# British Graphic Art

1660-1735

An Atlantic Perspective

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#### **ABSTRACT**

As historians have come increasingly to recognise, Britain's engagement in a burgeoning Atlantic economy during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries came to have a profound and lasting impact on the nation's cultural identity. Yet, despite this recognition, the standard narrative of British art history in this period has remained peculiarly parochial, told as the story of a 'native' tradition, shaped solely by the immediate context of the British Isles and Europe. In the study of British graphic art, this historiographical framing is particularly characteristic. This thesis seeks to challenge such assumptions. It examines the various ways in which the diverse spaces of the Atlantic were given formal and imaginative expression in printed media, as well as tracing the physical circulation of printed goods in the spaces of the Atlantic itself. By re-thinking British graphic art from this expanded perspective, a better grasp of its true cultural character and geographical reach is achieved.

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# AUTHOR'S DECLARATION

I declare that this PhD thesis is my own work. It has not been published before, or previously submitted for any degree.

# INTRODUCTION



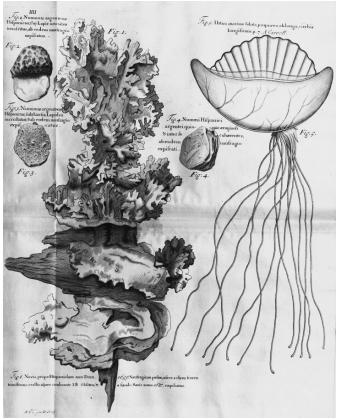






Figure 1. (top left) Anon. Frontispiece to John Seller, *The Coasting Pilot* (1671). Engraving.

Figure 2. (top right) Michael van der Gucht. Plate IIII in Hans Sloane, *Natural History of Jamaica* (1707). Engraving.

Figure 3. (bottom left) John Simon, after John Verelst. *Ho Nee Yeath Taw No Row*. Mezzotint, 1710. Figure 4. (bottom right) Peter Pelham. *Cottonus Matherus*. Mezzotint, 1728.

The four images depicted above effectively demonstrate the richness and diversity of British graphic art during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Each is visually different from the others; responsive to a different set of formal conventions; and created with the intention of performing a specific function. Yet, they may all be understood as part of what this thesis describes as an 'Atlantic' visual culture. By thinking through this broad geographic and panoramic critical perspective, and examining the circulation of printed images as part of a kaleidoscopic Atlantic economy, we can identify a range of shared connections and preoccupations among engraved images that are rarely considered together. As a result, a new cultural understanding of British graphic art is allowed to emerge.

Focusing on a wide-ranging body of graphic art produced between c.1660 and 1735, the following chapters use these and other images to explore the material, imaginative and personal links that helped tie Britain into an Atlantic economy during the period. As historians have come to recognise, the American colonies and plantations were an increasing target for British overseas investment at this time, and the development of settlements and trading routes in the Atlantic had profound implications for the shaping of British cultural identity. Given the assumptions which have traditionally been made about the development of a parochial or native artistic tradition over the same period, the possibility of considering British art within this wider geographic framework is especially provocative. By tracing the circulation of print and people within the Atlantic, and

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> This recognition has become manifest through the emergence of 'Atlantic History' as a distinct historical discipline. For the foundational statement of Atlantic History, see Pocock, 1975. Due to the multitudinous national contexts through which Atlantic History may be studied, scholars have recently argued that it is "more manageable…to think of separate atlantics rather than an integrated one". Morgan and Greene, 2009:6. Thus, in the 2009 collection of essays, *Atlantic History: A Critical Appraisal*, the Spanish, Portuguese, British, French, and Dutch Atlantics are all defined separately. This thesis is sympathetic to this position, but also suggests the ways in which these separate European Atlantic systems overlapped with and influenced each other – socially, politically, militarily, and (most importantly in the present context) aesthetically. It is also important to note that the period covered by this thesis is interrupted in 1707 by the Acts of Union, which formally joined the Kingdom of England and the Kingdom of Scotland to form Great Britain. Conventionally, however, the terms 'British Atlantic', 'British Empire' and 'British Art' are employed across the period, and so for consistency, I will use the term British throughout.

investigating the ways in which this space was given expression in a range of printed contexts, the thesis will offer a fresh interpretation of the scope and function of British graphic art through these years. This entails expanding on the normative disciplinary and chronological boundaries which have helped structure the art historical understanding of the period. In these introductory pages I want to outline how those boundaries are being adjusted in recent scholarship, and how the present study, by dealing with an expanded range of print media, will further contribute to a more developed sense of British culture in this formative period.

# Current state of the field and normative periodization

Although a number of art historical studies have recently attempted to situate British art in a broader Atlantic context, the majority of these works have concentrated on images belonging to a fine art tradition, and produced during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Challenging the normative conception of 'British' art as an insular practice, these works have particularly focused on the way in which London evolved into a "contact zone where the empire persistently intruded into domestic affairs" and major political and military events in the Atlantic world elicited a range of pictorial responses that responded to a larger project of state formation.<sup>2</sup> In view of the fact that the second half of the eighteenth century saw the British Atlantic Empire undergo enormous growth at the same time as a national school of painting and exhibiting culture began to flourish, the scholarly focus on this period is perhaps not surprising.<sup>3</sup> As Doug Fordham and Eleanor Hughes have both shown, seminal conflicts waged between competing European nations in the Atlantic were brought into sharp relief through monumental commemorative sculptures and large-scale history paintings, displayed in such prominent and venerable spaces as Westminster Abbey, or on the walls of the Royal Academy's Great Room at Somerset

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Nussbaum, 2004:71.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Hoock, 2003; Solkin (ed.), 2001; Solkin, 1992.

House. 4 During these years, Fordham suggests, paintings which sought to "wrest viable artistic form from journalistic imperial narratives" prompted London's public for the first time "to speak regularly of the 'British Empire' as the unity of Britain's overseas possessions". Like Fordham, John Crowley has also noted the influence of Atlantic conflicts such as the Seven Years War (1756-63) on the visual arts in Britain. Before this conflict, he argues, "there was little sustained interest – either in Britain or in the colonies themselves – in how places in Britain's Atlantic colonies...actually looked." British success in this war not only provided the impetus for new imperial projects in other parts of the world, but also allowed the British public to "believe that [the existing Atlantic] colonies were a strength in themselves, not merely valuable as a source of trade". As a result, British landscape painters responded to a modified sense of nationhood by developing "a global landscape that visually linked colonial territories with metropolitan Britain." The American Revolutionary War (1775–1783) has also been identified as a key moment in British Atlantic history which left a strong impression on the cultural character of British art. Martin Myrone has demonstrated how the war came to profoundly shape contemporary representations of the heroic male figure. His study analyses a variety of images that are "different...in so many respects" yet "nonetheless all exhibit the complexity and reticence that accompanied attempts at the visual embodiment of heroic virtue in the wake of America's revolution and the crisis of empire". Likewise, in a recent survey of British maritime painting, Geoff Quilley has considered the formation of a

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Fordham, 2007; Hughes, 2007.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Fordham, 2007:99. Also see Fordham, 2010.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Crowley, 2005:283. The Seven Years' War was a world war that involved most of the great powers of the time and affected Europe, North America, Central America, the West African coast, India, and the Philippines. The war was largely driven by antagonism between Great Britain and France, which stemmed from overlapping interests in their colonial and trade empires. As a result of the war, Britain became the dominant European force in the American colonies. For further reading see Baugh, 2011.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Rodger, 2004:327. Rodger also notes here that "colonies", at this time, simply "meant British America, a single economic unit stretching from Labrador to Barbados, for the few British colonies elsewhere in the world scarcely figured in public consciousness."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Crowley, 2011:2.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Myrone, 2005:202.

national identity through images produced during and after this conflict.<sup>10</sup> The "visual imagery representing the Atlantic during the period of the war against America", he argues, "can be understood not only in relation to that specific conflict, but more widely in terms of the changing cultural emphasis from empire to nation".<sup>11</sup>

Alongside these studies, a handful of curatorial projects in British museums and galleries have also begun to problematise the insular way in which the national collection of British art has often been perceived. Pollowing the pattern of the scholarship mentioned above, these displays and exhibitions have tended to examine the Atlantic through works produced in the second half of the eighteenth century, and later still. In Tate Britain's 2011 'Atlantic Britain' display, for example, a selection of works from the late eighteenth century were juxtaposed to highlight the way in which "even the most parochial-looking of British paintings" may contain underlying narratives that connect them to "a larger history of trade, war and imperial exploitation". A small group of portraits from the 1770s and 1780s allowed visitors to come face-to-face with those whose fortunes were made through Atlantic investments such as slave trading and plantation ownership. The ostensible ordinariness of these paintings and their subjects effectively demonstrated how, by this period, Atlantic commerce had become an everyday part of consumerism in Britain. In a less pointed way, Tate Britain's 2012 exhibition 'Migrations: Journeys into British Art' also addressed the influence of the Atlantic in works from the gallery's collection.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> Quilley, 2011:10.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> Quilley, 2011:82.

A major trans-historical exhibition provisionally titled 'Art and the British Empire' is currently being planned by Tate Britain and is due to open in September 2015. The exhibition will include works produced in Britain and the British colonies, from the sixteenth century to the present day. It will also incorporate works by indigenous artists from countries that were formerly part of the British Empire. While a large number of exhibits will be borrowed from other collections – nationally and internationally – the exhibition will explore the theme through a number of works from Tate's own collection, examining these in contexts they might not have been viewed before. Each gallery space in the exhibition will address a separate theme which will be considered from a variety of global and historical perspectives. Thus, while the 'Atlantic' will not be treated as an individual case study per se, it is a geographical space that will be addressed by a number of different works spread throughout the exhibition (including some which have been included in this thesis). While writing this thesis I have been fortunate to work for a short period as part of the project's curatorial team.

Across a broad range of historical and geographical contexts, the very 'Britishness' of British art was scrutinised by curators who were challenged by their director to "take on the potentially daunting task of looking at [the] collection through the prism of migration". 14 A gallery space dedicated to 'Dialogues between Britain, France and America' addressed the "extensive interchange of artists and ideas" between these nations during the nineteenth century. 15 As the works presented in this display suggested, the emergence of the United States of America as an independent nation served to strengthen the "proliferation of artistic exchanges" across a circum-Atlantic framework. 16 The bicentenary of the abolition of the British slave trade in 2007 prompted the creation of many other exhibitions and displays, powerfully reminding us of the painful reality of slavery's role in the development of British culture in the eighteenth century. Most notably perhaps, this anniversary resulted in the inauguration of the International Slavery Museum in Liverpool – a port city that acted as a critical hub for Atlantic trade. As well as highlighting key contemporary concerns relating to human rights, reparation claims, and the origin of Britain's multiculturalism, the museum explores how the eighteenth-century Atlantic economy created an African Diaspora which has had a lasting influence on Western art and culture. Likewise, the Yale Center for British Art's 2007 exhibition 'Art and Emancipation in Jamaica: Isaac Mendes Belisario and His Worlds' productively demonstrated how the art associated with a major British plantation colony illuminates the complex and often brutal aspects of a social, cultural and political Atlantic economy. Collectively then, as these exhibitions and the aforementioned scholarly studies suggest, the middle of the eighteenth century marked the beginning of an age when the influence of the Atlantic became an ever more prominent feature of British art.

Carey-Thomas (ed.), 2012:9 (director's foreword).
 Chambers, 2012:40.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> Peters Corbett and Monks, 2011:636.

# The existence of a 'pre-history'

Yet, as this thesis argues, a diverse range of imagery produced between 1660 and 1735 allows us to trace the pertinence of the Atlantic framework in a much earlier period of British art history. During these formative years of exploration and settlement the "colonies and trading positions that had been acquired in almost serendipitous fashion during the first half of the seventeenth century" gradually "came to be considered a matter of national interest as well as pride". 17 There was a growing realisation among Britons that "an Empire of trade and dominion had been established, that this Empire was located in the Atlantic, and that it was in the national interest to cherish and defend it." While this notional understanding of the Atlantic as a cohesive focal point for the emerging British Empire may have developed in the collective imagination, "few people recognized a single Atlantic" at a basic working level. 19 As Bernard Bailyn has suggested, "this vast swath of territory was no singular cultural entity...It was a congeries of entities – cultural, political, economic – distinctive in themselves, each with peculiar, anomalous features...a diversity of lifeways constantly forming and changing."<sup>20</sup> This amorphous and complex spatial system was traversed, populated and shaped by Britons with wide-ranging motivations and interests, operating "in a limbo between public and private spheres." Consequently, the images that represent early Atlantic experiences are diverse, heterogeneous, and often representative of conflicting agendas; this collective character makes any totalizing analysis almost impossible.<sup>22</sup> The disinclination of art historians to engage with this material was made apparent at the 2012 conference, 'Histories of British Art, 1660-1735:

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> Canny, 1998:21.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> Ibid:22.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> Morgan and Greene, 2009:8.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> Bailyn, 2002:xv.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> Canny, 1998:25-26.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> Notably, these characteristics reflect a broader picture of British Art during these years, as demonstrated by the recent AHRC collaborative research project, 'Court, Country, City: British Art 1660-1735'. As it was concluded in a roundtable discussion that formally marked the project's end, the period between the Restoration of the Stuart monarchy and the establishment of the first British academies of art played host to a visual culture marked by "richness", "contradiction", "fragmentation" and "chaos" (Nigel Llewellyn, in conversation with panel members, conference participants and delegates at 'Histories of British Art, 1660-1735: Reconstruction and Transformation'. Held at the University of York, 20-22 September 2012).

Reconstruction and Transformation', where only three out of thirty six papers addressed topics relating to the Atlantic.<sup>23</sup> While these papers suggested that the Atlantic remains a niche area of interest among art historians working on this period, their shared preoccupation with print culture also demonstrated that the images which best reflect Britain's early engagement in an Atlantic milieu are predominantly graphic, and therefore are "as likely, if not more so, to be found in libraries and museums as in art galleries". 24 This, perhaps, goes some way to accounting for the relative neglect of the Atlantic in this period of British art history. From a curatorial perspective the printed archive poses particular problems, as many images are bound within books, are relatively fragile, sensitive to light, or are not seen as aesthetically striking enough to be exhibited in British gallery spaces with a strong remit to attract diverse general audiences. In terms of art historical scholarship too, there does still seem to be a tendency to view certain aspects of graphic culture as distinct from the canonical traditions of British art, and many reproductive prints – particularly those of a didactic nature – are denigrated as merely illustrative, functional, or lacking in sufficient artistic merit to warrant serious attention.<sup>25</sup> However, as I shall argue in this thesis, the printed images that helped to define and make comprehensible the Atlantic world for the British public were not only shaped by an established western artistic discourse, but shaped the very way in which that pictorial discourse continued to develop. As such, the printed visual archive of Britain's early Atlantic world must be allowed the "close detailed analysis" that is still "largely devoted to works of a putatively more high-minded and artistically ambitious order". 26

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> These three papers were: Simon Turner, 'Things resembling graves & solid rocks: Wenceslaus Hollar and Tangier in 1669'; Emily Mann, 'Making plans, improving prospects: a printed prospectus of English settlements in West Africa'; and Peter Moore, 'Portrait Prints in British Colonial America c.1718-1728: Reconstructions and Transformations'.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> Bonehill, 2012:442.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> The minor role played by print media in the 2008 survey, *The History of British Art 1600-1870*, supports this point. Bindman (ed.), 2008.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup> Bonehill, 2012:442.

While scholarship in this particular area of research is still remarkably sparse, there are a number of studies that have influenced the development of this thesis and which must be addressed here. Most notably, the methodological approach advocated by An economy of colour: Visual culture and the Atlantic world, 1660-1830 (2003) has fundamentally shaped my outlook.<sup>27</sup> Drawing attention to what has traditionally "been an overlooked geographical and historical context for understanding the development of European art and other forms of visual culture", the essays in this volume serve to demonstrate "how the experience of the Atlantic world" came to be "see-able" in British culture "according to that culture's codes of visual representation". <sup>28</sup> As this publication demonstrates, in the period before 1750 engraved book illustrations played a particularly important part in this process. Accordingly, the bibliographic spaces of graphic art are treated at some length in this thesis. In his 2008 book, Engraving the Savage: The New World and Techniques of Civilization, Michael Gaudio has also suggested that "the art of mechanical reproduction" allowed "a level of standardization" that critically influenced the way in which people across Britain and the continent came to "experience...the [new] world". 29 My study of Native American identity, as seen through the lens of graphic art, is indebted to this work. Equally useful in this respect has been Joseph Roach's Cities of the Dead (1996) which posits graphic art as part of a complex system of 'circum-Atlantic' performance. Roach argues that the "symbolic inventiveness" of printed images helped to shape a highly orchestrated programme of "subtle stagecraft" which was used to assert power and authority in the Atlantic world's contested geographic terrain. Another publication that must be noted here is Joseph Monteyne's *Printed Images in Early Modern London* (2007) – a text which problematises the conventional boundaries of British print studies by seeking out "prints that trouble the very categories of high and low, images that reflect creative acts of the appropriation of space, or moments at which popular politics become

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>27</sup> Quilley and Kriz (eds.), 2003.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>28</sup> Quilley and Kriz, 2003:2.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>29</sup> Gaudio, 2008:xix,xx.

infused with art."<sup>30</sup> Though the space of the Atlantic is not a primary concern of Monteyne's book, his examination of images that are "situated on a fertile threshold of exchange between different pictorial strains" illuminates the diverse ways in which the circulation of prints helped to define social and physical environments – namely, in this case, London.<sup>31</sup> Similarly, my thesis seeks to problematise the relationship between 'practical' and 'imaginative' forms of print, countering the idea that "graphic representation is always 'other' to spatial practice" and revealing the ways in which printed images operated intersubjectively to communicate lived experiences though a combination of figurative and conceptual strategies.<sup>32</sup> Finally, Beth Fowkes Tobin and Kay Dian Kriz have both examined paintings and prints associated with the British Atlantic colonies. In Colonizing Nature (2005) Fowkes Tobin identifies the use of "pastoral and georgic tropes and antiquarian and connoisseurial discourses" in the print culture of Atlantic natural history in the later eighteenth century.<sup>33</sup> In *Picturing Imperial Power* (1999) she studies "cultural cross-dressing" as a form of pictorial rhetoric used to civilise Native Americans though the medium of portraiture.<sup>34</sup> Though much of her research only just falls within the historical boundaries of this thesis, there are nevertheless important overlaps which must be acknowledged. Likewise, Kriz has written at length about the complicated relationship between natural history and racial subjectivity. Her 2008 book *Slavery*, *Sugar*, and the Culture of Refinement investigates "imagery designed to promote the colonial project in the West Indies" and posits 'refinement' as a key concept in the production of images relating to colonial British Jamaica. 35 Her focus on the island's flora and fauna; her study of humans as subjectified features of its natural historical discourse; and her renegotiation of the geographical boundaries of a British graphic tradition; have all helped to shape the character of this thesis.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>30</sup> Monteyne, 2007:4.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>31</sup> Ibid:204.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid:2

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>33</sup> Fowkes Tobin, 2005:145.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>34</sup> Fowkes Tobin, 1999:81.

<sup>35</sup> Kriz, 2008:2.

# British graphic art: a parochial tradition

By highlighting the role of print in the construction of national identities, these studies not only demonstrate the importance of engraving in the seventeenth and eighteenth century Atlantic world, but redress a lacuna in the normative historiography of British graphic art. Furthermore, they provide a more focused pictorial dimension to Benedict Anderson's influential view of nationalism as an "anomaly". 36 As Anderson suggests, in order to understand national identities properly "we need to consider carefully how they have come into historical being [and] in what ways their meanings have changed over time."<sup>37</sup> Critically, by scrutinising pictorial evidence in ways which do not privilege certain art forms over others, the aforementioned works collectively illuminate how "the explorations of the non-European world...widened the cultural and geographic horizon" of British art (and by extension Britons' own sense of 'nation-ness') in the early modern period.<sup>38</sup> This shared approach and expanded geographic perspective marks a clear departure from seminal texts like Antony Griffiths' The Print in Stuart Britain: 1603-1689 (1998) and Tim Clayton's The English Print: 1688-1802 (1997). Both of these books examine modes of artistic production that are central to this thesis, and as such they are important points of reference. Indeed, the European graphic traditions they survey are critical in fully understanding the development of British printmaking, and this important continental foundation is one which is necessarily addressed though the course of my thesis. However, the adoption of a unilateral Eurocentric perspective does have its limitations. One of Griffiths' key concerns is the "mismatch between the primitive world of British print publishing and the booming industry in Continental Europe". <sup>39</sup> He examines the development of intercontinental relationships and the migration of artists, with a particular emphasis on the influence of French and Dutch engravers. Through his study of these networks Griffiths aptly demonstrates how British graphic art was critically shaped by the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>36</sup> Anderson, 1991:4.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>37</sup> Ibid:4.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid:16.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>39</sup> Griffiths, 1998:17.

"foreign supply...of second-hand...plates" and the "huge business of importing printed impressions". 40 Blinded, perhaps, by this frenetic activity within Europe, Griffiths' study neglects to consider the circulation of people and print across the Atlantic. In sections on 'Botanical and Natural History Prints', 'Book Illustration' and 'Scientific Printmaking', there are certainly rich opportunities to address the influence of the 'new world' in his book – indeed, it is through a shared interest in these categories that this thesis overlaps with and extends his work. However, while Griffiths explores how the development of these pictorial categories in Britain were influenced by the spread of knowledge, skills, and styles across Europe, I aim to show how the established conventions of this interconnected European graphic tradition came to accommodate and normalise images of unfamiliar flora and fauna, people and places, encountered as a result of Atlantic voyages of discovery and the colonisation of the Americas. Like Griffiths, Tim Clayton has also suggested that "the history of the English print trade cannot be understood without understanding its place in [an] international system of print publishing, distribution and collecting". <sup>41</sup> In part one of his book, which deals with the period 1688-1730, this 'international' system is largely defined as "France, Italy, Holland and Germany". 42 During these years, he suggests, the "English production of prints tells less than half the story, for until the 1740s the print market in England was dominated by imported prints – chiefly recent publications from France and Italy."43 In a brief two-page summary of the supply of prints to provincial and colonial markets, Clayton does mention the rise of Boston as an important colonial centre, and notes the emigration of the London mezzotint engraver Peter Pelham to this thriving New England town in 1727.<sup>44</sup> While this relatively small colonial market was, of course, overshadowed by the dominant European system of print production and consumption that

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<sup>40</sup> Griffiths, 1998:19.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>41</sup> Clayton, 1997:xii.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>42</sup> Ibid:xiii. In parts two and three, which cover the periods 1730-1770 and 1770-1802 respectively, Clayton does broaden his geographic gaze somewhat, occasionally looking to America through the lens of history engravings produced in response to major military conflicts.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid:xiii. 44 Ibid:12.

Clayton's study focuses on, such a cursory reference simply serves to further marginalise it, not integrate it, into the history of 'the English print'. Thus, by offering an extended analysis of Boston as a key centre for graphic art, and presenting a detailed case study of Peter Pelham's career on either side of the Atlantic, the final part of this thesis transforms a transient moment in Clayton's study into a critical point of departure to explore a much understudied aspect of early eighteenth-century British print culture. As I suggest, the visual culture of Britain's American colonies should not be seen as a separate story to be laid arbitrarily alongside a more familiar national art history, but should be considered as an integral part of the narrative.

# **Recent developments**

While these seminal works by Clayton and Griffiths have long been considered definitive studies in the field of British print culture, Michael Hunter's *Printed Images in Early Modern Britain: Essays in Interpretation* (2010), and Malcolm Jones' *The Print in Early Modern England: An Historical Oversight* (2010), mark an important shift. Examining categories of imagery that have "been extraordinarily neglected" in the past, these publications are at the forefront of an emerging approach to graphic art that "breaks down some of the technical and disciplinary boundaries...thereby giving us the improved understanding of the role of printed images in the history and culture of the period". <sup>45</sup> As Michael Hunter suggests, this new methodology does not privilege "the sophisticated prints that had formerly interested art historians" but instead straddles "the boundary between fields which had until recently remained distinct, dealing with types of printed images ranging from woodcuts to engravings, and juxtaposing these with recourse to printed books and other source material from the period." <sup>46</sup> In the case of Jones' book, relatively obscure categories of graphic art such as 'playing cards', 'metamorphic pictures'

<sup>45</sup> Jones, 2010:viii; Hunter, 2010:6-7.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>46</sup> Ibid, 6-7.

and 'game sheets', are analysed in impressive detail. Sharing a broad vision, these publications have productively reinforced the heterogeneity of printmaking, revealing the diverse subjects dealt with by printed images and reminding us of the variety of processes and techniques which were used to create them. Yet, while they are extremely helpful in allowing us to build a more detailed picture of British print culture, they do remain tied to a fairly parochial notion of 'Britain' as a discrete geographic entity and thus do not account for the full range of settings in which British prints operated in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. A good case in point is Jones' discussion of print as a medium which allowed the translation of designs across different forms of art. He notes that "it is now possible to point to a dozen or so English seventeenth-century paintings (mostly on panel) that must derive from English prints". 47 While drawing attention to this process is certainly productive in challenging some of the general assumptions about the binary relationship between paint and print (the former always preceding the latter), the narrow scope in which Jones comprehends a 'national' English print culture is perhaps too limiting. For example, had he extended his gaze to the New England colonies in the early eighteenth century (as this thesis does) he would have encountered many more examples of paintings evidently derived from English prints. As I argue, such colonial sites of artistic production have long been considered anachronistically as 'early American', yet when understood in the historical context of British controlled and occupied territories, they can just as validly be seen as important contexts for the study of British art.

Redressing other areas of graphic culture neglected by art historians, Printed Images in Early Modern Britain also helps chart the changing character of scholarship in this field. A section of the book dealing with 'printed images in science and cartography' exemplifies the publication's relatively broad perspective on genre and format, drawing images too often seen as merely illustrative, objective or functional into an art historical tradition.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>47</sup> Jones, 2010:382. Despite drawing attention to this, Jones does not identify the paintings.

Contributions in this section address technical diagrams, natural history images, prospects and maps, and the pioneering microscopy engravings of Robert Hooke. In many ways, these essays foreshadow other developments in the interdisciplinary research of art and science in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. In 2012, for instance, a major AHRC research project was launched to examine the 'origins of science as a visual pursuit'. 48 Despite bringing together scholars from a range of disciplinary backgrounds, it was highlighted at the project's annual conference that this area of study has often been dominated by "historians of science who accidentally start working on the history of art". 49 Remedying this imbalance, and taking a cue from some of the essays in *Printed Images in* Early Modern Britain, my thesis employs a method of formal and stylistic analysis particular to the discipline of art history, to engage with 'scientific' images that are usually overlooked by art historians. As I suggest, engravers moved freely between disciplines, deploying their skills in a range of contexts, and so the oeuvres of individual practitioners should not be separated, however diverse they may be. For example, Michael Vandergucht (1660-1725) was an engraver of portraits, historical scenes and architectural designs as well as providing scientifically accurate images of flora and fauna for Hans Sloane's Natural History of Jamaica. Though his natural history engravings are rarely subjected to serious art historical examination, I argue that they demand to be formally analysed in the same way as other aspects of his work, which are more readily allied with a liberal pictorial tradition. Moreover, produced at a time when the Atlantic colonies were still largely perceived as part of an 'other' or 'new' world, the traces of Vandergucht's highly trained and well developed hand in his engravings of Jamaican wildlife illuminate the

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>48</sup> Conducted under the AHRC's 'science in culture' theme, the aim of this project (which ran from January 2012 to April 2013) was to "understand how art, artists, and reproductive-print makers enabled creativity and innovation in science in the seventeenth century, and to what extent naturalists and natural philosophers, in turn, transformed such visual resources and strategies into something of their own". Quotation taken from the project's website: http://picturingscience.wordpress.com/.

Paula Findlen, in conversation during her paper 'The specimen and the image: John Woodward, Agostino Scilla, and the depiction of fossils', presented at 'Curiously Drawn: Early-modern Science as a Visual Pursuit', held at the Royal Society, London, on 21-22 June 2012.

authoritative power and normalising potential of images crafted through a European graphic tradition at this time.<sup>50</sup>

### **Disciplinary intersections**

In dealing with Britain's cultural relationship with the Atlantic, this thesis draws upon and develops disciplinary perspectives associated with 'Atlantic History' and 'Imperial History'. Indeed, many of the images I study are as likely, if not more so, to be found in works published in these fields than in that of art history. However, in these disciplinary traditions, "visual images still operate largely as unmediated 'evidence'." In contrast. detailed formal analysis and pictorial comparison is a critical means by which this thesis reaches many of its conclusions. Similarly, while traditional approaches to Imperial History often focus on administration, politics and policy, I examine the cultural impact of British experiences in the Atlantic largely through highly specific case studies. This approach takes a cue from Christian Koot's suggestion that we should "factor border crossers' stories into [our] understanding of how Atlantic empires were constructed", rather than focusing solely on the mechanisms of governing institutional bodies.<sup>52</sup> Moreover, it strikes a chord with the 'New Historicist' paradigm set out by Gallagher and Greenblatt, who argue that the task of understanding any given culture "depends not on the extraction of an abstract set of principles, and still less on the application of a theoretical model, but rather on an encounter with the singular, the specific, and the individual".<sup>53</sup> The examination of individuals who moved across and between empires is also an approach that has been endorsed by scholars of 'Early American History' and 'Early

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>50</sup> Since work on this thesis began, a major interdisciplinary research project was launched to reconnect Hans Sloane's diverse collections, now dispersed between the Natural History Museum, The British Library and the British Museum. The three strands identified for doctoral research were: vegetable substances; papers and scientific networks; albums of natural history drawings. As far as is known, the graphic art of Sloane's natural history publications does not feature any in current research undertaken as part of this project. For more information see: http://www.nhm.ac.uk/research-curation/science-facilities/cahr/projects-partnerships/sloane/index.html

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>51</sup> Quilley and Kriz, 2003:2.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>52</sup> Koot, 2010:606.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>53</sup> Gallagher and Greenblatt, 2000:6.

