisscrossed the United States—Canada border, as Montreal, Toronto, and (to a somewhat lesser extent) Halifax and Saint John also became regular stops on the theatrical circuit.⁸ They also were linked to Atlantic steamship travel and lines such as Cunard's which, as theater historian Marlis Schweitzer has argued, were critically important in bringing together the stages of New York and London.⁹ Although Anglin chose not to appear on London's stages (though she visited England, France, Germany, and Greece), from the late nineteenth until well into the twentieth century other Canadian women—Julia Arthur, Beatrice Lillie, Margaret Bannerman, Lena Ashwell, and Everetta (Prentice) Lawrence, just to name a few examples—welcomed the chance to train, appear, and in some cases produce and manage in England, as well as having careers in the United States and Canada. Furthermore, the large expansion of Atlantic urban print culture and the growth of consumer culture provided a ready vehicle for these actresses and their companies to cultivate celebrity status.

Trains were integral to Margaret Anglin's career, as she, along with her contemporaries, relied on the rail networks that linked the northeastern seaboard to Canada, the American Midwest, New Orleans, and the West Coast. Her dependence on these well-worn routes was rarely, if ever, a matter for deep reflection; nor has my research uncovered the rich collections of letters and diaries generated by ocean liner and railroad travel that, for example, Australian women en route to England to pursue theatrical careers have left.¹⁰ For one, they saw England and, in particular, London as the epicenter of theatrical culture; their sense of excitement at launching a career there was intense. While launching tours of the North American interior might have stirred up feelings of exhilaration at the prospect of winning new audiences, it also posed new challenges, ones that were not always welcome or easily overcome. Practical considerations also may have

played a role in shaping the archival record: the longer voyages Australian actresses undertook to reach London offered them long periods of time in which to reflect on the cultural significance of their journeys. In contrast, travel by train might take less time and, depending on the destination, could be interrupted by changes at railroad stations; in some cases, railroad cars also may have been too crowded and noisy to afford these women time to record their feelings in much depth. Nevertheless, trains—not least their delays—appear regularly in Anglin's papers, underpinning discussions of scripts and contracts. "We are sending you our route, which has been changed, because of getting into Cincinnati this week, ahead of the time scheduled," Julia Opp Faversham told her in February 1916, as she and her husband William Faversham worked out arrangements for a production in Chicago with Anglin.¹¹

Telegrams, however, left a particular kind of material presence in the archives, as they were saved as part of Anglin's preservation of her records. They also had their own particular epistolary qualities. For one, they testify to the plans, hopes, and desires of those who sent them, as well as—at times—the conflicts between the actresses and the directors, designers, playwrights, managers, and theater owners with whom they dealt. At times they could be matter-of-fact, aimed at working out details as smoothly and efficiently as possible over considerable distances. Such was the case in Anglin's negotiations to produce Constance Fletcher's *Old Hickory*, a play about Andrew Jackson. Cordial, yet direct, with their discussions of rights, dates, and details of payments, these exchanges connected Venice, London, and New York in organizing and solidifying the business of producing theater.¹² Telegrams also testify to their senders' attempts to smooth over tensions and conflicts, as when producer George Tyler cabled to Anglin in February 1925: "it's all right my dear stop worrying about the situation I am agreeable to most any old thing." Not every "old thing," though, as Tyler needed her to agree to a change in her performance route, moving from Toledo to St. Louis, St. Paul, Minneapolis, and Omaha and not, as she had hoped, back to New York from her current location at the Jefferson Theatre in Birmingham, Alabama. "I cannot," he confessed, "make any money in the east."¹³ Tyler's statement was likely underpinned by his belief that the rapid growth and prosperity of these Midwestern cities had provided him with new audiences for Anglin's work.¹⁴ Anglin, though, was eager—to the point of desperation—to end her tour and to begin rehearsing a new play, so much so that Tyler's plea could not be answered in a brief telegram. Instead, she wrote him a

lengthy letter in which she told him of her frustration with the production “in which a lot of people hate me.” Moreover, “after telling me emphatically it was too late to worry with a New York season you sent me last week a sudden telegram telling me I was a fool not to let you book me in a lot more one night stands until next November! . . . I had tried my level best to please you—I had not heard one word from you direct except the telegram saying I was foolish not to put up with further inconvenience.”¹⁵

For Tyler, though, the cities of the northeastern seaboard were proving far less lucrative than those of America’s Midwest, an unpleasant reality that Anglin may not have wished to acknowledge. Her unhappiness with the tour, though, would not have been a shock to Tyler, as three weeks before their exchange he had telegraphed Harry Bryant at the Majestic Theatre in Danville, Virginia, to tell him “Miss Anglin wires me protesting against filthy dressing rooms. Will you please look at her design room immediately on arrival in each town and if necessary pay special man to put in sanitary shape for her. She’s quite entitled to this consideration.”¹⁶ As Thomas Postlewait has observed, while touring had its “pleasures and rewards,” it also could be marked by a number of aggravations, not least of which could be “inadequately equipped theatre,” ones made worse by the performer’s desire to get back to their “mecca,” New York.¹⁷ While Tyler appeared to have been genuinely sorry that Anglin was unhappy, one wonders if he might have wished for a less efficient transcontinental telegraph system.

Telegrams also might be a way that performers could quickly address the question of how best to create and control an audience when working at a distance and when timeliness was critical. Anglin’s planned appearance in *The Taming of the Shrew*, scheduled for Chicago’s Princess Theatre in March 1916, warranted a flurry of exchanges between herself, her husband and manager Howard Hull, and the Princess’s manager Frederick Donaghy, as those around Anglin feared another upcoming engagement she was scheduled to fulfill would undermine her appeal in Shakespeare.¹⁸ Telegrams also helped performers move swiftly to promote themselves: in January 1922 Thoda Cocroft, Anglin’s press representative, contacted her in Chicago to inform her that the Butterick Company was running photos and stories showing “prominent theatrical and opera people in their kitchens” in their publication *Delineator*, which reached two million people. If Anglin did not have any photographs that she could quickly send to the publication, Cocroft believed it necessary to hire a good photographer to take some as soon as possible.¹⁹

Telegrams also could help generate the excitement that performers and producers hoped would be part of a production's opening. At times they might serve as a more personal and intimate form of communication and, it is likely, boosted the recipient's self-esteem and confidence, letting them know at a very crucial moment that they were not isolated in their artistic endeavors. Prominent American playwright, producer, and director David Belasco, for example, wished Anglin "a huge success you great wonderful artistic woman," on her opening at New York's Carnegie Hall in February 1918; three years later Belasco wired his thanks to "dear wonderful Margaret Anglin for the beautiful lilies I am so glad of your great triumph and with the rest of the world in doing you honour long may you reign."²⁰ Telegrams also, though, might have a reach beyond the performer's dressing room and could play their own part in the creation of theatrical celebrity. They might, for example, be read from the stage at the curtain call or serve to emphasize the stature of a particular performer, not least if they had fallen prey to the vicissitudes of poverty and illness that could threaten any actor, no matter how successful and feted. According to Pennsylvania's *Reading Times*, at the 1903 benefit for Toronto-born Clara Morris at New York's Broadway Theatre there was "many a wet eye" once its organizer, Amelia Bingham, had finished reading the various tributes sent to Morris, who had had great success as a member of Augustin Daly's New York company but had become too ill to perform and was forced to retire from acting. Morris's letter, read by Bingham, told of her immense gratitude at the kindness of prominent figures such as actress Julia Arthur, and was "honored" by the presence of Bishop Potter and those who had gathered in the theater that day. The final tribute, though, came in the form of a telegram from Sarah Bernhardt, who wished that she could attend the benefit "to express to you myself my admiration for your talent, my sympathy for your person. You are one who has honored our career by the beauty of your life. I embrace you with emotion and tenderness."²¹

However, as Glen O'Hara has pointed out, telegrams did not supplant letters, something that Anglin's archives make abundantly clear. Although transatlantic cables were transmitted from 1858 onwards, they could also be expensive and were not accessible from all locations, as their reach was shaped by existing networks of transportation and communication. Steamships and faster, more frequent trains meant that letter-writing became an even more efficient means of communication between cities on both sides of the Atlantic as well

as between American cities.²² Anglin was an eager participant in that process, as her collection of letters is voluminous.²³ Her work as a producer necessitated ongoing exchanges of copious details about her contracts, such as royalties, casting, venues, and production costs, as Anglin herself paid scrupulous attention to the minutiae of her productions.²⁴ It is likely that the sheer volume of information generated by these productions made telegrams too expensive; furthermore, Anglin was fond of lengthy explanations of her decisions and demands.

Letter-writing also served other purposes in the world of early twentieth-century theater. As in the case of those transatlantic and imperial family networks studied by scholars such as Sarah Pearsall, Erika Rappoport, Elizabeth Buettner, and Laura Ishiguro, letters also allowed lengthy and more fulsome expressions of feelings and reactions to events in the profession, particularly in bad times.²⁵ Writing to Belasco in 1924, for example, Anglin told him she had read in the Chicago press that he was closing his theaters or at least not mounting any more productions that year “on account of the sorry state of affairs. Well, of course, you know how right I feel you are, but I myself am in a pretty sad position with a big expensive production on my hands and only a few more weeks to realize on it.” Anglin was eager to find a venue in New York, as she believed that the play in question, *The Great Lady Dedlock*, could be quite popular, particularly if she could rework the last act. Although set in a London slum and “highly dramatic and effective,” it had been criticized as being “terribly depressing” and hurting her box office. Accordingly, she had telegraphed the author to write a new ending that would take place in Chesney Wold. Presumably Anglin thought that American audiences would prefer an ending in a more luxurious and pastoral setting, one that might soften Dickens’s critiques of English society. Adding to her problems with ticket sales, technical matters had initially thrown her off:

We made, I must admit, a very bad start due to the carelessness of the house electrician. There are several difficult effects in the play, to be worked from the switch board. The man was given plenty of rehearsals and, of course, paid for them, but with fire laws here (it necessitates using only electric candles which have to be extinguished in a complicated way) we were at this man’s mercy and he nearly wrecked the performance, delaying it as well a full half hour. My own worry was so great and also I was very tired so that I was far below par.

Although Anglin did not go so far as to claim that such problems would not have occurred in New York, her disillusion with touring and a desire to return to her theatrical “home” probably underpinned her exasperation with the hapless house electrician. Whatever the case, Anglin still wished to have the benefit of Belasco’s expertise, perhaps even his patronage. “Of course I need not tell you what it would mean to me to have you see the play and criticize it or advise me about it and I will not feel hurt if you don’t think it good enough for the Belasco Theatre. This may be my last appearance in New York and it would be so wonderful if I could make it in a real theatre where I would have nothing to do but act.” She was not looking for financial support, she reassured him, but rather his opinion: “I am so alone and I have had such shocking treatment this year at the hands of my recent associates that I am almost at the end of my strength.” The letter ended, though, not on a note of desperation but with a matter-of-fact recitation of her upcoming schedule, including the news that she would be in Cleveland after leaving Chicago and then to Washington, D. C., if a New York engagement did not materialize.²⁶ Perhaps Anglin did not want to appear too despondent to someone she considered both a friend and a powerful force in American theater.

