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# Deterritorialization, Pure War, and the Consequences of Indian Captivity in Transnational Colonial Discourse

Billy J Stratton  
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*Detail from The Nautical Map of Diego Ribero (1529). Reprinted in The Discovery and Conquest of the New World, 1892, author's private collection.*

[1] The genre of the captivity narrative has operated as a vital circuit for transnational colonial discourse since its inception. Throughout the age of discovery, accounts of the captivity became an indispensable means of connecting the European metropole to foreign lands in Asia and Africa, as well as North and South America. The development of the Indian captivity narrative within the Atlantic context functioned as an effective tool for the dissemination of knowledge concerning the New World and its Indigenous inhabitants. In this essay, I examine some of the ways in which the captivity narrative functions as a colonial apparatus vital to the process of what Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari refer to as deterritorialization. However, the effectiveness of the captivity narrative to redefine space and place was not simply a given, but became possible through technological developments in the production and distribution of printed books as vehicles of "speed" and manifestations of "pure war," as conceived by Paul Virilio. Within the matrix of hegemonic knowledge and the increased capacity for the distribution of texts, the Indian captivity narrative became an essential element in the apparatus of colonial war, assuming the logistical capacity to reach across the oceanic divide to literally re-map Indigenous space. As with any system of knowledge, however, the very nature of the structure that allows for its effectiveness also harbors the seed of its own subversion. Accordingly, Jean-Philippe Mathy conceptualizes the Atlantic as "a rhizomatic system of cultural exchanges," which precludes the assertion and extension of absolute hegemony. [1] Drawing on the work of Deleuze and Guattari, Mathy reminds us of the dialogic nature of discourse, even when the subaltern *seems* little more than an absent presence persisting as specters that haunt the landscape.

[2] In *A Thousand Plateaus*, Deleuze and Guattari employ the rationalist parlance of the natural sciences to describe the rhizome as a "subterranean stem," which challenges the privileged status of knowledge as disseminated in writing and the notion of printed books as standing for "the image of the world." [2] The concept of the rhizome is offered here to draw a distinction between systems of representation based on

binary logic and a mimetic relationship with the world, for as Deleuze and Guattari note, "writing has nothing to do with signifying. It has to do with surveying, mapping, even realms that are yet to come." [3] Consequently, a rhizomatic understanding of the transatlantic circulation of colonial knowledge provides a particularly useful apparatus for the examination of the Indian captivity narrative, which was instrumental in the physical and ideological claiming of Native North America. For American and English readers on both sides of the Atlantic, the Indian captivity narrative had two distinct, yet complementary, functions. The first, and much more vital concern, was to synthesize historical events within a preconceived ideological schema serving the immediate needs of the English colonies. The second was to allow for dissemination of news and information back across the Atlantic to satisfy the curiosities of English and European readers. The reprinting of accounts of Indian captivity in locations as far away as London most assuredly appealed to readers interested in what Mathy terms, "the incommensurability of cultural formations," encountered by English settlers in North America. [4] The accumulation of sensationalistic images of cultural difference found in accounts of Indian captivity functioned as affective ideological instruments to support and justify the extension of Euro-American colonial hegemony. While other scholars have addressed the meaning and function of the captivity narrative within the context of Puritan religious dogma and historiography, my aim is to bridge and extend previous studies by placing representations of Native people within a context that is attentive to both the transatlantic nature of cultural exchange and the rhizomatic nature of literary production. [5]

[3] The published account of Mary Rowlandson's experiences during King Philip's War, *The Sovereignty and Goodness of God...*, [6] has been viewed by critics and historians as the model and archetypal example of the Indian captivity narrative. Kathryn Derounian-Stoloda characterizes the Indian captivity narrative as "a discrete American literary form," [7] while Rafia Zafar claims that through the Indian captivity narrative, "the British colonies had given birth to a 'simple indigenous American prose' form." [8] In Jill Lepore's award winning, *The Name of War*, the Rowlandson narrative is elevated to the rather dubious, if not meaningless, status of "America's first best-seller," and cited as "a foundational work in American literature." [9] As these writers attest, accounts of captivity among the Indigenous peoples of North America have held a prominent place in American historiography, national literature, and popular culture, maintaining an enduring influence on the American psyche. True, indeed, but through the exigencies of canonization that these authors participate in Rowlandson's narrative is granted an elevated literary status that acts to dissimulate it from the deeply problematic historical and literary context from which it was produced. The detachment and distance produced in this literary process, intentionally or not, works to obscure Native American subjectivities and historical experiences through the privileging and consolidation of the colonial gaze and the tropes of pure war. Conventional reading practices such as these reinforce the all-too-common association of the frontier with dreadful images of animalistic, bloodthirsty savages descending upon isolated settlements, forming a line of discursive referentiality from the colonial period to the present that American writers have repeatedly returned to in times of national crisis. The adoption of a rhizomatic literary praxis challenges colonial simulations and repressive cultural, historical, and fictive constructs of captivity, which ultimately seeks to circumscribe the interpretive horizon and vitiate Native subjectivities in a system of disavowing characterization.

[4] Mary Rowlandson's captivity narrative was first printed by Samuel Green in Boston in 1682, and quickly reprinted twice in Cambridge, as well as in London during the same year. After this initial flurry of activity, Rowlandson's narrative was not reprinted until 1720. This date is suggestive because it follows the close of the

Yamasee War, which pitted the colonial settlers of South Carolina against Indians of the Southeastern tribes including the Apalachee, Catawba, Cherokee, Creek, and Yamasee among others. As Joel Martin observes, this conflict was not only fought for control of territory, but was primarily fueled by Native distress over colonial exploitation of Native American slaves in Carolina plantations. [10] Following another lull in circulation, six more editions of the Rowlandson narrative were printed in the revolutionary period from 1770 to 1773, during which time various Native nations, especially those west of the Appalachian Mountains, fought as allies to the British. These printings were closely followed by six additional editions released in the early years of the New Republic and the American struggle against the Indian confederacies for the Old Northwest in the last decade of the eighteenth century. For English colonists and their American progeny, the frequent outbreaks of violence between settlers and Indians over land and resources seriously hindered the establishment of a pluralistic national culture modeled upon emerging enlightenment principles of freedom, democracy, and reason. As the chronology outlined above suggests, the distribution and dissemination of the Rowlandson narrative demonstrates the usage of books as vectors of speed and also carriers of destruction.