American Art History', and these too are disciplines with which this thesis intersects. However, my investigation of works of art that are normally described as 'early American' problematises this categorisation by suggesting that they might also legitimately be understood as a part of British art history. As Jennifer Mylander has argued, cultural artefacts and works of art considered to be 'early American' have long been "neglected by those investigating national identity formation in the British Isles". <sup>54</sup> My investigation reconciles this inattention: rejecting the parochialism that has often marked attempts to define a 'national' art history on both sides of the Atlantic, and identifying resonances between these respective traditions. As Pocock has influentially argued, British history "must be a plural history, tracing...a diversity of societies, nationalities, and political structures". <sup>55</sup> This then implies that British art history must also be understood as "a multicontextual history". <sup>56</sup>

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>54</sup> Mylander, 2009:138.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>55</sup> Pocock, 1982:320.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>56</sup> Ibid:320.

#### CHAPTER ONE

## The Pictorial Project of Cartography in Restoration London

The Restoration of Charles II in 1660 marked a new phase of cartographic production in Britain, one which can be closely allied with contemporary plans to develop a maritime empire. Following his accession to the throne, it took little time for the new Stuart monarch to establish a programme of Atlantic trade and colonisation, and in the year of his coronation he ordered the publication of An Act for the Encouraging & Increasing of Shipping and Navigation. This act, in support of imperial self-sufficiency, stipulated that "no Goods or Commodities whatsoever" could be "Imported into, or Exported out of any Lands, Islands, Plantations, or Territories to his Majesty belonging...in Asia, Africa, or America" unless carried in "ships or vessels" of British origin. Shortly afterwards, the slaving company known as the Royal African Company was formed, led by the King's brother, James, Duke of York.<sup>2</sup> The company, which was jointly operated by the Stuart family and London merchants, created a number of important Atlantic trading posts and shipping routes. The King's marriage to Catherine of Braganza in 1662 also brought the nation a handful of important colonies as part of her dowry, including the strategic port of Tangier in North Africa, situated on the narrow strait separating Europe and Africa, through which all sea traffic from the Mediterranean into the Atlantic was required to pass.<sup>3</sup> On the western shores of the Atlantic, the consolidation of the New Haven and Connecticut Colonies in 1662; the chartering of the Province of Carolina in 1663; and the capture of the Provinces of New York and New Jersey in 1664, all indicated the King's eagerness to continue to maintain and develop an existing network of American territories, acquired in the first half of the seventeenth century during the reigns of his father, Charles I, and his grandfather, James I.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Charles II, 1660:1-2.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Davies, 1957.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Hair and Law. 1998.

To any nation pursuing the creation of a New World empire during this period, maps indisputably held great importance. Together with other products of the geographic trade – such as globes, navigational instruments, charts and plans – they provided a fundamental means to construct and disseminate among a curious public an image of power, ownership and authority abroad. As Harley and Woodward suggest in their seminal *History of* Cartography, mapmaking "was one of the specialized intellectual weapons by which power could be gained, administered, given legitimacy, and codified." If maps themselves provided a rich terrain of representation in this respect, the printed frontispieces associated with cartography also played a crucially important role, presenting viewers with ornate pictorial friezes that symbolically responded to, and operated in dialogue with, the maps and texts they introduced. In particular, frontispieces could become powerful aphorisms for maritime exploration and imperial development – an area in which the Atlantic played an increasingly central role. The use of classical allegory, pictorial devices and emblems enabled these images to cultivate a distinctively European vision of the New World.<sup>5</sup> As Rodney Shirley asserts, such forms of print were evidently held with much contemporary esteem, being "designed and engraved or etched to the highest standards of excellence by artists who, it would seem, were specially commissioned by the author or publisher to produce the titlepage alone." Finally, working in harmony with these kinds of images, decorative designs, symbols, or representations of human figures emblazoned on the surface of maps allowed even "the most mathematically accurate" spatial representations to operate as vehicles for subjective opinion, significantly blurring the boundary between "the geography of imagination" and "the geography of perception, of the actual".

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Harley and Woodward, 1987:506.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Honour, 1975.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Shirley, 2009:13.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Petto, 2009:227.

Through detailed examination of some of these kinds of print, this chapter explores the various graphic art forms which helped make visible Britain's maritime interests during the Restoration: a moment in European history that has since been coined as "the dawn of the global eighteenth century". 8 Furthermore, it seeks to reconnect what has previously been seen as a specialised category of printmaking with a more familiar narrative of British art and graphic culture. While I address a number of maps and topographical images that represent iconographically British interests overseas. I am equally concerned with forms of print that symbolise the maritime world less directly – particularly those which conceptualise London as the centripetal origin of a developing Atlantic empire. Such images aptly demonstrate how the Atlantic was imaginatively conceived not as a discrete spatial system, but as part of an amorphous watery world that competing European nations sought to regulate and control through the dissemination of a totalising pictorial discourse that – drawing on a term that has become used to describe the study and mapping of water – I here describe as 'hydrographic'. The formulation of this kind of hydrographic imagery in Britain relied implicitly on a graphic language forged in the Netherlands during the Dutch 'Golden Age' of maritime endeavour. As power shifted in favour of Britain, the cartographers of major map-producing centres like Amsterdam were less "implicated in...[their own]...project of 'nation-ness" and became increasingly willing to market their goods abroad. 9 Thus, publishers in London, with little or no experience in the field, were able to exploit these materials (even purchasing second-hand plates which they edited, printed, and claimed as their own) to fuel a growing industry in home produced works. As I suggest, the reconstruction and transformation of Dutch cartographies and their related images in Britain not only dramatised the real-world power shift that occurred between these two imperial nations, but reflects more generally the pervasive influence of Dutch visual culture on emerging forms of British graphic art through these years.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Schmidt, 2003:21. <sup>9</sup> Ibid:26.

Taking shape through a pair of case studies, my discussion focuses on the publishing activities of two men at the heart of Restoration London's cartographic trade: John Seller and John Ogilby. Both of these publishers were granted Royal warrants for their work in the field. Initially operating as a trader of nautical instruments, John Seller began peddling his wares "at the Sign of the Mariners Compass and hour Glass, at the Harmitage Stayers in Wapping" in around 1659. 10 Being located at the heart of the city's maritime community, he was well placed to supply a thriving community of sailors, naval officers and merchantmen with the tools of their trade, and did so for almost a decade before he moved into the business of printing navigational treatises, maps and charts, with the publication of *Practical navigation: or, An Introduction to that whole Art* in 1669. <sup>11</sup> John Ogilby, by contrast, had a background in theatre, but pursued a career in publishing during the Interregnum, producing illustrated translations of poetic works by Homer, Virgil and Aesop. At the Restoration, he gained royal approval to publish a poetic account of the King's coronation procession, and in 1670 made his first foray into cartographic publishing with a series of large folio atlases, unprecedented in scale and ambition.

Though their works served certain very different clientele, Seller and Ogilby shared a clear preoccupation with visual imagery, each infusing their publications with decorative frontispieces, topographical illustrations and other pictorial embellishments. However, as Benjamin Schmidt has noted, the extent to which they relied upon Dutch sources was overwhelming. "The pride of British mapmaking, John Seller's English Pilot", he notes with some cynicism, was almost entirely "produced from old worn Dutch plates", while "the major contributions to geographic studies" made by John Ogilby, "the so-called royal

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> Gadbury, 1659:99.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> Coolie Verner has suggested that Seller may have published a collection of charts as early as 1668, although this supposition is largely based on speculative or anecdotal evidence which merely indicates that Pepys was aware that Seller was preparing such a work at this time. However, no publications by Seller bearing this date are known, and Verner's hypothesis is impossible to validate. In this discussion therefore, I shall regard Seller's 1669 edition of *Practical Navigation* as his first published work in the field. Verner, 1978:140-43.

geographer of the realm...were nothing more than English translations of Dutch-composed texts". 12 Likewise, Davis and Daniel have described John Seller as a "Plagiarist" whose purchasing and rebranding of cartographic plates indicates an inherent "human failing". 13 While the identification of these practices is certainly important, and serves to demonstrate the impressive influence of Dutch cartography at the time, such dismissive attitudes towards Seller and Ogilby can be challenged. As these men worked in a pre-copyright age, their manipulation of existing forms of print must be conceived of as a legitimate practice rather than an illicit or covert act of piracy. Indeed, the process of copying and editing (without always citing one's sources) characterises the way in which graphic culture developed across Europe throughout the seventeenth century. Alternatively, as I suggest, the illustrated works of Seller and Ogilby demonstrate the ingenuity of men who were willing to take advantage of the cartographic products of a rival maritime nation, to aid the development of a native school of publishing and strengthen their own nation's maritime credentials. Their exploitation of Dutch sources reflects the fact that "the supremacy of the Netherlands had been broken on the sea and in America" and "independence from the Dutch" was increasingly sought by those working in the British atlas business. <sup>14</sup> As such, their works should not be seen simply as lifeless reproductions or imitations, but as products that energised a nascent culture of British graphic art.

A central argument of this chapter is that the printed images borne out of publishing initiatives like Seller's and Ogilby's were critical to the imaginative construction of London as an authoritative and self-supporting hub for maritime activity and imperial development. Moreover, the visual language of their works demonstrate that the process of 'mapping' or 'charting' the Atlantic was as much concerned with the cultivation of a symbolic pictorial identity as it was with actually recording the physical statistics of a

Schmidt, 2003:22.
 Davis and Daniel, 2009:6.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> Woodward, 1978:159.

hydrographic or geographic terrain. As Jules Prown suggests, "objects reflect cultural values in their style" and "these values can therefore be apprehended through stylistic analysis". 15 With this model of affective engagement in mind, it seems all the more important that Seller's and Ogilby's printed 'objects' should be considered art historically. By thinking not only about their pictorial content but also the stylistic character they exude, we can recover some sense of the cartographic publishing trade in Restoration London as a constituent of a more extensive and protracted material and pictorial project which sought to redefine the space of the Atlantic, and assert Britain's role within it. As I suggest, this followed on from other European nations' attempts to do the same. Indeed, as David Armitage asserts, "the Atlantic was a European invention" – a "mythical" space whose identity was flexible, constantly mutable and multidialectal. "It was the product of successive waves of navigation, exploration, settlement, administration, and imagination. It did not spring fully formed into European consciousness." After centuries of crisscrossing and mapping by many different European nations, it is perhaps inevitable that the pictorial project of Atlantic geography undertaken by John Seller and John Ogilby relied not solely upon "creation" but also "destruction and re-creation". 17

#### John Seller

Throughout the seventeenth century, the area of Wapping, situated on the banks of the river Thames in the City of London, was recognised as one of the capital's busiest centres of maritime trade. After the Restoration, its role as a hub of seafaring activity continued, as it played home to mast makers, boat builders and instrument makers, as well as taverns, coffee houses and victuallers, supporting a lively milieu of sailors and traders who came ashore there. Wapping gained infamy as a point of departure for treacherous voyages,

<sup>15</sup> Prown, 2001:66.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> Armitage, 2002:12.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> Elliott, 2002:233.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> Darby, 1998.

often undertaken by inexperienced seafarers whose return was by no means guaranteed. Printed ballads and broadsides such as *The Seamans adieu* (Fig. 5) frequently juxtaposed poetic ditties with images of wives bidding their husbands farewell from Wapping, with scenes foretelling later events in which ships can be seen meeting a tragic end in rocky waters.<sup>19</sup>

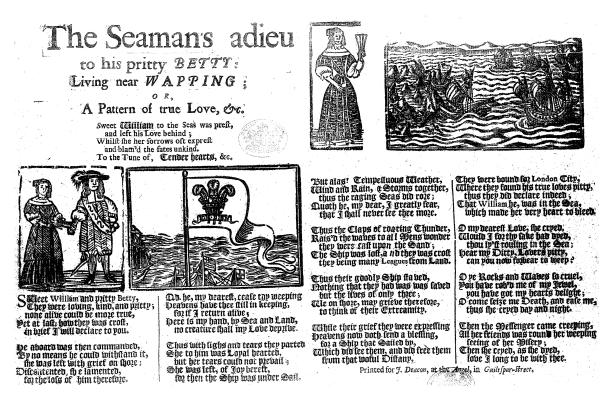


Figure 5. Anon. The Seamans adieu to his pretty BETTY: Living near WAPPING. Letterpress and woodcut, c.1670s.

In the heart of this bustling riverside environment, which operated as a liminal stage between the city and the maritime world beyond, John Seller furnished those wishing to embark on nautical ventures with all the tools of the trade they required. Actively engaged in a collaborative culture of exchange, in which ideas and experiences were shared between mariners and shipmen, Seller not only sold new goods but mediated the trade of "second hand" instruments.<sup>20</sup> This process of 'recycling' seems to have been a central aspect of his work. Thus, as has recently been pointed out, when the London instrument maker Elias Allen died in 1653, Seller acquired the remaining contents of his workshop

<sup>19</sup> See also, for example, *The seamans adieu to his dear* (London, c.1665).

<sup>20</sup> Gadbury, 1659:99.

and completed many pieces that were unfinished, having them engraved with his own name before reintegrating them into the marketplace (Fig. 6).<sup>21</sup>



Figure 6. Two views and enlarged detail of a 'double horizontal sundial'. Attributed to the workshop of Elias Allen; later adapted and signed by John Seller. Brass with engraving, c.1640 and later.

After touting these kinds of goods for a number of years, John Seller turned his attention to print, and in 1669 published his first book – *Practical Navigation or An Introduction to that whole Art.* In his preface, he dedicated this work "To all those Worthy Persons, the Captains and Commanders of Ships; and to all other Officers and Mariners whatsoever of our English Nation...who are not inferior to any other Nation whatsoever". In his following address, he indicated that his motivation for producing such a work stemmed from the expressed desire of his customers to be properly educated in the tools of navigation. "In making and selling several Instruments of Navigation", he wrote, "the Buyers many times desire to be informed in the practical use of them...which moved me to

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> Crouch, 2012:72.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> Seller, 1669:unpaginated preface.

write something concerning the most useful Instruments". <sup>23</sup> With illustrations demonstrating how to use devices like the 'Quadrant' (Fig. 7) and 'Cross-Staff' (Fig. 8), Practical Navigation not only assisted those already in the shipping trade, but encouraged a new generation of seafarers to educate themselves and enter Britain's fast expanding maritime industry. Although Seller's book also incorporated a variety of numerical tables and mathematical formulas, its simple pictorial features were arguably a critical factor in its success.<sup>24</sup> As Seller explained, before embarking on the publication of *Practical* Navigation he had often been required to take "time to instruct" his clients "by word or writing", though this was not always efficacious: "many times", he recalled, "they were disappointed of their expectations". <sup>25</sup> In contrast, the "vernacular accessibility" of his rather crude woodcut images established a mode of pictorial instruction that could be mentally retained more effectively and could be revisited with ease and speed, as and when required – whether on land or at sea. <sup>26</sup> Further encouraging his users' active participation in the graphic content of his work, Seller's book also included a small number of volvelles - "little discs of parchment that could be rotated on string pivots and that carried scales that could be read with string cursers like a circular slide-rule". 27 The use of ink and paper to create these miniature instruments allowed otherwise expensive or cumbersome tools to be taken to sea and put into practical use. Indeed, many of Seller's volvelles were engraved to imitate the look of decorative apparatuses such as globes (Fig. 9) or dials (Fig. 10), complete with ornate features such as turned wooden legs or decorative brass pointers. In view of these diagrams and volvelles, which stimulated physical responses on the part of the reader, a critical function of the images in Seller's treatise can be seen as their motivation of bodily performances that were fundamental to sailing a ship.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> Ibid:unpaginated preface.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> Though no sales records survive, Seller's manual was evidently popular and enjoyed continuing success: in total, fourteen editions were published before 1730.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> Seller, 1669:unpaginated preface. <sup>26</sup> Ferrell, 2010:115.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>27</sup> Solla Price, 1967:102.

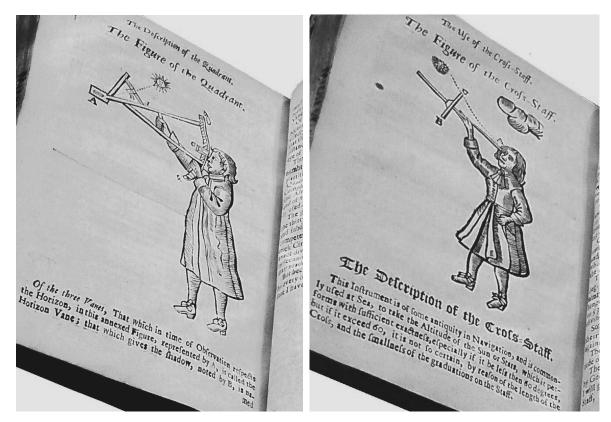


Figure 7. (left)Anon. *The Figure of the Quadrant*, in John Seller, *Practical Navigation* (1669). Engraving.

Figure 8. (right) Anon. *The Figure of the Cross-Staff*, in John Seller, *Practical Navigation* (1669). Engraving.

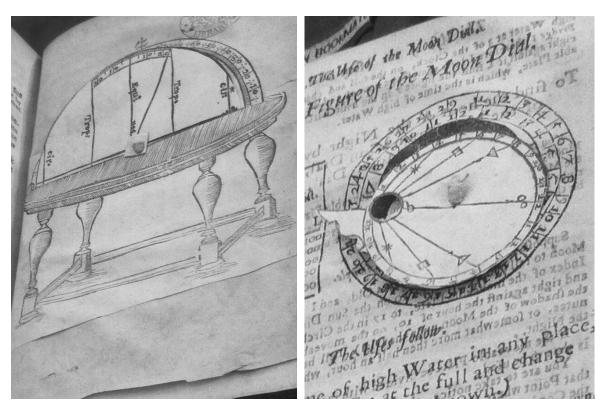


Figure 9. (left) Anon. *Celestial Globe*, in John Seller, *Practical Navigation* (1669). Engraved volvelle with string attachment.

Figure 10. (right). Anon. *Moon Dial*, in John Seller, *Practical Navigation* (1669). Engraved volvelle with string attachment.

As such, the process of "reading" or using his pictures might be understood as "a creative practice" in itself: a practice through which one's "response" or "labor" could invent "singular meanings and significations" that were not dictated by authorial power. 28 This "living, personal, striking experience" of print that Roger Chartier has so fluently described, supports the suggestion that the key effects of the images in *Practical Navigation* were the responses they provoked. 29 Ultimately, these responses were the effective operation of tools required to navigate ships overseas. Acknowledging the contribution of humble mariners to the emergence of Britain as a dominant Atlantic power, and consolidating their success with such seemingly marginal forms of imagery, we might begin to develop an alternative approach to 'Atlantic visual culture' that looks beyond institutionalised or state governed activity, and instead interrogates the discrete actions and singular experiences of individuals.

Equally important in *Practical Navigation*'s cultivation of a didactic graphic culture were the various lists and charts that helped mariners accurately navigate between different destinations such as 'Barbados' or 'Cape Charles in Virginia' (Fig. 11). Though describing such tabulated forms of numerical and textual data as 'images' might be seen as stretching the terminology of the visual to a virtual snapping point, these printed forms of information were, like Seller's figures of men using tools, designed to be both 'seen' and 'read', and thus operated as what Lorraine Daston has described as "hybrids of the visible and the legible". <sup>30</sup>As forms of print with analogous functions, presented virtually side by side in Seller's book, his complex matrices of textual, numerical and pictorial data clearly indicate a new approach to the medium of print in Restoration Britain – one which was effected by

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>28</sup> Chartier, 1989:156.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>29</sup> Ibid:156.

Quoted verbatim from Lorraine Daston's paper, Super-Vision: weather watching across space and through time at the early Royal Society and Académie Royale des Sciences, presented at 'Curiously Drawn: Early-modern Science as a Visual Pursuit', held at the Royal Society, London, on 21-22 June 2012.

advancements in experimental philosophy, driven by the foundation of the Royal Society, and sustained by the continuing development of maritime activity.<sup>31</sup>

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Figure 11. Anon. Navigation tables from John Seller, *Practical Navigation* (1669). Engraving and letterpress, before 1669.

Beyond the confines of these pages, a highly decorative and allegorical frontispiece imbued Seller's work with an altogether different aesthetic appeal (Figs. 12-13). This anonymous copper plate engraving displays a fine level of technical and artistic accomplishment that stands in stark contrast to the relatively crude woodcuts peppered throughout the rest of the book. Such emblematic engraved frontispieces had long been utilised throughout Europe and first began to appear in books published in Britain towards the end of the sixteenth century.<sup>32</sup> As Corbett and Lightbown have noted, frontispieces produced at this time operated as a "vehicle for the thoughts of the author on his work" as well as a means to "give an indication of its scope, and include pictorial representations

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>31</sup> Johns, 1998:446. Joseph Monteyne also identifies Seller's work in the medium of print as particularly innovative, noting that he was clearly "someone who saw new uses for statistical computation". Monteyne, 2007:84.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>32</sup> Corbett and Lightbown, 1979:34.



Figure 12. Anon. Frontispiece to John Seller, Practical Navigation (1669). Engraving.



Figure 13. Frontispiece and title page overview of John Seller, Practical Navigation (1669).

which could be understood only by perusing the book, thus stimulating the reader's curiosity."<sup>33</sup> In the example of the frontispiece used by Seller, this certainly rings true. On either side of the composition, allegorical personifications of 'Art' and 'Experience' stand on top of raised plinths, facing each other and brandishing navigational tools. Globes, compasses and other instruments surround them, while above their heads two mermaids open a chest, one of whom blows an exotic conch shell. At the foot of the image, a cross of St George is flanked by depictions of a riverside dock. Either side, topographic views of open water shipping scenes are enclosed within the architectural framework that supports the stone plinths. In a central cartouche, the title of Seller's book, along with a brief description of its contents, sits uncomfortably skewed within the composition – perhaps suggesting the hurried removal and replacement of an earlier inscription. The frontispiece itself, which is printed on a sheet considerably larger than the other pages, requires a series of folds to fit within the book, making it quite obvious that the image was not designed specifically for Practical Navigation, but was appropriated from another pocket atlas of different proportions.<sup>34</sup> Here, then, we can unmistakably identify another example of Seller's 'recycling'. In its formal composition and style, the frontispiece used by Seller adheres to the configuration of Dutch frontispieces used in similar navigational manuals and 'pilot books' during the early decades of the seventeenth century. Though pared down in its use of allegorical ornament, the frontispiece designed to accompany Willem Jansz Blaeu's Het Licht der Zeevaert in 1608 is a good example of this precedent (Fig. 14); indeed, the standing figures within it hold the same tools (a cross staff and a plumb line) as those in Seller's. Translations of this work, and others of Dutch origin, dominated the British market throughout the first half of the seventeenth century, and typically incorporated the original frontispieces with English text simply overlaid (Fig. 15).<sup>35</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>33</sup> Corbett and Lightbown, 1979:34.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>34</sup> Exhaustive searches of libraries and archives have failed to determine the origin of this frontispiece.

<sup>35</sup> Schilder, 1984:107.



Figure 14. (left) Anon. Frontispiece to Willem Janszoon Blaeu, *Het Licht der Zeevaert* (1608). Engraving.

Figure 15. (right) Anon. Frontispiece to Willem Janszoon Blaeu, *The Light of Navigation* (English translation, 1612). Engraving.

Despite ostensibly undertaking this same adaptive process for his frontispiece, Seller was evidently keen to conceal any evidence of his reliance on a Dutch source. When we consider the patriotic tone of the language he uses in the book, this becomes all the more understandable. In spite of recent demonstrations of Dutch maritime supremacy, Seller resolutely maintained that it was "certain, that the English excel at this day all Nations, in their industry and skill of Navigation". Only two years earlier however, in the wake of the Raid on the Medway which ended the Second Anglo-Dutch War with a decisive Dutch victory, Samuel Pepys had gloomily reflected that "in all things; in wisdom – courage – force – knowledge of our own streams – and success, the Dutch have the best of us". We might well imagine therefore, that in the mind of Seller – who lived and worked among "rough seamen" in the epicentre of an area "concerned almost solely with the port and trade" of the City of London – the admission that he had used a Dutch image to promote his work would have been an embarrassment. Though particularly pugnacious in his staunch belief in British seafaring, Seller's desire to promote a nationalist agenda through his hydrographic publishing was reflected by a growing discontent towards the reliance of

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>36</sup> Seller, 1669:1

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>37</sup> Samuel Pepys, quoted in Latham and Matthews (eds.), 2010a:359-60.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>38</sup> Latham and Matthews (eds.), 2010b:467.

British sailors on Dutch imprints; indeed, Samuel Pepys later remarked with some sarcasm that "the Dutch print our very bibles for us." Seeking to rectify the situation, and outlining the ideological reasons for taking such steps, Seller wrote on the final page of his treatise, "Courteous Reader":

These [sic] may be to inform you, that whereas there being frequent complaints made that the *English* hath not as yet manifested that forwardness ... for the general benefit of Navigation, as the *Hollander* hath done...[which] gives advantage to our Neighbours the *Hollanders*...[and] means a great treasure of Money is transported out of our Native Countrey to the enriching of them...I do here make known unto you, that I ... [am] making (at my own cost and charge) a Sea Waggoner...with charts and draughts of particular places...with the Dangers, Depths and Soundings in most parts of the World...and therefore my humble request is to all ingenious persons, who are desirous for the promotion of a publick good, for the honour of our Nation...to communicate any of their Informations and Experiences of things of that nature...unto me. 40

Just over a year later, shortly before Seller's plans came to fruition, he was issued with a Royal warrant at the request of the King. On March 22 1671, an announcement was published:

...forbidding any person to print any work, under other titles, reprinting or counterfeiting, for thirty years, the works of John Seller, the English Pilot and the Sea Atlas, describing the coasts, capes, headlands, &c., of the kingdom; also forbidding the import from beyond seas of any such books or maps, under the names of the *Dutch Waggoner* or *Lightning Column*, or any other name.<sup>41</sup>

Two days later, on March 24, a further warrant instructed "the Lord Chamberlain to swear John Seller as the King's hydrographer". 42

Soon after Seller's Royal warrant was issued, a second edition of *Practical Navigation* was published, complete with a new frontispiece (Fig. 16). This image was engraved by the young Londoner, Robert White, who had recently completed an apprenticeship with David

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>39</sup> Samuel Pepys, quoted in Chappell (ed.), 1935:106.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>40</sup> Seller, 1669:310

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>41</sup> Calendar of State Papers Domestic. Charles II, 1671. NB: All citations from the Calendar of State Papers Domestic are taken from the online resource provided by the Institute of Historical Research. Basic citations in the body of this thesis are hereafter presented as above, and expanded upon with full URL details and date of access in the bibliography.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>42</sup> Calendar of State Papers Domestic. Charles II, 1671.

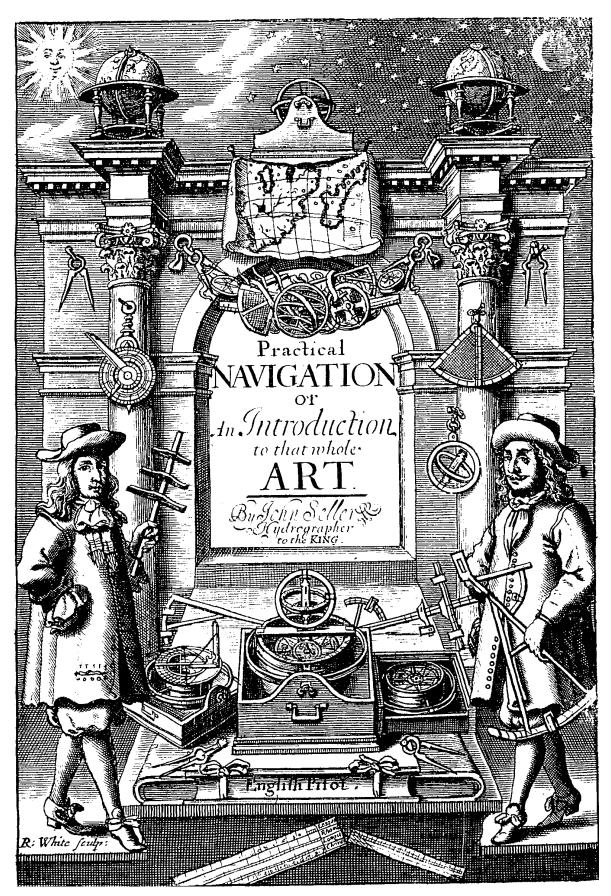


Figure 16. Robert White. Frontispiece to John Seller, *Practical Navigation* (1672). Engraving.