Like those families and friends split up by imperial service and settlement, men and women employed in the performing arts were often separated by touring schedules from fellow-workers with whom they might have developed close relationships, not to mention family members and other friends. Such letters provided solace and support in a cultural milieu that, as much as it was marked by cooperation and collaboration, was also noteworthy for its competitive nature. They also were useful conduits for the circulation and exchange of news about the business of theater and performance. Who was planning to produce which scripts; who had been contacted or, with luck, contracted to appear in them; how box office receipts were faring in other cities: these, and other types of information, provided performers both with a sense of connection and with vital knowledge of the state of their profession. Anglin’s correspondence with singer and songwriter Carrie Jacobs Bond, for example, which began in 1925 and continued until Bond’s death in 1946, was conducted mostly across the continent after Bond moved to Hollywood. Their correspondence is full of affectionate wishes, news of theater, movies, and radio (like Anglin, Bond made appearances on radio programs in the 1930s and 1940s), illnesses (shingles, dental surgery, accidents, and asthma), the vicissitudes of aging and loneliness, family developments (the

birth of Bond's granddaughter and Anglin's nephews' wartime enlistment), and the bleakness of the wartime years.²⁷ "I think of you often, darling friend—how many years you have been dear to me—and I pray for you and understand and love you," Bond told Anglin in 1942.²⁸

Finally, a performer such as Anglin received an abundance of fan mail, the majority of it sent in the form of letters and notes from cities, towns, and rural areas across the United States and Canada. This correspondence might be simple notes of appreciation for her performances sent by audience members. June Nahl told Anglin that since she had been old enough to attend the theater, "you have been the subject of my very sincere admiration. I have seen you in everything you have ever done here the dream of my life is that I might be like you in every way." Nahl had a favor to ask of Anglin as well, as she hoped to come to see the actress "and place my hand once in yours, I would be the proudest woman on earth. Could you tell me a time, any time, that you will be even for a moment where I might come and see you? If I am asking the impossible consider it unasked."²⁹ Although Anglin's reply has not survived, the emotional fervor of Nahl's letter was not unique. Moreover, fellow performers, from both North America and Britain, also expressed their delight in her work. "My dear Miss Anglin," wrote the versatile singer-dancer-actor Eddie Cantor in 1921, "may I not thank you, for making yesterday afternoon the most enjoyable one I have spent in years? Your splendid performance and that of your excellent company thrilled me beyond words." Cantor concluded his note with his best wishes for a long stay in Chicago.³⁰

Others, though, particularly (albeit not exclusively) young women, wrote to her seeking advice on training and launching themselves on the stage. Viva N. M. Martin, in New York for nine months and unable to obtain "an opening" in the theater, asked Anglin if she thought her chances would be better "in the old country." (Martin had been given a letter of introduction to Anglin by a mutual friend from Vancouver.) "My desire to try to express myself through the drama is keener than ever since witnessing the performance of 'Jean d'Arc,'" she told Anglin, referring to the latter's role as Joan.³¹ Some might be more forthcoming, as they were seeking employment and hoped that Anglin might have a part for them in her company. On the advice of her friend Helen Joseffy, who had appeared in *Lady Windermere's Fan* with Anglin, Alice Reynolds wrote to Anglin from her apartment on West 74th Street, telling her she had been in a number of plays and films with Helen but had not worked since

she returned from Paris. Joseffy hoped that Anglin could find Reynolds work in one of her productions; she had waited for five hours to see Anglin while the latter was in rehearsal and “a word from you, Miss A., would mean so much in my favour.”³² Although it is not clear whether Anglin was able to help Reynolds, for her correspondents, who came from across North American, Britain, and Europe, her opinion of their abilities and potential carried considerable weight.

While enthralled by her live performances, Anglin’s admirers might well have encountered representations of her and her contemporaries in other ways: most notably, in the pages of the newspaper and the periodical press. This urban-based print culture not only expanded rapidly from the mid-nineteenth century: it also took increasing notice of theater and other forms of performance, providing readers with considerable coverage of plays, performers, and theatrical news in general.³³ The genre of the theater review drew attention to these women’s work and their images as celebrated performers, particularly in the pages of the *The New York Times*. “Julia Arthur as Clorinda Wildairs, A Strange and Vehement Young Lady of Long Ago. Good and Stirring Acting. Miss Arthur’s Unusually Spirited and Effective Portrayal Will Probably Carry ‘A Lady of Quality’ to Triumph,” proclaimed the *Times*’ review of Arthur’s opening at the Wallack Theatre. Based on English novelist Frances Hodgson Burnett’s novel, *A Lady of Quality* was “a great triumph” for Arthur, whose “portrayal of Clorinda Wildairs . . . is an achievement of quite uncommon merit.” To be sure, the reviewer was not completely enamored of the script, pronouncing it “unusually long . . . not a very able piece of dramatization,” containing a few “puerile’ devices,” and “as full of dams as the Merrimac River.” Yet these flaws could be overlooked because of the strength of Arthur’s performance. Arthur’s portrayal of Clarinda, a “fashionable London lady” who is pursued by an evil Duke and ends up unintentionally killing him, was “powerful and splendid acting” that “will long be remembered.” The reviewer also noted that “Miss Arthur’s Queen Anne dresses defy description by a mere man.”³⁴

Arthur, then, not only brought “splendid acting” to New York; she also brought English culture, through both Burnett’s work and through her own evocation of fashionable London femininity. This was not the first time, though, that Arthur’s connection to London had been the subject of press comment. “Julia Arthur to Star,” readers of the *The New York Times* were told earlier that year, as she had returned to America after “two years

of work in the 'legitimate' under Sir Henry Irving." Moreover, in the last two months of Irving's season, she had "played the leading roles" in the company, as Ellen Terry was ill. "With such training Miss Arthur's friends are confident of her success as a star."³⁵ Two years later, Arthur's plans to make another transatlantic trip were the subject of yet more press attention. While it was unclear whether Arthur's exodus would be permanent or temporary, nevertheless it would jeopardize her planned London trip and her spring appearances at the Criterion Theatre in *Hamlet*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *A Lady of Quality*, and *More Than Queen*. "Miss Arthur also owns the British colonial rights" to *More Than Queen*, the *Times* reported, and if she did not retire it was probable that she would appear in it "in the Antipodes." Whatever the fate of her London appearance, though, she was scheduled to perform at Brooklyn's Montauk Theatre and then tour to Toronto, Chicago, St. Louis, and Pittsburgh; she also was scheduled to return to Broadway in the fall of 1900.³⁶

Arthur did not, as it happened, retire, at least not permanently. By September 1900 she "reconsidered her determination ... and to intimate friends who have been visiting her at her country seat she declared that theater-going public would see her before the footlights again this season." Her "comeback" would be *Hamlet*, a "new version ... entirely different from that interpreted by Mme. Sarah Bernhardt ... far more elaborate than any play she has produced for some time." It was not just the play that would be elaborate: Arthur's travel itinerary crisscrossed the continent and then took her across the Atlantic. As her husband, "Boston millionaire" Benjamin P. Cheney, was a director of the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railroad, Arthur planned to accompany him "in their private car" on his "tour of inspection" of the railway, going as "far west as California." She then would return to New York and leave for Europe, "where a visit will be paid to many of the Continental cities" so Arthur could buy properties and costumes for *Hamlet*. Upon her return to America, Arthur planned to meet her company in Boston, where they would start rehearsals.³⁷

As previously noted, Anglin's career was less that of the transatlantic world than the North American theatrical circuit, one that linked Atlantic cities to those of the Midwest and Pacific coast. Her performances were reviewed in newspapers that covered a wide swathe of American cities, such as Albany, Pittsburgh, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Chicago, Minneapolis, Dayton, and Portland; she also received extensive press in Toronto, Ottawa, and Montreal.³⁸ Yet reviews of her work also appeared

in the English press, albeit not as frequently or as in as much detail as in the United States. One of her earliest major performances, as Roxanne in *Cyrano de Bergerac*, was described in *The Bristol Mercury and Daily Post* as having made “the mark of the evening,” a performance “highly praised for its poetic promise.”³⁹ London’s *The Era* also thought Anglin had been “an unmistakeable success” in the role, although it admitted that “all that New York playgoers previously knew of her was that she was a Canadian, and that while an understudy in the Southern company she had made a hit” when filling in for the company’s female lead. Despite such relatively obscure origins, “Miss Anglin quickly captivated the audience . . . by her sympathetic and graceful performance of Roxane and the critics have praised her unanimously.”⁴⁰ *The Era* also found Anglin’s 1899 performance as Mimi in Charles Frohman’s New York production of *The Only Way* to be “charming”; one year later, the paper was pleased to tell its English audience that Anglin was going to appear at New York’s Empire Theatre as Mrs. Dane in *Mrs Dane’s Defence*, appearing opposite William Faversham.⁴¹

In turn, New York readers were kept abreast of Anglin’s 1908–1909 tour of Australia. In a special cable sent from Sydney, the *Times* announced that the actress—who by the early twentieth century was claimed by American writers as both American and Canadian—had received “an ovation from a large audience and scored a triumph” in her production of *The Awakening of Helena Ritchie*.⁴² Anglin returned the following year, after touring Australia for five months and visiting France and England, where, in her words, she obtained a “wonderful play by a French author . . . and an American play written by an English author of prominence. The author has never visited America, yet he has depicted with unerring fidelity many of the National traits of this country in this play.” Anglin declared she had had a “splendid time” in Australia, having been impressed by the warmth of her welcome and the enthusiasm of her audiences.⁴³

Her Atlantic trip on the S.S. *France*—most likely taken in the early 1920s—drew readers’ attention to her celebrity status. “The *France* Takes Away a Good Chunk of Broadway,” reported Harry Acton in his “Over the Gangplank” column. The ship left at midnight, “as you probably know, and took away Margaret Anglin.” However, readers could be forgiven for not realizing that Anglin had left New York, as she sailed as “Mrs. Hull, and it wasn’t until she ran up the gangplank at the last minute that it was known that she was leaving us” (it also took away Edna Ferber

and Mrs. Alexander Woollcott).” She was “perhaps the theatre’s most interesting woman. Unquestionably its most dynamic ... swept down the small corridor to her small corridor Friday night with the rush of a Yankee businessman and the grandeur of one of our visiting dignitaries. Lady Nancy Astor, for example.” Acton pointed out the familiar markers of the shipboard farewell: the flowers and telegrams that decorated Anglin’s cabin and, in her case, the ministrations of her secretary, “Johnnie-Johnson ... a most likable and vivacious little girl” who had ensured that “the steward and stewardess (were) all prepared to render her chief the utmost care during the six-day crossing.”⁴⁴ If that description did not raise excitement and anticipation in the paper’s readers or audience, Acton tantalized them with the following:

Thus, when the portiere over the porthole had been arranged just so, the baggage under the bedstead in its place, the flowers in their respective vases—“Johnny” whispered: “Here she comes!” You’d have thought it was the Grand Duchess of all Dukedom making her entrance under the direction of David Belasco. But, like all real people who amount to anything, Margaret Anglin is a regular human being, after you brush aside the veneer, in the shape of secretaries, aides, friends, admirers, and self-appointed bodyguards. “No, really, I can’t pose for your pictures,” she said in the doorway of her cabin, after a 15-minute effort to gain an audience with the great woman. “To tell you the truth,” and she laughed here, “I didn’t want to see you tonight; didn’t want you to know I was sailing; only booked yesterday; and am only going to pass a week in England.” “And- - -?” “Well, I’m all tired out; too tired for the picture—really won’t you excuse me? When I return in the *Acquitania* next trip, then you and I shall have a good picture—and in the daylight. I’m scared speechless with these flashlights anyway.”