[5] The deployment of the captivity narrative throughout this period marks a transatlantic caesura in the dialectical utilization of the captivity narrative, as Americans sought to distinguish themselves from the vanquished British and their increasingly hostile Indian allies. These historical details are suggestive of a link between the publication history of the Rowlandson narrative and corresponding periods of intense national trauma and societal change brought about by colonial expansionism and reterritorialization. In the context of Anglo/Indian warfare, colonial trauma was manifested in borderland conflicts such as Pontiac's Rebellion in 1763, Lord Dunmore's War in 1774, and the war against a confederacy of tribes from Ohio and the Great Lakes region culminating in the Battle of Fallen Timbers in 1794. These conflicts, as well as countless other skirmishes, were often exacerbated by concurrent outbreaks of transnational European warfare such as in the French and Indian War, the Seven Years' War, the American Revolution, and the War of 1812. The latent function of later reprints of Rowlandson's narrative as a means of demonizing Indian people, and their European allies by association, is implied by the subtitles appended to eighteenth-century editions of the text. Through the metadiscourse created in these subtitles, for example, Rowlandson is frequently identified as one "who was taken Prisoner by the Indians . . . and treated in the most Barbarous and Cruel manner by those vile Savages." [11] This, as well as other Indian captivity narratives, such as those of Hannah Dustan and Quentin Stockwell, [12] provided the American reading public with harrowing and sensationalistic accounts of frontier experience, juxtaposing acts of Indian savagery with celebrated feats of perseverance and heroism. These facts seem to illustrate Virilio's observation that "the war-machine is not only explosives, it's also communications, vectorizations. It's essentially the speed of delivery." [13] As ideological extensions of internecine colonial conflict, such narratives circumscribe the nature of Anglo/Indian relations, at once serving as swiftly deployed alibi for past conflict and as a pretext for ongoing wars of American colonial aggression.

[6] In his analysis of frontier American literature, Richard Slotkin reveals the implicit logic of many early American literary texts. "Regeneration through violence" signifies what Slotkin identifies as the enactment of symbolic rituals of mourning and appropriation critical to the formation of American national identity and individualistic connections to the land. [14] Articulated in the form of the Indian captivity genre, this rhizomatic literary ritual was reinforced in performances of Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show and countless other frontier dramas staged throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. [15] The steady production and reiteration of

the Indian captivity narrative acted as a means of establishing a distinctly American conception of selfhood and cultural identity within the liberal-pluralist project of nation-building, which was predicated upon the veneration of individualism and libertarianism. As Deleuze and Guattari remind us, however, the rhizomatic nature of such texts inhibits the categorical efficacy of a privileged order, for "there is always an outside" where the rhizome can be formed with something else. [16]

[7] As literary responses to cycles of intercultural conflict attending European and English conquest and settlement of North America, however, Indian captivity narratives represent, not a distinct literary form, but the extension and reformulation of colonial discourses that had already enjoyed a long and varied history in the annals of European literary discourse. The enduring influence of accounts of captivity, such as that of Rowlandson's, seems to confirm Slotkin's observation that myth has the power to "reach out of the past to cripple, incapacitate, or strike down the living." [17] Long before the publication of the Rowlandson narrative, German, Spanish, French, Dutch, and English writers had been busy composing texts that described the "strange" customs and behaviors of peoples encountered by merchants, missionaries, and soldiers in travels and voyages as early as the thirteenth century.

[8] Although European travel and exploration narratives were widely accepted as "true" accounts of cross-cultural contact—designed to frighten as much as astonish—on a deeper level, these texts act as potent cultural artifacts produced as responses to a radically changing and expanding world. For contemporary readers, European and English travel and exploration narratives reveal considerably more about how Western writers understood their place in the cosmos, their aspirations, their fears, and their biases, than they do about the peoples who were often the denigrated subjects of such works. As Deleuze and Guattari suggest, "the book is not an image of the world. It forms a rhizome with the world, there is an aparallel evolution of the book and the world; the book assures the deterritorialization of the world, but the world effects a reterritorialization of the book, which in turn deterritorializes itself in the world." [18] In European travel and exploration narratives, the convergences Deleuze and Guattari speak of find their materialization in the form of the Other, represented as a cultural anomaly and looming threat to Western cultural hegemony. European leaders—members of the nobility, Church officials, and intellectuals—generally viewed non-European Others as formidable obstacles to the European imperial project. In addition to marshalling military forces to wage wars of pacification and conquest, the Portuguese, Spanish, Dutch, French, and English proved to be particularly adept in the dissemination and control of knowledge and the meaning-making techniques brought to bear most conspicuously in the form of manuscripts, broadsides, leaflets, and printed books. As Richard Cole notes, "one of the earliest books to be printed on the Gutenberg press in 1454 was a short tract by Paulinus Chappe, which described the Byzantine struggle against the Turks and the fall of Cyprus." [19] Viewed through the historical sensitivities of fifteenth-century European readers who had just witnessed the fall of Constantinople to the Turks in 1453, [20] such texts represented an ideological extension of the Holy Crusades that had consumed Christian Europe during the previous three and a half centuries.