Loggan – the leading line engraver for London's print trade at the time. 43 White's reputation as one of the brightest new prospects in the field of book-plate engraving had already been cemented by his exceptional portrait plates and title pages for illustrious patrons including members of the Royal family. While his frontispiece for Seller bears the legend 'R. White. Sculp.', identifying him as the engraver of the plate, there is no indication as to who conceived the image. However, White was a renowned draughtsman, whose original drawings Vertue later considered "superior to his prints", so it is not unreasonable to imagine that he might have been responsible for the design.<sup>44</sup> In its general framework and verisimilitude of an architectural façade, with two men standing either side, White's engraving seems loosely based on *Practical Navigation*'s earlier frontispiece. However, in contrast to the ornate baroque design of this precedent, the image's architectural style seems less ostentatious and more functional. Bold furrowed lines give the impression of channelled masonry "which, like rustication, is emblematic of strength, the deep grooves implying a depth and therefore a solidity of material". 45 Similarly, the allegorical personifications of academic disciplines in the previous frontispiece are transformed by White into men who are dressed in recognisably contemporary costume and have a more lively sense of corporeality about them; they are dramatised not as stage props or symbolic mannequins but as physical embodiments of seafarers, actively engaged in maritime affairs. White's image is clearly invested in a new kind of iconography, designed to endorse Seller's business as well as to promote national maritime advancement more generally. Lying on a plinth in the centre, a book labelled 'English Pilot' is monumentalised in gigantic proportions, publicising Seller's business as a driving force behind the advancement of navigation, and lauding the arrival of his second publishing project. The bewildering array of instruments that populate the entire pictorial space – from

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>43</sup> Oxford Dictionary of National Biography. 'White, Robert (1645–1703)'. NB: All references to the online version of the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography are hereafter cited as above, with full URL, author details, and date of access provided in the bibliography.

<sup>44</sup> Walpole, 1796 (vol. v):175.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>45</sup> Geraghty, 2013:64.

compasses, quadrants and sundials, to slide rules, astrolabes and globes – give the image the feel of a trade card. Many of these instruments are those described in the book itself, and which Seller no doubt sold in his shop. Such tools would have been "associated explicitly with the wider activity of shipping, with all its economic and political potential". 46 Indeed, the navigational instruments depicted here "formed an important part of the material culture of seafaring, existing as physical elements of the mental framework through which mariners understood both the natural and the human world around them".<sup>47</sup> It is important to note, however, that Jules Prown suggests that "the straightforward statements of fact in purely utilitarian objects provide only limited cultural insights...the cultural interpretation of works of art has been more fruitful than that of devices...Art objects are the products of the needs of belief; devices are the products of physical necessity." 48 Yet, Prown does not consider the consequences of transposing these 'devices' into the context of a work of 'art'. As White's frontispiece demonstrates, we need not know how these devices actually work, to recognise from their shape, design, juxtaposition and prolificness as visual signs in a treatise on navigation, that they are emblematic of a culture of maritime progress and activity. Though Prown remains fairly noncommittal towards this theory, he does concede that "if the cultural significance of a device is perceivable in its style rather than its function, then there is no reason to conclude that, for the purposes of material culture analysis, the aesthetic aspects of artifacts are more significant than the utilitarian."<sup>49</sup>

White's activation of navigational artefacts contrasts with the static presentation of them in earlier navigational frontispieces such as the one used to preface Edward Wright's *Certaine errors in navigation* (1610) (Fig. 17). Here, there is a lack of human engagement

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>46</sup> Blakemore, 2012:31.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid:31.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>48</sup> Prown, 2001:91.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>49</sup> Ibid·91

and we are presented with a bird's eye view of the instruments, as they would appear if they were laid upon a table. White's image, in contrast, depicts instruments swinging from hooks, wreathed together as a chain, spilling off the edge of a central platform and being physically handled by mariners. Moreover, the map that fills the space at the foot of Wright's frontispiece does not give the semblance of another material object, but is simply presented as an engraved map. White, however, shows a map that is rather ragged and curled at the edges – a depiction of a specific map that bears the marks of activity, and thus is almost glorified for the process that its active use has facilitated.

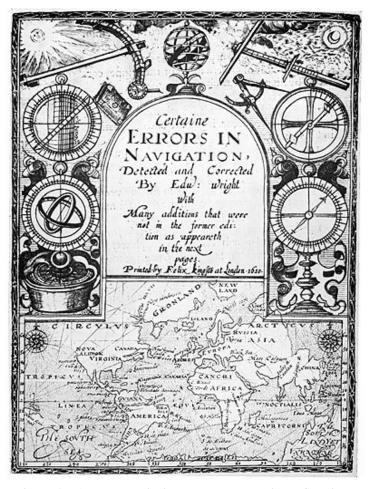


Figure 17. Anon. Frontispiece to Edward Wright, *Certaine Errors in Navigation* (1610). Engraving.

The ideological condition of function and utility reified by White's frontispiece is supported by the engraver's deliberate use of the burin to create a brazenly stark graphic design, constructed with prominent cross-hatched lines. This aesthetic seems deliberately defined against the smooth fluidity of Seller's earlier frontispiece, whose stylistic

appearance might been seen as both a betrayal of its continental origin and as sign of conceit. Notably, in the first few pages of his 1662 treatise, Sculptura: or the History, and Art of Chalcography and Engraving in Copper, John Evelyn explicitly refers to the "useful" relationship between engraving and the "Noble Mathematical Sciences". His discussion recurrently alludes to "the utility of great Travel and Forreign Voyages" while constantly returning to a core argument regarding engraving's role in the "advancing of useful knowledge". 50 Critically, in attempting to define the intrinsic character of this 'useful' form of art, he concludes that "it may be describ'd to be an Art which takes away all that is superfluous of the subject matter, reducing it to that Forme or Body, which was design'd in the Idea of the Artist." This sense of 'reduction' – or ridding an image of 'superfluous' elements – is evident in White's work.

Around the same time that *Practical Navigation*'s second edition was published. Seller was also busy printing a new range of sea charts, which he collated into area-specific volumes and sold as separate navigational 'Pilots'. 52 Though he had earlier proposed to draw these charts from the "Informations and Experiences" of native seamen, this proved to be unfeasible, presumably on account of his fundamental lack of expertise in the scientific art of mapping.<sup>53</sup> Nevertheless, Seller publically maintained that his "new and Exact Draughts, Charts, and Descriptions" had been "gathered from the latest and best Discoveries...made by...able and experienced Navigators of our English Nation". 54 It is now widely acknowledged, however, that his charts were restrikes of Dutch plates. As Coolie Verner suggests, these were acquired by Seller during "a trip to Holland where he came upon a collection of some sixty-three old and worn copperplates that had been used

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>50</sup> Evelyn, 1662:unpaginated front matter.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>51</sup> Ibid:6-7.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>52</sup> There are numerous editions of Seller's 'Pilots', each dealing with a particular hydrographic area. Yet, as examination of multiple versions of single editions at the British Library has shown, it is clear that not every collation was the same, and that the charts included could be tailored according to the individual purchaser's requirements.
<sup>53</sup> Seller, 1669:310
<sup>54</sup> Seller, 1671: 54.

to print the charts in a Dutch sea-atlas". Sefore these plates were printed, they were systematically altered by the British engravers Francis Lamb and James Clark, who added new legends and embellishments to effectively re-brand them as products of a native publishing industry. Within each chart appeared a cartouche bearing Seller's name and a proclamation of his title as 'Hydrographer to the Kings most Excellent Majesty', as well as the engraved signature of Francis Lamb or James Clark, depending on who had altered that particular plate. This transformative, palimpsestic procedure effectively codified Seller's Dutch source materials as British, thus mirroring in pictorial terms the physical process of reinvention and adaptation that the nation simultaneously sought to impose in the wider maritime world.

Although Seller's Pilots collectively delineated shipping routes in all parts of the world, his first, titled *The English Pilot*, was concerned solely with the coast of Britain and its surrounding waterways. In view of contemporary proposals to blockade Dutch Atlantic trade routes in the North Sea, the priority given to these shipping waters seems particularly telling.<sup>58</sup> Indeed, Seller's decision to begin by focusing his attention on domestic shores corresponded with a widely felt sentiment towards nautical exploration, which was concurrently being expressed through literary treatises such as Edward Leigh's *Three Diatribes or Discources* (1671). Leigh, a Master of Arts at Magdalen Hall, Oxford, urged that any man wishing to embark on a voyage beyond British waters "should be first well

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>55</sup> Verner, 1978:139. Verner suggests that these plates may have come from 'J. Van Loon', who published a sea atlas in 1650. As Helen Wallis notes, during this nascent period of sea chart production in Britain, "new surveys and maps... demanded resources and capital which were beyond the means of map dealers", and thus Seller's use of second hand plates is not surprising, nor as scandalous as some have suggested. Wallis, 1978:19. Commenting on the re-working of map plates by publishers in Britain, Joseph Roach has more recently added that the lack of enforced copyright laws meant that maps and charts by Dutch cartographers "were as vulnerable as unescorted Dutch merchantmen to the depredations of English pirates". Roach, 2003:94.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>56</sup> As D.J. Bryden notes, Clark's work for Seller in the London map and chart trade records his first professional undertakings as an engraver. This fact reinforces the important role that such 'editorial' jobs played in nurturing the skills of young British engravers at the time. Bryden, 1998:18.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>57</sup> The most notable contemporary example of a Dutch territory being captured, renamed, and naturalised as a part of Britain's extended cultural territory is undoubtedly the transformation of 'New Amsterdam' into 'New York', following its appropriation in 1665.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>58</sup> Rodger, 2004:65-94.

acquainted with his own Country, before he go abroad", informing readers that "if any came heretofore to the Lords of the Council for a License to Travel; the old Lord Treasurer Burleigh, would first examine him of England; if he found him ignorant, he would bid him stay at home, and know his own Country first."59 Leigh's discourse also advised the prospective traveller "to inform himself (before he undertakes his Voyage,) by the best Choregraphical and Geographical Map of the Scituation of the country he goes to...and to carry with him...a Map of every Country he intends to travel through". 60 The timely nature of the English Pilot's publication can also be understood in relation to contemporary articles in the London Gazette – the only official newspaper in print at the time. Published bi-weekly, the newspaper was edited by Joseph Williamson, "the de facto head of the Restoration government's intelligence system"; its articles therefore "naturally reflected the government's viewpoint". 61 At this time, the newspaper focused "almost entirely on foreign and shipping news" and routinely announced overly "optimistic reports about the large numbers of men who were cheerfully volunteering their services". 62 Such reports were evidently intended to encourage more mariners to pledge their services and assist with the on-going diminution of the Dutch seaborne empire. Seller's *Chart of the sea* coasts of England, Flanders and Holland (Fig. 18) clearly dramatises this "unscrupulous use of propaganda", emblazoning East Anglia with figures of country labourers hawked over by Roman soldiers, extolling the model of organisation exemplified by Britain's own imperial usurpers. Below this vignette, a dedication to Joseph Williamson further suggests the chart's status as a diplomatic tool. 63 In the upper-right corner of the chart, a cluster of ships are depicted engaged in fierce battle off the island of Texel in the Friesland archipelago. This specific area of the North Sea played host to the final battle of the First Anglo-Dutch War in 1653 and later became the site of the battle which proved to be the

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>59</sup> Leigh, 1671:6.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid:6-7.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>61</sup> Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, 'Williamson, Sir Joseph (1633–1701)'; Boxer, 1969:67.

<sup>62</sup> Boxer, 1969:67,75.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid:67.

last of the Third Anglo-Dutch War in 1673. A stream of references to Texel appeared in press reports written by Joseph Williamson in the period immediately before Seller's chart was published, suggesting that a strategic interest in this battleground was already building at this time.<sup>64</sup> Such connections certainly validate conceptions of Seller's sea charts as more than simply objective representations of space for functional use.

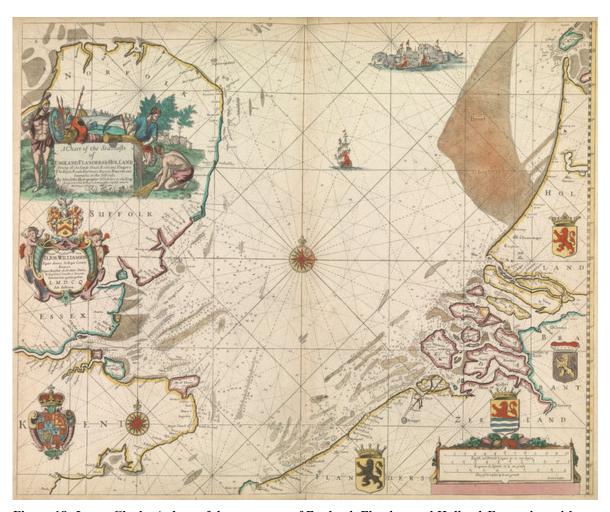


Figure 18. James Clark. A chart of the sea coasts of England, Flanders and Holland. Engraving with hand colouring, 1671.

Furthermore, the introduction of a battle scene into this hydrographic space (Fig. 19) registers an engagement with more sophisticated forms of maritime art, perhaps best demonstrated by the work of the van de Veldes – the leading exponents of the genre at the time. In 1672, this father and son duo from the Netherlands moved to London where they

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>64</sup> See for example, London Gazette: April 18-21, 1670; June 27-30, 1670; July 25-28, 1670; August 29-September 1, 1670; September 8-September 12, 1670. NB: All references to British newspapers are taken from the online database 'British Newspapers 1600-1950'. Full details provided in the bibliography.

took up residence in Greenwich and were provided with a studio in the Queen's House by Charles II. 65 A Royal warrant issued in 1674 ordered:

...the present and future establishment of 100l. per an. to William Vandeveld, senr., for taking and making draughts of sea fights, and 100l. per an. to William Vandeveld, junr., for putting the said draughts into colours for His Majesty's particular use. <sup>66</sup>

Sketches by the elder van de Velde, such as *The Battle of the Texel (Kijkduin)*, 11/21 August 1673 (Fig. 20) were undertaken at sea and provided visual records of battles which the younger van de Velde later developed into large scale oil paintings (Fig. 21).



Figure 19. Detail of Figure 18.



Figure 20. Willem van de Velde (snr.). *The Battle of the Texel (Kijkduin)*, 11/21 August 1673. Graphite and ink on paper, 1673.



Figure 21. Willem van de Velde (jnr.). *The Battle of the Texel*. Oil on canvas, late seventeenth century.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>65</sup> Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, 'Velde, Willem van de, the younger (1633–1707)'.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>66</sup> Calendar of Treasury Books. Volume 4: 1672-1675. NB: All citations from the Calendar of Treasury Books are taken from the online resource provided by the Institute of Historical Research. Basic citations in the body of this thesis are expanded upon with full URL details and dates of access in the bibliography.

Yet, as Clara de la Peña McTigue has shown, the elder van de Velde's sea sketches cannot be wholly relied upon as truthful forms of documentary evidence. These drawings routinely included later elements which were cut and pasted from other sketches, recycling features of other battle scenes which made for livelier compositions, or favoured the political interests of the van de Veldes' patron, Charles II. In view of the Royal endorsement that John Seller also enjoyed, the nuanced forms of maritime art that were carefully superimposed onto his hydrographic charts might be seen in the same light.

Endorsing Seller's claim to (and pride in) national maritime prowess, every collation of charts he sold came with a folio sized frontispiece, which appears to have been produced specifically for this purpose (Fig. 22).<sup>69</sup> The text within the central cartouche of this frontispiece was altered according to the charts it prefaced, while the rest of the image remained the same.<sup>70</sup> At the top of the composition, a legend bears the title 'England's Famous Discoverers'. Underneath, a posse of mariners examine charts, globes and other navigational instruments, which are familiar from the frontispiece produced by Robert White for *Practical Navigation*. Four of these mariners are identified by small captions at their feet: James Davis, Walter Raleigh, Hugh Willoughby and John Smith. Each of these men had been instrumental in late sixteenth and early seventeenth century attempts to establish British colonies in the Atlantic. Below, in the central part of the frontispiece, standing either side of the central cartouche, two more men are identified as the nation's

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>67</sup> Clara de la Peña McTigue. *The van de Veldes at work: studio practices, materials and techniques*. Research paper presented at 'Technical study of the Willem van de Velde drawings: exploring workshop practices and techniques in 17th-century marine art': a conference held at the National Maritime Museum, London, on 5 September 2013.

As Sarah Monks has suggested, the naval battles of the Anglo-Dutch wars were "huge and incoherent events whose status as victories or defeats often lay more in cultural interpretation than in elusive fact". Thus the works produced by the van de Veldes can be seen as critical assertions of naval authority. Quoted from the abstract to Monks' paper. *Drawing fire: the van de Veldes and the imagery and implications of late Stuart naval conflict*, presented at the conference 'British Art 1660-1735: Close Readings', held at Tate Britain, London, 20 May 2011.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>69</sup> The designer and engraver of this frontispiece remain unknown.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>70</sup> Verner, 1973.



Figure 22. Anon. Frontispiece to John Seller, The English Pilot. Engraving, c.1671.

most celebrated circumnavigators, Francis Drake and Thomas Cavendish.<sup>71</sup> In a horizontal line by their feet, four shielded emblems denote the key governing bodies responsible for the organisation of maritime affairs after the Restoration. The first of these depicts the emblem of the Lord High Admiral, an office held by James, Duke of York, which afforded him overall responsibility for the command of the Royal Navy. The second emblem signifies of the arms of the Board of Admirality, which was the board of the Royal Navy responsible for the approval and allocation of flags to new colonies. The third shield denotes the arms of the Masters of Trinity House – the organisation entrusted with the provision and operation of lighthouses and pilotage services. The final shield contains the Arms of the City of London, cementing its status as a critical hub for maritime ventures further afield. <sup>72</sup> Occupying a higher space at the top of the image, the Royal coat of arms asserts the Stuart Monarchy's supreme governance over all these states of office. At the foot of the frontispiece, a view of the City of London is juxtaposed with an estuary scene some forty miles downriver, where the Thames and Medway rivers converge at the sandbank known as the 'Nore'. 73 Romanesque river gods pouring water from urns marked with the names of these two waterways give a small flotilla of ships a final helping push on their way, out into the North Sea and beyond. While this expansive estuary scene is dramatised as an unrestrained space which spills out to the edges of the page, the image of the city is imagined as a more orderly environment, regulated by an oval frame. As Joseph Monteyne has noted, the image of London viewed from the Southwark side, foregrounded by the Thames, "had a lengthy history" by the Restoration "and served to construct a mutual relationship between natural forces and cultural production." The river "provided a nurturing locus for London, while at the same time the thriving city required the harnessing

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>71</sup> Drake had famously undertaken a pioneering expedition around the globe in 1577, having previously served with Richard Hawkins in the West Indies; Thomas Cavendish embarked on a much celebrated journey in 1586, in which he fitted out three vessels to chart the South Sea.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>72</sup> Identification of these emblems was provided by Peter Loeser, Michael Faul and David Prothero, of the Flag Institute, London.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>73</sup> My reading of this scene has greatly benefited from Richard John's research paper, *From the Nore: Turner at the Mouth of the Thames*, presented at The Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, 26 June 2013.

of this natural force by human industry...[its] boat traffic was a metaphor for the to-and-fro of both individuals and merchandise on a national and increasingly global scale."<sup>74</sup> By contrasting the 'harnessed' Thames in the city with its 'unharnessed' outer reaches, Seller's frontispiece effectively extends this metaphor, while also establishing a connection between the river's traffic and global sea travel. Moreover, by depicting the river crowded with large vessels departing from the docks on the east side of London Bridge, and then imagining their passage into the sea as they are symbolically thrusted outwards by the power of the tide, the frontispiece emphasises the outward rather than inward passage of ships and thus signals a drive towards new discovery and exploration.<sup>75</sup>

While this pictorial narrative evidently responded to topical expansionist interests, Seller's London skyline also recollected an earlier period in the capital's past, which contemporary viewers would have recognised by the presence of St. Paul's Cathedral's majestic spire, towering above the city's rooftops and dominating the skyline. The spire was destroyed by lightning in 1561, and the remaining structure was further damaged a century later by the Great Fire of London in 1666. Seller's print therefore fails to register either of these events. Wenceslaus Hollar's 1657 engraving of the Cathedral (Fig. 23), which also depicted the building as it appeared before the spire was lost, was reproduced in a number of publications by the antiquarian author Sir William Dugdale, and identifies a contemporary interest in the "study of mapping, history and chronology". As Lucy Peltz has suggested, "such knowledge was viewed in patriotic terms" and the reflection upon past achievements

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>74</sup> Monteyne, 2007:75.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>75</sup> In an engraving published by John Seller in 1665, which has been extensively analysed by Joseph Monteyne, a view of the Thames from the Southwark side also depicts river traffic (in this case, barges) heading uniformly in the same direction – out of the city. As part of a complex broadside produced in response to London's plague, Monteyne suggests that the image "alters the customary message of this viewpoint" to dramatise the movement of "persons and property out of the city in the interests of self-preservation". Monteyne, 2007:75. Critically, the frontispiece under discussion was produced a number of years after the plague and shows larger seafaring vessels moving away from the city; thus its alteration of a 'customary' image of bi-directional river traffic demands a different reading.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>76</sup> Peltz, 1999:474. Hollar's image was reproduced in a number of editions of Dugdale's *Monisticon Anglicanum* and *The History of St Paul's Cathedral*, the earliest example dating from 1655.

was seen as having a demonstrable impact on public spirit, motivating a new generation to make their own contribution to their country's greatness. As Peltz notes, the aftermath of London's 'Great Fire' in 1666 only served to fuel such sentiment, inspiring a stream of poetic responses which eulogised the historic greatness of the city's built environment and provided an emotive and nostalgic spur for rebuilding projects which sought to transform the capital into a great metropolis for a new imperial generation.

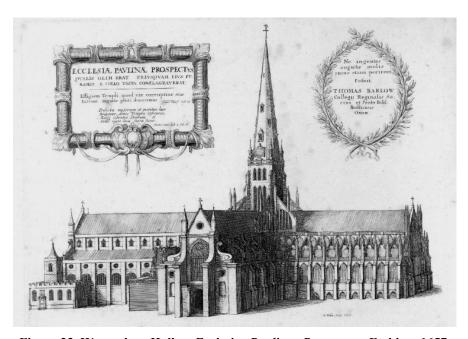


Figure 23. Wenceslaus Hollar. Ecclesiae Paulinae Prospectus. Etching, 1657.

Publications like Roger l'Estrange's *Vox Civitatis: or, London's Call to her Natural and Adopted Children; Exciting them to her speedy Reedification* (1666) even employed "maternal metaphors for London", addressing readers thorough the personified voice of the city. As the 'mother' London proclaims in l'Estrange's text, "All things their Seasons have, and Revolution", and "immortal Memories survive The Ruins" of the fire. In a final rousing call, she requests the assistance of "helping hands; so may you see Yourselves once more to Fame advanc'd with Me: So may we mutually rejoice each other, I in my Glorious Sons, you in your Mother". In light of such strategies, and in relation to the inspirational visual rhetoric instilled by the depiction of great seafaring heroes in Seller's

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Peltz 1999·472

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>78</sup> L'Estrange, 1666:unaginated single sheet.

frontispiece, the inclusion of St. Paul's' spire reifies a historically ambiguous form of topography which oscillates between reflections on the past, present and future. In later editions of Seller's frontispiece, produced from 1677 onwards, a more up to date image of the city depicts a spireless St. Paul's Cathedral with a low tower, and also includes the newly built Monument, constructed between 1671 and 1677 to commemorate the great fire of London (Fig. 24).<sup>79</sup> Placing this revised topographic view alongside the version of the same skyline in Seller's earlier frontispiece (Fig. 25), we can see how the alteration of the print assimilated a contemporary preoccupation with comparative viewing and reflection, exemplified by Wenceslaus Hollar's 1666 dual aspect of the city, as seen before and after the fire (Fig. 26). As Joseph Monteyne has argued, this etching "marks a nodal point...between the fire's effect on the city viewed through the frame of classical precedents, and emerging scientific conceptions of urban space." As Hollar's print "does not actually picture the fire", he suggests, the viewer is required to jump "back and forth from absence to presence" and in doing so partakes in "a repetitive process of mourning" which "veils but does not completely efface, the destruction of London". 81 Similarly, Seller's contrasting views of the city – both of which are framed by the same allusions to historical achievements and future aspirations in the scientific art of navigation – consign the fire's destruction to the realms of memory. Unlike Hollar's print, which depicts a number of ships to the east of London Bridge before the fire, and none in that area afterwards, the rendering of this space in Seller's frontispieces remains the same: populated by a cluster of vessels heading out to sea. Likewise, while Hollar accurately records the destruction of churches as a result of the conflagration, Seller's revised

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>79</sup> The British Museum's copy of this revised frontispiece, which bears the title for John Seller's *Coasting* Pilot (and is used for illustration purposes here), is incorrectly catalogued as "1671 (c.)". This assumption is simply based on the year in which the first edition of the Coasting Pilot was published, yet as Rodney Shirley has suggested (and research at the British Library has confirmed) the revised frontispiece with its adapted skyline first appeared in Seller's Pilots in 1677. Shirley, 2009:168.

<sup>80</sup> Monteyne, 2007:125. 81 Ibid:129.

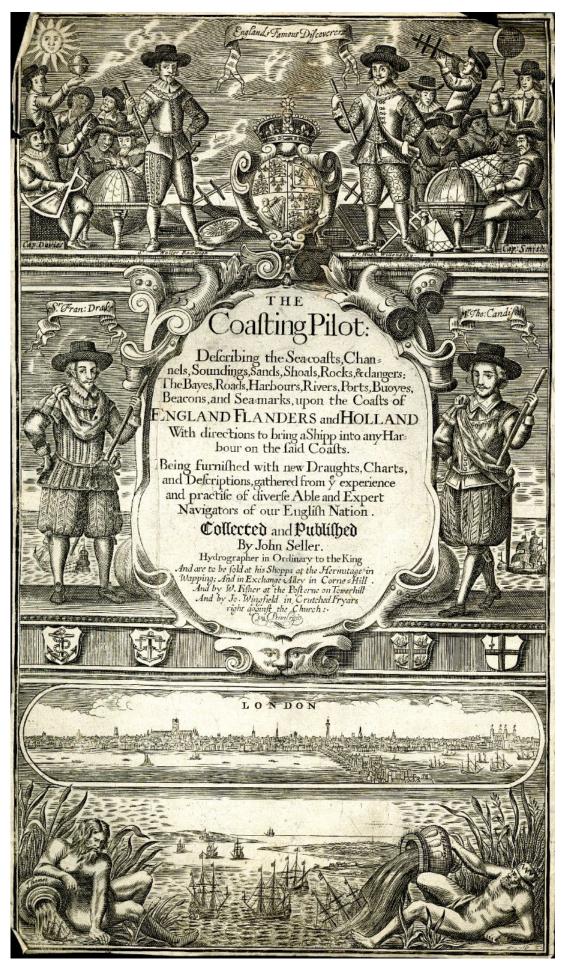


Figure 24. Anon. Frontispiece to John Seller, *The Coasting Pilot*. Engraving, c.1677.

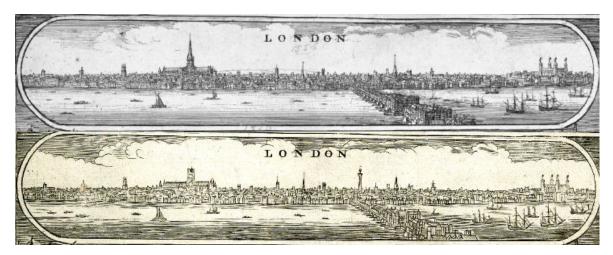


Figure 25. Details of Figure 22 (top) and 24 (bottom).

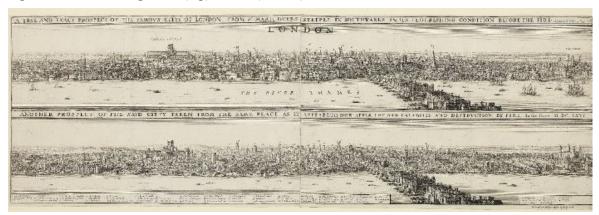


Figure 26. Wenceslaus Hollar. A true and exact propect of the famous citty of London ... before the fire [and] ... after the sad calamitie and destruction by Fire in the yeare MDCLXVI. Engraving, 1666.

frontispiece anachronistically leaves notable spires that were consumed by the flames in full view – despite illustrating the Monument, which registers the fire's occurrence. As a result, the second version of Seller's frontispiece continues to play with time and memory, as his first version had done. Produced six years apart, during which time the first and last stones of the Monument were laid, Seller's pair of topographic views extend the kind of viewing experience introduced by Hollar into a much more prolonged, participatory process. Moreover, in their negation of a temporal period of desolation and despair, Seller's views of the city effectively distort reality to recondition the historical memory of a disruptive event.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>82</sup> For example, St Laurence Pountney, to the west of London Bridge, and St Dunstan-in-the-East, on its east side.