Anglin finally admitted that she was en route to visit Rebecca West, who was writing a play for her, and promised to give Acton a full interview upon her return.⁴⁵

The interview is notable for the ways in which theatrical celebrity was intertwined with other forms of cultural prominence within the Anglo-American urban Atlantic. For one, it suggests the ways in which Anglin played with her celebrity, adopting a self-effacing attitude that, even as it denied she had anything to offer her public, might help feed their desire for news of her plans. It also suggests how the luxurious setting of the ocean liner performed its own role in, as theater historian Marlis Schweitzer has argued, “the transnationalization of theater roles and cultures.”⁴⁶ Equally

importantly, though, it depicts Anglin herself as emblematic of transatlantic fusion in multiple ways. As a synthesis of “Yankee businessman and Lady Nancy Astor,” the well-known American-born socialite and, by then, British parliamentarian, Anglin promised to bring economic shrewdness coupled with glamour and strength of character to her meeting with English author Rebecca West, a meeting aimed at further transatlantic cultural collaboration.⁴⁷ In this instance, though, the reporter claimed Anglin as emblematic of elite American womanhood: there was no mention of Canadian origins or ongoing links to Canada.

While press coverage emphasized the public dimensions of Arthur’s and Anglin’s lives, reporters also were fascinated with these women’s private lives, writing about them in ways that highlighted both their respectability and their urban aspects. To be sure, such interest was far from being new, since from the late eighteenth century on such an interest had characterized celebrity culture.⁴⁸ Yet the technological developments discussed above made it possible for this concern to be expressed and explored in not just more detail, but in rapid sequences of reporting as well which gave an air of urgency and concern to their coverage. Actresses’ health was a favorite topic: not surprisingly, perhaps, since their well-being could affect whether or not a performance could be held. Anglin’s illnesses and accidents garnered their share of attention, as did Arthur’s, partly because of their need to inform audiences of performances’ cancellations.⁴⁹ Both Arthur’s and Anglin’s marriages were also written about in the press: in Arthur’s case, her “prostration” and “serious illness” since waiting on the Hollis Street Theatre stage apparently “influenced one or two who know of the marriage to speak of it.” Whether Arthur wished to keep her marriage a secret or at least wished to announce it herself at an appropriate time is unclear. The paper noted that “when the announcement of the marriage was made” her husband Benjamin Cheney, who had been constantly with her during her illness, “disappeared.”⁵⁰ In contrast, Anglin’s marriage to writer Howard Hull, while a quiet affair, took place not in secret but in the Lady Chapel of New York’s St. Patrick’s Cathedral, after which the couple sailed across the Atlantic for a two-week honeymoon motor tour of France. Anglin quickly dispelled her audience’s concerns that her marriage might result in her leaving the stage, as she told her “many questioners” she had no intention of retiring and that her new husband would work alongside her as a writer. They may also have been reassured somewhat by the earlier announcement

that her trip would include a meeting in Paris with producer George C. Tyler, presently in Algeria, to discuss next fall's season, although the reporter admitted "how much this programme may be disarranged by Miss Anglin's marriage is not known."⁵¹

There were times, too, when these women offered up their domestic lives for the public's entertainment and edification, doing so in ways that affirmed their respectability. As part of a 1912 series on female performers and the home run by the magazine *Good Housekeeping*, Anglin offered her thoughts on the topic of "Domesticity and the Stage." Acting and housekeeping, she declared, were not at loggerheads but rather worked together "for good." Anglin's discussion of housekeeping would have resonated with urban middle-class women, as it touched on matters such as the efficient management of servants and the need for economies (albeit not false ones) and avoiding waste. Such advice was quite in keeping with *Good Housekeeping's* focus on the "mundane world of domesticity," since many of its articles on the home were aimed at wives and mothers faced with solving domestic problems with few or no servants, a situation with which Anglin, though, used to servants, secretaries, and a maid, did not contend.⁵² She also, though, told them about the ways in which a performer's schedule means adjusting domestic routines, particularly mealtimes, and the importance of domestic settings in some of her plays.⁵³ Although the article was liberally illustrated with photographs of Anglin in a number of well-known roles, it also featured a large, full-page spread of "Margaret Anglin and her Husband" in their New York home.

Although conducted while she was single, an interview with Arthur also pointed to her liking for a "quiet life" spent mostly at home, a "small but very comfortable flat" on New York's Twenty-Third Street, which she shared with her younger sister Mary. Illustrated with sketches of Arthur in various roles, including Juliet, and a reproduction of a photograph of her as a child with her sister, the reporter's picture was that of a virtuous and intelligent young woman committed entirely to her art. Arthur's day were not taken up with shopping or sightseeing but, rather, preparing new parts, reading (Homer, Carlyle, Johnson, Byron, Goethe, Macaulay, and George Meredith), singing, and horseback riding in the park. "Miss Arthur is different from most other actresses in a number of important respects," the writer thought, as she

does not wear a great number of diamonds, she does not like suppers late at night, she has never been married, and consequently never

divorced, her hair is not auburn colored, she very seldom drives in the park, and though she has a great number of admirers, it is not believed that she has formed any strong attachments. At any rate, she has never formed any merely for advertising purposes. She is a serious, studious, intelligent young woman.⁵⁴

A very different portrait, then, emerged of Arthur's private life than the sensationalism that surrounded accounts of the intimate lives of other female performers.⁵⁵ These articles also suggested that, just as these women's professional lives took place within New York's theaters, the urban home was also an important site for these women. Despite their peripatetic lives, lived on trains, ocean liners, and (not least) within the bustle of downtown Manhattan, actresses could also create domestic havens within the urban Atlantic.

What, then, do these brief glimpses of these women's engagement with late-nineteenth- and early twentieth-centuries theater tell us about an urban Atlantic? Although the following is meant to be suggestive, not definitive, their lives open up a number of questions about both their lived experiences and that of the urban Atlantic as an imaginary, albeit powerful, set of constructions. For women such as Anglin and Arthur, pursuing a theatrical career with seriousness and ambition meant moving away from their homes of Ottawa and Hamilton, even if theatrical successes and family obligations brought them back to those places from time to time.⁵⁶ Thus the urban Atlantic, whether the particular site was New York or London, was a space shaped by the economics of culture and demography, one that might represent degrees of instability and loss as much as it also signified desire, excitement, and the opportunities of mobility.

These women's stories also suggest processes of integration, as their careers linked them to a range of long-distance networks, ones that spanned both an ocean and a continent. Anglin and Arthur's lives suggest ways in which the cultural world of the urban Atlantic encompassed circuits that brought London and the northeastern seaboard to the Great Lakes region, the Midwest, and the Pacific coast (and in some cases to Australia). In particular, their performances, on and off-stage, also brought its cultural genres and representations to other regions and spaces. The plays they appeared in were part of the circulation of

Anglo-American drama and, in some cases, literature (adaptations of Dickens's, Hodgson Burnett's, and West's work) that crisscrossed the Atlantic. Appearing in work by English and Irish playwrights such as A. E. W. Mason, Henry Arthur Jones, Oscar Wilde, George Bernard Shaw (not to mention the ubiquitous Shakespeare), Anglin and Arthur tied North American theaters and audiences' imaginations to London's stages. Scripts such as Mason's *Green Stockings*, with its invocation of Britain's imperial presence in South Africa, or Jones's *Mrs. Dane's Defence* brought American theater audiences into the worlds of London's drawing rooms and a southern English village.

Yet this was not entirely a seamless or complete process of integration. Although there is plenty of evidence to suggest that women such as Anglin and Arthur were part of the reconfiguration of "a common Anglophone culture" from the mid-nineteenth century on, this culture was not without its nuances.⁵⁷ Although a question that warrants further research, not all plays may have been equally "at home" on both sides of the ocean. For example, American playwright William Moody's *The Great Divide*, for example, which brought New England and Arizona together and helped Anglin make a name for herself, traveled to Australia but does not seem to have made an Atlantic crossing.⁵⁸ Furthermore, their Canadian origins provided yet another layer of complexity to this Anglo-American world. Claiming Canadian identity was not a consistent or constant practice for either woman or the press that covered their careers. There were times when their place of birth was noted by reporters on both sides of the ocean, often to the point of celebrating a layer of "otherness," almost exoticism, that served as a point of interest and distinction. At other moments, though, Anglin and Arthur's Canadian origins disappeared or were folded into a more generic category of "North American" or "American" identity, one that travelled across multiple borders; not, perhaps, in an entirely seamless fashion but in more fluid, slippery ways than those permitted to other identities, other types of locations.⁵⁹

Supplementing our understanding of the late nineteenth and early-twentieth century urban Atlantic by including the multiple theatrical circuits through which Anglin and Arthur circulated, as well as the technologies that enabled their mobility, raises questions about the urban Atlantic's range and reach. In this context, theater helped create far-flung networks that linked not just London and New York to each other but also to Cincinnati, St. Louis, Montreal, Chicago, and San Francisco, networks represented by telegrams and letters, train and steamer travel,

hotel rooms and boarding houses. They also helped create circuits of fantasies, imaginations, and desire, ones that would continue to be forged—and reshaped—throughout the twentieth century, both in theater and in the rapidly expanding world of movies and cinema.⁶⁰

NOTES

1. This chapter is part of a larger project, funded by the Social Science and Humanities Research Foundation of Canada, on Canadian actresses who crafted careers in the United States, Britain, and Canada, from the 1860s to the 1940s. To date the bulk of my research has focused on Anglin and Arthur.
2. Henry Arthur Jones to Margaret Anglin, 16 May 1908, 10 June 1910; Paul Kester to Margaret Anglin, 9 Oct. 1924, n.d. 1926, 7 Mar. 1927, 9 May 1927, Margaret Anglin Papers (henceforth MAP), 1898–1952, New York Library for the Performing Arts, Billy Rose Theatre Division, Box 2.
3. Paul Kester to Margaret Anglin, 9 Oct. 1924, n.d. 1926, 7 Mar. 1927, 9 May 1927, MAP Box 2.
4. See, for example, Marlis Schweitzer, “Networking the Waves: Ocean Liners, Impresarios, and Broadway’s Atlantic Expansion,” *Theatre Survey* 53.2 (Sept. 2012): 241–67; Margaret Werry, “The Greatest Show on Earth: Political Spectacle, Spectacular Politics, and the American Pacific,” *Theatre Journal* 57.3 (2005): 355–82; Thomas Postlewait, “The Hieroglyphic Stage: American Theatre and Society, Post-Civil War to 1945,” *The Cambridge History of American Theatre, Vol. 2: 1870–1845*, eds. Don B. Wilmeth and Christopher Bigsby (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 107–95; and John Frick, “A Changing Theatre: New York and Beyond,” in *Cambridge History of American Theatre*, 196–232.
5. For example, Martha Banta, *Imagining American Women: Idea and Ideals in Cultural History* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1987); Linda Mizejewski, *Ziegfeld Girl: Image and Icon in Culture and Cinema* (Chapel Hill: Duke University Press, 1999); Susan A. Glenn, *Female Spectacle: The Theatrical Roots of Modern Feminism* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000); Joel H. Kaplan and Sheila Stowell, *Theatre and Fashion: Oscar Wilde to the Suffragettes* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994); Lisa Tickner, *The Spectacle of Women: Imagery of the Suffrage Campaign, 1907–1914* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994).
6. Leonard von Morzé, “Introduction,” in *Urban Identity and the Atlantic World*, ed. Elizabeth Fay and Leonard von Morzé (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 5.
7. Leslie O’Dell, “Amateurs of the Regiment, 1815–1870,” in *Early Stages: Theatre in Ontario 1800–1914*, ed. Ann Saddlemyer (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990), 52–89; Bruce McConachie, “American Theatre in

Context from the Beginnings to 1870," in Wilmeth and Bigsby, eds., *The Cambridge History of American Theatre Vol. 1: Beginnings to 1870* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 111–81.