[9] Comparing early printed books describing the Ottoman Turks and Moors published from the fifteenth to the middle of the sixteenth century with those published afterwards, a subtle shift in language and style becomes apparent. These changes seem to correspond to the gradual expansion of the European book trade spurred by steadily increasing literacy rates throughout Europe during this period. The contrast in literary style apparent in these texts can be discerned when distinguishing works composed to provide religious leaders, military

commanders, and royal administrators with "actionable intelligence," and those written and distributed to more diverse readerships in Europe and England. Texts produced through the sixteenth century are typified by the use of a concise colonial rhetoric and are generally free of the demonizing imagery common to works published from the early seventeenth century on. Viewed in terms of the affect that such texts had upon readers, those produced before the sixteenth century seem to depend primarily on the use of illocutionary acts for their literary effectiveness, manifested in the form of assertives, directives, expressives, and declaratives. In contrast to these early narratives, subsequent works are distinguished in terms of the perlocutionary, or psychological, effect intended on the reader. What is significant about this shift is not simply an issue of the linguistic function of syntactic markers present in each set of texts, but the broader implications of what Deleuze and Guattari address in their criticism of "the *abstract machine* that connects a language to the semantic and pragmatic contents of statements, to collective assemblages of enunciation, to a whole micropolitics of the social field."

[21]

[10] Hence, in a work such as William Caxton's *The Cronycles of Englonde* (1482), the recent military advances of the Turks is brought to his readers' attention in a clear, unadorned manner, "aboute this tyme the cyte of Costantynople whiche was the Imperyal cyte in al grece was taken by the Turkes Infydeles." [22] The use of descriptive adjectives is kept to a minimum in this example, with the purpose of Caxton's account to simply provide the order of factual events. For Caxton as well as his readers, the forthright statement that the Turks had taken Constantinople conveyed the troubling facts well enough. [23] Even Caxton's classification of Turks as "infydeles" is redundant given the history and nature of this social field and seems to function simply to reinforce a marker of cultural difference between the Oriental and the Occidental world. On another level, Caxton's use of this term acts as a not-so-subtle reminder of the holy mission of the Crusades. Accordingly, Caxton's text and those that immediately followed are generally free of the sensationalized, extravagant, and degrading depictions that were to become prominent features of subsequent literary works. In these early texts, however, the Other is primarily defined according to a set of marginalized cultural signifiers, which were evoked whenever writers referred to "turkes," with the occasional use of other descriptive modifiers, such as "infydeles" and "hethen." [24] This manner of characterization stands in marked contrast to texts published from the late sixteenth century on, in which writers began to employ a more sensational literary style to accommodate the affective shift to a growing public readership.

[11] Another effect of the advent of the printing press and the development of movable type, as Cole further observes, was that "culturally arrogant and ethnocentric observations of non-European peoples were given immortality in western culture by the printed page." [25] In literary depictions of Turks and Moors found in early printed books, English and European writers established an ambivalent assemblage of cultural representations that were based not upon firsthand observation, but defined through a negative dialectic of cultural distinction and difference. Within the social field of European and English literary discourse, Turks and Moors, and later Native Americans, became knowable primarily through a system of representation predicated upon a dialectic of culturally defined binary oppositions, or what Homi Bhabha has termed, "the recognition of cultural and racial difference and its disavowal." [26] The establishment of this system of opposition, argues the postcolonial critic Abdul R. JanMohamed,

Provides the central feature of the colonialist cognitive framework and colonialist literary representation: the Manichean allegory—a field of discursive, yet interchangeable oppositions

between white and black, good and evil, superiority and inferiority, civilization and savagery, intelligence and emotion, rationality and sensuality, self and Other, subject and object. [27]

As with their North American successors, the development of Turkish and Barbary captivity narratives in Early Modern English and European literature demonstrates how, according to Rosylyn Knutson, "non-Europeans and non-Christians were . . . reinvented in texts and performances as demons, primitives, or commercial property." [28] Announcing a shift from an illocutionary to a perlocutionary rhetorical praxis, Thomas Becon, in his call to holy war titled, *The new pollecye of warre* . . . (1542), describes Ottoman Turks in animalistic terms, stating, "the rapacite of wolfes, the violence of lyons, the fearsenes of tygres, is nothyng in comparison of theyr furious & cruell tyranny." [29] In his study of English captivity narratives in North Africa and the Middle East, Nabil Matar identifies at least ten accounts of "English captivity in the Muslim dominions" published between 1577 and 1625 in England alone. [30] Reminiscent of animalistic descriptions of Indian people later to appear in the Rowlandson narrative, Matar discusses an account produced by Anthony Munday, *The admirable Deliverance of 266 Christians by Iohn Reynard Englishman from the captiuitie of the Turkes* (1608), in which "English heroes" are depicted in marked contrast with the Turkish "bears, bulls and, rats." [31] In the sensationalistic account of the assault upon Reynard's ship in which he, along with his shipmates, were taken captive, Munday writes, "the Turkes leapd out of their vessels, and like ratts nimblely climed vp to the taclings of the ship . . ." [32] Animalistic descriptions such as these anticipate the stylistic employed in the account of the attack on Rowlandson's village, in which survivors are awakened by the coming of the Indians only to witness their "dear Friends, and Relations . . . stript naked by a company of hell-hounds, roaring, singing, ranting and insulting, as if they would have torn our very hearts out." [33] Within Deleuze and Guattari's rhizomatic context, the Indian captivity narrative forms "a plane of consistency" with an already well-established system of transatlantic colonial representation and historical "emplotment." [34]



*Turkish piracy during the era of the Crusades.*

*Engraving from The Discovery and Conquest of the New World, 1892, author's private collection.*