It is perhaps important to also note that Christine Stevenson has suggested that "the Monument can teach us a great deal about the visual culture of later seventeenth-century England, and not least about ways of seeing the city, its monuments and their ornament."83 Monuments and memories, she argues, were often linked with statecraft; Seller's adaptation of his frontispiece to include the fire's memorial Monument might therefore be seen as part of a project to cultivate national pride, allied to his role as the King's official hydrographer. 84 William Lodge's depiction of the Monument (Fig. 27), printed in the same year as Seller's revised frontispiece, further implicates the structure as a symbol of London's emerging status as a great imperial city. The enormous Doric column, delineated in fine detail here, evokes the heyday of ancient Rome, while the print's Latin inscription makes a further connection between the developing architectural language of London and that of the former Roman Empire's metropolis. Similarly, an anonymous publication titled London's Index, or Some Reflexions on the New built Monument (1676), which might be seen as a literary equivalent to Lodge's image, analogises London as Rome's successor. The question is asked: "why such richness spent About the fire's Monument? Could it be thought in after years, That BRUTE could ere erecct such Buildings, as themselves protect, And fill the Neighbouring World with fears?". The immediate answer proclaims: "No, the future Age must say, 'Twas CAESAR's influence that rul'd the day... No more we'll fear Forrain Invasions, to molest us here: This when our Enemies shall see, They'l yield, it doth portend a destiny"85 While this text and Lodge's print use the emblem of the Monument to foster an image of London as the heart of a great empire, Seller's frontispiece provides a geographical extension to this metaphor by foregrounding the structure with a scene of ships on the river, heading for the outer reaches of the Thames estuary and into the ocean beyond.

<sup>83</sup> Stevenson, 2005:45.84 Ibid:45.

<sup>85</sup> Anon. London's index,1676: unpaginated single sheet.

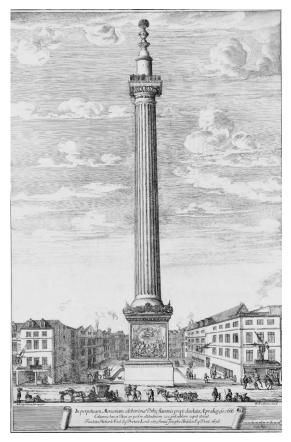


Figure 27. William Lodge. In perpetuam Memoriam celeberrimae Urbis flammis propé desolatae A prodigioso 1666. Etching, 1677.

By crystallising this vision of London as an imperial metropolis, directly connected by the water of the Thames to a nascent maritime empire, the frontispiece foreshadows a number of decorative schemes painted in the captial in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Notable examples include frescoes at The Royal Mathematical School, The Royal Hospital for Seamen at Greenwich, and The Royal Hospital Chelsea. The last of these epitomises the visual language of large-scale civic art forms which served to aggrandise British sea power. Here, Antonio Verrio depicts Charles II on horseback, in

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The Royal Mathematical School was founded by Charles II in 1673 (during the Third Anglo-Dutch War) to train potential sailors in the art of navigation. Having already painted a work titled *The Sea Triumph of Charles II* in 1674 to commemorate the end of the war, Antonio Verrio spent a large part of the 1680s producing an eighty-six foot long paining for his Royal patron, to be installed in the School's hall. The painting depicts the King granting the institution its Royal Charter, while figures nearby observe charts and globes. The Royal Warrant authorising the establishment of the Royal Hospital Chelsea for British Soldiers was issued in 1681, though work on the building was not completed until 1692. A large mural at the end of the Great Hall, which depicts Charles II on horseback surrounded by allegorical figures, a globe, and personification of the four corners of the globe, was begun by Antonio Verrio in the 1680s and was completed by Henry Cooke in 1690. The Royal Hospital for Seamen at Greenwich was founded in 1694. In 1707, James Thornhill was given a Royal commission to decorate the Great Hall: his work pays tribute to British maritime power.

front of the Royal Hospital Chelsea (Fig. 28). From the positioning of Hospital in the background, we can determine the viewer's position as being on the bank of the Thames, or even on the river. To the left, a river god (presumably signifying the Thames) spills water from an urn, which pools across the ground and trickles towards a group of figures representing the four continents, who are gathered around a large globe on the opposite side of the composition. This image is evidently invested in the same kind of iconography configured by Seller's graphic works some twenty years earlier. Acknowledging this relationship not only demonstrates the role of 'print' as a progenitor of ideas for more developed forms of public art, but allows us to see Seller's hitherto marginalised graphic products in a new light, as an integral part of a British art historical tradition.



Figure 28. Antionio Verrio / Henry Cooke. Fresco for The Royal Hospital Chelsea. Oil, c.1680s.



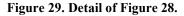




Figure 30. Detail of Figure 24.

To suggest some of the ways in which Seller's navigational publications may have functioned in Restoration London, and to outline the various readings that their graphic content encourages, helps us to appreciate the extent to which the British geographic printing trade of this period should be understood as both a site of aesthetic and political exchange.<sup>87</sup> At the same time, these works offer a dialogue with a Netherlandish tradition of cartographic production, and thus dramatise the shifting status of these competing nations in both the world of Atlantic commerce and colonisation, and the world of artistic production. Despite the ostensible connection between the visual culture of 'navigation' and the pursuit of Atlantic dominance in the period, such graphic materials have been "largely overlooked in recent overviews of 'Atlantic world' history", as well as in studies of British graphic art more generally. 88 As the second case study of this chapter suggests, the Atlases published by John Ogilby further reinforce this relationship.

## John Ogilby

Like John Seller, John Ogilby spent much of the early 1670s producing atlases and was also awarded a Royal Warrant for his work in this area of publishing. While his 1671 publication, America: being the latest, and most accurate description of the New World, will form the core of my case study, the following discussion will also critically examine broader aspects of his oeuvre which were endorsed by Charles II, and express in more nuanced ways contemporary concerns with imperial state formation.

Before venturing into geographic printing, Ogilby spent the early part of his career working as a dancing master and theatre owner, in London and Dublin, and gained the title of 'Master of His Majesties Revels'. 89 Prior to the Civil War he became a respected

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>87</sup> This reading of Seller's work borrows from the method of analysis employed by Mark Hallett in his investigation of early eighteenth century graphic satire. Hallett, 1999:54.

Blakemore, 2012:34.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>89</sup> Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, 'Ogilby, John (1600–1676)'.

courtier, and through the 1650s turned his attention to publishing, producing translations of the Bible and the classic works of Virgil, Homer and Aesop: all of which were considered essential reading for the educated man of the time. Perhaps having had his Royalist views supressed during the Interregnum, the Restoration motivated him to pen an epic poem celebrating the life and martyrdom of Charles I, and in the same year he gained a Royal commission to help with the arrangements for the coronation of Charles II. This assignment culminated with his publication of *The Entertainment of his most Excellent Majestie Charles II, in his passage through the City of London to his Coronation* (1661). Even before working on this text, Ogilby's addition of a celebratory ode to Peter Williamson's engraved portrait of Charles II (Fig. 31) (an image which had earlier been published in a slightly different state, by Peter Stent (Fig. 32)) indicates his astute understanding of printed word and image as a powerful form of panegyric.



Figure 31. (left) Peter Williamson (with addition of verse by John Ogilby). *Carolus II D.G Angliæ, Scotiæ, Franciæ, & Hiberniæ Rex.* Engraving, 1661.

Figure 32. (right) Peter Williamson. Carolus II D.G Angliæ, Scotiæ, Franciæ, & Hiberniæ Rex. Engraving, 1661.

In this revised version, which was sold by John Williams, an inscription in verse was added by Ogilby, lauding the new king's Restoration:

The Second CHARLES, Heir of the Royal Martyrs Who, for Religion, and His Subjects Charter, Spent the best Blood, that unjust Sword e're dy'd, Since the rude Souldier pierc'd Our Saviour's Side Who such a Father had'st, art such a Son, Redeem Thy People, and assume Thy Own.

JOHN OGILBY

Having published a solely textual account of Charles II's coronation procession in 1661, Ogilby obviously felt that a second edition, enriched by the addition of images, could more powerfully preserve the memory of the spectacle of the event. He was duly granted "the sole privilege of setting forth a large and noble Treatise on the Coronation, with the most remarkable passages represented in sculpture". 90 In 1662, this work was printed with a series of fine engravings by Wenceslaus Hollar and David Loggan. As well as visualising the various stages of the procession and its participants, these images depicted the series of temporary triumphal arches erected for the cavalcade to pass thorough. As Ogilby explained, these arches were explicitly conceived in imitation of "the ancient Romanes, who, at the return of their Emperours, erected Arches of Marble". 91 "Ours" however, he stressed, "far exceed theirs in Numbers, and stupendous Proportions." Such "fictions of authority", rooted in the cultural language of the Roman Empire, not only functioned to assert the permanence of a restored monarchy, but offered some indication of the drive towards imperial expansion that would soon follow. 93 Indeed, as Katherine van Eerde has suggested, "Ogilby made considerable use of the themes of Rebellion subdued and Restoration triumphant. And his account, situated in time between the First and Second Dutch Wars and foreshadowing England's search for and growing dominance of world

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>90</sup> Calendar of State Papers Domestic. Charles II, 1660-1.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>91</sup> Ogilby, 1662:1.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid:2

<sup>93</sup> Staves, 1979:14, quoted in Monteyne, 2007:11.

trade, emphasized constantly the anticipated growth, in conjunction with the return of the monarchy, of unprecedented commerce and prosperity."94



Figure 33. David Loggan. Triumphal arch, near the Royal Exchange in Cornhill (with enlarged details - right). Engraving, 1662.

In this respect, Ogilby's description of the second arch, themed as "Naval", seems particularly pertinent. In the illustration supplied by David Loggan (Fig. 33), the coat of arms of the City of London can be seen emblazoned on either side of the structure, establishing the commercial heart of the capital as a driving force for maritime trade. 95 At the very top, a figure of Atlas is shown carrying a globe, on which sails a ship. Lower down, among various other figures, allegorical personifications represent Africa and America. Together, these elements seem to allude to the proposed programme of Atlantic development ushered in by the Restoration. In the centre, a large frieze depicts "Charles I

 <sup>&</sup>lt;sup>94</sup> Van Eerde, 1976:52.
 <sup>95</sup> Ogilby, 1662:43.

in antique costume, holding the hand of the future king [Charles II] and showing him the Sovereign of the Seas" – a warship launched in 1637 that was still, in the 1660s, the pride of the navy's fleet. 60 Ogilby's account explains that during the coronation procession, this arch formed the backdrop for a stage on which a series of performances took place. In particular, he describes an actor "representing the River Thames; his Garment Loose, and Flowing, Colour Blew and White, waved like Water, a Mantle over, like a Sail; his Head crown'd with London Bridg...[and his] long Hair falling over his Shoulders, his Beard long...an Oar in his right Hand...an Urn beside him, out of which issued Water". 71 Alongside his description of this figure, Ogilby quotes a passage relating to the Thames from Michael Drayton's 1612 topographical poem *Poly Olbion*: "Attended, and attired magnificently, thus, They send him [the Thames] to the Court of great Oceanus, The World's huge Wealth to see; yet with a full intent, To woo the lovely Nymph, fair Medway, as he went."

Elsewhere in his publication, Ogilby describes a moment in the coronation procession when two black youths attended a man in Indian habit, standing alongside a boy riding a camel who scattered jewels, spices and silk. The subsequent speech delivered by these characters, which Ogilby transcribes, evidently sought to cultivate collective support for the King and his plans to develop trade and colonisation overseas:

Your Sacred Person, Royal Sir, hath brought
Home all the Wealth, that can be found or thought
The Riches of both Indies are but Poor,
Compar'd with our renew'd Carolean Store...
...Among Your first of unexpected Cares
Enlarg'd our Charter, and dispel'd our Fears
Of the incroaching Holland's Rival Force.
Nor can we doubt, but by the bounteous Source
Of your Successful Right, not only We,
But all the Merchants of Your Realm shall see....<sup>99</sup>

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<sup>99</sup> Ogilby, 1661:10.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>96</sup> Stevenson, 2013:106.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>97</sup> Ogilby, 1662:43.

<sup>98</sup> Ogilby, 1662:49. Ogilby quotes Drayton, 1612:257.

Continuing with similarly rousing prose, Ogilby refers to a poetic recital performed by three seamen, in which the protagonists declare:

...Wee'll not care a fig
For France, for France, the Netherlands, nor Spain;
The Turk, who looks so big,
We'll whip him like a Gig
About the Mediterrane
His Gallies all sunk, or ta'ne.

Wee'll seize on their Goods, and their Monies, Those Algier Sharks That Plunder Ships, & Barks, Algier, Sally, and Tunis, We'll give them such Toasts To the Barbary-Coasts, Shall drive them to Harbour, like Conies.<sup>100</sup>

While such extracts from Ogilby's account of the coronation procession enable us to identify the central role he played in promoting Charles II's imperial agenda, the following years saw him retreat from such activity. Now in his mid-sixties, Ogilby retired to Kingston-upon-Thames to escape the Plague of 1665, and sold the majority of his existing stock through a succession of standing lotteries. <sup>101</sup> Yet, by the end of the decade, perhaps sensing the growing interest in maritime trade and colonial development, he returned to publishing to work on a series of folio atlases which culminated with what he described as his "great Atlantick Work". <sup>102</sup> Comprised of two volumes – *Africa* and *America* – the publication of this atlas was particularly timely, being between the Second and Third Anglo-Dutch Wars, when (as we have seen already with our study of John Seller) the debacle of the Dutch Raid on the Medway left Britain keen to reassert their maritime authority and conjure new ways to "destroy the Republic's military and naval power...strip the Republic of its most valuable commerce, and deprive it of most of its colonies in Asia,

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>100</sup> Ibid:18.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>101</sup> van Eerde quotes John Aubrey (Guildhall, MS. 6537), who remarked that Ogilby left town "during the sickness". van Eerde, 1974:81.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>102</sup> Ogilby, 1670a:1. Prior to the production of his 'Atlantick' atlases, Ogilby translated a number of works by Dutch travellers and authors such as Johannes Nieuhof and Arnold Montanus. These focused predominantly on Asia, and as Ogilby noted, they merely constituted a preliminary "by-Volume" for his later Atlantic work. For a fuller analysis of these earlier geographic publications, see van Eerde, 1674:95-101.

Africa and the Americas". On 28 April 1670, it was announced that Ogilby's "African Volumn" had been completed, and on 22 November an advertisement revealed that the project's final instalment, *America*, was "in good forwardness". Almost a year later, on 3 November 1671, this pièce de résistance was finished and both volumes were available for purchase. Use Seller, Ogilby thoroughly exploited the work of Dutch geographers in this work, employing his skills in translation to purloin material from contemporary publications produced in Amsterdam. The majority of the images he used were also second-hand illustrations from Dutch works. Nevertheless, the process of reframing and translating these publications into "our Native Dress, and Modern Language", as he put it, was understood as a symbolic act in itself. While Ogilby explicitly stated that his Atlantic atlas had been "Collected and Translated from the most *Authentick Authors*", he also publicised the fact that they were "Augmented with later Observations" – both textual and pictorial. The following discussion identifies these augmentations, suggesting their intended effects and examining their relationships with contemporary preoccupations regarding the Atlantic.

The publication of a Royal Licence for "John Ogilby to print an exact description of Africa, by command of Lord Arlington" on 20 April 1669, provides some endorsement of the connection between his work and the imperial concerns of the day. Between 1662 and 1664 Lord Arlington was Charles II's Secretary of State, and was an important member of the 'Committee for Tangier' – a territory which was declared a free city by a Crown Charter in 1668. Though the pictorial content of Ogilby's *Africa* transpired to be a virtually like-for-like copy of Olfert Dapper's *Naukeurige Beschrijvinge der* 

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>103</sup> Israel, 1998:434.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>104</sup> Arber, 1903:45,63.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>105</sup> Ibid:94.

<sup>106</sup> Ogilby, 1670b:4.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>107</sup> Ibid:title page.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>108</sup> Calendar of State Papers Domestic. Charles II, 1668-9.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>109</sup> Oxford Dictionary of National Biography. 'Bennet, Henry, first earl of Arlington (bap. 1618, d. 1685)'. On Britain's colonial involvement in Africa during this period, see Brown, 2012:33.

*Afrikaensche Gewesten*, published in Amsterdam just a few months earlier in 1670, a new image of the strategic African port of Tangier, which had been gifted to Charles II as part of Catherine of Braganza's dowry, was engraved by Robert White (Fig. 34). White's birds-eye view of Tangier was displayed alongside a prospect of the port of Asilah, produced by an anonymous Dutch engraver for Dapper's atlas (Fig. 35).

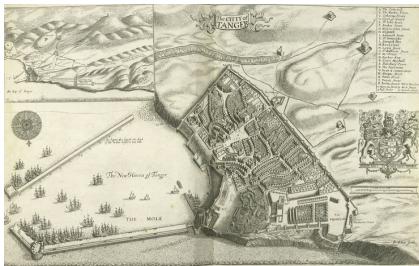


Figure 34. Robert White. *The CITTY of TANGER*, in John Ogilby, *Africa* (1670). Etching and engraving.



Figure 35. Anon. *ARZYLLA of ARGILLE*, in John Ogilby, *Africa* (1670). Etching and engraving.

Situated just twenty-six miles south of Tangier, Asilah had originally been fortified by the Portuguese in the fifteenth century, but by the late seventeenth century the town was controlled by the Spanish. The prospect of Asilah created for Dapper's Dutch atlas,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>110</sup> Comparing the British Library's copies of these two men's atlases, it is evident that the printed images in each were taken from the same engraved plates, and so at some point between 1670 and 1671, Ogilby must have brokered a deal with Jacob Van Meurs (the printer and publisher responsible for the overall production of Dapper's atlas and also the engraver of the frontispiece) to purchase the copperplates for use in his work.

recorded at distance from the sea, clearly reflects the view of an 'outsider', unable to penetrate closer within. White's spectacular view of Tangier, however, conveys a detailed understanding of the settlement's inner structure and workings, suggesting a degree of knowledge that also implies ownership and authority. Juxtaposed with the image of Asilah used by Dapper, White's engraving seems to function as a deliberate critique on the Dutch lack of influence in the region – their artists merely having to suffice with vague renderings of Africa's Atlantic coast ports, observed from a peripheral perspective.

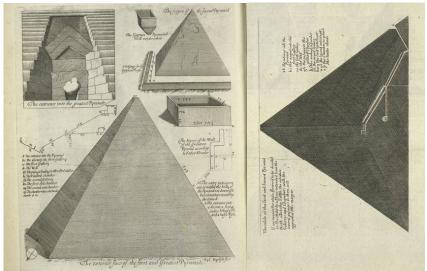


Figure 36. Anon. Views of the Greatest Pyramid / The inside of the first and fairest Pyramid, in John Ogilby, Africa (1670). Etching and engraving.

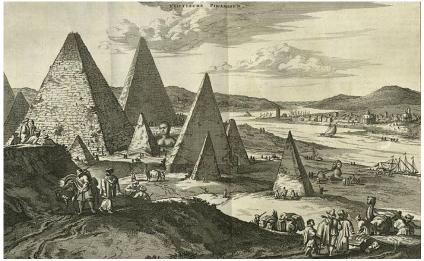


Figure 37. Anon. *Egiptische Piramiden*, in John Ogilby, *Africa* (1670). Etching and engraving.

Similarly, other images in *Africa* were specifically commissioned by Ogilby to be used alongside existing Dutch pictorial sources. For example, a double page spread showing the Egyptian Pyramids dissected and annotated with technical information (Fig. 36), was

presented alongside a romanticised Dutch view of them, originally produced for Dapper's atlas (Fig. 37). The combination of these images allowed Ogilby to establish his work as superior product – as an atlas conversant not only in the picturesque language of topography, but also the semantic dialect of scientific or mathematical studies. This sense of artistic beauty combined with scientific interest would surely have heightened the appeal of Ogilby's atlas for a growing body of scholarly minded and wealthy British virtuosi, whose financial backing of imperial advancement was vital. While these pictorial additions suggest the ways in which Ogilby sought to elevate his atlas above the work of his Dutch counterpart, it is notable that he had not yet established his reputation or usefulness as a geographer, and did not receive the full support he would have liked. The empty cartouche on his introductory map indicates his failure to find a patron for the unsigned plate (Fig. 38). However, just ten weeks after *Africa* was published, the importance of his work seems to have been recognised, and a Treasury Warrant was issued to freely permit him "to import into London port 20,000 reams of paper" – presumably to enable the printing of his next atlas, *America*, which was published in 1671.<sup>111</sup>

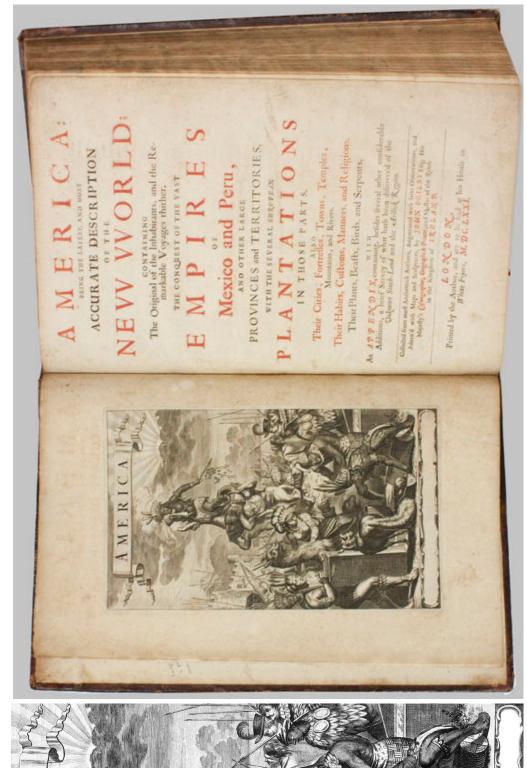


Figure 38. Anon. *Africae Accurata Tabulae*, in John Ogilby, *Africa*, (1670). Engraving.

<sup>111</sup> Calendar of Treasury Books. Volume 3: 1669-1672.

Further evidence of Ogilby's rising status can be gathered from his appointment as "His Majesty's Cosmographer [and] Geographick Printer" immediately before America's publication. This accolade was proudly announced on the book's title page along with his existing position of "Master of the Revels". 112 As he had done with Africa, Ogilby relied heavily on existing atlases while compiling this work. In fact, close comparison reveals his atlas to be an almost exact copy of Arnold Montanus' De Nieuwe en Onbekende Weereld: of beschryving van America, published earlier in 1671. Despite listing the names of over one hundred and fifty authors whose works he had made use of, Ogilby elected not to mention Montanus, perhaps hoping to distance himself from the Dutchman's work in the midst of rising tensions in the run up to the Third Anglo-Dutch War. Yet, he had clearly been in contact with Montatus (or at least his publisher, Jacob van Meurs) in order to purchase the set of copperplates used to illustrate his work. These included Montanus' frontispiece (Fig. 39), which supported a European-wide vision of America as a land of opportunity – or as Ogilby put it, a "New and Golden World". 113 The fact that Ogilby made no alterations to this plate other than erasing the script which betrayed its Dutch origin suggests that while fierce competition remained among European nations in America, their interests in the continent could be succinctly addressed by a single image. 114 High up, in the centre of the composition, an allegorical personification of America stands on a scallop shell, like a modern Venus emerging from the sea. Two Romanesque sea gods carry her up the beach, straining under the weight of the riches she carries and spills towards a European figure standing below with an outstretched arm and an open palm. In the foreground, a group of Native Americans of various skin colours (presumably representative of both the North and South of the continent) are attended by native animals.

Ogilby, 1671:1. The Royal Warrant appointing Ogilby as 'His Majesty's Cosmographer' and 'Geographick Printer' is reproduced in J.B Harley's 'Biographical Note' to the facsimile edition of Ogilby's *Britannia*, *1675*, from the document in the Bodleian Library, 'MS Aubrey 4.f.244'. Harley (ed.), 1970:ix.
 Ogilby, 1670:767. Similarly, Ogilby used Dapper's frontispiece for *Africa* (also engraved by van Meurs).
 For a comprehensive overview of early modern European pictorial conceptions of America, see Honour.1975.



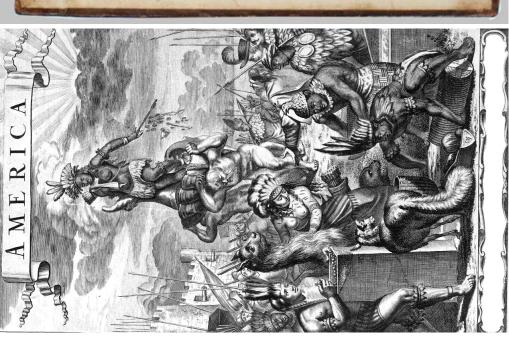


Figure 39. (left) Jacob Van Meurs. Frontispiece to John Ogilby, America (1671). Engraving.

Figure 40. Frontispiece and title page to John Ogilby, America (1671). Engraving and letterpress.

The scars on the arm of one of these figures seems ambiguous – perhaps the result of tribal fighting, an injury inflicted by one of the wild creatures, or wounds caused by resistance to one of the many European weapons that populate the scene. 115 Arrow-tipped pikes and guns point up to the sky, many towards 'America' on top of her shell; cannons from a nearby turreted fortress are also aimed in her direction. The paradox of great reward and potential gain, combined with an omnipresent threat of violence, is clearly communicated here. Viewed alongside Ogilby's title page, which uses such phrases as 'accurate description', 'authentic', and 'observation', the frontispiece's illusory fantasy highlights the lack of distinction between fact and fiction in works of early modern geography. Indeed, the adjoining title page's description of the atlas as being "Adorn'd with Maps and Sculptures" (Fig. 41) posits these two forms of imagery as analogous, yet from a modern perspective we might imagine 'Scultpures' as creative products of the subjective imagination, and 'Maps' as objective forms of imagery rooted in accuracy and truth.

Collected from most Authentick Authors, Augmented with later Observations, and Adorn'd with Maps and Sculptures, by JOHN OGILBY Esq; His Majesty's Cosmographer, Geographick Printer, and Master of the Revels

Figure 41. Detail from the title page of John Ogilby, America (1671).

As the following analysis of *America*'s pictorial and cartographic content confirms, this cannot be considered a given. It is notable that in his short study of Ogilby's atlases, Joseph Roach has highlighted the significance of the author's connections to the theatre, suggesting the ways in which "graphic and theatrical media" might be conceptualised as "related techniques" of representation. 116 For Roach, the fact that Ogilby maintained his dramatic role as 'Master of the Revels' while working under the title of 'His Majesty's Cosmographer [and] Geographick Printer', critically shapes the way we should address America and problematises the work's perceived status as an impartial "encyclopaedic

<sup>115</sup> For a general history of American Indians in British art, as well as allegorical personifications of America, see Pratt, 2005; Bickham:2006; Gaudio:2008.

116 Roach, 2003:93.

history". <sup>117</sup> My discussion of *America* pays attention to Roach's reasoning, but analyses graphic material he leaves unexplored. As I suggest, the maps that Ogilby added to those previously used by Montanus demonstrate his astute understanding of cartography as both a means of representing space, and a way of advertising the promise that colonial territories in the Atlantic offered to British investors.

While Ogilby had failed to find a sponsor for his introductory map in Africa, the opening map in America (Fig. 42), which was engraved by Francis Lamb after the original produced by Gerard Schagen for Montaunus (Fig. 43), heralds Lord Ashley (Anthony Ashley Cooper, 1<sup>st</sup> Earl of Shaftesbury) as its donor. A decorative cartouche in the top-left corner of the map bears his coat of arms, and is carried majestically by angels. The same space in the map used earlier by Montanus had remained blank. Fittingly, Lord Ashley was a staunch Royalist and had been instrumental in Charles II's Restoration. He received his Lordship from the King in 1661 and thereafter served as Chancellor of the Exchequer. With a keen interest in the colonial development of North America, he was made a Lord Proprietor of the Province of Carolina – a territory for which extensive plantation strategies were being planned. 118 Clearly then, the map's association with Cooper served to transform a neutral form of spatial representation into rhetorical tool for imperial promotion. Other notable differences between Lamb's map and the model by Schagen on which it was based include the typographic legends identifying different place names along the coast labelled as 'Mare Virginium' (Figs. 44-45). Aside from naming settlements in English rather than Dutch, Lamb's uncluttered application of font makes the identification of British settlements far easier. Moreover, his bold indication of 'NEW ENGLAND', 'MARYLAND', 'VIRGINIA' and 'CAROLINA' (which were left unrecorded on Schagen's map) marks these out as locations of particular interest for British viewers. As

<sup>117</sup> Van Eerde, 1974:103.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>118</sup> Dictionary of National Biography. 'Cooper, Anthony Ashley, first earl of Shaftesbury (1621–1683)'.

the following discussion demonstrates, these areas of British importance were treated by Ogilby with particular care. As well as significantly extending their textual descriptions, he commissioned a number of new maps of these colonies, providing cartographic information that had been unavailable to Montanus.