8. Between 1850 and 1910, the United States' railroad mileage, for example, grew from just over 9000 miles to 240,293 miles. By 1905 the country boasted 2272 connecting railroad lines (Postlewait, "The Hieroglyphic Stage," 154). Mary M. Brown explores the presence of many types of touring companies and performance in nineteenth-century Ontario, whose work was underpinned by mid-nineteenth century rail expansion in the province ("Entertainers of the Road," *Early Stages*, 123–65).
9. Schweitzer, "Networking the Waves."
10. Angela Woollacott, *To Try Her Fortune in London: Australian Women, Colonialism, and Modernity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001).
11. Julia Opp Faversham to Anglin, 9 Feb. 1916, MAP Box 2.
12. Anglin to Harrison Rhodes, n.d.; Rhodes to Anglin, 5 July 1920; Howard Hull to Rhodes, MAP Box 2.
13. George Tyler to Anglin, 14 Feb. 1925, MAP Box 3.
14. For a discussion of the relationship between urban growth in the United States and the opportunities it represented for the theater, see Postlewait, "The Hieroglyphic Stage," 143–48.
15. Anglin to Tyler, 27 Feb. 1925, MAP Box 3.
16. Tyler to Harry Bryant, 3 Feb. 1925, MAP Box 3. Bryant was the manager of the Anglin-Faversham Company.
17. While, as Postlewait points out, "everyone toured," he also argues that not everyone enjoyed it ("The Hieroglyphic Stage," 153). Even as a star, Anglin toured extensively with her own company, as did Arthur.
18. William Faversham to Anglin, 22 Feb. 1916; Frederick Donaghy to Howard Hull, 9 Mar. 1916; James Shesgreen to Howard Hull, 11 Mar. 1916; Anglin to Faversham, n.d.; Anglin to Lee Shubert, n.d.
19. Theda Cocroft to Anglin, 23 Jan. 1922, MAP Box 1.
20. David Belasco to Anglin, 6 Feb. 1916 and 18 Apr. 1921; Belasco to Anglin, 2 Dec. 1927; Doris Rich to Anglin, n.d., MAP Box 1.
21. The unsigned article is "Tears Follow Letter at Clara Morris's Benefit. It is Full of Gratitude to All Who Aided Her in Her Trouble," *Reading Times* (17 Apr. 1903): 7. See also the following unsigned articles: "Clara Morris' Benefit," *The Inter Ocean (Chicago)* (16 Apr. 1903): 6; "Week's Calendar," *The New York Times* (12 Apr. 1903): 26; and "Clara Morris's Thanks," *The New York Times* (15 Apr. 1903): 7.
22. Glen O'Hara, "New Histories of British Imperial Communication and the 'Networked World' of the 19th and Early 20th Centuries," *History Compass* 8.7 (2010): 615. While O'Hara's focus is on the British Empire, nevertheless his arguments about letter-writing's continued importance appear to

me to apply to networks that both encompassed and extended beyond those of formal imperialism.

23. Anglin's personal and professional correspondence alone takes up eight well-stuffed boxes in the papers held at the New York Public Library, Billie Rose Theatre Division. Her entire collection encompasses over 30 boxes.
24. See Margaret Anglin Finding Aid, Section II, Production Files, for an inventory of these extensive collections (New York Public Library, Billie Rose Theatre Division).
25. Sarah Pearsall, *Atlantic Families: Lives and Letters in the Late Eighteenth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008); Erika Rappaport, "'The Bombay Debt': Letter Writing, Domestic Economies and Family Conflict in Colonial India," *Gender and History* 16.2 (August 2004): 233–60; Elizabeth Buettner, *Empire Families: Britons and Late Imperial India* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004); Laura Mitsuyo Ishiguro, "Relative Distances: Family and Empire Between Britain, British Columbia, and India, 1858–1901" (PhD diss., University College London, 2011); and Cecilia Morgan, "'Write Me. Write Me. Write Me.': Native and Métis Letter-Writing Across the British Empire," in *Critical Perspectives on Colonialism: Writing the Empire From Below*, ed. Fiona Paisley and Kirsty Reid (New York and London: Routledge, 2014), 141–56.
26. Anglin to David Belasco, 14 Mar. 1924, MAP Box 1.
27. Carrie Jacobs Bond file, MAP Box 1.
28. Carrie Jacobs Bond to Anglin, 10 Feb. 1942, MAP Box 1.
29. June Nahl to Anglin, n.d., File N-Y, MAP Box 1. Nahl was probably writing to Anglin from California, as her husband, Professor Perham Nahl, had made posters for Anglin's productions of Greek plays at Berkeley.
30. Eddie Cantor to Anglin 12 Nov. 1921, MAP Box 1; also Johnston Forbes-Robertson to Anglin, 10 Dec. 1905, MAP Box 2.
31. Viva N. M. Martin to Anglin 5 May 1921, File "Miscellaneous, M–O 1920–24," MAP Box 5. Anglin replied that while she remembered meeting Martin, she regretted that she was "out of touch" with developments in European theatre and therefore did not dare advise her.
32. Alice Reynolds to Anglin, n.d., "Miscellaneous P–R 1920–24," MAP Box 5.
33. For example, see Mary Buckhurst and Jane Moody, eds., *Theatre and Celebrity in Britain, 1660–2000* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005); Scott Fosdick, "Chicago Newspaper Theatre Critics of the Early Twentieth Century," *Journalism History* 27.3 (Fall 2001): 122–28; and Vincent Landro, "Faking It: The Press Agent and Celebrity Theatre in Early Twentieth Century American Theatre," *Theatre History Studies* 15 (June 2002): 95–114.
34. N.a., "A New Stage Heroine," *The New York Times* (2 Nov. 1897).
35. N.a., "Julia Arthur to Star. Will Begin Her Season as Clarinda in a 'Lady of Quality,'" *The New York Times* (23 July 1897).

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41. N.a., "American Amusements," *The Era* (21 Oct. 1899); n.a., "Theatrical Gossip," *The Era* 15 (Dec. 1900).
42. N.a., "Miss Anglin in Australia. She Scores Heavily at Her First Appearance in Sydney," *The New York Times* (29 Jun. 1908).
43. N.a., "Miss Anglin Back From a World Tour. Actress Has Been Away From This Country for a Year, Playing in Many Lands," *The New York Times* (26 May 1909).
44. For discussions of the rituals and traditions that developed around the shipboard farewell, see Schweitzer, "Networking the Waves"; Woollacott, *To Try Her Fortune in London*; and Cecilia Morgan, *"A Happy Holiday": English-Canadians and Transatlantic Tourism, 1870–1930* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008).
45. Harry Acton, "France Takes Away a Good Chunk of Broadway," n.p., n.d., MAS, 1920–1929.
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48. For example, Cecilia Morgan, "Celebrity Within the Transatlantic World: the Ojibwa of Upper Canada, 1830–1860," *Celebrity Colonialism: Fame, Power and Representation in (Post) Colonial Cultures*, ed. Robert Clarke (Newcastle, UK: Cambridge Scholars' Press, 2009), 15–36; and Joseph Roach, "Public Intimacy: The Prior History of 'It,'" in *Theatre and Celebrity in Britain*, 15–30.
49. See, for example, the following unsigned articles: "Margaret Anglin Ill," *The New York Times* (4 Feb. 1919); "Margaret Anglin Bruised," *The New York Times* (9 Apr. 1921); "Margaret Anglin Injured," *The New York Times* (6 May 1922); "Julia Arthur Disabled," *The New York Times* (30 Mar. 1898); "Miss Julia Arthur's Illness. Compels the Cancellation of Her Brooklyn and Harlem Engagements," *The New York Times* (1 Jan. 1899); and "Julia Arthur Injured. Former Actress Thrown from Her Sleigh in Boston," *The New York Times* (14 Jan. 1902).
50. N.a., "Julia Arthur Married. Became the Wife of Benjamin Cheney, a Boston Millionaire, Last November," *The New York Times* (12 Apr. 1898).
51. N.a., "Margaret Anglin Weds Howard Hull. Noted Actress and Magazine Writer She Met Last Summer Married at Cathedral. To Sail To-day for Europe. Bride Had Planned Summer Trip Abroad, but Had Not Announced It Would Be a Honeymoon," *The New York Times* (9 May 1911).
52. Penny Sparke, "The 'Ideal' and the 'Real' Interior in Elsie de Wolfe's 'The House of Good Taste' of 1913," *Journal of Design History* 16.1 (2003): 63–76, 67; also Jean Gordon and Jan McArthur, "Popular Culture, Magazine and American Domestic Interiors, 1898–1940," *Journal of Popular Culture* 22.4 (Spring 1989): 35–60.
53. Margaret Anglin, "Domesticity and the Stage. How Play-Acting and Housekeeping Work Together for Good," *Good Housekeeping Magazine* 64.1 (Jan. 1912): 41–48. Actresses Julia Marlowe and Mary Mannering and opera singer Louise Homer also wrote articles for the magazine.
54. N.a., "Julia Arthur's Quiet Life. A Clever and Rising Young Actress Who Spends Most of Her Time at Home. She Doesn't Like Late Suppers and Gets up Early in the Morning," *World* 23 (July 1893).
55. Other performers, such as southern Ontario's Margaret Mather, were noted for having much more turbulent domestic lives (Associated Press, "Margaret Mather Married. The Actress's Second Venture in Matrimony. Col. Gustav Pabst Is Emil Haberkorn's Successor. That Accounts for Their Rooming Together in San Francisco—So Says the Niece of the Fair Tragedienne," *Los Angeles Herald* (14 Nov. 1892); n.a., "MARGARET MATHER. She is No Longer the Wife of Gustave Pabst," *Sacramento Daily Union* (25 Oct. 1896); and n.a., "NO OPPOSITION TO PABST DIVORCE. Wife Leaves for the East and Now Calls Herself Margaret Mather," *Chicago Tribune* (1 Dec. 1895).
56. Morgan, "She is a Canadian Girl."

57. Laura Mayhall, "The Prince of Wales *Versus* Clark Gable: Anglophone Celebrity Culture Between the Wars," *Cultural and Social History* 4.4 (Dec. 2007): 530.
58. Anglin toured this production across the United States and to Australia. To date I have not found out much more information about the play's production history. Cecilia Morgan, "'That Will Allow Me to be My Own Woman': Margaret Anglin, Modernity, and Transnational Stages, 1890s–1940s," *Biography Across Boundaries: Transnational Lives*, eds. Angela Woollacott, Desley Deacon, and Penny Russell (London: Palgrave Macmillan Press, 2010), 144–55.
59. I have explored these questions to some extent in "'She is a Canadian Girl'" and "'That Will Allow Me to be My Own Woman.'"
60. See Mayhall, "The Prince of Wales *Versus* Clark Gable." Beatrice Lillie's career, which encompassed stage and film actress on both sides of the Atlantic, as well as a high-profile marriage to a British aristocrat, encompasses multiple dimensions of this history. (Sheridan Morley, "Lillie, Beatrice Gladys [married name Beatrice Gladys Peel, Lady Peel] (1894–1989)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*,. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, <http://www.oxforddnb.com.myaccess.library.utoronto.ca/view/article/39938> (accessed March 20, 2015).

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A Museum is Born: Albert-Charles Wulffleff and the Parc-Musée of Dakar, 1936

Mark Hinchman

INTRODUCTION

The Plateau is the commercial and administrative center of Dakar, Senegal, just off the Western-most tip of Africa. It is also the historical center of the city that started in the mid-nineteenth century, and its most prominent urban feature is the rectangular Place de l'Indépendance. Away from the busiest streets, such as the Avenue Pompidou, three streets intersect, forming the star-shaped Place Soweto. One side of the Place features the modernist National Assembly Building. Another leads to Dakar's central art museum, set back in a garden. During its planning, it was compared to the Louvre and the British Museum. Unless it is participating in one of the city's many art festivals, or the government is in session, a visitor is more likely to be struck by the location's verdurous serenity (Fig. 10.1). The Art Deco building is mostly unchanged from its original appearance, and is beautiful. Yet its quiet demeanor belies a history which took many surprising turns.