[12] In *Orientalism*, Edward Said has shown how Western perceptions concerning the East were established and formalized through the production of "an internally structured archive." [35] Drawn from oral and written accounts by and about captives found in popular stories, folklore, and the growing body of travel and exploration literature, by the end of the sixteenth century the cultural assumptions found in these texts had become deeply entrenched in European thought. Based on the reiteration of demonizing imagery and the rhizomatic "lines of flight" embedded in a wide variety of texts produced in the seventeenth century and after, it is clear that such works left an indelible imprint on American perceptions of the Other. Through the maintenance and extension of the "internally structured archive" produced from these texts, the elliptical reiteration of the sensational and exotic portrayals of people of the Orient and North Africa became entrenched in historical, scientific, and ecclesiastical discourses. Such depictions, codified through the power of the printed word, were endowed with a sense of presence adding to the veneer of historical legitimacy, which functioned as what Hayden White refers to as a "literature of fact." [36] Like Bhabha's description of the "literature of empire" in 'Signs Taken for Wonders,' White's observation allows us to better appreciate the significance of Said's thesis. [37] Herein lies the means by which the "language, perception, and form of the encounter between East and West" came to be shaped according to the latent ideological structures found in these colonial artifacts. [38]

[13] Building on the foundation established by Said's work, Bhabha points out that the effectiveness of the means by which transatlantic encounters were framed in literary discourses rests in "its dependence on the concept of 'fixity' in the ideological construction of otherness." [39] For Bhabha, it is not enough to simply make use of language in its written or oral forms to represent otherness "as the sign of cultural/historical/ racial difference." [40] The essential power of the prevailing system of colonial representation lies in its capacity to synthesize and maintain the seemingly incongruous attributes of "rigidity and an unchanging order as well as disorder, degeneracy and daemonic repetition." [41] Bhabha's deployment of these terms is suggestive of the notion of iterability central to Jacques Derrida's critique of communicative discourse and signification found in 'Signature Event Context.' What Bhabha implies when he discusses the "fixity" and "rigidity" of colonial discourse is, in essence, the ways in which representations are transmitted beyond the context of their production, i.e., the specific author, subject, and immediate audience of a given text. In the case of the captivity narrative of Mary Rowlandson, this would include the ways in which her captivity was disseminated not only as testimony to the abject savagery of the Pokanoket, Narragansett, and the other allied tribes the English were engaged with during King Philip's War, but more broadly as an illustration of the motif of Indian savagism, which continued to have affective influence well into the twentieth century. It is out of the discursive context created by early American captivity narratives, and those they necessarily informed, that a structurally coherent, or "fixed," system of Indian representation was articulated. Bhabha's analysis illuminates the complex manner by which descriptive classifications such as the savage, barbarian, infidel, or pagan are naturalized by focusing not merely on the way regimes of knowledge are established, which is one of Said's primary concerns, but through their diachronic transmission within colonial discourses. Derrida initiates his critical intervention by addressing the concept of fixity, not only in terms of how it is manifested in discourse, but through an analysis of what it necessarily assumes; that is to say, the process in which "one writes in order to communicate something to those who are absent." [42] If it is true that "writing *extends* the field and powers of locutionary or gestural communication," as Derrida suggests, then it follows that the European development of printed books extended this field of communication and the power that is vested in it exponentially. [43]

[14] The adoption by the English of pre-existing narrative forms and literary motifs to serve their colonial purposes would have been a natural response for writers with a wealth of accumulated cultural experience and shared knowledge. The rhizomatic literary exchange evident in early American writing resulted in a cartographical shift of the colonial gaze from the dungeons and galleys of Constantinople, North Africa, and the Mediterranean to the dark, inhospitable forests of the northeast woodlands. Ellen G. Friedman notes that the presence of European captives in North Africa dates back to the Middle Ages. Citing an array of archival sources she estimates captive populations as high as "25,000 to 35,000 by the late sixteenth century." [44] While the majority of these captives were taken in the Mediterranean region, Paul Baepler has shown that such was not always the case, observing that some "Barbary privateers began to take North American colonists as early as 1625." [45] Although details about these interactions are sketchy at best, Baepler also cites an account in which "rovers had claimed two American ships and escorted them into the Moroccan harbor at Sallee." [46] Episodes such as these challenge conventional transatlantic emplotments that elide the agency of Indigenous and non-Western participants in the processes of deterritorialization and reterritorialization initiated during the Age of Discovery.

[15] Given the prominence of the captivity theme in literary discourse of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries it should come as no surprise that early depictions of Native American people found in the works of Dutch, French, British, and later, American writers bear many similarities to descriptions of Moors and Ottoman Turks found in texts produced in England and Europe. As with writers who depicted the horrors of Turkish captivity, a number of the earliest writers who sought to represent Indian cultures and people of the New World did so based not upon their own experiences and observations, but by drawing on the accumulated archive of transatlantic literary representations predicated upon the play of intertextual regression. Jean Baudrillard has characterized this process as "an uninterrupted circuit without reference or circumference." [47] In this mythico-historic tautology, the fundamental relationship between the signifier and signified is ideologically displaced with Indigenous subjects negatively defined within the categorical binaries of good and evil, civil and savage, and Christian and pagan, which generates a system of correspondence that is self-constitutive, self-perpetuating, and beyond the purview of conventional modes of referentiality.

[16] Such is the case with the lurid descriptions of cannibalism and ritual torture that were common features of early literary discourses purporting to describe the Indigenous people of the New World. The Indian captivity narrative as an adapted literary form dates to the earliest periods of European exploration in the New World. Hans Staden's 1557 firsthand account, *Geschichte eines Landes . . .*, [48] details his captivity among the Tupinamba Indians in the Amazon basin and includes graphic descriptions of ritual torture and cannibalism. The account of the Chilean writer Francisco Núñez de Pineda y Bascuñán, *Cautiverio feliz y razón individual de las guerras dilatadas del reino de Chile* (1673), offers an alternate view in which he is careful to identify the religious significance of cannibalism among the Mapuches. Peter Hulme, writing in "Columbus and the Cannibals," draws attention to the seemingly ubiquitous representation of cannibalism attributed to Native societies of the New World. In an effort to historicize processes of colonial signification and othering, Hulme traces the term, "canibale," to the journals of Columbus, in which the term was first used in his description of the hostile Caribs. [49] In the development of the Columbian representation of "racial difference and its disavowal," Hulme identifies a "trace of that repression," implicit in the way Columbus' account was so readily accepted as truth. [50] Considering the lack of reliable knowledge and cultural tolerance concerning non-