Figure 42. Francis Lamb, after Gerard Schagen. *Totius Americae Descriptio*, in John Ogilby, America (1671). Etching and engraving.



Figure 43. Gerard Schagen. *Totius Americae Descriptio*, in Arnoldus Montanus, *De Nieuwe en Onbekende Weereld* (1671). Etching and engraving.





Figure 44. Detail of Figure 42

Figure 45. Detail of Figure 43

Developing Montanus' rather brief one and a half page assessment of New England, Ogilby meticulously described this region over thirty pages. Following on from this section, he extended Montanus' short account of Carolina and Maryland into a much more prominent part of his atlas, describing these burgeoning British plantation economies in very favourable terms. In his descriptions of these places, he included maps that had not been used by Montanus. At this time, the Province of Carolina – led by Lord Ashley – had only held a Royal Charter for eight years, and the continued encouragement of financial backing for its development was crucial. Indeed, as Philip Burden has argued, "it was self promotion, through works like Ogilby's *America*, that enabled the colony to survive."<sup>119</sup> While preparing America, Ogilby evidently liaised with Peter Colleton, one of the Lords Proprietors of Carolina, to request a map – the publication of which would have been seen as mutually beneficial; for Ogilby it would enrich the content of his atlas, for the colony it would provide a crucial source of advertising. Following his contact with Ogilby, Colleton summarily wrote to Lord Ashley's secretary, John Locke:

To my honoured frend Mr. John Lock

Sr.

Mr. Ogilby who is printing a relation of the West Indies hath been often with mee to get a map of Carolina wherefore I humbly desire you to get of my lord (Ashley) those mapps of Cape feare & Albermarle that he hath & I will draw them into one with that of port

<sup>119</sup> Burden, 1996: LVi

Royall and waite vpon my lord for the nominations of the rivers. &c: & if you would do vs the favour to draw a discource to be added to this map in ve nature of a description such as might invite people with out seeming to come from vs it would very much conduce to the speed of settlemt. & bee a very great obligation to yr most faithful frend & servt

P Colleton<sup>120</sup>

Consequently, Ogilby's section on Carolina included a discourse (clearly prepared by the Proprietors but not advertised as so) which did as Colleton had suggested and 'invited people' to emigrate to the colony:

The Lords-Proprietors, for the comfortable subsistence, and future enrichment of all those who shall this Year 1671 Transport themselves and servants thither, allow every Man a hundred Acres per Head, for himself, his Wife, Children and Servants, he carries thither, to him and his Heirs for ever, paying onely one Peny an Acre, as a Chief-Rent...and the Countrey promises to the Planter Health, Plenty and Riches at a cheap Rate. 121

Adding to this, Ogilby informed readers that the Lords Proprietors had "been at great Charge to secure this so rich and advantageous a Countrey to the Crown of England... for its Situation, Fertility, Neighbourhood to our other Plantations and several other Conveniences, of too valuable consideration to be negligently lost. <sup>122</sup> In addition, the new map referred to in Colleton's letter was printed, titled A New Discription of Carolina By Order of the Lords Proprietors (Fig. 46). Engraved by James Moxon from the drawing provided by Locke, the map clearly marked the locations of Cape Fear, Albertarle and Port Royal (as proposed by Colleton), along with other sites named after English dignitaries and Proprietors. 123 Also following Colleton's advice, 'the nominations of the rivers' had been agreed and an enlarged section of the map, inset in the bottom left corner,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>120</sup> Cumming, 1998:17.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>121</sup> Ogilby, 1671:211.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>122</sup> Ibid:211.

<sup>123</sup> William Cumming explains that on the back of Colleton's letter, Locke inscribed notes for the requested description of the new country, and that that this description is evidently used by Ogilby in his propagandist chapter on Carolina. In the same collection of papers as Colleton's letter is a map endorsed by Locke as a 'Map of Carolina [16]71', with his annotations on it. A comparison of this manuscript map with the one engraved by Moxon for Ogilby's America shows that it must have been used as an early draft. Cumming, 1998:17.

proudly declared these waterways as the 'Ashley River' and 'Cooper River' (Fig. 47). As William Cumming suggests, this map was probably not only included in Ogilby's atlas but also distributed separately as a promotional tool to attract would-be settlers and indentured labourers to the new province. 124

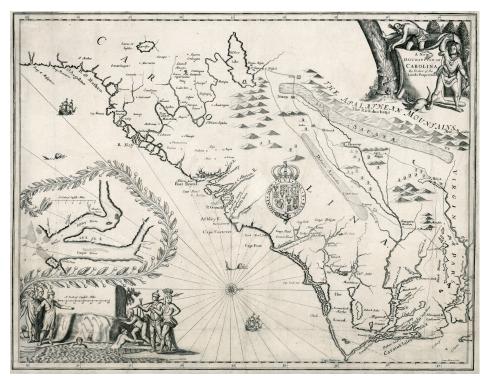


Figure 46. James Moxon. A New Discription of Carolina By Order of the Lords Proprietors, in John Ogilby, America (1671).

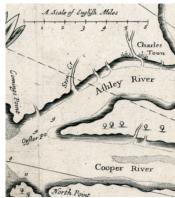




Figure 47. Detail of Figure 46.

Figure 48. Detail of Figure 46.

Economically, the colony "had no obvious staple apart from furs" at this time. 125 Accordingly, the framing of the map's title, within a hide being stretched out by two Native Americans, appears to allude to this key commodity – as well as dramatising the local indigenous inhabitants as amiable neighbours, compliant in the project of British

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>124</sup> Ibid:17.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>125</sup> Middleton, 1992:110.

colonisation. As the Proprietors recognised, the preservation of a licensed fur trade was essential to maintain peaceful relations with local tribespeople. Though there had been plans to introduce plantations of "silk, vines, ginger, and olives" along the Ashley river, these never amounted to anything profitable, and the main activity was "subsistence" farming, supplemented by the production of a little surplus tobacco and corn, which were sold to passing New England traders". 126 Though potential resources of precious metals had not yet been fully explored, this was an area that was thought to hold promise: from 1667 onwards, when plots were allocated to incoming planters "a quitrent of one halfpenny an acre and 50 percent of all precious metals" was reserved for the Proprietors. 127 A small frieze in the corner of the map, which appears to show gold panning taking place (Fig. 48), ostensibly alludes to the hopes for such resources – encouraging potential settlers and dramatising the aspirations of the Proprietors who would profit from any such discoveries.

Like his handling of Carolina, Ogilby's section on Maryland conveyed a similarly favourable impression of the colony, going to great lengths to praise the "unweary'd Industry and endeavour" of its "absolute Lord and Proprietary", Cecil Calvert, second Lord Baltimore. 128 As Ogilby informed his readers, "the Climate is very healthful, and agreeable with English Constitutions" and "the general Diet of the Country is now English". 129 He also announced with some delight that "all sorts of English Grain are now common there, and...good Beer of Wheat or Barley Malt, after the *English* Mode, is made...which makes a sort of fresh and pleasant Drink...The Plantations upon the York River are esteem'd to produce the best of that sort of Sweet-scented [tobacco]." Adding a map which had not appeared in Montanus' atlas, Ogilby evidently commissioned a new version (Fig. 49) of one that had originally been produced for Lord Baltimore in 1635 (Fig. 50).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>126</sup> Ibid:108,110.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>127</sup> Ibid:110.

<sup>128</sup> Oilby, 1671:185. 129 Ibid:185,187.

<sup>130</sup> Ibid:187,197.

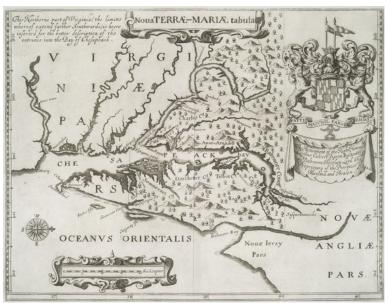


Figure 49. Anon, after Thomas Cecill. *Nova Terræ-Mariæ tabulæ*, in John Ogilby, *America* (1671). Engraving.



Figure 50. Thomas Cecill. *Nova Terræ-Mariæ tabulæ*, in Hammond and Lewger, *A Relation of Maryland* (1635). Engraving.

The first state of this map had been engraved by Thomas Cecill for the 1635 publication *A Relation of Maryland* — a promotional tract that set forth revised conditions of plantation designed to attract investors and settlers for the colony. Shortly before Ogilby published *America*, a major border dispute had broken out between Maryland and neighbouring New Netherland over Lord Baltimore's claim to territory around the Delaware River. Colonial governors had demanded that all Dutch settlers there depart immediately. As far as New Netherland officials were concerned, this was Dutch land. While this dispute ensued, and Dutch officials continued to fight their cause, Ogilby's re-designed version of Lord

Baltimore's map clearly served to symbolically support his position. As recently as 1670, new surveys of the region had been made, yet Ogilby elected to employ a historical document instead, imparting a sense of lineage and upholding a continuing tradition. 131 Ogilby's readers would undoubtedly have been aware of this dispute and recognised the significance of his choice of map. It also seems notable that in 1670, apparently during a visit to London, Lord Baltimore sat for his portrait, painted by Gilbert Soest (Fig. 51). 132 Here, he is pictured with his grandson and heir apparent to the title – both holding the map of 1635, with his crest relocated by Soest into a more visible position (Fig. 52). As Soest's distortion of the map and Ogilby's later use of it suggest, the imaginative construction and preservation of a British empire in America was as much controlled by the "decentralized and improvisational decisions" of makers of knowledge "at the periphery" as it was by those in central positions of government and rulership. 133





Figure 51. (left) Gerard Soest. Cecil Calvert, 2nd Lord Baltimore. Oil on canvas, c.1670. Figure 52. (right) Detail of Figure 51

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>131</sup> This land dispute, and the various maps produced of the region throughout the seventeenth century, are exhaustively examined by Christian Koot, 2010.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>132</sup> Catalogue entry for Soest's portrait, provided by Enoch Pratt Free Library. See also Kelly, 1934:40-43. NB. Gilbert Soest is often incorrectly named as Gerard. <sup>133</sup> Koot, 2010:605-606.

By 1671, when Ogilby's *America* was published, the islands of Jamaica and Barbados were in the midst of a period of development now referred to as "The Sugar Revolution", and their status as Britain's most lucrative plantation economies was increasingly recognised. <sup>134</sup> Earlier, following the conquest of Jamaica in 1655, a number of tracts such as *A true description of Jamaica* (1657), *A Proclamation for the encouraging of Planters in His Majesties Island of Jamaica* (1661), and *Jamaica viewed* (1661) had all encouraged the improvement of the island's infrastructure. During this early period of British rule, there were few signs that the island would become among the most profitable American colonies, as sugar planting had not yet been established. However, texts like *Jamaica Viewed* registered the colony's potential value in this area and prefigured the trade in sugar that was soon to develop. <sup>135</sup> Within this publication appeared what is now thought to be the earliest printed British map of the island, engraved in 1661 after a draught by John Man, Surveyor General of Jamaica (Fig. 53). <sup>136</sup>

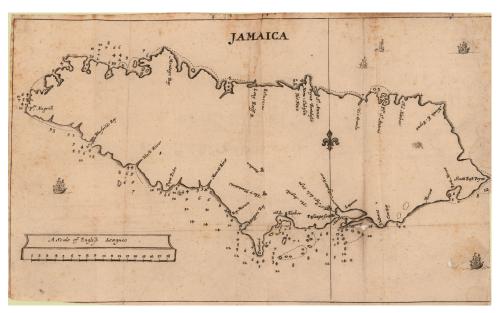


Figure 53. Anon, after John Man. *Jamaica*, in Hickeringill, *Jamaica viewed* (1661). Engraving.

The colony of Barbados had been gained much earlier in 1627, and tobacco, cotton, ginger and indigo were all cultivated there before a booming sugar cane industry was developed

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>134</sup> Beckles, 1998:226.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>135</sup> Buissieret, 2009:74.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>136</sup> Ibid:78.

during the 1640s. 137 By the 1650s, Britain was importing about five thousand tonnes of Barbadian sugar annually and the colony's remarkable achievements were formalised by the publication of Richard Ligon's A True and Exact History of the Island of Barbados in 1657. This publication included what is believed to be one of the earliest British maps of the colony (Fig. 54). <sup>138</sup> As Keith Sandiford has suggested, Ligon's "accounts of the colony's early growth, of the politics and economics of plantation management, of the particulars of sugar cultivation and the foundational role of slavery in establishing the prosperity of the first planter class were key instruments in inscribing Barbados in the early modern popular and literary imagination."139

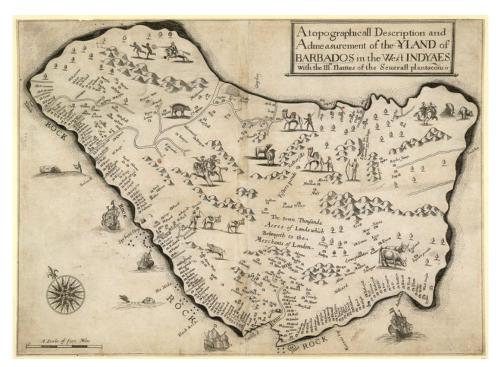


Figure 54. Anon. A topographicall Description and Admeasurement of the YLAND of BARBADOS, in Richard Ligon, A True and Exact History of the Island of Barbados (1657). Engraving.

These important British colonies (which were only briefly mentioned in Montanus' atlas) were treated extensively by Ogilby, who organised the production of new maps to advertise their plantation trades. Comparing Ogilby's maps of Jamaica and Barbados with the earlier surveys of the islands mentioned above, we can identify a strategy of mapping

 <sup>137</sup> Beckles,1998:221.
 138 Menard, 2007:310.
 139 Sandiford, 2003:16.

space that makes use of "a variety of spatial representations in order to manifest different images of the natural and social world." Unlike John Man's 1661 map of Jamaica, which conceptualises the relatively recently acquired colony as a blank canvas, to be redeveloped by a new generation of British planters, the map of Jamaica engraved by Francis Lamb for Ogilby's *America* (Fig. 55) marks the land with the imaginary dividing lines of the parishes, or 'precincts', established by the first British Governor, Sir Thomas Modyford. A chart at the foot of the map is titled 'A Catalogue of the Severall Precincts, with the most Eminent Settlements therein, marked and numbered as followeth'. Below, the names of landowners within each precinct are given, with adjoining columns indicating the number of 'Cocoa', 'Indigo', 'Sugar', and 'Cotton' plantations kept by each.



Figure 55. Francis Lamb. *Novissima et Accuratissima Jamaicae Descriptio*, in John Ogilby, *America* (1671). Engraving.

As an alternative to the linear logic applied to this map (communicated by the straight dividing lines that form a grid over the land, as well as in the vertical and horizontal framework of the table below), the anonymously engraved map of Barbados that Ogilby included in *America* (Fig. 56) fuses the linear language of navigational charting with a

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>140</sup> Monteyne, 2007:20.

Ligon's map while removing the clutter and disorder that characterises this precedent.

Among a bewildering array of sea monsters, camels, a bow-wielding Native American and chivalric knights in armour, Ligon's map depicts men on horseback firing guns and chasing escaped slaves (Fig. 57). Ogilby's map effectively tidies the landscape and is dominated by enormous cash crops marked as 'A Cabage tree', 'Indian Corne', 'Pappaw tree', 'Bennawnol', 'A Pine Aple', and 'Suger Cane'. In contrast to the slaves depicted by Ligon, who resist enforced labour and risk their lives to gain their freedom, those presented in Ogilby's map dash back and forth, harvesting the crops and dramatising a well organised system of industry (Fig. 58). In addition, the map's legitimacy as a practical tool is emphasised by the superimposed lines of a portolan chart, representing the directions of a mariner's compass either side of the island and describing the safe passage of ships from these points. Such charts were crucial for navigating the shallow waters around Barbados' ports and inlets, and in the context of Ogilby's map this schema seems to symbolise the constant to-ing and fro-ing of ships which sustained the island's thriving economy.

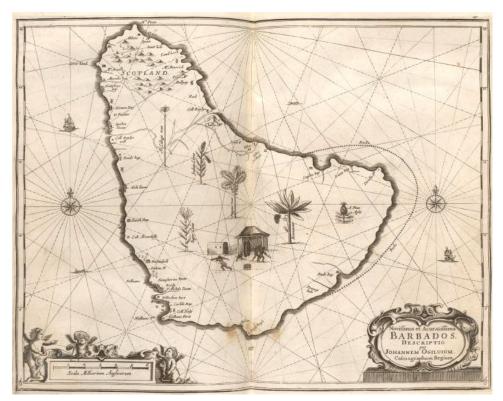


Figure 56. Anon. *Novissima et Acuratissima Barbados*, in John Ogilby, *America* (1671). Engraving.

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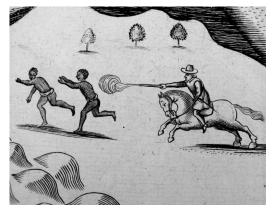




Figure 57. Details of Figure 54

Figure 58. Detail of Figure 56.

In the years following *America*'s publication, the atlas evidently enjoyed continued success: almost twenty years after its publication, it appeared with regularity in London's auctions (Fig. 59). Although only a handful of art sale catalogues from this early period of British auction history survive, a small collection from 1689 offer an intriguing snapshot of the context in which *America* appeared for sale. In June and July of that year alone, five copies of the atlas were sold. Intriguingly, two of these auction lots appeared within sections of sales containing paintings, even though the same sales also included separate sections containing prints. This certainly suggests the recognition and high esteem held for the atlas' aesthetic value. <sup>141</sup> Indeed, as there is no record of professional British artists visiting the West Indies during this period, it seems notable that paintings such as 'a View of Barbadoes' were available to purchase in London's auctions at this time. <sup>142</sup> Isaac Sailmaker's depiction of the island (Fig. 60), certainly seems to fall into this category of painting. As Ogilby's quasi-topographical map of Barbados was among the few pictorial renderings of the island available at the time, and was circulated in the same commercial auction milieu as works like Sailmaker's, such painterly renderings of the colony may be

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>141</sup> The dates of these auctions and the lot numbers are as follows: 14 June 1689 (lot 23); 12 July 1689 (lot 192); 26 July 1689 (lot 151); 19 July 1689 (lot 147); 28 June 1689 (lot 119). These discoveries were made while transcribing the British Library's Volume of 132 auction catalogues from the years 1689 to 1692 (collected by Narcissus Luttrell), for the online database 'The Art World in Britain: 1660-1735' (http://artworld.york.ac.uk). At the time of writing, these transcribed catalogues are due for imminent publication on the website.

publication on the website.

142 Lot 806, in 'A Continuation of the Curious Collection of PAINTINGS, &c by the best Masters', British Library, shelfmark 1402.g.1.(123.). A transcription of this catalogue is available at http://artworld.york.ac.uk.

seen as a perpetuation of an art historical tradition initiated by Ogilby's cartographic precedent. The identification of such connections challenges the common assumption among art historians that cartographic prints like Ogilby's are merely marginal or derivative forms of illustrative imagery, distinct from other pictorial practices.

\*\*\* To morrow, being the 26th Instant, will be sold by Austion a curious Collection of Paintings and Prints by the best Masters; with Volumes of Ogilby's Atlas, Travels, Geographical Maps, &c. at Four of the Clock in the Assernoon, at Tom's Costechouse in Popes-head Ally in Cornhil. Catalogues are distributed by Mr. Wilkinson in Fleet-street, Mr. Bentley in Russel-Street, Covent-Garden, Mr. Nott in the Pall-mall, Mr. Gyllyslower in Westminster-hall, Mr. Hargrave against Furnival's Inn in Holborn, Booksellers. Attendance is given for viewing the said Collection before the Sale.

Figure 59. Detail from Advertisements in the London Gazette, July 22, 1689. British Library.



Figure 60. Isaac Sailmaker. The Island of Barbados. Oil on canvas, c.1694.

Two years after publishing *America*, Ogilby advertised a set of proposals for a new atlas, simply titled *Britannia*. Another year later, an announcement declared "His Majesty's creation of an office to be called the office of His Majesty's Cosmographer and Geographic printer, and a grant of same with the salary of 20 marks per an. to John Ogilby: with liberty to erect a printing house for the printing such volumes as he shall publish in the arts of

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>143</sup> Ogilby, 1673:1.

cosmography and geography". <sup>144</sup> The following year, in 1675, *Britannia* was published. Although the atlas is most commonly noted today for its revolutionary mapping of domestic roads, its discussion of Britain as a "Royal Metropolis" and "Prime Center of the Kingdom" established a critical conceptual link between the mother country and the overseas colonies. 145 In particular, Britannia promoted London as a centre for "Trade and Traffique to the several Parts and Ports of the World", describing the city as a "Celebrated Emporium, which for Situation, Extent, Government, Magnificence, Trade, Plenty, Riches and Strength, may Challenge any the European Cities whatsoever". 146 The atlas' dramatic frontispiece (Fig. 61), designed by Francis Barlow and engraved by Wenceslaus Hollar, reflects this spirit of imperial advancement.

Having studied the formal language of seventeenth century frontispieces associated with navigational publications earlier in this chapter, it seems immediately striking that Barlow's design reifies a thoroughly modern and fresh approach to the tradition, shifting the architectural façade that one would normally expect to see face on, in the centre of the page, to the side and at an angle. This pictorial reorganisation permitted the construction of a much more complex, multifaceted form of imagery with a strong sense of narrative. At the foot of the frontispiece, in the foreground, an assortment of figures can be seen sitting around a table covered with navigational instruments. A large globe is positioned on the table with the word 'Africa' clearly visible (Fig. 62). Approximating the gentlemanly ideal of learning exemplified by Dutch golden age paintings of cognoscenti (Fig. 63), these men immediately establish the study of navigation and global geography as a connoisseurial activity, akin to the appreciation of fine art. To the left, a heavily fortified gateway bears the coat of arms of the City of London and flies the Royal Standard, clearly serving as an imaginary substitute for one of the City's actual Gates (Fig. 64).

 <sup>144</sup> Calendar of Treasury Books. Volume 4: 1672-1675.
 145 Ogilby, 1675:2.
 146 Ibid:2;13.



Figure 61. Wenceslaus Hollar, after Francis Barlow. Frontispiece to John Ogilby, *Britannia* (1675). Engraving with hand colouring.



Figure 62. Detail of Figure 61.



Figure 63. Anon (Flemish School). Cognoscenti in a Room hung with Pictures (detail). Oil on canvas, c.1620.

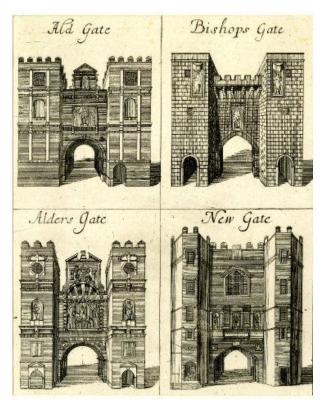




Figure 64. (left) Anon. The gates of the City of London (detail). Etching, 1720.

Figure 65. (right) Tilbury Fort Watergate. Designed by Sir Bernard de Gomme, c.1670.

While this fantastical edifice enacts a connection with the physical, permanent makeup of the city, it also seems to share a relationship with the temporary arches of triumph erected for Charles II's coronation – which as discussed earlier, were memorialised in another collaborative venture between Ogilby and Hollar. Christine Stevenson suggests that these occasional structures, produced to celebrate the Restoration, emblematise "a particular way of conceiving architecture: as an assemblage of readily-dismountable parts like Lego bricks, or like a trophy, the ornamental group of symbolic or typical objects arranged for display."<sup>147</sup> Similarly, the triumphal arch in *Britannia*'s frontispiece, formed by the imagination of Barlow and literally sculpted into being by Hollar, identifies an ephemeral and responsive approach to architectural construction which is embedded in artifice and illusion. A further point of reference, which contemporary viewers would certainly have recognised, is the Watergate at Tilbury Fort (Fig. 65), situated just inside the mouth of the Thames. The first permanent fort at Tilbury had been built in 1539 by Henry VIII, but over the years it had gradually deteriorated. Following the 1667 Raid on the Medway, Charles II set in motion the re-fortification of the site to protect London's docks from a similar catastrophe, and employed the Royalist engineer Bernard de Gomme to carry out the work. 148 Unlike de Gomme's gate, which incorporates carved depictions of cannons, the one in *Britannia*'s frontispiece includes nine real cannons, poised and ready to ward off potential intruders. Creating a triangulated relationship between the Gates of the City of London, the temporary arches of the coronation procession, and the recently developed fortifications in the Thames estuary, Barlow's design establishes a form of iconography that connects the domestic with the imperial, the modern with the historic, the temporary with the permanent, and the real with the imaginary.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>147</sup> Stevenson, 2006:35.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>148</sup> Tomlinson, 1973:9-13. Stevenson provides a comparable discussion of de Gomme's fortifications for the Royal Citadel in Plymouth. This large defence complex, also built during the 1660s, contains a large gate that is similar to the one at Tilbury, and is dated 1670. Stevenson, 2013:113.

Though Britannia's frontispiece was etched by Hollar from a draught provided by Barlow, its undulating landscape and coastal backdrop seems reminiscent of Hollar's own topographical drawings of Tangier (Fig. 66), made during an official visit to the colony in 1669 when he was employed as "His Majesties Scenographer or Designer of Prospects". 149 Originally produced for Charles II, these drawings were later used as draughts for a series of prints called *Divers Prospects in and about Tangier*, published by John Overton in 1673 (Figs. 67-68). Fortified monuments and harbours; winding pathways populated by men on foot and horseback; and ships arriving and departing from ports, are all present in Hollar's visual records of the colony. These elements register an uncanny resemblance to the salient pictorial features of Britannia's frontispiece. Here, two men, saddled and ready to embark on an expedition, dominate the foreground. They study a map at the outset of their journey, having presumably emerged from the large fortified gate behind them. Other figures occupy positions of varying forwardness along a path, assisting the movement of our eve from the City gate, over a bridge and up a winding path, across a passage over mountainous terrain, and down towards the distant harbour where waiting ships allow the journey to continue overseas, towards other vessels on the horizon (Fig. 69). The similarity between this pictorial narrative and the one established by Hollar's Tangier prospects seems to imbue the frontispiece with a deliberate sense of ambiguity. On the one hand, we are encouraged to imagine the scene as taking place somewhere in the vicinity of the City of London, perhaps between the fringes of the metropolis and the outlying marshes of the Thames estuary, where domestic journeys on land and river end, and greater voyages overseas begin. Simultaneously, the frontispiece reminds us of the distinctive landscape of a distant imperial territory, sketched by Hollar and subsequently distributed as the official imagery of a British Atlantic, colonial environment. This paradox, perhaps cultivated selfconsciously in partnership between Ogilby, Hollar and Barlow, serves to dramatise the metropolis and colony as fundamentally interconnected rather than distinct.

<sup>149</sup> Turner, 2012:95.



Figure 66. Wenceslaus Hollar. Prospect of Whitby by Tangier. Drawing and watercolour, c.1669.



Figure 67. (left) John Oliver, after Wenceslaus Hollar. *The South East Corner of Tangier*. Etching, c.1675-1690.

Figure 68. (right) John Oliver, after Wenceslaus Hollar. *Prospect of ye North side of Tangier*. Etching, c.1675-1690.



Figure 69. Details from Figure 48.

## **Conclusion**

To conceive of the different forms of graphic cartography addressed by this chapter as "transient performances, rather than disinterested aesthetic objects", responsive to the ebb and flow of the Atlantic and its ever-shifting hierarchy of power, allows us to recover the usefulness of print's malleability in an age of rapid colonial development. <sup>150</sup> As recent studies have shown, "the conception of print culture... as something to be associated with fixity" can be challenged. 151 The adaptation of Dutch graphic sources by Seller and Ogilby demonstrates the way in which a highly mobile print culture supported the continual revisualisation of an evolving geographical, political and cultural landscape. As these publishers' re-use of pre-existing graphic models shows, the British cartographic project in the Restoration was not simply a derivative of a Dutch tradition, but a mode of production that developed and adapted Netherlandish precedents in imaginative ways: assuming power through print as the Atlantic's former major European nation struggled to maintain control of its imperial supremacy. This course of political and pictorial development evokes Joseph Roach's paradigm of "circum-Atlantic" culture as a reproductive process informed by "memory, performance, and substitution". <sup>152</sup> As Roach suggests, this process "does not begin or end but continues as actual or perceived vacancies occur in the network of relations that constitutes the social fabric". 153 As this chapter has also shown, the construction of a cartographic printing trade in London after 1660 firmly established the capital as a driving force for Atlantic development. The formulation of a pictorial and ideological relationship between the water of the Thames; the ocean beyond; and the shores of British colonies, promoted a powerful pictorial metaphor in which the image of the metropole foregrounded by its river emblematised "the expansionist destiny of the

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>150</sup> Fordham, 2007:101.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>151</sup> Wildermuth, 2008:13.