The genesis of this chapter looking into the origins of the Museum started in 2010 when I was in Dakar conducting a final round of research

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Fig. 10.1 Charles Wulffleff, Institut d'Afrique, 1936. Author's photograph

for my work on Gorée's eighteenth-century domestic architecture.¹ Ibrahima Thiaw was director of the museum, now a part of the Institut fondamental d'Afrique Noire (IFAN), and he allowed me to visit the building in its off hours. He showed me two sets of original construction and engineering drawings from the 1930s that were in pristine condition. I took photos of the building to upload to the Society of Architectural Historians photosharing site.² The cursory research necessary for that step made obvious the relative lack of information about the building's architect, Charles Wulffleff, whom I had never heard of. Thiaw shared that some visitors to the museum asked questions about the building's origins. I wondered what I could find out.

Thus began this investigation of the Museum's early days. This research project therefore had a Eurocentric start, as I sought information about a European architect who created a Western building in Africa within the political structure of colonialism. I initially pursued information through archival documents, architectural drawings, and the building itself. I begin

with this personal narrative in light of Anthony King's argument for an honest assessment of positionality with regard to knowledge production, past and present. King was one of first architectural historians to look at buildings in a transnational context, and he consistently demands a discussion of the parameters of knowledge creation, not only of the past, but of those writing now: "From where, by whom and when is knowledge produced and for what purposes?"³ When the building was in development, its creators intended it as a catalyst for specific kinds of knowledge, among certain populations. Its appearance in the present volume is also intended to spur discussion, albeit of a different kind.

The idea of building a central museum in Dakar started in the earliest days of the twentieth century. Discussions involving its architecture, its collections, its management, its relationship to France, and its name were to play out over decades. Worth noting here is the extent to which an image of a building, even in its formative stages, when it remained only an imaginary image, can take hold in the bureaucratic consciousness, so that the building's construction became a *fait accompli*, although there were continual questions as to the building's purposes. During the period of its development, numerous ideas of how to govern and manage West Africa and the necessary infrastructure arose in other quarters, and some features of the discussion were appended to the development of the museum. Architecture is usually considered a straightforward art, one based on function, with clear roles for client and architect. Yet some buildings have a history which is so tortured—think the Sydney Opera House or the reconstituted World Trade Center—as to stand the definition on its head. The principal art museum of Dakar, Sénégal, is one of those buildings.

This chapter has multiple goals, one of them being to straightforwardly highlight that there is some accomplished Art Deco architecture in Dakar. It explores an architect, Wulffleff, who had considerable success for decades, yet because he sought his fortune mostly outside of France, is little known, in Africa or Europe. Complicating the museum's description as a European Art Deco building, which it is, is the knowledge that its most direct precedents were the halls of several French colonial exhibitions; mention of them, their collections, and their success was frequent in the museum's development. The French colonial authority did not so much impose a French style on Senegal, as they established a set of representational norms, from Beaux Arts to Art Deco and neo-Sudanese, which they employed in differing circumstances.

Over the course of his life, Wulfleff designed by using, depending on the situation, the vocabularies of Beaux Arts, Art Deco, Modernist, and a variety of historicisms, incorporating them into a revitalized neo-Sudanese style. His use of them varied, depending on the vagaries of the commission, so the resulting buildings are less an insistence on an imposition of colonial power than material manifestations of layer upon layer of complexity. The scholars who have written on the Museum, and its related architectural brethren, take a number of positions whose commonality is the multiplicity of their approaches and conclusions. Roberto Filippetti referred to the building as an example of “ambiguity.”⁴ Allen Roberts calls the group of public buildings in Dakar, including the museum, “material testimony to the ironies and ambiguities of the trans-colonial heritage.”⁵ Steven Nelson addressed a parallel situation in his book on Mousgoum architecture in Cameroon. He writes about buildings in Cameroon, France, and elsewhere, some of them built by the same architects who dominate the story of Dakar’s museum. He argues that we should consider such buildings as a reconstellation of architecture as “a highly complex terrain of seemingly disparate desires and agendas.”⁶

One of the benefits of the last three decades of postcolonial scholarship is that how a project is framed is no longer taken for granted, but is itself an object of inquiry. For one, postcolonialism has included numerous critiques of the idea that France exported infrastructure, and Africans received it. Architectural history has a postcolonial branch, first articulated by Anthony King among others, which explores how buildings came to be constructed under multiple influences and constraints. To view the creation of Dakar’s museum as yet another case of colonizer and colonized would miss the richness of the story, for instead of polarity or dichotomy in the relationship between Europe and Africa, there is complication and irony at every turn. As Nezar AlSayyad writes, “The only purpose that these dualities serve today in the study of the built environment is to force an articulation of theoretical positions beyond the realm of binary opposites.”⁷

KNOWLEDGE

A museum is a building designed to contain artifacts, and the engagement of researchers and the public with those artifacts produces knowledge. This chapter explores the specifics of that scenario: the nature of the building’s contents when their curation was under discussion; the kinds

of knowledge sought or produced; and the form the building took as a prompt for developing and modernizing multiple sectors of West Africa. Based on the sources used, it is not a story that easily addresses African users, or women for that matter, as it initially involved European architects and colonial administrators. Yet eventually African voices appeared in the building's story, albeit in discrete ways. The building, in a convoluted way, was based on African precedents. And most of the intended users of the park and museum were Africans, and it eventually ended up entirely in African hands, as administrators, workers, researchers, and visitors. In 1925, 165 buildings were built in Dakar, of which 121 were owned by Africans.⁸ This underscores that even at the height of colonialism, Africans carried out the bulk of the city's construction, even if they are under-represented in colonial documents.

Just as there is metalanguage, a text that refers abstractly to other texts, and which itself refers to language, Dakar's Museum is an example of meta-architecture, or buildings that explicitly reference other buildings. Within sight of the Museum is another building by the same architect, Senegal's largest cathedral, the Cathedral of African Memory, and the pair, to differing degrees, reference the African Sudanese architecture. These are the large-scale rectilinear buildings of the Western Saharan, made of mud bricks, with no connection to the modern nation of Sudan. Dakar's neo-Sudanese colonial buildings do not visually reference the buildings of the African interior directly, but do so by their similarity to exhibition buildings in France, many of which were done by the same architects. The immediate precedents of Dakar's monumental African buildings, whose architects sought to fit them to their African context, are the exhibition buildings in Marseille and Paris that themselves evoked the monumental architecture of the Niger River Bend. Further complication of the architectural context comes when looking at the African precedents for the exposition buildings, the grand mud and wood structures of Mali, whose largest monuments includes the Djingueré Ber Mosque in Timbuktu, and the Great Mosque of Djenné. The latter building, the most famous of the lot, was greatly influenced by the French architects who renovated it in 1909, thereby casting questions as to its authenticity as an exemplar of African monumental architecture. Labelle Prussin writes: "Although said to be a precise replica, its size, its orientation, and its style differ considerably from even the suggested reconstruction."⁹ So in summary, a building in Africa looked to contemporary structures at colonial exhibitions that were modeled on African structures whose authenticity is questionable,

based on heavy-handed restorations at the hands of French architects. Moreover, the West African coast is a totally different cultural sphere than the Saharan region of Mali and the Niger River.

Within this framework of multiple stylistic influences, the history of the Museum before it was built and the decades of its extenuated planning reveals that there was little consensus other than the vague notion that the city needed a museum. Yet a hazy image of the Museum endured as a remarkably stable reference; first as a good idea, then (once initial sketches were done) an idea with attached visuals that carried with them multiple ideas of modernization. After the introduction of the early sketches of the building, it is striking how the central elements remained constant as goals and functions were added to its conception, and then withdrawn, and as constituencies, clients, and circumstances changed over ensuing decades.

HISTORY

The situation that resulted in multiple colonial buildings in Dakar started with the consolidation of France's African colonies into one administrative structure, French West Africa or l'Afrique Occidentale Française (AOF), established in 1902. The capital was moved from Saint-Louis du Sénégal to Dakar, and the coastal city began its meteoric rise. Dakar was a relatively new city that grew, starting in the 1850s, out of its beginnings as a modest village of Lebou fishermen. The AOF for which Dakar served as capital was eight times the geographical size of France, with a population of 13,500,000.¹⁰

The beginning of Dakar's museum in the opening years of the AOF was straightforward in the sense that the authorities first addressed the most pressing needs, attending to administration and the economy before turning to culture. Having established a modicum of colonial institutions and buildings that addressed the political and commercial spheres (the Governor's mansion, the Chamber of Commerce, the port facilities), the colonial authorities in France and Dakar turned to cultural infrastructure. There was broad agreement on the importance of building in Dakar a museum, and several mentioned the project's inevitability.

Colonial buildings that were built in the early twentieth century in French West Africa fall into three categories: European buildings, African-inspired buildings, and hybrid structures. Those in the European camp have Beaux-Arts planning and details, a group that included the Chamber of Commerce and the palace of the Governor General. Those

that belonged to the trend of the Africanization of Dakar's central area include the Cathedral of African Memory, the Sandaga Market, and the Maternity Hospital. Some, like the Museum, are stylistic hybrids. The categorization might suggest an underlying system that dictated which style was used for which function, but it also suggests a lack of administrative consistency regarding architectural stylistics. Jules Brévié (1880–1964) was one of the most prominent of the governors of the AOF during the period, and was a known aficionado of neo-Sudanese buildings, hence the Cathedral displays his influence. The Museum arose initially under another governor's term, and was Art Deco. With decades of delay for the structures, it could not have been clear to Wulffleff that either or both would be built, so he never had the opportunity to develop them as an ensemble.

An early reference to the facility that became Dakar's central museum is documented in a letter to the Governor General in April 1919. A summation of previous decrees, it called for a "parc public" with an ensemble of pavilions intended to house scientific and artistic collections. Thus from the start there was an expressed desire to be comprehensive, and cover both art and science. This reveals an uncertainty that French intellectuals and political leaders had about Africa's natural and cultural productions; they weren't sure what was art, what was ethnography, and what was nature. Although the Museum was mostly discussed as an art museum, the documents repeatedly confuse art and nature. This is a classic primitivizing colonial gesture: the assumption that Africans made things without self-consciousness of what they were doing. This, to European minds, substantiated their own uncertainty about where nature ended and art began in Africa.

The curation and display of African artifacts was the Museum's central role, yet at least once in the process, the discussants mentioned showcasing European and French art. Specifically, examples from antiquity to the middle ages and Renaissance "are essential to awaken in the minds of young natives intended to form an elite, some fundamental stirrings of the French soul we wish to give them. Contemporary art, even in small number, will contribute to establish links between their sensibility and ours."¹¹ Louis Lapicque (1866–1952), a doctor and anthropologist, was not in the artistic trenches in Dakar, but nonetheless made clear his position from Paris. He opined that the intended audience was an African elite, and that exposure to European artworks would foster the development of a "French soul." This musing was unbelievably ambitious

in its scope both in terms of the objects, a comprehensive smattering of art from classical to contemporary, and its intended outcome, the production of a common “sensibility” between Africans and French. While the focus on an African elite, and the development of an intellectual platform that connected Africa to France remained, thereafter the discussants dropped the idea of a European section of the Museum’s collections.