European cultures during this time, it is not difficult to see how the descriptions disseminated by Columbus and other early explorers could have such a powerful influence on the imaginations of European audiences. Interestingly, as is also the case with the Rowlandson narrative, as Hulme points out, the "actual text on which we presume Columbus to have inscribed that name," along with the original manuscript copy, is no longer in existence. [51] Consequently, what we are left with is a rhizomatic system of reference that has no verifiable foundation, no clear origin, but is nonetheless unremittingly reinforced by subsequent writers in historical, literary, and critical texts, creating a closed system of historical citationality where the essential relationship between primary and secondary documentary sources is lost in labyrinthine circuits of absence, reiteration, and intertextuality.



*Nineteenth-century engraving of Caribs participating in cannibalism.  
From *The Discovery and Conquest of the New World*, 1892, author's private collection.*

[17] Due to the wide distribution and influence of European exploration narratives, the shocking depictions of violence, cannibalism, and paganism found in the work of Staden and Columbus were reiterated in the work of colonial New England writers. In the account of the attack on Lancaster by Pokanoket, Narragansett, and Nipmuc Indians found in the opening pages of the Rowlandson narrative, the innermost fears of isolated colonists are vividly expressed, providing readers with a terrifying portrait of Indian savagery. Like many of its European and English predecessors, a first person narrative voice is employed to reinforce the perceived veracity of eyewitness testimony, which functions as a hegemonic instrument of historical validation. Rowlandson's narrative voice reinforces the unexpectedness of the frenzied attack from the perspective of a terrified settler barricaded inside a burning garrison in a way that cannot be achieved in historical texts such as those of William Hubbard and Increase Mather. [52] However, as Virilio observes of the fortified city, "war exists in its preparation." [53] The fact that Rowlandson and her fellow settlers had taken refuge in the garrison confirms the validity of Virilio's claim. King Philip's War did not begin with the preceding raids on English settlements, the hanging of the Pokanokets by the Puritans for the murder of the praying Indian, John

Sassamon, nor did it have its source in the mysterious death of Metacomet's brother, Wamsutta. King Philip's War began with the construction of the first English fortifications, which laid bare their intentions. As Virilio suggests, pure war exists in the "infinite preparation" that always already anticipates the conflict to come. [54]

[18] The sense of dread and torment that Rowlandson's narrative evokes is palpable in the details of the attack, which are interspersed with fluttering images of cannibal-like Indian assailants "gaping before us with their Guns, Spears and Hatchets to devour us." [55] Given the sense of fear and desperation induced by these grim circumstances, readers experience the sense of the terror that colonists in frontier settlements may have faced living in perpetual fear of Indian attack. Through such vivid accounts, Indian people are dehumanized and literally transformed into a legion of inhuman creatures in whose hands a cruel and certain death awaited, to be followed by the even more dreadful fate of cannibalism. As if this imagery was not potent enough, the stylistics of the Puritan jeremiad is also exploited through the framing of Rowlandson's experience against a hellish backdrop of "roaring" fires and "gaping" Indians who, like their animal brethren, "scornfully shouted and hallowed." [56] This traumatic event is framed within an exacting historical and ideological symbolic structure through the deployment of an array of vivid and compelling images, which extends religious meaning and significance to what would otherwise be viewed as a rather predictable, although terrifying, turn of events given the prevalence of Anglo-Indian conflict during this period.

[19] In addition to the allusions to Indian cannibalism found in the narrative of Rowlandson's captivity, an array of animalistic images and motifs are employed to effectively demonize Indian people. For instance, after fleeing the burning garrison and witnessing the desperate struggle taking place around her, Rowlandson laments, "it is a solemn sight to see so many Christians lying in their blood, some here, and some there, like a company of Sheep torn by Wolves." [57] The means by which colonial writers were able to render Native people voiceless in accounts such as these seems intimately related to the practice of the epistemological disavowal of Indian languages as glossolalia. In the opening scenes of the Rowlandson narrative there are numerous instances where Indian speech is associated with sounds made by wild animals. In her description of what was probably the ceremonial utterances and songs of an Indian war party, Rowlandson states, "Oh the roaring, and singing and dancing, and yelling of those black creatures in the night, which made the place a lively resemblance of hell." [58] Later, after another successful raid, this time on the settlement of Medfield, she regretfully declares, "Oh! The outrageous roaring and hooping that there was . . . By their noise and hooping they signified how many they had destroyed . . . and then, Oh, the hideous insulting a triumphing that there was over some *Englishmens* scalps that they had taken (as their manner) and brought with them." [59] It is apparent that the scene described here bears little resemblance to what was taking place from the Indians' perspective. Instead, Rowlandson simply deploys what Deleuze and Guattari term, the "ready-made tracings" of the savage Other produced in the absence of knowledge about her Indian captors and their cultural practices. [60] It is the simulacrum of an imperialist cartography, a deterritorialization and remapping, subsumed within the matrices of colonial desire in place of Native subjectivities and knowledge, which are always already marginalized and rendered incomprehensible. Despite the evocative power of Rowlandson's description of these events, which would have been fresh in the minds of many of her contemporaries, the imagery used to describe Indian people throughout the narrative is far from unique.