<sup>152</sup> Roach, 1996:7,2.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>153</sup> Ibid:2.

nation". 154 Consequently the cartographic publications of Seller and Ogilby reflect the emerging notion of the capital as "a contact zone where the empire persistently intruded into domestic affairs", and also into the graphic culture of the day. 155

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>154</sup> Brown, 2003:109. <sup>155</sup> Nussbaum, 2004:71.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

## **Cultures of Collecting and the Art of Natural History**

While my first chapter explored the pictorial strategies used to physically and conceptually map the Atlantic for British viewers in the first quarter of a century after the Restoration, this chapter examines the ways in which print was used to draw the Atlantic's diverse plant and animal life into an authoritative visual discourse during the early decades of the eighteenth century. This discourse was rooted in scientific empiricism and credibility – or as Hans Sloane described it, "Observation of Matters of Fact". A key tenet of empirical learning was that information should be gained from sensory experience. Thus, "the material details of the world as perceived by the senses became the foundation for a new approach to knowledge."<sup>2</sup> After its foundation in the 1660s, the 'Royal Society of London for improving Natural Knowledge' became central to the preservation of these values, and encouraged the development of natural history though empirical means.<sup>3</sup> The importance of travel in the improvement of natural inquiry was well understood by the Society. Indeed, as Stephen Shapin reflects, it is now "difficult to imagine what early modern natural history or natural philosophy would look like without that component contributed by travellers, navigators, merchant-traders, soldiers, and adventurers". As the Atlantic Ocean became an ever more familiar site for British seafarers, who traversed the various trade routes between the nation's colonies, the Royal Society recognised the potential role such men could play in furthering their cause. In the first edition of the Society's journal, the Philosophical Transactions, an article titled 'Directions for Sea-Men, Bound for Far Voyages', urged those involved in maritime trade "to study Nature rather than Books, and,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Sloane, 1707 (vol. i):unpaginated preface. The word 'science' is technically anachronistic to the period under discussion here, yet for clarity of understanding, the term will occasionally be used throughout this chapter to describe the practices more commonly known in the early eighteenth century as 'natural philosophy' and 'experimental philosophy'.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Cook, 2007:41.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> This institution will hereafter be described by its commonly shortened name: the Royal Society.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Shapin, 1994:245.

from the Observations, made of the Phænomena and Effects she presents, to compose such a History of Her, as may hereafter serve to build a Solid and Useful Philosophy upon". While "travellers' accounts thus naturally merged with the promotion of natural history as the early Royal Society understood it", such works "were also notoriously unreliable". "Mercantile opportunism, interest in personal advancement, and fear or envy springing from social dependence or academic servility" were all able to corrupt travellers' faithful witness and translation of the natural world. Moreover, "the distance between their observations and the confirmation of additional witnesses…allowed accounts to move between borders of fictionality and authenticity that proved difficult to police."

By the early part of the eighteenth century, as the development of sea travel provided greater possibilities for people to undertake transatlantic voyages, a growing number of trained naturalists and respected members of the scientific professions began to visit the colonies and produce natural histories, based on their first-hand experiences.

Two of the most notable men to undertake such projects were Hans Sloane and Mark Catesby, whom this chapter takes as its case studies. The perceived dependability of printed natural histories was ever more contingent upon "the status of the individual as a reliable investigator and relator of truth", and so the works produced by these men – both of whom were closely connected to the Royal Society – were seen as exemplary in the field. As the form and style of images used to illustrate natural history were also seen as a reflection of a work's status, both men went to great lengths to furnish their publications with engravings of the highest order. Yet, as this chapter suggests, these engravings were regulated by a range of western pictorial traditions which allow us to challenge their

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Phil. Trans. 1665 1 140-143; doi:10.1098/rstl.1665.0066. NB: All citations from the Philosophical Transactions are taken from the Royal Society's online archive of the journal and are referenced in the manner above, as suggested by the resource.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Gascoigne, 2009:543-54.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Scott Parrish, 2006:66.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Carey, 1997:270.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Johns, 1998:442.

position as impartial or unedited translations of the natural world. In his recent article on natural history in the late seventeenth century, Alexander Wragge-Morley has argued that naturalists "used the rhetorical device known as 'comparison' to make their descriptions of natural things vivid." As he suggests, Aristotelian descriptions of nature were well respected as "accurate" sources of knowledge, but their "lifeless" verbal descriptions "were not vivid enough to enable even an informed reader to form an adequate mental image". As a result. British natural historians working at the dawn of the eighteenth century developed "strategies derived from rhetorical theory...for impressing vivid images into the imaginations of their readers". <sup>10</sup> Complementing Wragge-Morley's hypothesis about the use and effect of "written style" in natural histories, this chapter extends his argument to identify 'pictorial style' as a similarly important rhetorical tool in Sloane's and Catesby's work. As I argue, the natural history engravings they employed to illustrate their texts were mediated by visual tropes and pictorial mechanisms, allowing them to act as vehicles for encoded subjectivities, while maintaining the status of truthful and objective forms of empirical observation. By drawing attention to these influences, I hope to rehabilitate the graphic culture of Atlantic natural history within a mainstream tradition of British graphic art.

## Hans Sloane

In 1689, Hans Sloane returned to England from Jamaica following the untimely death of his employer, the colony's governor, Christopher Monck, 2nd Duke of Albermarle. Having arrived on the island only fifteen months earlier to serve as Monck's personal physician, Sloane's stay was considerably shorter than planned; yet during this time he managed to record a remarkable wealth of information relating to the local flora and fauna. When not engaged in professional duties, Sloane took every opportunity "to search the several places"

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> Wragge-Morley, 2012:341.

[he] could think afforded Natural Productions". 11 With the assistance of a local amateur artist, the Reverend Garrett Moore, he travelled around the island collecting specimens and making notes while Moore produced sketches of the things they encountered. Sloane's specimens were preserved between sheets of paper and bound in volumes, and together with Moore's drawings, were brought back to London. Prior to his stay in Jamaica, Sloane had "settled [himself] to practice Physic in London, and had had the Honour to be admitted a Fellow of the College of Physicians, as well as of the Royal Society". <sup>12</sup> On his return to the capital in 1689, he continued to play a prominent part in the Royal Society's development and from 1695 acted as its principal secretary. In this role he was responsible for the publication of the institution's journal, the *Philosophical Transactions*. As Arthur MacGregor notes, "this appointment placed Sloane at the hub of the learned world". 13 Over the following years Sloane continued to study the plant life of Jamaica, showing his drawings and specimens "very freely to all lovers of such Curiosities". <sup>14</sup> In 1696 he produced a catalogue of this material under the guidance of his close acquaintance, the eminent naturalist and Fellow of the Royal Society, John Ray. 15 This volume, titled Catalogus plantarum quae in insula Jamaica, not only surveyed the plant life of the island on which Sloane had lived, but recorded his observations in other parts of the West Indies that he had visited on his way to Jamaica. 16 Sloane's first-hand experiences of these largely unstudied places, together with his proven academic credentials, allowed the work to command great authority among his peers at the Royal Society. <sup>17</sup> Indeed, being written entirely in Latin and without illustrations, it was a work of the highest intellectual order and was by no means widely accessible. As Paula Findlen suggests, there was a very

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> Sloane, 1707 (vol. i):preface, ii.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> Ibid:preface, i.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> Oxford Dictionary of National Biography. 'Sloane, Sir Hans, baronet (1660–1753)'.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> Sloane, 1707 (vol. i):preface, v.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> Ibid:preface,iv.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> The full title of this work is: Catalogus plantarum quae in insula Jamaica :sponte proveniunt, vel vulgò coluntur cum earundem synonymis & locis natalibus, adjectis aliis quibusdam quae in insulis Maderae, Barbados, Nieves, & Sancti Christophori nascuntur, seu Prodromi historiae naturalis Jamaicae pars prima. <sup>17</sup> For a chronological list of published studies of Jamaica's natural life in the late seventeenth century see Buissieret, 2009:75-78.

limited market for such texts in Latin, and so Sloane's *Catalogus Plantarum* can be understood as a work predominantly intended to serve his personal interests, rather than those of a broader clientele. Sloane evidently recognised this, later reflecting that the work had been "somewhat more Copious and exact than any other before it". Markedly dense and devoid of images, it required readers to possess what Locke described as "the exactness of Judgment, and clearness of Reason, which is to be observed in one Man above another". These scholarly attributes were allied with one's ability to form "*Ideas* in the memory" and "distinguish one thing from another, where there is but the least difference". For more leisured 'curiosi' or 'virtuosi' whose interest in natural history was embedded in "a fascination and admiration for the rare, novel, surprising and outstanding", the work was perhaps rather impenetrable. Despite possessing "a great deal of Wit", such men, Locke suggested, had "not always the clearest Judgment, or deepest Reason". The type of natural history they favoured had the characteristics of "quickness and variety, wherein can be found any resemblance or congruity, thereby to make up pleasant Pictures, and agreeable Visions in the Fancy". 22

Just over a decade later, in 1707, Sloane published the first of two new volumes based on his time in the West Indies, titled *A voyage to the islands Madera, Barbados, Nieves, S. Christophers and Jamaica, with the natural history of the Herbs and Trees, Four-Footed Beasts, Fishes, Birds, Insects, Reptiles, &c. of the last of those islands.*<sup>23</sup> As the title page announced, the work was *Illustrated with the figures of the things describ'd, which have* 

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> Findlen, 1996:73.

<sup>19</sup> Sloane, 1707 (vol. i):preface,v.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> Locke, 1690:68.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> Whitaker, 1996:75.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> Locke, 1690:68.

The second volume was not published until 1725. My investigation deals solely with volume one, published in 1707. For brevity, I shall refer to this work as the 'Natural History of Jamaica'. The full title is: A voyage to the islands Madera, Barbados, Nieves, S. Christophers and Jamaica, with the natural history of the Herbs and Trees, Four-Footed Beasts, Fishes, Birds, Insects, Reptiles, &c. of the last of those islands; to which is prefix'd an introduction, wherein is an account of the inhabitants, air, waters, diseases, trade, &c. of that Place, with some Relations concerning the Neighbouring Continent, and Islands of America. Illustrated with the figures of the things describ'd, which have not been heretofore engraved; In large Copper-Plates as big as the Life.

not been heretofore engraved; In large Copper-Plates as big as the Life. This multifaceted publication opened with an 'Introduction', which offered a brief overview of the history, geography and customs of the West Indies before describing the various medical conditions Sloane had encountered and treated. A second section titled 'A Voyage to Jamaica' consisted of a descriptive travel narrative of Sloane's journey to the island, together with a map in three parts: one showing Jamaica in isolation, another showing it among the other islands of the Caribbean, and another depicting it in the context of the entire space of the Atlantic. Following this map appeared three plates depicting animals, antiquities and cultural artefacts, each labelled with Latin descriptions.<sup>24</sup> The subsequent section of text, titled 'The Natural History of Jamaica', provided a detailed catalogue (analogous to Sloane's Catalogus Plantarum but in English) which, but for two entries, focused exclusively on the island's plant life. A final section of one hundred and fifty six consecutive printed images, labelled with inscriptions in English, gave this catalogue visual form. As Kay Dian Kriz has argued, by setting the book "in English and framing it with the account of the voyage, augmented with plates" Sloane calculatedly sought to expand his readership beyond the "circumscribed circle of cognoscenti" towards whom his Catalogus Plantarum was directed. 25 Indeed, the "variety" of the "pleasant Pictures" in his Natural History of Jamaica resonates with the qualities identified by Locke as making such "discourses pleasurable" for those beyond the academic elite. 26 Combining textual and pictorial elements commonly found in atlases, social histories, georgics, travel diaries, medical journals and botanies, Sloane's publication was a truly hybridised and innovative work; as a consequence, it today attracts interest from scholars working in a wide range of disciplinary fields. Much of this interest has stemmed from its merit as an early work of scientific enquiry, produced by one of the Royal Society's central figures. As James Dandy

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> In copies studied in person at the British Library and National Art Library (Victoria and Albert Museum), and electronically from the Brown University Library and Missouri Botanical Garden Library, these plates all appear in the position described. Kay Kriz notes that in all copies she knows, they are presented similarly – separated from the main body of images by the 'Natural History' section of the text (Kriz, 2000:46).

<sup>25</sup> Kriz, 2000:43 (note 24).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup> Locke, 1690:68; Wragge-Morley, 2012:343.

notes in his seminal study on The Natural History of Jamaica, the contribution it made to the development of natural science can "hardly be over-estimated, as the figures and descriptions in Sloane's book were frequently cited by Linnaeus and other early authors in founding their species". 27 Kriz's essay on the book's engravings marks a more recent art historical interest in the work. Indeed, her study represents a shift in approaches to graphic art more broadly, in which there has been a greater willingness to widen the discipline's boundaries. As Kriz suggests, the publication's engravings can, in various ways, be seen to "work against Sloane's implicit claim to maintain the domain of the visual as a neutral space of pure knowledge" and thus they demand to be subjected to proper art historical scrutiny. 28 In taking seriously this challenge, Kriz remains one of the few art historians to tackle the work.<sup>29</sup> However, while she identifies a series of imperially driven motives in The Natural History of Jamaica, her commentary does not venture to explore the mechanisms of the graphic traditions that allowed Sloane's images to achieve this aim. In contrast, this chapter presents a series of comparative analyses, identifying the specific traits of domestic natural history engraving that Sloane's work strategically responded to and adapted. Furthermore, Kriz's study focuses almost exclusively on the three engraved plates that were placed between the 'Introduction' and 'Voyage' sections, ignoring the main pictorial catalogue of the 'Natural History' that appeared later in the book. Sloane's preliminary trio of images, Kriz suggests, was "clearly designed to capture the attention of the reader". "What distinguishes these engravings from the majority of those in the Natural History section", she adds, "is a heightened visual interplay between disparate objects in

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>27</sup> Dandy (ed.), 1958:204.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>28</sup> Kriz, 2000:48.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>29</sup> Kriz's 2000 article, *Curiosities, Commodities, and Transplanted Bodies in Hans Sloane's 'Natural History of Jamaica'*, is perhaps the most extensive of her works on the subject. A chapter in the 2003 collection of essays, *An economy of colour: Visual culture and the Atlantic world, 1660-1830* (Quilley and Kriz eds.), and a chapter in Kriz's 2008 book, *Slavery, Sugar, and the Culture of Refinement: Picturing the British West Indies 1700-1840*, reproduce slightly modified versions of this article. While a recent interdisciplinary project has sought to undertake new research on various aspects of Sloane's collections, it seems notable that among three PhDs funded by the project, none is hosted by a History of Art department. The host departments for these CDAs are English, History and Geography. For up to date information about this project, see: http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/research\_projects/all\_current\_projects/sloanes\_treasures/project\_dev elopments.aspx.

the same pictorial field."<sup>30</sup> Sloane's "most sophisticated viewers/readers", she argues, would have been "expected to understand both [their] scientific and emblematic aspects" as well as having "an aesthetic appreciation" for their "manner and execution".<sup>31</sup> While I wholeheartedly agree with Kriz's astute interpretation of these particular images, I argue that such art historical analysis should not be reserved solely for these images alone, but should also be applied to the engravings of specimens in the 'Natural History' section, which Kriz seems to suggest are not implicated in the same kind of 'visual interplay'.<sup>32</sup> As I argue, these images cannot be seen simply as accurate delineations of empirically observed specimens, but must be equally understood as forms of representation mediated by established graphic modes and thus imbued with particular cultural meanings. Their collective arrangement; stylistic relationship with other forms of botanical illustration; and interplay with Sloane's text; all suggests how they are thoroughly regulated by convention.

Before undertaking these tasks, it will be helpful to establish the historical context in which *The Natural History of Jamaica* was produced and unearth some of the economic motives for its publication. By the early eighteenth century, when Sloane was preparing his book, the colony of Jamaica had been under British rule for just over half a century. Throughout this time, as was seen in the previous chapter, printed accounts of the island became crucial instruments in its promotion among investors and potential settlers, creating an impression of a well-ordered plantation system that was ideal for the cultivation of cash crops and other useful natural products. However, in the years leading up to the publication of Sloane's *Natural History*, a series of catastrophes had thwarted Jamaica's development – reports of which inevitably filtered their way back to London. Since the British assumed control of the colony, a large number of escaped African slaves had been living in the island's rugged mountainous interior, forming an alliance with Amerindian natives who

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>30</sup> Kriz, 2000:48.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>31</sup> Ibid:52.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>32</sup> Kriz simply illustrates one image of a botanical specimen to stand as a representative example for the whole of the 'Natural History' section. She offers no other art historical analysis of these images.

had earlier escaped from Spanish imprisonment. Establishing their independence in remote areas, these 'Jamaican Maroon' communities survived largely through subsistence farming although "made frequent excursions to harass the English", raiding plantations for food and other resources. 33 From the outset they were seen as a threat to the stability of the colony and settlers constantly strove to supress them. As the first Governor General Robert Sedgwick wrote in 1656, the Maroons "must either be destroyed, or brought in, upon some terms or other; or else they will prove a great discouragement to the settling of the country."<sup>34</sup> Though this had been a major problem throughout the period of British rule, rising tensions in the early eighteenth century made major warfare seem an ever more likely prospect, and by the 1720s the simmering threat of violence erupted with the outbreak of a series of conflicts which came to be known as the 'Maroon Wars'. 35 While this continuing struggle for peace caused much anxiety among plantation owners and those who traded with them, the danger of tropical diseases proved an equally pressing concern. Indeed, as Sloane experienced first-hand through the death of his employer, Christopher Monck, mortality rates were high. Within the first six years of British rule, the white population of Jamaica decreased by over two thirds, and the death toll rose steadily thereafter.<sup>36</sup> Compounding these on-going problems, an enormous earthquake in 1692 destroyed many of the island's towns, plantations and trading ports. Reports published in London spoke of the devastating events which saw the "noted Town of St. Jago de la Vega...utterly down to the ground" and the important shipping town of Port Royal "three parts swallowed by the Sea". 37 Eyewitness accounts told how "Merchants before worth thousands" became "scarce worth more than the blew Linnen on their backs". 38 Other contemporary texts published in London satirised the colony's inconceivably bad fortune,

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<sup>33</sup> Edwards, 1973:230.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>34</sup> Major-general Sedgewick, in a letter to Secretary Thurloe, dated 1656. Quoted by Edwards, 1973:230.

<sup>35</sup> Wilson, 2009:50-51; Gaspar, 2010:11.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>36</sup> As Richard. Dunn explains, an estimated 12,000 Englishmen emigrated to Jamaica in the first six years of its settlement, yet after the first decade of the eighteenth century the population had decreased to only 3,470. Dunn, 2000:149-87.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>37</sup> Anon. The truest and largest account of the late earthquake in Jamaica.1693:3.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>38</sup> Ibid:3.

parodying the kinds of tracts often used to attract investors or recruit settlers to the island. In one such publication, titled *A Trip to Jamaica* (1698), the satirist Edward Ward described the colony as "The Dunghill of the Universe, the Refuse of the whole Creation…a shapeless pile of Rubbish confus'ly jumbl'd into an Emblem of the *Chaos*, neglected by Omnipotence when he form'd the World into its admirable Order."<sup>39</sup>

Such negative reports must have perturbed Sloane. Not only did he have a great personal interest in promoting the study of Jamaica's rich natural history: he also avidly pursued the commodification of the island's natural products, devoting much time to "prospecting for new [Jamaican] drugs that might turn him a profit."40 One such product he hoped to market to British consumers was Jamaican 'Milk Chocolate', which he famously promoted as a fashionable hot beverage with unique health-bringing properties. 41 Through his marriage to Elizabeth Rose, he was also the beneficiary of profits generated by an extensive portfolio of Jamaican sugar plantations. 42 Clearly then, for Sloane and other investors in the colony's natural products, news of tumult and instability would have been a great concern. Unlike other colonies in the British Empire, Jamaica "did not possess rich mines or organized, settled societies which would provide labor" and so maintenance of a buoyant economy based on horticultural enterprises was imperative. 43 Newspapers such as A Collection for Improvement of Husbandry and Trade, which was published in London on a weekly basis, went to great lengths to promote plantation economies like Jamaica's as part of a mutually dependant system of agriculture that operated across Britain's overseas colonies and interconnected with domestic affairs. 44 Written by John Houghton – an apothecary, importer of medicinal goods, and an elected member of the Royal Society –

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>39</sup> Ward, 1698:14.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>40</sup> Schiebinger, 2004:28.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>41</sup> For the most thorough account of Sloane's relationship with the commercial development of chocolate in Britain see Delbourgo, 2011.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>42</sup> Delbourgo, 2007:6.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>43</sup> Zahedieh, 2002:52.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>44</sup> For a detailed examination of this newspaper see Glaisyer, 2000.

the newspaper published lists of products shipped to and from the Atlantic colonies as well as presenting articles suggesting ways in which the trade in natural goods might be developed. In an article published on Friday 20<sup>th</sup> December 1695, Houghton suggested to readers that "In order to improve [the] *West-Indian* Trade...it would be well worth while to have it some body's Business to make a good Natural History as well as can be, and to study how everything there're [sic] may be improved, and what useful known matters grow in other Countries, that in Probability might grow there". Whether Sloane was aware of this article is not known, but as Houghton was one of a growing number of London merchants who attended Royal Society gatherings at the time, the two men's paths would certainly have crossed. Indeed, it seems plausible to suggest that the *Natural History of Jamaica* was at least in part motivated by such requests from Sloane's contemporaries.

In preparation for his book's publication, Sloane enlisted the services of the engravers John Savage and Michael van der Gucht to reproduce Garrett Moore's drawings in copper plate prints. Additional specimens that had been collected by Sloane in Jamaica but had not been recorded by Moore were drawn in London by the Dutch artist Everhard Kick (Fig. 70), providing further blueprints for Savage and van der Gucht to work from. Evidently a superior draughtsman to Moore, Kick also completed many of his drawings which had remained unfinished, as well as reworking others of insufficient quality and detail to be used as templates for engravings. Kick was renowned for his meticulous renderings of exotic plants, and at around the same time that he was working for Sloane he gained a commission from Mary Somerset, 1 Duchess of Beaufort, to record her spectacular

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>45</sup> Oxford Dictionary of National Biography. 'Houghton, John (1645–1705)'.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>46</sup> A Collection for Improvement of Husbandry and Trade, December 20, 1695.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>47</sup> Acting as both the Secretary for the Royal Society and the editor of the *Philosophical Transactions* at this time. Sloane would have been well acquainted with the attendees of the organisation's gatherings.

time, Sloane would have been well acquainted with the attendees of the organisation's gatherings.

48 Though many engravings in *The Natural History of Jamaica* bear the names of Savage and van der Gucht, the two engravers failed to sign all of the plates they produced for the book.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>49</sup> As Charlie Jarvis has noted (in conversation, June 2013) many of Kick's early drawings for Sloane are undated. Others are inscribed 1700 and 1701. His reworkings of draughts by Moore were probably undertaken later. (Charlie Jarvis, botanist, is Scientific Coordinator of the Centre for Arts and Humanities Research at the Natural History Museum, London. He is also the curator of the Sloane Herbarium).

collection of living plants in a highly decorative florilegium – a pictorial botanical catalogue (Fig. 71).





Figure 70 Everhard Kick. Drawings of Hans Sloane's Jamaican specimens (left pages) displayed alongside the corresponding dried plants (right pages) in the Sloane Herbarium. Graphite and ink, early eighteenth century.





Figure 71. Everhard Kick. *Adhatoda Zeylanensium* (left) and *Althea Luteis* (right), in florilegium of Mary Capel Somerset, 1st Duchess of Beaufort. Watercolour and bodycolour, c.1703.

At her two residences – Badminton House in Gloucestershire, and Beaufort House in London – the Duchess had assembled plants from all over the world, assisted by wellknown nurserymen and botanists like William Sherard and Leonard Plukenet.<sup>50</sup> In an "age which valued the marvellous, different and new" her botanical collection was universally admired by the most eminent virtuosi of the day. 51 As Tabitha Barber notes, "while florilegia celebrated the wonder of discovery and possession, their focus was essentially pictorial rather than scientific". 52 The potential to conceive of Kick's work for Sloane and the Duchess of Beaufort as analogous is particularly telling of Sloane's desire to produce a natural history that was not only scientifically useful, but was also aesthetically beautiful and emblematic of possession. Unlike his drawings for the Duchess – which catalogued a personal collection of living plants, cultivated in Britain for curiosity and show – those produced for Sloane depicted specimens that had been plucked from the tropical wilderness of Jamaica and were only available to view in Britain through dried and pressed samples. As blueprints for engravings which reactivated these lifeless specimens into British visual culture, Kick's drawings thus dramatised the potential for naturalising Jamaican plants into Britain, as well as contriving the natural world of Jamaica as a private collection, owned by the nation and at its disposal for connoisseurial study and financial exploitation.<sup>53</sup>

In its examination of the practical or medicinal uses of plants, Sloane's book also responded to illustrated 'herbals' which visualised specimens considered useful for the production of botanical remedies. At the turn of the eighteenth century, William Turner's

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>50</sup> Chambers, 1997:49.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>51</sup> Quoted verbatim from Tabitha Barber's paper, *Mary Somerset, Duchess of Beaufort (1630-1715) and the culture of collecting*, presented at 'Revisiting British Art 1660-1735', held at the University of York on 7 May 2010. As Barber noted in this paper, Kick's finished drawings for Beaufort's florilegium were completed between 1703 and 1705.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>52</sup> Barber, 2011:56.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>53</sup> As Fowkes Tobin suggests, this pictorial approach to botanical illustration also "reinforced the idea that a plant could be plucked from one cultural and ecological context and inserted into another with ease and with little regard for negative consequences." Fowkes Tobin, 1999:179.



Figure 72. Anon. Illustrations in William Turner, *A New Herball* (1551). Woodcut.



Figure 73. Anon. Illustrations in William Salmon, *Botanologia English Herbal* (1710). Woodcut.

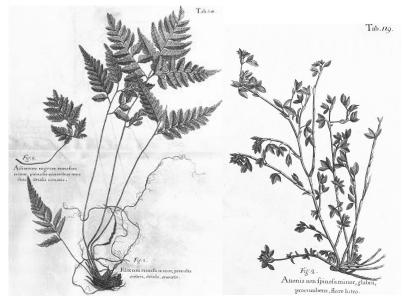


Figure 74. Anon (John Savage or Michael van der Gucht). Tab 54 and Tab 119 in Hans Sloane, *Natural History of Jamaica* (1707). Engraving.

New Herball (1551) remained a critical point of reference, having become in the mid sixteenth century "the very first genuine attempt to identify scientifically, in English, the plants which were of medical benefit to all."54 Turner's use of vernacular English rather than Latin, and his employment of vivid woodcut illustrations (Fig. 72), pointedly sought to make his work more accessible. 55 William Salmon's *Botanologia English Herbal: Or*, History of Plants, published just after the first edition of Sloane's Natural History of Jamaica, in 1710, demonstrates the continuation of Turner's accessible verbal rhetoric. describing in plain style the plants that the author considered to be the most "Virtuous, most Experimented, and Useful in Physick", as well as illustrating specimens with woodcuts that preserved the simple aesthetic of Turner's illustrations (Fig. 73). <sup>56</sup> While the copper plate engravings commissioned by Sloane retained the powerful sense of immediacy and functionality conveyed by Turner's and Salmon's widely disseminated illustrations, their well-considered chiaroscuro and velvety finesse simultaneously reflected the influence of Kick, whose style of representing botanical subjects was evidently shaped by a responsibility to produce aesthetically beautiful works of art for private patrons (Fig. 74). By fusing these distinct modes of public and private representation, Sloane's work was able to stand as both an impressive functional directory of Jamaica's useful natural assets, as well as an ostentatious form of colonial promotion, allied with the display of personal wealth through fine artistic patronage.

As part of an active community of botanists, naturalists, and collectors of natural curiosities in London, Sloane was one of the founding members of the 'Temple Coffee House Botanic Club'<sup>57</sup>. Now considered to be the earliest natural history society in Britain, the club's informal gatherings allowed like-minded men to meet "in the convivial surroundings of the Temple Coffee House to pore over plant specimens and discuss the

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>54</sup> Chapman and Tweddle (eds.), 1996:7.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid:14.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>56</sup> Salmon, 1710 (vol. i):preface, i.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>57</sup> Riley, 2006:90.

latest botanical discoveries from the New World and beyond."58 Through such social activities. Sloane rapidly gained fame for his personal collection of natural specimens and curiosities, which he displayed at his house in Great Russell Street. Here, Sloane exhibited many of the artefacts he had brought back from his Jamaican voyage, along with the numerous sketches and drawings of them. In 1702, the number of items in Sloane's 'museum' rose considerably, when his close friend William Courten died and bequeathed him his entire collection of natural curiosities. Among Courten's possessions were fine botanical paintings and prints, which were highly "valued as accurate conveyors of natural historical knowledge". 59 Museums or 'cabinets' like Sloane's in early eighteenth-century London responded to the model of encyclopaedic collecting pioneered in Renaissance Europe and further developed in the Low Countries during the golden age of global discovery. 60 Mattheus van Helmont's painting of A savant in his cabinet (Fig. 75), and the printed frontispiece to Ole Worm's Museum Wormianum (Fig. 76), are typical in displaying a cabinet of curiosities full of variety and contrast. As Katie Whitaker notes, "this close juxtaposition of very different things crammed together in a confined space was the desired effect sought by curious collectors."61 As this mode of display gained popularity in Britain, printed natural histories adopted similar forms of representation, evoking a strong impression of design through microcosmic assemblages which alluded to and celebrated the inherent miracle of design in nature itself. In James Petiver's illustrated natural history Musei Petiveriani (1695), for example, the arrangement of specimens was not governed by species or type, but dictated by shape, size and symmetricality (Fig. 77). Petiver (who like Sloane, was a member of the Temple Coffee House Botany Club) received specimens from contacts throughout the country, as well as from acquaintances in

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>58</sup> Ibid:90

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>59</sup> Gibson-Wood, 1997:61.