In September of 1919, a prosaically focused document recommends procuring the properties, and working immediately on the park, as these steps were necessary and seemingly easier than constructing the museum and curating its collections.¹² This time, the project was referred to as the “Parc et Musée de Dakar.” The vague benefit of the proposed park was similar to that commonly associated with urban green spaces across the globe, such as Frederick Law Olstead’s work on Central Park: Dakar’s citizens could enjoy the greenery and outdoors as soon as possible: “We want to foster among the children an appreciation of exercise and fresh air.”¹³ These early documents focus on the physical, a pragmatic adjunct to Lopicque’s musing about a French soul. The documents stipulated the necessary site work and the mental benefits the park’s users would achieve from exercise. The document emphasizes the need for haste, so that possible profiteers didn’t start buying up the properties with the intention of reselling them to the government at inflated prices. Documents spelled out additional practical steps, such as leveling the property, draining it, and proceeding with the building’s plans in 1920. A scenario for realizing the building was detailed: a competition for the museum’s design would open in September of 1920, close in December, with construction planned for 1921.

It is not clear if the competition was held, but the architect who came to dominate the correspondence as of February 1921, and who ultimately would be appointed to the project, was Albert-Charles Wulfleff (1874–1941), of Ch. A. Wulfleff et A. Verrey. Wulfleff himself had an international background; he was born in England, and studied at the University of Fribourg in Switzerland. From 1911 on he was architect of the Ministry of Colonies in Paris. He eventually became a naturalized French citizen. Wulfleff was an architect in the private sphere with strong connections to France’s colonial administration. It is significant that in three situations, two in Senegal, and one in Egypt, a competition was held for a prominent architectural commission, and ultimately Wulfleff succeeded, but his selection arose from contested circumstances. Wulfleff’s connections with the colonial administration in France served him well.

The administrative body in charge of the project in consultation with the AOF was the French-based Vice President of the Comité d'Études, who complained in March, 1921, of not being able to proceed without further direction from the Dakar-based AOF. The project was then called "Musée de l'Afrique Occidentale," indicating its ostensible connection to a vast swath of African geography. This aspect of the museum's curation came to fruition, for in the twenty-first century, its director noted that 95% of its collections originated outside of Senegal.¹⁴

The transition from ideas to a building appears in a series of sketches, possibly by Wulffleff.¹⁵ The drawings indicate a Beaux-Arts training, apparent in the grand imagery of columns and pediments, the features of a prominent public institution. What skillful Beaux-Arts architects excelled at was creating plans with an attractive formal complexity. Galleries and suites of rooms, primary and secondary, were artfully construed along axes, elements of compositions that lent themselves to the complex administrative functions that twentieth-century institutions demanded of them. The architect's initial vision remained stable, despite changes of program over the years. The initial sketches indicate a symmetrical building with a central entrance to a grand hall; adjacent courts flanked the center, and colonnaded galleries enclosed the entire ensemble (later enclosed). This is the basic set-up that remains visible today.

Wulffleff's two buildings in Dakar, the Museum and the Church, developed in tandem. There is no evidence that he planned them as an ensemble, but they arose because of different sets of circumstances. Planning for both started in the 1910s, and the projects languished in bureaucratic indecision for decades. Both were announced as competitions, and Wulffleff ended up designing them, without it being clear that he won the competitions. Robert Shaw sees the two buildings as part of a series of five buildings in Dakar in the neo-Sudanese style. He attributes them to the interests of the AOF's governor, Jules Brévié. In Shaw's interpretation, these buildings seek their authenticity by relating to the monumental mud structures of the Niger River bend, a subject on which Brévié had written. Yet for the architects hired to do the work, the direct precedents were African pavilions at expositions in France. The men constituted a small group of French-based colonial affiliated architects that included Wulffleff. The geographic dislocation they promoted, in which a Saharan architecture type is called upon to establish African authenticity in other areas, such as the African coast, was not unique to French architects in West Africa; a similar process unfolded in English colonies. Arthur

Benison Hubback designed buildings throughout Southeast Asia in the style associated with the Taj Mahal. Before Hubback and his mentor, Arthur Charles Norman (1858–1944), started designing government buildings, including railway stations and courts, in the Indo-Saracenic style associated with Mughal India, the onion dome did not exist on the Malaya Peninsula.¹⁶ Similarly, before the work of French architects including Wulffleff, Sudanese architecture did not exist on the West African coast.

ART DECO

The Museum is a stone's throw from Senegal's principal Catholic Cathedral, which is visible from its upper floors (Fig. 10.2). The two structures make an interesting pair, for the church, in Shaw's description, is a neo-Sudanese (African) building with Ottoman and Art Deco features.



Fig. 10.2 Charles Wulffleff, Cathédrale du Souvenir Africain, constructed 1936. Façade. Author's photograph

The museum reverses the scenario, for it is primarily an Art Deco structure, with restrained neo-Sudanese details. On the museum, the Sudanese stylings are found in three features: the piers, the downspouts, and the cupola or belvedere on the roof. Its piers suggest the vertical elements of Sudanese architecture, although they are straight, not canted; the octagonal roof structure was an exotic element of undefined provenance that some associate with Egypt—another sphere of activity where Wulffleff designed a mosque. Most prominent in the Museum's facades are its downspouts, which are prominent features of Saharan mud-architecture (Fig. 10.3). Art Deco itself was not antithetical to a global African presence, it was part of it. In its resolute symmetry, framed panels within each bay, numerous setbacks, and decorative motifs of zigzags and chevrons, the museum is a grand example of an Art Deco building (Fig. 10.4).

The contribution of African arts to modernism is well studied, with Picasso's study of African masks for his Cubist paintings as one example.¹⁷



Fig. 10.3 Charles Wulffleff, Museum of Dakar, constructed 1936. Parapet detail with neo-Sudanese downspouts and Zig-Zag balustrade. Author's photograph



Fig. 10.4 Charles Wulffleff, Institut d'Afrique, constructed 1936. Door details. Author's photograph

The same is true for Art Deco, modernism's chronological cousin. The African presence in Art Deco, in the United States, France, and Africa, was strong. Art Deco had multiple constituent features: a stripped down classicism, a growing tendency to streamline and simplify forms, and a use of pattern. As its designers considered their work different from literal historicist treatments, the new designs required elements that distinguished them from neoclassicism and other historical styles. African motifs helped push the nascent art form in a new direction. The years of the museum's planning were coincident with the Harlem Renaissance's apogee. Art Deco furniture master Émile-Jacques Ruhlmann contributed his elephant chairs to the 1931 Exhibition, and Eileen Gray designed a *settée* based on an African pirogue and frequently incorporated Asante stools in her interiors. Marie Clifford, in an article on Helena Rubinstein's New York beauty salons of the 1930s, noted that the stylist's incorporation of African art in her interiors was considered a sign of her sophistication. More specifically, African masques acted as a point of contrast to fashionably made-up faces contrasted with the "'primitive' schematic, geometry and forms ascribed to non-Western aesthetics."¹⁸ Steven Nelson, focusing on Josephine Baker as a figure who connected the United States, France, and colonial Africa, writes that the French arts of the 1920s and 1930s, writ large, exhibited "the predominance of the colonial in the French psyche."¹⁹

The period of the expansion of much of Dakar's urban infrastructure, which included the museum and the cathedral, occurred at the time when Africans were achieving prominence. Blaise Diagne served as deputy from Senegal to the National Assembly, first elected in 1914. As Kelly Duke Bryant writes, African elites owed their growing prominence to the colonial educational policies, of which the museum was an intended part: "Thus, the African engagement with colonial schooling that began in the mid-nineteenth century not only prepared the way for blacks to participate more fully in colonial politics during the 1900s and 1910s but also contributed to the emergence of Negritude and the process of decolonization several decades later."²⁰ At various points, discussion of the museum included mention of a medical school, a secondary school, and a national university. At a political level, Diagne became Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, and participated in France's Colonial Exposition: "Blaise Diagne represented, on the other hand, the evolution of African political power within the colonial structure." Various movements and people were to lead to independence in the 1960s, some

promoting a revolutionary perspective as outsiders. But there was also the cultivation of elite individuals, to which numerous documents refer. Bonny Ibhawoh, writing about the English colonial capital Lagos, has noted that African intellectuals were important figures in African nationalism, while they were also “deeply vested in the colonial order as a modernizing project.”²¹ There is some irony that the development of an African intellectual elite, of which an institution like a museum, schools, and a university were a part, would foster better relations with France, but was also the beginning of ultimate separation from France. Thus Art Deco, colonial infrastructure, and Negritude were intertwined endeavors that brought together the worlds of design, urbanism, and politics, and that contributed to creation of a West African modernism that ultimately led to independence.

SOUVENIR AFRICAÏN

The genesis of the Cathedral overlaps in chronology and mirrors the museum’s development in multiple respects. The first whisperings for the Cathedral came in 1911; in 1912, a committee was formed; in 1913, Wulfleff went to Senegal to check out possible sites for the cathedral, one of several trips he took to Africa throughout his life.²² In 1915, planning for the cathedral was getting serious when Gov. William Merlaud-Ponty talked to the bishop and expressed his desire that the cathedral be dedicated to the memory of those killed in the war.²³ A competition took place, and it was awarded to Wulfleff, although his recommendation by Monseigneur Hyacinthe Jalabert (1859–1920) influenced the decision. He eventually designed other religious structures, churches and mosques, in France, Switzerland, Egypt, Martinique, as well as Senegal.²⁴

The Cathedral’s plan takes the form of a Latin cross, with five chapels that encircle the sanctuary, each with a dome. Because the cathedral itself had a large flat dome, from the rear, the structure oddly resembles a multidomed Ottoman mosque. Its development followed a trajectory similar to that of the museum, with its recurrent delays. In 1920, Wulfleff travelled again to Dakar. He refused a location on the Place Protêt (today the Place de l’Indépendance). The architect showed his mettle by refusing to reduce the scope, and thereby the cost, of the project.²⁵ Once completed, the church was 60 meters long. Its front façade is framed by two towers, and is reached by a low set of stairs. Just one of its many African features are the four caryatids, with facial features

that are recognizably Peul, one of Senegal's ethnic groups.²⁶ Construction began in 1923, and was far along enough in 1929 that Easter mass was held. In 1936 the cathedral was consecrated, the first building in Dakar with neo-Sudanese details.²⁷

As for the Museum, ironies abound in its history, before and after its construction. It was designed to house African artifacts, yet, in contrast to its ecclesiastical neighbor, it is a building firmly in a Western tradition. Thus the Cathedral, a Christian institution in a predominantly Muslim country, is African. The Museum, by the same architect, reverses the scenario: it is a building whose purpose was to house African art and ethnography, and was European in its conception.

COLLECTIONS

As important as designing the building was figuring out what it was to contain. One proposal for the museum's collections was to commission a series of photographs of the villages of different ethnic groups. The proposal came with the warning that finding pure examples of the region's autochthonous architecture would prove difficult as most of the traditions were "tainted" by European materials and construction methods. The museum was part of a larger building program that included a hospital, enclosed markets, and the Cathedral.²⁸ All were part of the process by which West Africa was modernized, with Western institutions and infrastructure. Multiple colonial sources criticized one of the outcomes of this modernization: that Senegalese culture, as a result of the modernization process, was no longer purely African.²⁹ After an initial plan that mentioned only art, a meeting room and a library, a more elaborate notated plan listed multiple types of collections: ethnography, anthropology, art, geology, botany, zoology, and others. A report from 1931, just prior to the actual construction, presented the museum as part of a larger administrative structure, the Cité Universitaire, that was to have three components: the museum, a school of medicine, and a secondary school. The same report stipulated that the museum was to contain three sections: one devoted to ethnography and archeology (housing a pre-historical section); a section devoted to art; and one devoted to "science," or natural history.³⁰ The museum's planning reached a new level of complexity when it became enmeshed in a larger plan for an African postsecondary educational system.