[20] Throughout the course of the Rowlandson narrative, which is literally overflowing with invectives directed against her Indian captors, who are frequently described as "wolves" and "ravenous bears," not a single

firsthand description of cannibalism is offered. Even when incidents intended to highlight acts of Indian savagery such as torture are cited, Rowlandson is only able to do so by resorting to second-hand information passed on to her by witnesses who are often unnamed or absent from her text. This is illustrated in the description of the fate that befell "that poor woman," Goodwife Joslin, at the hands of her Indian captors:

She having much grief upon her Spirit, about her miserable condition, being so near her time, she would be often asking the Indians to let her go home; they not willing to do that, and yet vexed with her importunity, gathered a great company together about her, and stript her naked, and set her in the midst of them; and when they had sung and danced about her (in their hellish manner) . . . they knockt her on head, and the child in her arms with her: when they had done that, they made a fire and put them both into it, and told the other Children that were with them, that if they attempted to go home, they would serve them in a like manner. [61]

In her recounting of the pregnant Christian wife's ritualized execution at the hands of savage Indians, Rowlandson prefaces the description noting that the information she is providing was obtained "as some of the company told me in my travel." [62]



*Female captive tormented by Indians.*

*Engraving from Wild Life on the Plains and The Horrors of Indian Warfare.*

*St. Louis: Sun Publishing, 1874, author's private collection.*

[21] The conventional allegorical style employed in the description of Joslin's death functions to reinscribe the role of the invader, while eliding the suffering of Native women and children who were taken slaves by English colonists. Nancy Armstrong and Leonard Tennenhouse reason that "such a voice predisposes us *not* to think of the English as intruders who were decimating the native population and driving it from its homeland." [63] As a testimonial to the contempt that some early colonists harbored towards Native women, in a letter dated July 22, 1676, Nathaniel Saltonstall writes, "so vain it is to expect any Thing but the most barbarous Usage from such a

People amongst whom the most milde and gentle Sex delight in Cruelties, and have utterly abandoned at once the two proper Virtues of Womankind, Pity and Modesty." [64] Saltonstall's comparison of Indian women against the Puritan model of patriarchal social organization seems to provide retroactive justification for the practice, long established in the English colonies, of the taking of Indian captives, especially women and children, for the purposes of domestic servitude or, worse yet, slavery in the Indies. Michael Fickes, in his work on the English slave trade following the Pequot War, detailed the cruel treatment that Pequot captives endured, including psychological, sexual, and physical abuse. Fickes cites Indian testimony claiming, "Pequot captives who attempted to escape immediately after their capture were branded. One Pequot runaway reported to Roger Williams that she had been raped and subsequently punished, a branding administered by a local magistrate, for her unwilling involvement." [65] By March 1677, a little less than a year after the death of Metacomet, the Massachusetts Bay Council, seeking to assuage English anxieties regarding the mere presence of Indian people in the colonies, established strict legal conditions for the ownership of Indian slaves: "Man or Woman already bought, above the age of twelve years." [66]

[22] The lack of historically verifiable evidence concerning the accounts of torture and abuse depicted in the Rowlandson narrative is further exhibited when the subject of cannibalism is mentioned during a conversation with an anonymous Indian to whom she inquires on the whereabouts of her son who was taken captive by a different group of Indians following the assault on Lancaster. Yet again, an unnamed source, this time an Indian, responds by telling Rowlandson that "his master roasted him, and that himself did eat a piece of him, as big as his two fingers, and that he was very good meat." [67] Rowlandson immediately responds, proclaiming her own skepticism concerning such accounts, "but the Lord upheld my spirit, under this discouragement; and I considered their horrible addictedness to lying, and that there is not one of them that makes the least conscience of speaking of truth." [68]

[23] While *The Sovereignty and Goodness of God* displays many of the characteristics of Barbary and Turkish captivity narratives it also acts as an ideological counterweight to some of the more ambiguous, if not benevolent, depictions of Native people found in accounts of Spanish chroniclers published throughout the sixteenth century. In the widely distributed and translated work of Bartolomé de las Casas, *Brevíssima relación de la destrucción de las Indias* (1552), Indigenous people are portrayed in a sympathetic, if not tragic, light. Although informed by the same system of binary oppositions found in European works discussed previously, in these accounts the privilege is reversed marking some of the earliest examples in which the Indigenous peoples of the New World were regarded as inherently rational human beings.

[24] In 1583 Thomas Dawson published the first English edition of Las Casas's work in London under the title, *The Spanishe colonie, or Briefe chronicle of the acts and gestes of the Spaniards in the West Indies . . .* Significant to the development of *la leyenda negra*, or the Black Legend, and reprinted at the height of the Anglo-Spanish War fought for control over the transatlantic slave trade, Las Casas's manuscript was ostensibly translated and brought to press as a tool of English propaganda to expose Spanish atrocities in the New World. Written as a treatise on Christian duty, Las Casas seeks to establish the historical veracity of his observations by frequently stating, as Rowlandson later does, that the events described were witnessed "with my own eyes." [69] In subsequent English versions, such as the second edition translated by John Phillips and dedicated to Oliver Cromwell, *the tears of the Indians: being an historical and true account of the cruel massacres and slaughters of above twenty millions of innocent people, committed by the Spaniards . . .*

(1656), ideological agenda is apparent in the title. This is in keeping with Deleuze and Guattari's claim and rhetorical query that "a book exists only through the outside and on the outside. A book itself is a little machine; what is the relation . . . of this literary machine to a war machine, love machine, revolutionary machine, etc.— and an *abstract machine* that sweeps them along?" [70] It seems clear that the motivation behind the English translation of *Las Casas* had much more to do with war than it did with any concern for the Indigenous peoples of the New World, or any concern with justice or virtue. As these examples suggest, the nature of Indian representation was far from stable, while the meanings of such were often determined according to which side of the rhizomatic circuit the implied audiences of these texts resided, whether in the colonies or on European soil.