<sup>60</sup> Cook, 2007:28-30,116,214.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>61</sup> Whitaker, 1996:75. Developing this thought, Harold Cook has argued that "people visited these collections in part because of the meanings with which they were imbued. But as with other matters of taste, the meanings to be found in the specimens on display were not discursive or reasoned but arose instead from relationships between particulars." Cook, 2007:30.



Figure 75. Mattheus van Helmont. A savant in his cabinet. Oil on canvas, 1670s.



Figure 76. Anon. Frontispiece to Ole Worm, *Musei Wormani historia* (1655). Engraving.

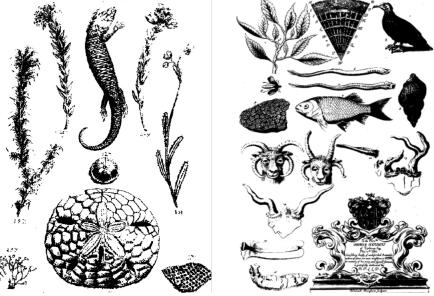


Figure 77. (left) Anon. Illustration from James Petiver, *Musei Petiveriani* (1695). Engraving.

Figure 78. (right) Anon. Illustration from Robert Plot, *Natural History of Oxfordshire* (1677). Engraving.

the British American colonies. These formed a physical part of his personal collection as well as serving as models for the illustrations in his publications. <sup>62</sup> Similarly, Robert Plot's regional account of the *Natural History of Oxfordshire* (1677) combined richly contrasting artefacts across single picture planes in order to heighten the visual spectacle they collectively offered (Fig. 78).

While this form of pictorial organisation is perhaps not a striking feature of the individual engravings in Sloane's Natural History of Jamaica, their collective arrangement does seem to suggest an attentiveness to this mode of display. 63 Casting our eyes across the first six illustrated pages we are confronted with various species of fish together with sea snails and a grasshopper, an assortment of grasses followed by broad-leaved plants and fruiting trees, and then two large sea birds (Fig. 79). Critically, these images do not respond to the logic of the accompanying descriptive catalogue; moreover, the 'Natural History' section of the text does not include animals at all. Closely reading the 'Voyage' section at the beginning of the book, we find that the creatures in plates one and six instead form part of this narrative. 64 Here, Sloane describes the long thin fish illustrated in plate one as a peculiar species inadvertently "taken with a Flying-Fish Bait"; on another occasion, he recalls his surprise at being far out at sea and finding a grasshopper that "came not thither from Land... but fell down from the Rigging of the Ship"; he also remarks upon watching Boobys "fly over the Water as a Kite over Land." In each instance, the margin is annotated with the number of the plate and figure number where the corresponding image is to be found. The images of plants which fall between these illustrations of animals form part of the 'Natural History' proper though they are not presented in the order they appear there.

<sup>62</sup> Stearns, 1970:294-5.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>63</sup> The illustrated pages in the 'Natural History' section of the book are numbered in the plate, so we can be certain that they were intended to be viewed in this order.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>64</sup> Descriptions of all of these animals appear in the 'Voyage' section of vol. i, between pages 26 and 32.

<sup>65</sup> Sloane, 1707 (vol.i):26,29,31.

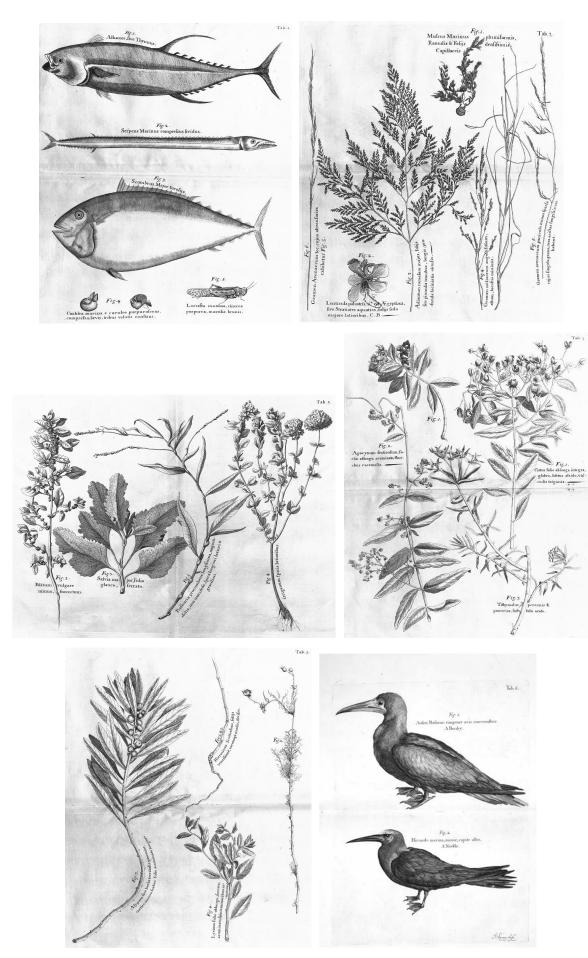


Figure 79. John Savage and Michael Van der Gucht. Tabs 1-2 (top), 3-4 (middle), and 4-6 (bottom), in Hans Sloane, *Natural History of Jamaica* (1707). Engraving.

By disregarding the organisation of the accompanying catalogue, and inserting other images from the voyage narrative in such a seemingly illogical way, it seems irrefutable that Sloane intended to produce a vibrant pictorial sequence comparable to the arrangement of specimens in single sheet images like Plot's and Petiver's. Furthermore, by deliberately accentuating the aesthetic diversity of Jamaican plant and animal life, this sequence assimilated the displays of natural specimens enjoyed by London's virtuosi. Significantly, the captions which accompany these images are not always presented in horizontal lines. but often curve sinuously around the corresponding specimens, following the organic lines of nature. This visual strategy asserts the dominance of image over word, adding further weight to the suggestion that Sloane's engravings were afforded the authority to interrupt the logic of his publication's text. As David Allen has argued, the manipulation of images to fulfil "a merely temporary inclination or mood" suggests that natural history is not "a purely intellectual pursuit. It has a considerable aesthetic component as well, of varying strength at different periods and in different individuals...Once this extra-intellectual interest goes beyond a certain point, natural history is liable to take on an additional dimension: to be drawn on for reasons that are purely aesthetic-cum-social, to become the prey of genuine fashion."66 Extending Allen's argument, we might suggest that in the context of a natural history concerned with a developing imperial territory, the use of a fashionable mode of display was twofold: effectively 'Anglicising' the subjects of Sloane's enquiry by inserting them into a domestic graphic tradition, and encouraging investment in them from the landed gentry who dominated the contemporary collecting scene.

Having offered some analysis of the main catalogue of images in the *Natural History of Jamaica*, we can now return to the three additional plates that preceded Sloane's voyage narrative.<sup>67</sup> As noted already, Kay Dian Kriz has suggested that by their separation from

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<sup>🗝</sup> Allen, 1996:394.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>67</sup> These plates are numbered II, III, and IIII. The map that precedes them is numbered I.

the other images, and through their depiction of manmade artefacts, these engravings were "clearly designed to capture the attention of the reader". <sup>68</sup> Furthermore, their use of Latin inscriptions, in contrast to the rest of the book which was written in English, further suggests their role as coded images which carried underlying narratives to be deciphered by the educated reader. The first of these three plates depicts two crabs, juxtaposed with two earthenware shards of a similar size and form (Fig. 80). The dual perspective of the creatures, which are identified as 'land crabs which burrow underground', seems to intentionally echo a similar image from Adriaen Collaert's *Piscium vivae icones* (Fig. 81), thus creating a connection to a respected Flemish tradition of natural history engraving.<sup>69</sup> The accompanying fragments are described as parts of 'pottery urns or vessels found in a cave in which were the bones of Jamaican Indians'. However, it is not clear whether the 'Jamaican Indians' to which these cultural artefacts relate are indigenous Amerindians, Maroons, or other native communities from an earlier period in island's history; indeed this vagueness seems to deliberately create a sense of ambiguity which allows the objects to function broadly as pictorial surrogates for colonised others. 71 As Kriz suggests, the formal resonances between the crabs and the pottery shards would have invited viewers to make comparisons between them. 72 What Kriz does not acknowledge, however, is that the critical point of this congruence is that the shards do not appear like living crabs, but are reflective of the discarded shells of dead crabs, vacated of their bodies and with their limbs removed. In contrast to this lifelessness, the crabs above convey a sense of dynamism which suggests they are living creatures rather than dead specimens. In particular, the

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<sup>72</sup> Kriz, 2000:52.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>68</sup> Kriz, 2000:48.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>69</sup> The impression of Collaert's print illustrated (Fig. 81) is from of the British Museum. It was bequeathed by Hans Sloane and had formerly been in the collection of James Petiver. This provenance suggests that Sloane was familiar with it when he published *The Natural History of Jamaica* in 1707.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>70</sup> Kriz teases narratives from Sloane's text which she believes refer to the crabs and pottery shards depicted in this plate. However, Sloane does not make such a connection explicit, and does not refer to the 'Tab' or 'Plate' number of this image in his narrative, as he typically does when speaking of things which are illustrated. Moreover, the passage of text that Kriz connects to the crabs (and by implication suggests we should use as a basis for our interpretation) is quoted from volume 2 of Sloane's *Natural History* which was not published until 1725. Such an approach to the interpretation of the plate is therefore inherently flawed.
<sup>71</sup> For more on the visual trope of 'surrogation', see Roach, 1996:2.

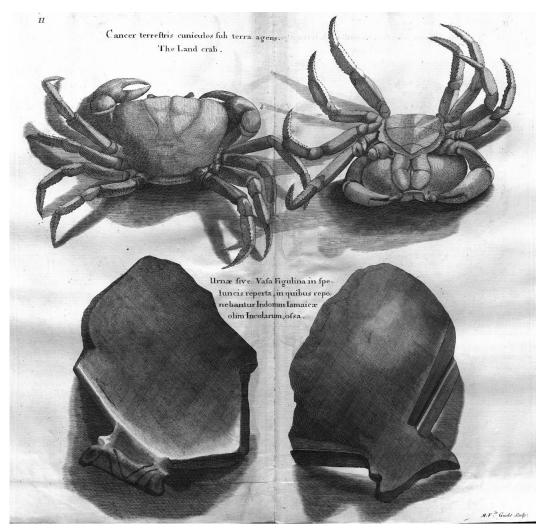


Figure 80.Michael van der Gucht. Plate II in Hans Sloane, *Natural History of Jamaica* (1707). Engraving.



Figure 81. Adriaen Collaert. Untitled arrangement of crustaceans and shells on the shore, from *Piscium vivae icones*. Engraving, 1598.

one on the left casts shadows that demonstrate its legs are supporting it above the ground, rather than lying flat as it would be if it was dead.<sup>73</sup> While the crabs are therefore dramatised as a living part of Jamaican natural history, the lifeless pottery husks are posited as mere anthropological relics that symbolise a former civilisation.

The pictorial simile used to make this politicised statement responds to a method of "comparison" that was well "understood as a figure or trope of rhetoric" in natural history at the time. 74 As Alex Wragge-Morley has demonstrated, men like John Ray habitually compared natural specimens with "commonplace objects" that did not resemble plants and animals "in any other way than in their shapes", in order to "provoke vivid images" that might assist the reader's understanding.<sup>75</sup> This was not simply a method of interpretation for the masses, but was used by Ray in correspondences with his own peers at the Royal Society. For example, in a letter to Hans Sloane in 1698, Ray described a plant which he called Serpentaria Virginiana as having flowers that "resemble a cow's horn". 76 A similar method of description is apparent in Charles Leigh's *Natural History of Lancashire*, Cheshire, and the Peak, in Derbyshire (1700). Here, Leigh describes a fossilised sponge which he suggests is often referred to as a "Toad" or "Brain Stone" (Fig. 82) – the former comparison due to its shape and size and the latter as a result of the "curious Composure of the Lines upon the surface". 77 He is keen to assert, however, that this is merely a useful visual comparison and that "no Man's...forehead [can] be so extremely hard, as to assert this to be a petrify'd Brain, if he does, I am sure I envy not the Product of his own."<sup>78</sup> In Hans Sloane's Natural History of Jamaica, a similar series of petrified sponges are described in the catalogue and visualised in the corresponding plate (Fig. 83).

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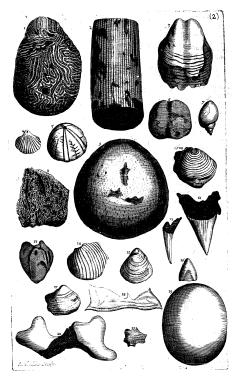
<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>73</sup> Kriz also suggest that the crabs retain a sense of "tension and movement", though draws different conclusions from this compared to though arrived at here. Kriz, 2000:50.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>74</sup> Wragge-Morley, 2012:343.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>75</sup> Ibid:345.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>76</sup> Letter from John Ray to Hans Sloane, dated 26 October 1698. Quoted by Wragge-Morley, 2000:345. <sup>77</sup> Leigh, 1700: (Book I) 177.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>78</sup> Ibid:177.



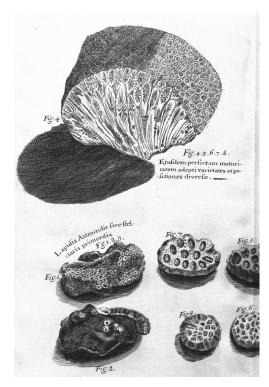


Figure 82. (left) J. Collins. Tab. 2 in Book I of Charles Leigh, *The Natural History of Lancashire* (1700). Engraving. ('Brain Stone' in top left corner).

Figure 83. (right) Anon (John Savage or Michael van der Gucht). Detail from Tab 21 in Hans Sloane, *The Natural History of Jamaica* (1707). Engraving. (Varieties of 'Brain Stone' depicted).

One of these, Sloane explains, "is frequently bigger than ones Head, roundish at the top…having many undulated Furrows on its top, imitating somewhat…a Man's Brain, from whence they are commonly call'd Brain Stones". Establishing the natural history of Jamaica as related to Britain's own, Sloane goes on to suggest that this specimen "is very frequently found" at home and that "there is no difference between those to be found in *Jamaica* and *England*". Further enforcing this connection between homeland and colony, Sloane indicates that the 'Brain Stone' "is mentioned to be found by my good Friend Dr. *Charles Leigh*, in his Natural History of *Lancashire*, &c. *Tab.2*. *Fig.1*." Turning our attention back to the image of crabs juxtaposed with pottery shards, we can perhaps now identify this example of pictorial comparison as a sophisticated adaptation of a standard textual convention used to identify the formal resemblance between disparate objects. Here, it is not the author's narrative but the engraver's art which allows such a parallel to be drawn in a more nuanced way.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>79</sup> Sloane, 1707 (vol. i):54.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid:55.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid:54.

The next plate in Sloane's preliminary sequence of images depicts three wooden stringed instruments, described in Latin as 'small lutes made by Indians and Negroes from hollowed out gourds and oblong blocks of wood' (Fig. 84). Below, a coil of twine is identified as 'cord from a bushy plant used for musical instrument strings' and another specimen is described as 'the root of a plant used to brush teeth'. As Kriz and Delbourgo have both suggested, these artefacts all relate to slaves encountered by Sloane, whose daily routines and musical performances he observed. Belbourgo adds that it was "a remarkable act" for Sloane to seek to "preserve, describe, and engrave an artifact of the enslaved" when their "cultural possessions were being actively stripped and suppressed by the slave trade". However, the geographic origin of the materials used to make these artefacts is not made clear – perhaps deliberately so, to imply that we might conceive of them as part of an 'British-Jamaican' natural history, rather than part of another continent's cultural tradition. In effect, this implies a sense of the slaves' belonging on the island.

The depiction of displaced African artefacts in colonial American natural histories was not an exclusive feature of Sloane's work, but was employed in other European voyage narratives which took the reader on a conceptual journey across the Atlantic. In Francois Froger's 1698 *Relation of a Voyage* (translated from French into English in the same year), an engraving by Michael van der Gucht depicts an 'Instrument of the Negroes' called a 'Balaso' alongside a specimen labelled as a 'Brasil Cherry' (Fig. 85). <sup>84</sup> The adjacent section of Frofer's narrative, written from the perspective of the west coast of Africa, describes how the instrument was made from "Gourds...[of] different Sizes" which

<sup>82</sup> Kriz, 2000:57-62; Delbourgo, 2011:90-91.

<sup>83</sup> Delbourgo, 2011:91.

Michael van der Gucht's signature appears on a third of the images in the publication. No other engravers are known to have been involved in the project, and the style of engraving is consistent throughout, so all illustrations are attributed to van der Gucht. Van der Gucht's engravings in this publication are noticeably less refined than those he produced for Sloane; however, when we compare his illustrations with those in the original French version of Froger's text, produced by an anonymous (presumably French) engraver, it is clear that the roughness of van Gucht's images is imitative of the original designs, and so he is simply maintaining his position as a 'copyist' and reproducing them exactly, rather than allowing his own 'style' to shine through.

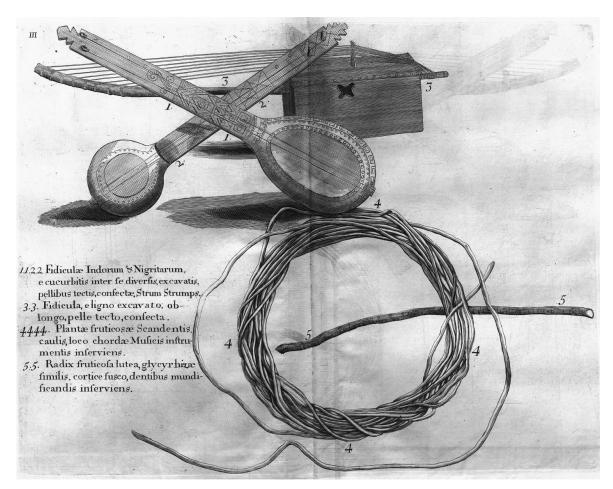


Figure 84. Anon. (John Savage or Michael van der Gucht). Plate III in Hans Sloane, *Natural History of Jamaica* (1707). Engraving.

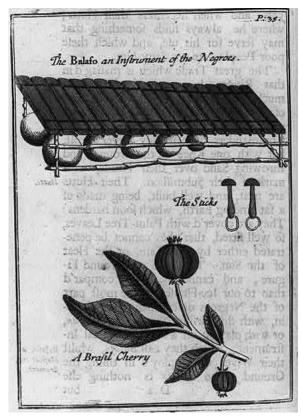


Figure 85. Michael van der Gucht. Illustration in Francois Froger, *A Relation of a voyage made in the years 1695, 1696, 1697* (1698). Engraving.

produce different notes when the slats above are struck "with Sticks". 85 Despite appearing alongside the 'Balaso' in the illustration, no description of the 'Brasil Cherry' is given in the accompanying text. Its unexplained presence in the plate, we might argue, serves to problematise the Balaso's sense of belonging to a place, legitimising its transplantation to the South American plantation colony that is later decribed in Froger's narrative.

Employing a similar kind of iconography, Sloane's image attempts to naturalise slave instruments within a colonial milieu, obscuring the reality of an enforced diaspora and fictionalising transplanted slaves as an autochthonous colonial community. 86 As Stephen Greenblatt suggests in his discussion of representations of those oppressed by western imperialism, "when we grasp that we are dealing less with native experience than with English conjectures" we recognise that images are "projecting onto the captive a characteristic English conception of their own powers of representation. In this conception the artist is at once the bestower of life and the master of deception…[his] art is a cunning counterfeit". 87

Like the two that precede it, the final plate in Sloane's introductory trio is interpenetrated with historical traces of human encounters in the British Atlantic world, depicting plant and animal specimens together with man-made objects (Fig. 86). The right hand side of the image is dominated by 'a purple jellyfish with long tentacles'. A reference to page seven directs the reader to a description of Sloane's encounter with this creature at sea. As Kim Sloan has noted, Sloane had no artist on board ship at the time to record the specimen he saw, and so his image relied on an earlier drawing of a jellyfish made by John White during an expedition to North Carolina in the 1580s (Fig. 87). See A copy of White's

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<sup>85</sup> Froger, 1698:36.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>86</sup> As Joseph Roach argues, in the "circum-Atlantic world" of the early eighteenth century, "diaspora was a material fact, autocthony was a fiction of origin." Roach, 1996:175. It is perhaps useful to also note that by the early 1700s, Jamaica's slave population totalled nearly 45,000, compared to 7000 white inhabitants. Slaves therefore represented by some margin the colony's largest demographic. Higman, 2001:8.

<sup>87</sup> Greenblatt, 1992:116.

<sup>88</sup> Sloan, 2007:186.

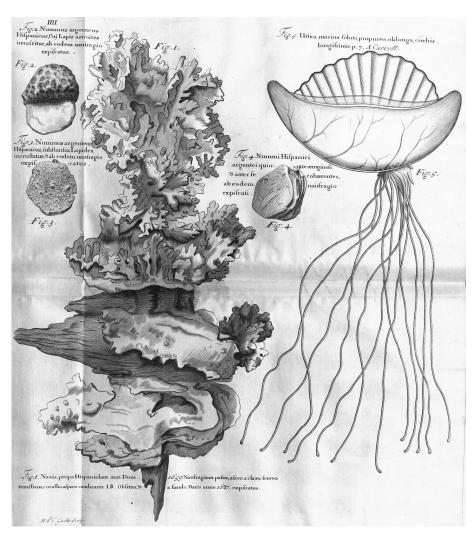


Figure 86. Michael van der Gucht. Plate IIII in Hans Sloane, *Natural History of Jamaica* (1707). Engraving.



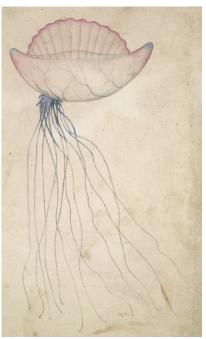


Figure 87. (left) John White. *This is a lyuing fish, and flote vpon the Sea, Some call them Carvels.* Watercolour over graphite heightened with bodycolour. 1585-1593.

Figure 88. (right) Anon (after John White). Untitled copy of Figure 87. Pen and ink with watercolour and bodycolour, 1585-1593.

drawing was owned by Sloane (Fig. 88). In his voyage narrative, however, Sloane suggests that the jellyfish was "different from any describ'd by any natural Historian" and so gave it a new name: "Urtica Marina, solute, purpurea, oblonga, cirrhis longissimus". 89 While this Latin descriptor is inscribed above the engraving of the jellyfish, the name 'Carvell' also appears in a larger font. As this was the name that had earlier been used by White to describe his specimen, and had been hand-written above his original drawing, Sloane's inclusion of the word purposefully makes a connection with his Elizabethan predecessor. cryptically publicising the use of his image as a model. Yet, unlike White's objective observation of the jellyfish, Sloane presents it in the context of a complex pictorial sequence, engineered to symbolise British imperial dominance. The effective hijacking of White's image for this purpose demonstrates the development of British natural history in the Atlantic from a means of recording a new and unexplored world, to a genre that was increasingly implicated in the cultivation of imperial rhetoric. To the left of the jellyfish, a large object is identified as 'a piece of wood with iron nails, encrusted with coral, from the wreck of a Spanish ship which sunk in 1659 and was discovered in 1687'. Around it appear three small objects, described as 'stone encrusted silver coins recovered from the Spanish shipwreck'. The use of archaeological finds to represent the ancient inhabitants of a given location was a commonplace aspect of British natural history at the time, and is aptly demonstrated by an image of Roman coins found at Ribchester and Lancaster, engraved by Robert Spofforth for Charles Leigh's *Natural History of Lancashire* (1700) (Fig. 89). As Leigh explains, "to know what our Ancestors were, cannot be more lively delineated to us, than by the Ruines we discover of those Days; hence it is that by penetrating the Bowels of the Earth, we can trace the footsteps of our Forefathers, and imprint upon our Minds some Idea's of their Times."90 Subverting this mode of representation, typically employed to satisfy an antiquarian interest in a national

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<sup>89</sup> Sloane, (vol. i)1707:7.

<sup>90</sup> Leigh, 1700:(Book III) 1.

genealogy, the decaying vestiges of Spanish imperial power represented by van der Gucht consign Jamaica's former inhabitants to the realm of history (Fig. 90). The detailed delineation of extreme decay suffered by the Spanish coins perhaps suggests an air of the ancient past, akin to the Roman coins depicted in Leigh's natural history, which bear the scars of over a thousand years spent in the ground. As a result, the pre-British colonial history of Jamaica is symbolically distorted as a part of ancient history rather than a period experienced in living memory.

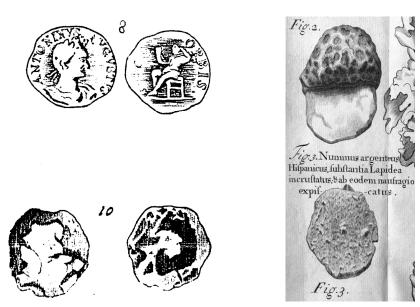


Figure 89. (left) Robert Spofforth. Detail from Tab 3 in Book III of Charles Leigh, *The Natural History of Lancashire* (1700). Engraving. Figure 90. (right) Detail of Figure 86.

On reflection, we might conclude that Sloane's trio of introductory images visibly demonstrate the "interpenetration of the botanical and the human in early modern natural history". 91 Furthermore, their unified subjugation of non-British peoples establishes the use of print as a "potentially threatening" force to "destabilize societies and whole nations" while simultaneously displaying the "selfish material tendencies of the culture" responsible for the production of those images. 92 Evidently, *The Natural History of Jamaica* was not solely driven by the impartation of scientific knowledge, but was equally motivated by the assertion of British dominance in the Atlantic world; as this discussion has suggested, the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>91</sup> Delbourgo, 2011:92.

<sup>92</sup> Wildermuth, 2008:18.

use of graphic imagery was critical in allowing the book to achieve this goal. A later portrait of Hans Sloane painted by Stephen Slaughter affirms this suggestion (Fig. 91). Here, Sloane is seen delicately unfurling an image that is clearly recognisable as an illustration from the second volume of his natural history, which was published in 1725 (Fig. 92). In the background, a statue of Artemis of Ephysus stands within an architectural niche. Artemis was a Greek goddess who symbolised fecundity as the "mother of living creatures."93 The juxtaposition between this classical symbol of nature and the illustration held by Sloane seems to allude to his integration of new world subjects within an old world visual discourse. Moreover, the depiction of Sloane holding an image of a Jamaican plant, rather than the actual specimen that we know he also owned, seems to suggest the perceived importance of the engravings he published in his *Natural History of Jamaica*. Indeed, as the bookseller and antiquarian John Bagford suggested to Sloane in a letter, which was subsequently published in the *Philosophical Transactions* in 1706 in an article titled 'An Essay on the Invention of Printing', pictures "cut in Wood, or Graved" had long been "called the Laymens Book; for every one could read a Picture, and say this is an House, and that a Tree". 94 More typically within portraits of early modern natural scientists, such as that of Leonard Plukenet (Fig. 93), we see the sitter holding a botanical specimen to signify his profession. Alternatively, Sloane's portrait approximates the conventions of portraits depicting those involved in the print trade, such as the publisher and print seller Edward Cooper (Fig. 94), whose print shop was of "the highest class" and operated as "a centre of the London art trade". 95 Similarly, Sloane is dramatised as a purveyor of fine art and knowledge, whose printed works allowed natural specimens from the Atlantic to transcend their fragile existence, and become indefinitely active and widely disseminated objects in British visual culture.

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<sup>93</sup> Hughes, 1990:192.

<sup>94</sup> Phil. Trans. 1706 25 2397-2410; doi:10.1098/rstl.1706.0042.

<sup>95</sup> Clayton, 1997:3.



Figure 91. (left) Stephen Slaughter. Sir Hans Sloane. Oil on canvas, 1736.

Figure 92 (right). John Savage. Tab 168 in Hans Sloane, *Natural History of Jamaica* Vol II (1725). Engraving.





Figure 93. (left) John Collins. Leonardi Plukenett. D.M. Engraving, 1691.

Figure 94. (right) Peter Pelham, after Jan van der Vaart. Edwardus Cooper. Mezzotint, 1724.