Yet another document ended with what seemed an afterthought, but was in fact the museum's central purpose: that the collections would serve

as an instruction for Africans to understand their own country. Repeated attempts to outline the museum's proposed collections were impossibly ambitious and comprehensive, covering pre-history to contemporary, Africa and Europe, art, ethnography, and nature. Yet a comical adjunct was the haphazard way by which items entered the collection, as in a letter in which the recipient at the museum wrote "I just received the package containing the snake that you kindly thought to offer the museum."³¹ The principal client for the museum was the AOF, with an important secondary role played by the Comité des Etudes in Paris.

A governor-general ruled the AOF, and lived in the structure that now houses Senegal's president, not by Wulffleff, but by Henri Deglane (1855–1931). Deglane's principal qualification for working in Africa was his success at designing Africa-themed buildings for France's colonial expositions that displayed a copious number of African objects. It is a professional trajectory that his student, Wulffleff, was to follow. In 1930, Jules Brévié assumed office, and his tenure as governor, 1930–1936, is associated with an aggressive building program. He was in power at the time of the completion of both the cathedral and the museum.

<i>Year</i>	<i>Project Title</i>
1919	Parc et Musée de Dakar
1921	Musée de l'Afrique Occidentale
1921	Musée de Dakar
undated	Musée Dakar
1922	Parc-Musée
1929	Palais de l'Administrateur del Circonscription (Wulffleff)
1930	Palais de Mr. le Gouverneur à Dakar (engineer)
1931	Institut des Etudes Africains
1931	Cité Universitaire
	1 Internat de l'École de médecine
	2 le Musée-Bibliothèque
	3 l'École William Ponty
1935	Musée-Archives
1935	Musée-Bibliothèque
1935	Institut d'Afrique
1936	Institut Français d'Afrique Noire
	Institut fondamental d'Afrique Noire
	Le Musée d'Art africain de l'Institut fondamental d'Afrique noire Cheikh Anta Diop IFAN/CAD
2007	Musée Théodore Monod d'Art africain

COLONIAL EXPOSITIONS

During the course of the Museum's planning, three colonial expositions in France played an influential role in shaping many of the buildings built in West Africa: the Colonial Exposition of Marseilles, 1906; the National Colonial Exposition, 1922, Marseilles; and the International Colonial Exposition, 1931, Paris. Wulffleff did buildings for two of them. The expositions had an impact in multiple ways. The African exposition buildings were mentioned as possible precedents for buildings in Africa, and in fact, two of the architects, Deglane and Wulffleff, worked in Africa.³² And several officials suggested that the objects on display in the exposition buildings serve as the core collection of Dakar's museum.

The 1906 exhibition included a West African Pavilion, based somewhat on the architecture of Djenné, Mali. It was designed by Deglane, an instructor at the *École des Beaux-Arts*, one of whose pupils was Wulffleff. A highlight of the 1906 exposition was his giant West African Pavilion, inspired by the architecture of the Haut-Senegal-Niger area. The building was monumental, and recalled a genuine African architecture.

Deglane based his building on the Great Mosque of Djenné, 1909, which is considered one of the greatest mud constructions of the Niger River Bend. Robert Shaw states that in preparation for designing the pavilion, Deglane travelled to Africa where he became familiar with Sudanic architecture.³³ He either visited it before its reconstruction, when it lay in ruins, or knew of it from publications. Yet its questionable authenticity stems from the knowledge that it was extensively rebuilt in 1909 after a fire, and many attribute its form and details to the French architects and workers responsible for its reconstruction.

Deglane's entrée to the world of French colonial buildings predated his work at expositions. He was the architect of the AOF's Governor's Palace in Dakar which he designed as an entirely Beaux-Arts structure. The Palace was ordered in 1902, and finished in 1907. Deglane's work in the 1909 exposition brings together the elements that characterize his work, and that of his pupil, Wulffleff. He had firsthand knowledge of African monumental architecture. He worked on exposition architecture, and had Beaux-Arts training; his contacts with the colonial administration led to further commissions in France's colonies.³⁴ In 1909, he had the

distinction of having designed French building in Dakar, and an African building in Marseille.

The second exhibition, of 1922, repeated a successful feature of the previous one, by having a grand West African Pavilion which was initiated to repeat the success of Deglane's African building. Two architects, Germain Olivier and Charles Wulffleff, won first and second place in the competition for the building, and the organizers awarded it to them both, with the instructions that they combine their entries to produce one stupendous structure (Fig. 10.5).³⁵ The collaborative result became one of the major attractions of the exposition.³⁶ For Europeans who thought little of African architecture outside of round structures made of thatch, the monumental building was, like Delgane's earlier building, an eye-opener. Its soaring tower was 60 meters tall, more than twice the height of one of its precedents, the tower of the Timbuktu mosque was 25 meters tall. Instead of being made of wood and mud, it was formed of iron and concrete. It exposed European audiences to a type of African architecture with which they were not familiar, and it did so by selectively exaggerating certain features.

Aloys Verrey was Wulffleff's business partner, and he wrote a project profile on the Palace of West Africa exhibition hall at Marseille, 1922. His text leaves no doubt that the building was not an authentic replica of an African building. It combined the features of buildings designed separately by Wulffleff and Olivier, a tall tower and a polygonal central hall which led to the national ethnographic exhibits. It was essentially the tower of the Djingueré Ber Mosque of Timbuktu added onto the volume of the Great Mosque of Djenné. Verrey said that the building's design "exaggerated in certain instances" the features of the architecture of the Upper Senegal-Niger area. Verrey's article confirms that those involved with the exhibitions did not blindly consider their African-themed buildings to be authentic. In his article's conclusion, he described the exhibition hall as an "amalgam." And he ambitiously hoped that the exhibition building, in concert with the Church being built in Dakar by Wulffleff, would create a new kind of architecture, connected to place, one that would be "a modern expression of ancient forms."³⁷ The building held items from all over Africa.

While there was a pavilion for French West Africa at the 1931 exposition, it was not designed by Wulffleff, although the temporary building resembled the building he designed for the 1922 exposition.³⁸ It was

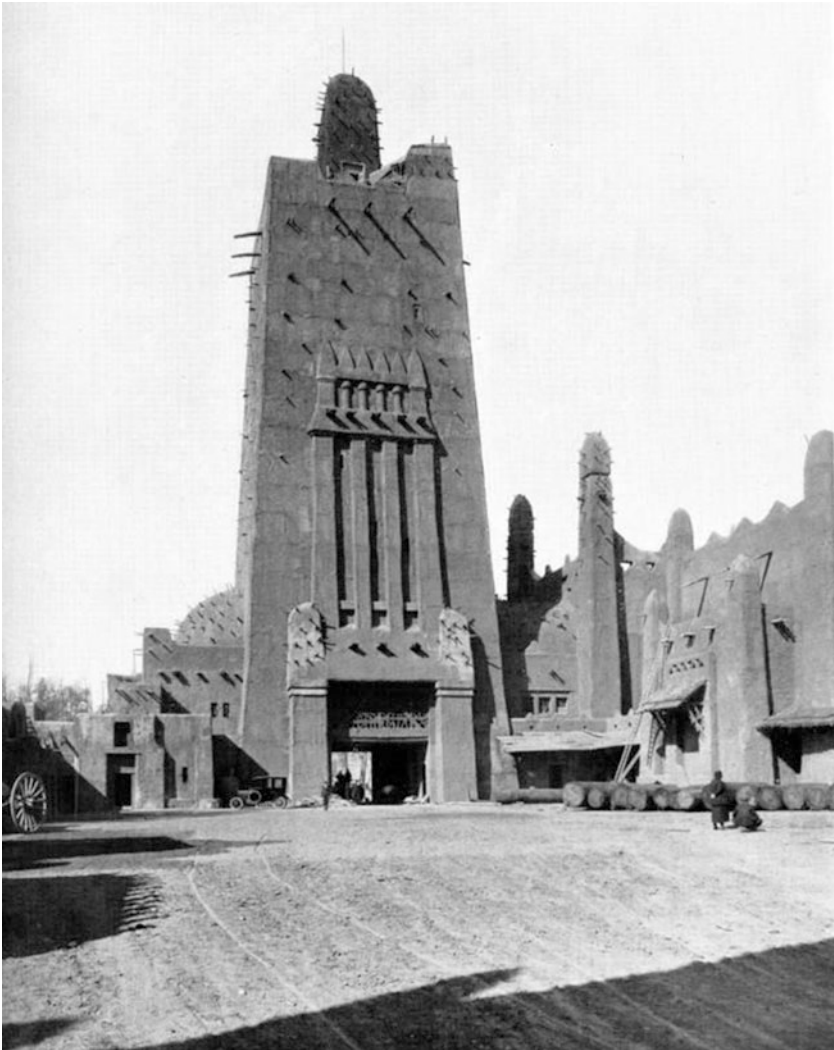


Fig. 10.5 Germain Olivier and Charles Wulffleff. West African Pavilion. Marseille, 1922

designed by his one-time partner, Germain Olivier and Jacques-Georges Lambert. Geographically, Wullfleff moved on: for the 1931 exhibition in Paris, he designed the Pavillon de la Martinique which followed work on the island. The most famous building of the 1931 exhibition was the modernist Musée des Colonies, which later became the Musée de l'Homme. 1931 was an eventful year for Wullfleff, for in addition to the exposition, he was occupied with the final stages of his two buildings in Dakar.

BUT FIRST, A PALACE

In 1929, from his offices in Paris, Wullfleff's office completed construction drawings for the grand public building on Dakar's star-shaped urban space, a beguiling fusion of Art Deco and Beaux Arts, with neo-Sudanese detailing. The engineers completed their drawings, and in 1931, construction was complete. The structure was clearly based on the sketches completed earlier. Only the building that rose in the park was not the museum, it was the residence of the colonial mayor of the district of Dakar. After decades of planning and protracted deliberation, what happened to the museum?

A parallel development to the museum's construction momentarily derailed it. Governor General Jules Carde supported the idea of a grander residence for the Administrator. The Administrator was not the Governor General of all of French West Africa, but oversaw the district of the city of Dakar, a position analogous to a mayor, or governor of a subdivision but not the entire colony. The administrator had previously lodged in tight quarters on the Place Prôtet.

The Wullfleff Palais assumed the form of the museum, only with exhibition halls turned into salons, a dining room, and bedrooms (Fig. 10.6). It was completed and occupied in 1931, and the official inauguration was held on August 8, 1931. Brévié was the Governor General at the time and Joseph Vadier was the administrator. The details of the museum-to-palace about-face are murky, but it is probable that the Palais was always destined to ultimately serve as the Museum, if temporarily being called into service as a grand residence. The budget crises of 1930 and 1931 might also have contributed. The building served as the Administrator's residence for less than three years.³⁹

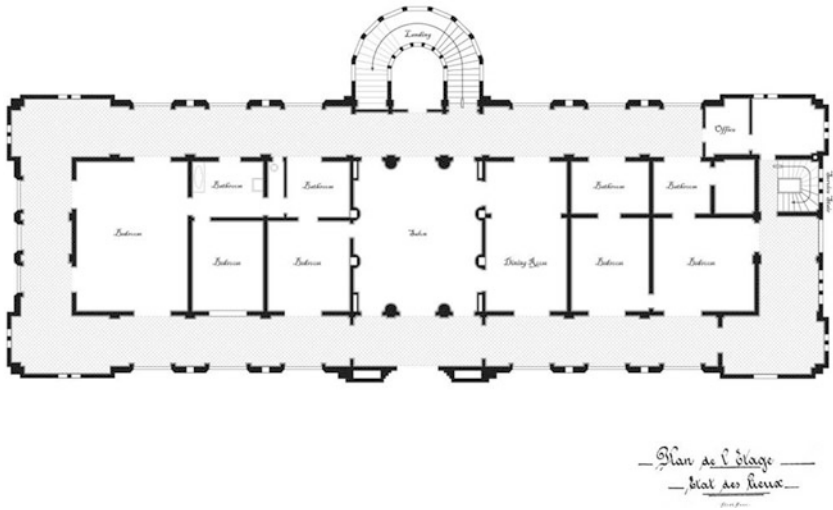


Fig. 10.6 Charles Wulffleff, Palais d'administrateur, 1931. Drawing by Matt Fulton

Of the colonial government buildings constructed under Brévié's watch, the Palace/Museum was the least stylistically beholden to historic Sudanese architecture.⁴⁰ The reason for the museum-turned-palace's Art Deco form is not recorded, but perhaps it was because the project predated Brévié's enthusiasm for neo-Sudanese architecture.