[25] The tendency of European and English colonial writers to plot their own nationalistic destinies as manifestations of divine providence is a common feature in fables of the expanding transatlantic world. The Turkish captivity narrative of Francis Knight, *a relation of seven yeares slaverie under the Turkes of Argeire* . . . (1640), anticipates the cultural logic of divine providence later to be reiterated in Rowlandson's account. In his description of the perilous moment of contact with the savage Other, Knight states: "On the ninth day of *December*, when it pleased *Almightie God* to give power to the *Infidels* to prevaile over me, whereby I became *Captive*." [71] The transformation that is intimated in this passage actualizes a process of becoming, which is bound up in the physical and psychological ordeal of captivity portrayed in the accounts of Knight, Rowlandson, and others. The rhizomatic network of connections extending from these liminal experiences functioned as a trigger for a process of colonial self-fashioning, which operated as a remarkably effective means of ideological and spatial appropriation in the New World. It was, in fact, through the captives' crossing into the howling wilderness, and the attendant sufferings they experienced, that the processes of deterritorialization and reterritorialization were instigated. The publication and dissemination, on both sides of the Atlantic, of literary descriptions of the captives' bitter trek through the frontier borderlands, deep into Indian territory, functioned as an effective vehicle of pure war by which the process of colonial territorial expansion and cultural re-mapping was accomplished and codified in American literary discourse. As is the case with Munday, Knight, Rowlandson, along with the many others that came before and after them, the exceptional status afforded by providential design supplied potent justification for the extension of European and English claims to the New World. Read within the broader literary history encompassing the "rhizomatic system of cultural exchanges" inherent to the transatlantic geopolitical context, narratives of Indian captivity in North America take on a renewed and much more evocative significance. Throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the adaptive utilization of long established rhetorical strategies drawn from preceding European captivity narratives, combined with the dictates of providential design, attained a central position in the interpretive framework of colonial American literary discourse. The relationship between these discursive works is, perhaps, best exemplified by Rowlandson's inadvertently ironic citation of Psalms 46:8, "*Come behold the works of the Lord, what desolations he has made in the Earth.*" [72]

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## Notes

[1] Mathy, Jean-Philippe. 'The Atlantic as Metaphor,' *Atlantic Studies* 1 no. 1 (2004) 109.

[2] Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, 1980, trans., Brian

Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), 6.

[3] *Plateaus*, 4-5.

[4] Mathy, 107.

[5] See for example, James Hartman, 'Providence Tales and the Indian Captivity Narrative: Some Transatlantic Influences on Colonial puritan Discourse,' *Early American Literature* 32 (1997), 66-81; as well as Linda Colley's *Captives*, (New York: Pantheon, 2002).

[6] Mary White Rowlandson, *The Sovereignty and Goodness of God, Together with the Faithfulness of His Promises Displayed, Being a Narrative of the Captivity and Restauration of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson. Commended by Her, to All that Desires to Know the Lords Doings to, and Dealings with Her. Especially to Her Dear Children and Relations, The Second Addition Corrected and Amended. Written Down By Her Own Hand for Her Private Use, and Now Made Publick at the Earnest Desire of Some Friends, and for the Benefit of the Afflicted*, 1682, ed., Neal Salisbury (Boston: Bedford/ St. Martins, 1997).

[7] Kathryn Zabelle Derounian-Stoloda, ed., 'Introduction,' *Women's Indian Captivity Narratives* (New York: Penguin Books, 1998), xi.

[8] Rafia Zafar, 'Capturing the Captivity: African Americans Among the Puritans,' *MELUS* 17 no. 2 (1991-92), 19.

[9] Jill Lepore, *The Name of War: King Philip's War and the Origins of American Identity* (New York: Vintage, 1998), 125.

[10] See Joel Martin's *Sacred Revolt: The Muskogee's Struggle for a New World* (Boston: Beacon, 1991), 58-60.

[11] This example is from the edition published in 1773 at New London Connecticut, printed by Timothy Green. The title pages for other editions published throughout the seventeenth century in New England, such as those released in 1770, 1771, 1791, 1793, 1795, 1796, and 1800, include this descriptive subtitle as well.

[12] See Cotton Mather's *Magnalia Christi Americana*, volume 2, Article XXV, 634-636; and the *Narrative of the Captivity of Quintin Stockwell who was taken at Deerfield, in Massachusetts, by a Party of Indians, in the Year 1677; Communicated in his own words, and Originally Published by the Eminent Dr. Increase Mather, in the Year 1684*, in *Indian Captivities or Life in the Wigwam*, edited by Samuel G. Drake. 1851. New York: AMS Press, 1975.

[13] Paul Virilio and Sylvère Lotringer, *Pure War* ( New York: Semiotext(e), 1983), 27.

[14] Richard Slotkin, *Regeneration Through Violence: The Mythology of the American Frontier, 1600-1860*, 1973 (New York: Harper-Perennial, 1992).

[15] For an examination of the early development and popularity of the frontier drama see, Roger A. Hall, *Performing the American Frontier, 1870-1906* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).



[16] *Plateaus*, 11.

[17] *Regeneration*, 5.

[18] *Plateaus*, 11.

[19] Richard G. Cole, 'Sixteenth-Century Travel Books as a Source of European Attitudes Toward Non-White and Non-Western Culture,' *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, 116 no. 1 (1972), 60.

[20] The fall of Constantinople was viewed as one of the most cataclysmic events to befall Christendom in the fifteenth century. The sheer number of texts that reference it indicates the religious and historical significance of this event. Detailed descriptions of this event appear in the works of English writers such as William Caxton, John Mandeville, William Tyndale, and Edward Hall, as well as in the work of European writers such as Guillaume Caoursin, Desiderius Erasmus, Sebastian Brandt, Jacques de Bourbon, and Jean Froissart, to name but a few of the better known examples.

[21] *Plateaus*, 7.

[22] William Caxton, *The Cronycles of Englonde* (London: William Caxton, 1482), P5<sup>v</sup>.

[23] See also, Sir John Mandeville, *Here begynneth a lytell treatyse or booke named Johan Maudeuyll knyght born in Englonde . . .* (Westminster: Wynken de Worde, 1499); Ranulf Higden's *Tabula* (London: Wynken de Worde, 1502); John Frith's *A disputacio of purgatorye . . .* (Antwerp: S. Cock, 1531); and Robert Fabyan's *Fabyans cronycle newly printed . . .* (London: William Rastell, 1533).

[24] *Cronycles*, Y4<sup>f</sup> .

[25] 'Sixteenth-Century Travel Books,' 59.

[26] Homi Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London, Routledge, 1994), 73.

[27] Abdul R. JanMohamad, 'The Economy of the Manichean Allegory: The Function of Racial Difference in Colonialist Literature,' in *"Race," Writing, and Difference*, ed., Henry Louis Gates, Jr., (Chicago Illinois: University of Chicago Press, 1986), 82.

[28] Roslyn L. Knutson, 'Elizabethan Documents, Captivity Narratives, and the Market for Foreign History Plays,' *English Literary Renaissance*, 26 (1996), 77.

[29] Thomas Becon, *The new pollecye of warre wherin is declared not only how [ye]mooste cruell tyraunt the great Turke may be ouer come, but also all other enemies of the Christen publique weale, lately deuised by Theodore Basille* (London: Iohn Maylerre for Iohn Gough, 1542), G4<sup>v</sup>.

[30] Nabil Matar, 'English Accounts of Captivity in North Africa and the Middle East: 1577-1625,' *Renaissance Quarterly*, 54 (2001), 553.

[31] 'English Accounts,' 561.

[32] Anthony Munday, *The admirable Deliverance of 266 Christians by Iohn Reynard Englishman from the*

*captiuitie of the Turkes, who had been gally slaues many years in Alexandria. The number of the seuerall nations that were captiues follow in the next page* (London: Thomas Dawson, 1608), B1<sup>r</sup>.

[33] *Sovereignty*, 70.

[34] Hayden White defines emplotment as "the encodation of the facts contained in the chronicle as components of specific *kinds* of plot structures." *Tropics of Discourse: Essays in Cultural Criticism* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978), 83.

[35] Edward W. Said, *Orientalism*, 1978 (New York: Vintage, 1994), 58.

[36] *Tropics*, 121.

[37] Homi Bhabha, 'Signs Taken for Wonders,' *The Post Colonial Studies Reader*, eds., Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin (New York: Routledge, 1997), 29-35.

[38] *Orientalism*, 58.

[39] *Location*, 66.

[40] *Location*, 66.

[41] *Location*, 66.

[42] Jacques Derrida, *The Margins of Philosophy*, 1972, trans., Alan Bass (Chicago Illinois: University of Chicago Press, 1982), 313.

[43] *Margins*, italics in original, 311.

[44] Ellen G. Friedman, 'Christian Captives as "Hard Labor" in Algiers, 16<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> Centuries,' *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 13 (1980), 617n.

[45] Paul Baepler, 'White Slaves, African Masters,' *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 588 (2003), 90.

[46] Paul Baepler, 'The Barbary Captivity Narrative in Early America,' *Early American Literature*, 30 (1995), 96.

[47] Jean Baudrillard, *Simulacra and Simulation*, 1981, trans., Shelia Faria Glaser (Ann Arbor Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 1994), 6.

[48] Hans Staden, *Geschichte eines Landes, gelegen in der Neuen Welt, America genannt, yon Hans Staden aus Homburg in Hessen* (Marburg, 1557).

[49] Peter Hulme, 'Columbus and the Cannibals,' *The Post-Colonial Studies Reader*, eds., Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin (New York: Routledge, 1997), 365.

[50] 'Columbus,' 365.

[51] 'Columbus,' 366.

[52] Accounts of the attack on Lancaster and Rowlandson's captivity are found in Hubbard's *A Narrative of the Troubles with the Indians in New-England . . .* (1677), as well as in Mather's work, *A Brief History of the Warr with the Indians in New- England*, which was published in both Boston and London in 1676.

[53] *Pure War*, 53.

[54] *Pure War*, 92.

[55] *Sovereignty*, 69.

[56] *Sovereignty*, 69.

[57] *Sovereignty*, 70.

[58] *Sovereignty*, 71.

[59] *Sovereignty*, emphasis in original, 76.

[60] *Plateaus*, 13.

[61] *Sovereignty*, 77-78.

[62] *Sovereignty*, 77.

[63] Nancy Armstrong and Leonard Tennenhouse, 'The American Origins of the English Novel,' *American Literary History*, 4 (1992), italics in original, 394.

[64] Nathaniel Saltonstall, 'Letter from Nathaniel Saltonstall, July 22, 1676,' John Easton, *Narratives of the Indian Wars, 1675-1699*, ed., Charles Henry Lincoln (New York: Scribner's, 1913), 82-83.

[65] Michael Fickes, "'They Could Not Endure That Yoke": The Captivity of Pequot Women and Children after the War of 1637,' *New England Quarterly*, 73 (2000), 71.

[66] Broadside, *At a Court Held at Boston in New-England the 29<sup>th</sup> of March, 1677. By the Council, Edward Rawson, Secr'* (Boston, 1677).

[67] *Sovereignty*, 87.

[68] *Sovereignty*, 87.

[69] Bartolome de Las Casas, *A Short Account of the Destruction of the Indies*, 1552, ed., and trans., Nigel Griffin (New York: Penguin, 1992). Throughout his narrative Las Casas frequently stresses the eyewitness nature of his observations, see 5, 9, 12, 15, 16, 19, 23, 29.

[70] *Plateaus*, emphasis in original, 4.

[71] Francis Knight, *A relation of seaven yeares slaverie under the Turkes of Argeire, suffered by an English captive merchant Wherein is also contened all memorable passages, fights, and accidents, which happined in that citie, and at sea with their shippes and gallies during that time. Together with a description of the*

*sufferings of the miserable captives under that mercilesse tyrannie. Whereunto is added a second booke conteining a discription of Argeire, with its originall, manner of government, increase, and present flourishing estate* (London: T. Cotes, for Michael Sparke Junior, 1640), 2.

[72] Sovereignty, 70.