Vadier's successor was Louis Charles Ponzio, and starting in 1932, he was amenable to the idea of turning the administrator's grand residence into a museum. The renovation of the building was carried out in 1934 by the architect Ernest Brun. The Minister of Colonies gave his final approval for the project, called "Museum-Archive"; Brévié also lent his support to turning it into a museum. The most significant change involved enclosing the open air galleries for more interior space (Fig. 10.7). Brévié had his eyes on the structure, with his own list of functional priorities that it might house, including the Institut d'Afrique Noire, the Library-Archive, the Museum and its collections, the Information Office, and the Office of Education. Before the building's reconfiguration, a major part of its collection was housed in an inadequate space in the Chamber of Commerce

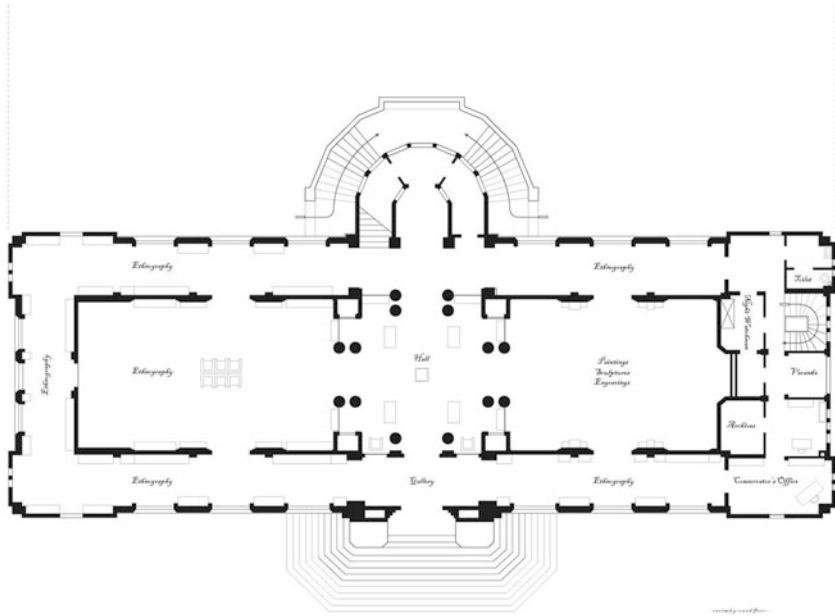


Fig. 10.7 Institut d'Afrique. Drawing by Matt Fulton

Building. In 1936, Wulffleff's building reopened, called "Institut d'Afrique," finally fulfilling the function for which it was intended.

EPILOGUE

In 1938, the museum's future looked rosy. It was serving the function for which it was designed. It served as the principal structure of the prominent research institute IFAN. The able Théodore Monod (1902–2000) joined IFAN in 1938, and oversaw the building's transformation from a palace to a museum. In an admirable display of space planning, he and the architects accommodated the impossibly long list of requirements demanded of the institution. The design method of Beaux Arts was to create a work, often first in plan, that was a 2-dimensional design of great complexity. Departments were assigned to rooms whose layout was beholden to composition, not function.

The life of the building underscores the belief in the universalism of Beaux-Arts planning, as a framework that proved adaptable to multiple functions, from a museum to a grand residence and back to a museum; this was at odds with the modernist idea of building with explicit attention to its intended functions. Yet another land grab was on the horizon. World War II arrived, and the museum was converted into a hospital. All the displays, shelving, and collections were upended to make way for row upon row of hospital beds. At war's end, Monod tirelessly set about again turning the structure once again into the museum it was meant to be (Figs 10.8 and 10.9).

If the building was intended to take its place alongside the Louvre and the Smithsonian, it failed to live up to its hype. This was not the fault of its attractive architecture nor the ambitions of the people who worked there. Eventually the Museum was appended to the l'Institut française d'Afrique Noire. It became one department of the research institute, which itself was



Fig. 10.8 Institut d'Afrique. Interior



Fig. 10.9 Institut d'Afrique. Interior. Collections repair and maintenance lab

subsumed as a part of Senegal's University of Dakar. The pattern of numerous name changes and functional adjustments continued. Up until 2007, it was Le Musée d'art Africain de l'Institut fondamental d'Afrique noire Cheikh Anta Diop IFAN/UCAD. In 2007, it was changed to The Théodore Monod African Art Museum.⁴¹

Looking at the variety of Wulfleff's architectural production on three continents reveals that, stylistically, he was all over the place. One can see his repeated efforts to make his buildings respond to place, and in doing so, he utilized multiple stylistic strategies, Art Deco, Islamic, Romanesque, neo-Sudanese, and Modern. Whether in France, Egypt, Martinique, or West Africa, he relied on different features that varied with function—church, museum, mosque or cinema—and presumably with how the projects developed during their periods of gestation, and the input of his clients. Further complicating an understanding of Wulfleff's buildings, he, as most architects do, reused certain forms. The central portal of his design for

Cairo's Amr Mosque reappears in a Romanesque-revival church in France.⁴² Multiple observers have detected Egyptian elements in both the church and the museum.

Long past the heyday of nineteenth-century historical revivals, Wulffleff's variety is no doubt part of the reason for his obscurity (architectural historians do not look kindly on architects who change dramatically over their careers). While there is usually some underlying reason to his stylistic choices, the logic does not always run deep, or withstand sustained scrutiny. Expressing Frenchness, or Africanness, were but two of a number of shifting variables in his work. He did a modern cinema in France, a neo-Sudanese building in France, and a Byzantine/Islamic/Sudanese building in Dakar, steps away from the Art Deco building that is this chapter's subject. In a time period when there was serious debate about modernism, Wulffleff practiced a twentieth-century version of serial historicism. Wulffleff, with his own English/Swiss/French identity, was a transnational figure who developed a number of multicultural design methods that as a group were unique to him.

Wulffleff was a minor figure in his contribution to French architectural modernism, but the lessons of his work on a museum in Dakar are many. He did contribute to modernism writ large, as a societal cultural force. He and his clients sought to improve one corner of the world by creating an African elite, through their planned exposure to art, nature, European history, books, fresh air, etc. That this unfolded in a pointedly nonlinear fashion is indicative of the ambiguities of French colonialism itself, with ever shifting objectives—first a medical school, then a library—and the personnel to carry out those objectives.

Wulffleff was a transnational figure who created buildings that addressed an urban global context. His work demonstrated an optimistic belief that a building and its contents, in Marseille, Paris, or Dakar, can foster knowledge and cross-cultural understanding. The museum and its collections were intended to prompt knowledge creation, which they did, in ways intended and unforeseen. The museum was a node in a circuit of knowledge, from Africa, to France, and back to Africa. It is a beautiful building whose pristine form belies a history that unfolded in fits and starts. Like many a colonial building, its design majestically rose above the convoluted circumstances of its creation.

NOTES

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4. Roberto Filippetti, *Modernità ibride* (Milan: FrancoAngeli, 2014), 37.
5. Allen Roberts, qtd. in Robert Shaw, *Irony and Illusion in the Architecture of Imperial Dakar* (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 2006), iv.
6. Steven Nelson, *From Cameroon to Paris: Mousgoum Architecture in and out of Africa* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), 192.
7. Nezar AlSayyad, *The Real, the Hyper, and the Virtual: Traditions in the Built Environment* (London: Routledge, 2014), 80.
8. Shaw, 26.
9. Labelle Prussin, *Hatumere: Islamic Design in West Africa* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), 182.
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11. Undated letter by Louis Lapicque, Archives du Sénégal, AS 0 610 (31) (henceforth AS).
12. AS: Series O: 611(31): Letter from the Vice-President du Comité d'Études, Henry Hubert, to the Governor of the AOF, September 26, 1919.
13. AS: Series O: 140 (31) creation of IFAN: from Paris Ministry of National Education, 20 septembre 1938: "Extrait Conforme Instructions Relatives à l'Application des Arrêtés du 23 mars et du 11 juillet 1938".
14. Véronique Mortaigne, "Le Musée d'art africain de Dakar décline soixante-dix ans d'histoire contemporaine," *Le Monde* (28 December 2008): 15.
15. It is the same drawing with an added sheet of paper that unfolds to show an option of a second story.
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18. Marie Clifford, "Helena Rubinstein's Beauty Salons, Fashion, and Modernist Display," *Winterthur Portfolio* 38 (Summer/Autumn 2003): 103–104.
19. Nelson, 98.
20. Kelly Duke Bryant, *Education as Politics: Colonial Schooling and Political Debate in Senegal, 1850s–1914* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2015), 163.

21. Bonny Ibhawoh, "Imperial Cosmopolitanism and the Making of an Indigenous Intelligentsia: African Lawyers in Colonial Urban Lagos," in *Urban Identity and the Atlantic World*, eds. Elizabeth Fay and Leonard von Morzé (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 123–39.
22. AS: Wulffleff wrote at least twice to Henry Hubert, 10 February 1921, and 3 April 1921.
23. Joseph Roger de Benoist, *Histoire de l'Église catholique au Sénégal: du milieu du XV^e siècle à l'aube du troisième millénaire* (Paris: Éditions Karthala, 2007), 299.
24. Wulffleff and Verrey entered a competition for the reconstruction of the Mosque of Amr, Cairo, in 1926. The jury dismissed the four Egyptian entrants, and it was awarded to Wulffleff's team. Alaa El-Habashi, "The Preservation of Egyptian Cultural Heritage Through Egyptian Eyes," in Nasr and Volait, 158. Wulffleff also participated in a competition for a church in Paris, 1912, l'église Saint-Dominique. See Simon Texier, *Églises Parisiennes du XX^e Siècle* (Paris: Action Artistique de la Ville de Paris, 1996), 53. Broillet and Wulffleff did restoration work on a cloister in Hauterive. See the illustration in Herman Schöpfer, "Zisterzienserklöster Altenryf/Hauterive," in *Zisterzienserbauten in der Schweiz*, ed. Karl Grunder (Zürich: Verlag der Fachvereine Zürich, 1990), 72.
25. de Benoist, 331.
26. *Ibid.*, 342.
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29. "The classic covered hut [...] is no longer built." *Encyclopedia of Vernacular Architecture of the World*, Volume 3, ed. Paul Oliver (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 1979.
30. AS: series O 610 (31), 29 May, 1931, report to the governor of the AOF.
31. AS: series O 611(31), undated letter.
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35. *Ibid.*, 43.
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37. Aloys Verrey, "Le Palais d'Afrique occidentale à Expo. de Marseille," *Art et décoration* 42 (November 1922): 156.
38. Shaw, 51.
39. *Ibid.*, 90–91.
40. *Ibid.*, 90.

41. This was done possibly to attract French funding.
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