## **Mark Catesby**

Mark Catesby, with the support of Hans Sloane, became one of colonial British America's best known naturalists as well as a respected illustrator of natural subjects, engraving the plates for his own Natural History of Carolina, Florida, and the Bahama Islands. 96 Following his rural Suffolk upbringing, and after making the acquaintance of John Ray through his grandfather, the botanist Nicholas Jekyll, Catesby became increasingly connected to London's community of naturalists. 97 In 1712 he had his first opportunity to travel to the colonies and accompanied his sister to Virginia where her husband had established a medical practice. 98 As a correspondent of the horticulturalist Thomas Fairchild, whose nursery in Hoxton was known for its impressive stock of American species, Catesby spent much of his time sending living plants "in Tubs of Earth" back to London."99 To other "Curious Friends", including the apothecary Samuel Dale and other members of the Royal Society, Catesby sent "dried Specimens of Plants". 100 Prompted by Hans Sloane's encouragement for the increased trafficking of natural products from the West Indies, Catesby also made an excursion to Jamaica in 1714 before returning to Britain in 1719. During his time in the colonies, Catesby had been greatly devoted to visually recording the flora and fauna that he witnessed. Unlike Sloane, who had enlisted the skills of a local artist during his visit to Jamaica, he elected to make his own drawings, despite having no formal artistic training. Back in London, Catesby showed these images to his acquaintances and attracted a particularly enthusiastic response from his close friend Samuel Dale, who arranged for him to meet the botanist William Sherard. Sherard was evidently impressed by the quality of Catesby's draughtsmanship, remarking that "he

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>96</sup> For brevity, I will refer to this work simply as the 'Natural History'. Its full title is: *The Natural History of Carolina, Florida, and the Bahama Islands: Containing the Figures of Birds, Beasts, Fishes, Serpents, Insects and Plants: Particularly the Forest-Trees, Shrubs, and other Plants, not hitherto described, or very incorrectly figured by Authors. Together with their Descriptions in English and French. To which are added, Observations on the Air, Soil, and Waters: With remarks upon Agriculture, Grain, Pulse, Roots, &c.* 

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>97</sup> Oxford Dictionary of National Biography. 'Catesby, Mark (1683–1749)'.

<sup>98</sup> Meyers and Pritchard, 1998:2.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>99</sup> Catesby, 1731:v. For further information about Catesby's dealings with the nursery and gardening industries, see Chambers, 1993:141-144.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>100</sup> O'Malley explores these various correspondences in detail. O'Malley, 1998:161.

designs and paints in watercolours to perfection". <sup>101</sup> Keen that Catesby should have the opportunity to revisit the colonies to produce more studies of their natural history, Dale and Sherard helped him to generate the financial support required to fund a return voyage. By publicising the proposed trip among wealthy members of the Royal Society, the necessary money was soon raised, and in 1722 Catesby departed once again for America. Beginning his journey in Carolina, he travelled across land to Florida and then sailed to the Bahamas before returning home in 1726. Shortly after returning to London, Catesby began to work on a new study of American natural history, focussing on the regions he had visited during his second tour of the continent. In preparation for this publication, he produced a large number of hand-coloured copperplate engravings, based on his accurate watercolour studies. His *Natural History* was sold by subscription over a number of years, in a series of eleven parts which were presented individually to the Royal Society as they were printed. The parts were then collated into volumes. Volume one, which included parts one to five, was published in 1731; the following discussion focuses on this book. <sup>102</sup>

Like Sloane's *Natural History of Jamaica*, Catesby's *Natural History of Carolina, Florida, and the Bahama Islands* fulfilled a series of artistic, economic, and imperialistic concerns, beyond those that were purely 'scientific'. Recent exhibitions such as the Royal Collection's 2008 *Amazing Rare Things*, and a 2013 display at Gainsborough's House, have focused on the poetic beauty of Catesby's illustrations. Likewise, Tate Britain's 2011 exhibition, *Watercolour*, situated Catesby's work within a fine art tradition, suggesting that it was his skill with images rather than words that allowed him to effectively convey "essential information, such as character, habit and vibrant colour". While these displays have focussed solely on Catesby's watercolours, the essays in *Empire's Nature: Mark* 

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Catesby pays homage to both Dale and Sherard in his preface. Catesby, 1731: v. Sherard's remarks about Catesby's artistic abilities are quoted from the archive of his manuscript correspondence (Bodleian Library) by Frick and Stearns, 1961:19.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>102</sup> As Amy Meyers and Margaret Pritchard note, volume one was published in 1731, volume two followed in 1743, and the third volume – an 'appendix' – did not appear until 1747. Meyers and Pritchard, 1998:15 <sup>103</sup> Barber, 2011:60.

Catesby's New World Vision have considered both his paintings and prints. Yet, the transition of his illustrations between different media, the relationship of his prints with other forms of graphic art, and the role of his book within a contemporary publishing industry, have not been properly explored.

But as expences were necessary for carrying the defign, I here most gratefully acknowledge the assistence and encouragement I received from feveral Noble Persons and Gentlemen, whose names are hereunder-mentioned. His Grace the Duke of CHANDOIS. The Right Honourable the Earl of OXFORD. The Right Honourable THOMAS Earl of MACCLES-The Right Honourable JOHN Lord PERCIVAL. Sir GEORGE MARKHAM, Bart. F. R. S. Sir HENRY GOODRICK, Bart. Sir HANS SLOANE, Bart. Prefident of the Royal Society, and of the College of Physicians. The Honourable Colonel FRANCIS NICHOLSON, Governor of South Carolina. RICHARD MEAD, M. D. and F. R. S. CHARLES DUBOIS, Efq; F. R. S. JOHN KNIGHT, Efq; F. R. S. WILLIAM SHERARD, L. L. D. and F. R. S.

Figure 95. Detail from the Preface in Volume I of Catesby's *Natural History* (1731). Letterpress.

As Arian Johns has suggested, the credibility of books published at this time depended largely on the credentials of their supporters. "Once sufficient subscribers had been persuaded to invest in a project", he notes, "the list of their names immediately became a further asset, generally being printed before the work itself. Such a list was a key element in the campaign of accreditation …and represented a survey of the reservoir of social credit underpinning the project…[It also] served to advertise the patronage of noble and even royal figures, and it proclaimed their endorsement of the knowledge being purveyed in the book itself." Before he had even embarked on the voyage which was to ultimately provide the material for his publication, Catesby had secured funding from twelve distinguished sponsors; the names of whom were published at the beginning of his *Natural* 

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<sup>104</sup> Johns, 1998:451.

History (Fig. 95), affording his work with kind of the 'social credit' noted by Johns. Among Catesby's financial backers were members of the nobility, colonial government, the medical establishment, and no less than six fellows of the Royal Society including its then President, Hans Sloane. Sloane's involvement in particular would have significantly raised the kudos of Catesby's endeavour – his Natural History of Jamaica being an important precedent for the study of colonial flora and fauna. Later in his preface, Catesby reiterated the significance of Sloane's support, describing him as "that great Naturalist and promoter of Science...to whose goodness I attribute much of [my] Success." 105 As David Brigham has observed, "the word 'subscription', upon which Catesby's travels and publication depended, was also used in contemporary business practice to refer to investment in trading companies. Natural history and colonial enterprise were closely linked. Discovering the natural stores of a locality previously unexploited by world markets was an important step in making colonial trade profitable." 106 Yet, such speculative subscription ventures were not always profitable. Indeed, the notorious 'South Sea Bubble' of 1720 (in which the collapse of inflated shares in Atlantic trading initiatives caused bankruptcy across Britain) is "one of the most famous financial market crashes in history." <sup>107</sup> As Mark Hallett has shown, the Bubble became a key subject for graphic satirists working in the capital at the time. 108 Prints such as 'The Bublers Mirrour, or England's Folley' (Fig. 96) dramatise the 'South Sea 4th Subscription' literally as a financial wheel of fortune doomed for disaster, with one investor being crushed beneath it as it turns. Around the edges of this print are lists of various failed financial enterprises, including the 'Bahama Islands' – one of the colonies visited by Catesby and the subject of a number of plant and animal studies in his *Natural History*. The reference to the Bahamas in 'The Bublers Mirrour' publicises the frenetic speculation which saw shares jump from three pounds to forty pounds, and mocks the apparent infertility of the colony's land with a

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>105</sup> Catesby, 1731:x.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>106</sup> Brigham, 1998:122.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>107</sup> Paul, 2011:1.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>108</sup> Hallett, 1999:57-91.

satirical rhyme: 'Rare Fruitfull Isles, where not an Ass can find, A verdant Tuft, or Thistle, to his Mind! How then must those Poor Silly Asses fare, That leave their Native Land to Settle there'.



Figure 96. Anon. *The Bublers Mirrour, or England's Folley* (with enlarged details, right). Mezzotint and line engraving, 1720.

In contrast to such satirical prints which conveyed the facts of colonial boom and bust in a gritty black and white style of reportage, Catesby's vivid images of Bahamian wildlife promoted the colony as a lush, fertile land (Figs. 97-98). His engravings of birds feeding on flowering and fruiting shrubs are vibrantly coloured, communicating both the exotic beauty and natural interest of the island, as well as cultivating allusions to the potential for growth. While such images would certainly have aroused interest among those involved in the cultivation of tropical plants, they would also have suggested the rich potential of the Atlantic's natural world as a repository for artists working in the 'exotic' taste, which was becoming an increasingly popular aesthetic for decorative paintings and coloured prints, such as those produced and sold in London by Pieter Casteels (Fig. 99).





Figure 97. (left) Mark Catesby. *The Bahama Sparrow / The Bignoni*, in Mark Catesby, *Natural History* (1731) Engraving and watercolour.

Figure 98. (right) Mark Catesby. *The Bahama Finch / The broad leaf'd Guaicum, with blue Flowers*, in Mark Catesby, *Natural History* (1731) Engraving and watercolour.



Figure 99. Pieter Casteels III. Untitled decorative print of exotic birds and monkeys. Etching and watercolour, 1726.

Catesby's practice of colouring his engravings, which allowed him to imitate the aesthetic of original works in paint, distinguished his publication from previous studies of colonial natural history such as Sloane's, which typically employed fine monochrome prints. The black and white matter-of-factness of Sloane's imagery resonated with the dense technical language he used in his catalogue and in the account of his voyage. Conversely, Catesby's more fluid coloured engravings were paired with minimal verbal descriptions. Working

almost twenty years after the publication of the first volume of Sloane's *Natural History*, at a time when knowledge of the Atlantic colonies had significantly developed, Catesby clearly felt able to transcend the role of frontier naturalist, and thus he boldly eschewed the kind of detailed narration that had characterised Sloane's work. Not only did Catesby show little concern with "constructing an account that showed him, the reader's witness, moving through space and time", he included very little text of any sort. 109 Offering only a simple description on the page facing each illustration, it was clearly the production of fine. beautiful and decorative imagery that interested him the most. From an early point in his career, the potential value of Catesby's artistic talent had been recognised by his initial supporter, Samuel Dale, who wrote a letter to William Sherard suggesting that Catesby's "paintings... may be very usefull for the perfecting of Natural History". 110 His technical skill and perceptive use of colour was also later recognised by the Royal Society. In a review of his work which featured in the *Philosophical Transactions* in 1729, two years before the first volume of the *Natural History* was formally published, it was noted that Catesby had "designed every thing from Nature in their proper Colours: in order to make the coloured Prints almost equal to his Original paintings, he engraves and colours them with his own Hand."<sup>111</sup> A later edition of the *Philosophical Transactions*, published in 1731, proclaimed Catesby's *Natural History* (positively) as a "curious and pompous Performance". 112 Such talk of Catesby's 'coloured prints' as 'designed' 'performances' implies an accepted sense of drama and contrivance that seems to contradict the principles of empirical observation endorsed by the Royal Society. Thus, this contemporary reflection on Catesby's work, made by the Royal Society's secretary at the time, demonstrates how the visual culture of natural history can problematise the assumption that early modern creative artistic practice was antithetical to the principles of observational science endorsed by the leading scientific institution of the day.

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<sup>109</sup> Chaplin, 1998:43.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>110</sup> Correspondence of Samuel Dale, 1718, quoted by McBurney, 1997:13-14.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>111</sup> Phil. Trans. 1729 36 425-434; doi:10.1098/rstl.1729.0057

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>112</sup> Phil. Trans. 1731 37 174-178; doi:10.1098/rstl.1731.0028

Though Catesby chose to produce dramatic prints in colour, he openly acknowledged in his preface that engravings of "Plants, and other Things...in a Flat...exact manner" served "the Purpose of Natural History better". Nevertheless, as he explained, it was his prerogative to work his plates in "a more bold and Painter-like Way", thus maintaining the appearance of his original watercolour studies and aligning his images with more decorative forms of liberal art. Rejecting the typical engraver's technique, Catesby did not employ the usual "method of Cross-hatching", but instead worked as though with brush in hand, which he claimed allowed him to "follow the humour of the Feathers" more fluidly. 113 Further indicating his high artistic aspirations, he explained that in preparation for the production of his *Natural History*, he had sought the "kind advice and instructions of that inimitable Painter Mr. Joseph Goupy" – one of the original subscribers to Godfrey Kneller's Academy of Painting and Drawing in London's Great Queen Street. 114 When turning his hand to the burin and copper plate. Goupy also maintained an allegiance to painterly subjects, translating works by artists such as Solimeni, Rubens and Ricci into print and advertising them in the London press. 115 As well as being a reputed copyist, Goupy had developed a reputation in the theatre, designing scenery at the King's Theatre, Haymarket, in the late 1720s. 116 As Catesby's tutor, Goupy's penchant for imitation and spectacle seems particularly telling.

By overseeing every aspect of the production of his *Natural History*, from observing and recording nature in the field to translating these records into print without the assistance of a separate engraver, Catesby not only gained credit from advocates of empirical knowledge, but also contributed to the development of a native publishing industry that did not rely solely on the work of continental engravers. Initially, he had spoken of "going to

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>113</sup> Catesby, 1731:xi.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>115</sup> Daily Post, Classified advertisements, 26 April, 1729. Goupy's employment reproducing old master paintings (in paint and print) is summarised by Robertson and Dance, 1998:354-375.

116 Oxford Dictionary of National Biography. 'Goupy, Joseph (1689–1769)'.

Paris or Amsterdam...to have [his engravings] done", but explained in his preface that this idea was abandoned due to the "expence of Graving" on the continent, which would have made his project "too burthensome an Undertaking." In light of the generous patronage that Catesby had received from members of the Royal Society, and the financial resources afforded to him by his affluent family background, it seems surprising that he should have cited 'expence' as the reason for his abandonment of these plans. 118 Indeed, given the grand folio size of the publication, its extremely fine binding, and its use of expensive imperial paper, there is no visible evidence that any expenses were spared in its production. 119 Perhaps Catesby and his patrons recognised that a solely British production could make a greater statement about the nation's artistic and imperial ingenuity and selfsufficiency at the time. Moreover, by handling the transition from paint to print himself, Catesby was able to re-shape his first hand observations through recognised graphic modes of natural historical illustration. As Beth FowkesTobin has suggested in her study of colonial natural history, "late-eighteenth-century British botany worked to establish British dominance over the world's botanical resources...its goal was to erase the power of the local to determine meaning and to insist that there was only one legitimate order, and that this order was best understood by Europeans who were adept in managing this world system." The following comparisons between Catesby's engravings and other forms of art and design, not only posit his conventionalisation of colonial nature as an early example of the kind of ordering strategies outlined by Fowkes Tobin, but reveal this process as a legitimate practice in the minds of the early eighteenth century's leading promoters of scientific empiricism.

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<sup>120</sup> Fowkes Tobin, 1999:189.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>117</sup> Catesby, 1731:xi.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>118</sup> Meyers and Pritchard note that Catesby came from a wealthy family of some repute in Sudbury: "'his father was a lawyer who served as mayor of Sudbury several times, and his mother descended from a family of lawyers and well-known antiquaries." (Meyers and Pritchard, 1998:2).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>119</sup> Copies of Catesby's *Natural History* have been examined in the Rare Books department of the British Library, London, to assess this quality.

The opening plate of Catesby's *Natural History* depicts a Bald Eagle dramatically swooping to grasp a fish which has presumably been dropped by the bird hovering above (Fig. 100). As Catesby's text explains, the Bald Eagle was known for stealing food from the "Fishing Hawk" and seldom failed in catching falling prey before it reached the water. 121 Superimposed onto the image, the 'size of the Eagle's head' is delineated in a diagrammatic drawing, infusing the print with the suggestion of scientific detail and accuracy. The watercolour on which Catesby based his print differs somewhat, perhaps appearing even more contrived with its dramatically sloping view of a rocky riverscape and the inclusion of a native inhabitant passing by in a canoe (Fig. 101). Although one might dispute the suggestion made in the Royal Collection's catalogue entry for this watercolour, that "it was rare for Catesby to introduce drama into his compositions, as he does here", the image is certainly more theatrical than many of his other studies, perhaps being a significantly reworked version of a less sophisticated observation made in situ. 122 The removal of topographical and human elements in Catesby's print seems to mark it out as a more neutral form of representation; indeed, by taking the Eagle away from a surrounding habitat and presenting it on a white background, it appears almost splayed out like an objectified specimen for examination. At the same time, the elimination of these elements results in an image that bears a greater resemblance to a design or pattern book print. By far the best known figure in this genre of bird and animal illustration in Britain was Francis Barlow, whose late seventeenth century natural history prints "continued to be published well into the following century and were an important source for artists and craftsmen of succeeding generations." <sup>123</sup> Barlow's 1686 series of engravings of British birds was particularly well known and these designs were reproduced extensively. A notice in the London Gazette announced them as "a new Book of various kinds of Birds, lately drawn after the Life in their Natural Actions, by Mr. Barlow, curiously engraven upon

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>121</sup> Catesby, 1731:2.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>122</sup> Mark Catesby, 'The Bald Eagle', RCIN 924814. http://www.royalcollection.org.uk/collection/924814/the-bald-eagle-haliaeetus-leucocephalus (accessed 12 May 2013).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>123</sup> Oxford Dictionary of National Biography. 'Barlow, Francis (d. 1704)'.



Figure 100. Mark Catesby. *The Bald Eagle*, in Mark Catesby, *Natural History* (1731). Engraving and watercolour.



Figure 101. Mark Catesby. The Bald Eagle. Watercolour and bodycolour over pen and ink, c.1722-26.

large Copper-Plates and Printed upon 10 sheets of Paper, useful for Painters, Carvers, Gravers, Designers etc." Augmented copies of Barlow's prints, which depict birds positioned individually and as part of more worked-up compositions, were repoduced widely through the years that Catesby was preparing his book. Comparing both Catesby's watercolour and engraving of the Bald Eagle with Barlow's designs, the extent of their influence is striking. The icon of a swooping eagle was a particularly distinctive and frequently recurring feature in these prints. In the examples shown below, the anonymous artists who copied Barlow's designs demonstrate how a particular element could be adapted as a decontextualised specimen among an arrangement of other birds (Fig. 102) or as a more active feature of a image with a narrative drive (Fig. 103). These different uses of a particluraly Barlowian motif reflect the way in which Castby also experimented with the artist's distinctive designs in paint and print. It is notable too that the small hovering bird in the corner of Catesby's images of the Bald Eagle can also be identified as a motif from the printed design of birds after Barlow, depicted below (Fig. 102). Catesby's evident use of such widely distributed and recognisable forms of print clearly served to transform his observational studies into highly "standardized and codified" forms of art. 125





Figure 102. (left) Anon, after Francis Barlow. Untitled image after *Various Birds and Beasts Drawn from the Life* (1686). Engraving and etching, early eighteenth century.

Figure 103. (right) Anon, after Francis Barlow. Untitled image after *Various Birds and Beasts Drawn from the Life* (1686). Engraving and etching, early eighteenth century.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>124</sup> *London Gazette*, 18 October, 1686. As Antony Griffiths notes, in the final edition of the series the number had increased to fifteen. The plates were etched by Jan Griffier, Francis Place, Richard Gaywood and Jan Kip. Griffiths, 1998:142.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>125</sup> Fowkes Tobin, 2005:145.



Figure 104. (left) Anon, after Francis Barlow. *The Ostrich* and *The Cassowary*, in Francis Willughby, *Ornithologiæ* (1676). Engraving.

Figure 105. (centre) Francis Barlow. An Ostrich. Oil on canvas, c.1670s.

Figure 106. (right) Francis Barlow. A Cassowary. Oil on canvas, c.1670s.

So highly regarded was Barlow that the greatest ornithologist of the seventeenth century, Francis Willughby, used his studies of an Ostrich and Cassowary as models for an engraving of these species in his *Ornothologiæ* (1676) – a foundational work in the natural history of birds (Fig. 104). Around the same time, Barlow also prepared large decorative canvases of these birds, dramatsing them as part of a theatricalised classical landscape (Figs. 105-106). As Nathan Flis has noted, Ostriches and Cassowaries could both be seen in Charles II's menagerie of exotic animals at St. James' Park, and were also owned by Mr. Maydstone, a London merchant. These were certainly places where Barlow would have been able to study them from the life and produce first-hand pictorial records, which could serve a dual purpose as either models for grand decorative paintings, or as designs for illustrations in scientific studies of natural history. This twofold potential of Barlow's original draughts suggests that the process of 'designing' empirical observations was an important one which allowed simple visual records to be codified as images belonging to a

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>126</sup> Flis, 2011:16.

certain category of visual representation – scientific or decorative. This process was evidently one that was well accepted by the scientific elite and was not seen as a degradation of an original observation's integrity or authenticity. In his 1706 treatise on The art of painting, Roger de Piles asserts that although an artist "should have a Genius...that Genius must be corrected by Rules...[and thus]...he may, without scruple, make use of another Man's Studies." <sup>127</sup> He continues: "Tis impossible for a Painter to represent well, not only all the Objects he has not seen, but also those he has not design'd. If he has not seen a Lion, he can never paint one; and if he has seen one, he will always paint it imperfectly, unless he first designs it after Nature, or after another Man's Works." This sentiment certainly resonates with the later comment made in the Royal Society's *Philosophical Transactions* on how well Catesby had "designed every thing from Nature". 129 Consequently, we might imagine that in the mind of an early eighteenth century viewer. Catesby's regulation of his studies by conventions laid out by artists like Barlow would have been seen as a virtue, not a deceit.

Having seen Sloane re-conceptualise the natural world of Jamaica through modes of graphic representation drawn mostly from chorographical studies of British natural history, Catesby perhaps felt that by aligning his images with an expanded European artistic tradition he could better connect with a readership beyond domestic shores. Although Sloane's Natural History did generate much interest on the continent, the extent of its geographic reach was certainly not anticipated. As Sloane explained in the second volume, published eighteen years after the first in 1725, "The first Part met with a Reception in these Kingdoms and Foreign Countries much beyond my Expectation, considering that the Book was publish'd in *English*, and begot a very earnest Solicitation from many

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>127</sup> De Piles, 1706:10.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>129</sup> Phil. Trans. 1729 36 425-434; doi:10.1098/rstl.1729.0057

People". Setting his work apart from Sloane's, and anticipating the distribution of his work further afield, Catesby designed his *Natural History* as a bilingual publication, providing text in both English and French, with each page of script divided into two columns (Fig. 107).

### The Fox-coloured Thrush.

THIS is fomewhat larger than the Mock-bird, and of a more clumfy shape. Its bill is fomewhat long, and a little hooked. The eyes are yellow. All the upper part of its body is of a muddy red or fox-colour, except the interior vanes of the quill feathers, which are dark brown, and the ends of the covert wing feathers, which are edged with dusty white. Its tail is very long, and of the same colour with the back and wings. The neck, breast, and all the under part of the body, of a dusty white, spotted with dark brown: the legs and seet are beown. This bird is called in Firginia the French Mack-bird. It remains all the year in Carolina and Firginia. It sings with some variety of notes, though not comparable to the Mock-bird.

#### Grive rouffe.

LLE est un peu plus grusse que le nosqueur. Et n'est par se dézogée. Seu bec est un peu long, est crectue : les yeux sons jauness : toute la partie supérieure de son corps est rousses des grandes plusees des ailes qui sont d'un brun obseur, et les exercenties des pranses plusees des ailes qui sont d'un brun obseur, et les exercenties des principales de sont d'un blanc falle. Sa queix est est longue et de la nature couleur que son des les colors peut d'un blanc falle. Sa queix est est longue et d'un blanc falle. Sa queix est est longue et d'un blanc falle, tout le déssous de son corps sont d'un blanc falle, tout le déssous de son corps sont d'un blanc falle, tout le déssous de son corps sont d'un blanc falle, tout le déssous de son corps sont d'un blanc de la caroline et d'a la Virginic peudaut toute l'année : sen chant d'quelque varieté; mais il n'est pas comparable à celui du mogueur.

Cerafi fimilis arbufcula Mariana, Padi folio, flore albo parvo racemofo. Pluk. Mantiff. 43. Tab. cccxxxix.

The CLUSTER'D BLACK CHERRY.

THIS Tree, in the manner of its growing, refembles much our common black cherry, in the thick woods of Caru-fives, where thefe Trees mod abound. They folden grow bigger than a man's lag, but by being removed to more open places, they become large, from of them being two feet in diameter. In March it produces pendulous butches of white flowers, which are facoured by finall black Cherries of a greenish cash, banging in clushras of five inches long, in the manner of Carriants. The fruit of famout that trees is flower and plandant: others are kitter. They are effected for making the best cherries upon. They are much covered by hirds, parti-

Arbriffeau reffemblant au Cerifier noir.

CET Arbes dans fa maniere de creitre refinable hausung.

Alter cerifien mêr. On a'un reuseu guere de plus grous que li junde dans les tois de la Carolina, sé cet debre ef fort commenci quand en le transfisarte dans un lieu plus aucure, il grefi d'ensentage. On en voir qui on infogues à deux foi de donnéer du moi de Mars il produit de haupures reuverfis de fours blanche.

An moi de Mars il produit de haupures reuverfis de fours blanche.

An moi de Mars il produit de haupures reuverfis de fours blanche.

Jernand des groupes de cloq passes de lang, fondables à colle de grafièlles. Les fraits de qualques uns de car debres fuit deux le grafièlles. Les fraits de qualques uns de car debres fuit deux le fraits de qualques uns de la debres. Les difeux d'entre le carolit que de carofit pas un off faire; Es on flives moff les carojés endinaires qui ent de graffie for un de tes debres. Les difeux, d'a

forment las grettes, fast fur friende de car crojés.



Figure 107. Mark Catesby. *The Fox-coloured Thrush and The Cluster'd Black Cherry*, in Mark Catesby, *Natural History* (1731). Engraving and watercolour. (Shown alongside the corresponding page of text, in English and French).

His use of two languages indicates that he intended his volume to move seamlessly into other contexts and be read on the continent, thus allowing him to enter a European-wide discourse of imperial natural history via the French. Significantly, this followed the same bilingual configuration that Maria Sibylla Merian had employed in her *Metamorphosis Insectorum Surinamensium* (1705), which was published in various combinations of Dutch, Latin and French, in many editions throughout the eighteenth century. Like Catesby, Merian was a keen naturalist, with a particular fondness for fine artistic representation. Having been sponsored by the city of Amsterdam to travel to the Dutch Atlantic colony of Surinam in 1699, she enlisted the assistance of Pieter Sluyter and

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<sup>130</sup> Sloane 1725 (vol. ii):introduction i.

Jospeph Mulder to produce engravings from her exquisite watercolour studies, which were subsequently coloured and used to furnish her natural history of the colony. After its initial publication in 1705, her work rapidly gained popularity throughout Europe. Not only were Merian's images of scientific interest, they were extremely decorative and revealed to naturalists, book collectors and virtuosi "vivid and surprising portrayals of tropical plants and animals such as no publication had ever done before." Furthermore, her depictions of nature brought to the attention of wealthy consumers images of plants which were increasingly available to purchase as 'living commodities' that could be transplanted from their original tropical locations and naturalised within European gardens. At this time, Amsterdam was fast becoming the foremost horticultural centre of Europe, and exotic species such as those depicted by Merian were among the most desirable on offer. <sup>132</sup> Thus, in relation to this burgeoning trade, Merian's striking imagery functioned as an extremely effective means of advertising the natural goods of Surinam to prospective buyers across the Netherlands, as well the rest of mainland Europe and Britain. <sup>133</sup> For these refined kinds of clientele, the cultivation of beautifully constructed gardens and exquisitely decorated interiors habitually went hand in hand, and thus by purposely rooting her work in the esteemed tradition of Dutch botanical artists such as Jan van Kessel (an artist who was especially revered in England as "a curious Painter of Flowers [and] Insects"), Merian ensured that her catalogue of colonial natural goods made an agreeable impression (Figs. 108-109). 134 Van Kessel's "Pictures were much esteemed" in Britain and he was widely regarded as one of "the most eminent painters, and other famous artists, that have flourished in Europe". 135 Recognising the resemblance between Merian's and van Kessel's

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>131</sup> Stearn, 1982:531.

For a detailed account of the Northern European trade in new world exotic plants in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, see Britz, 1974:133-144.

Advertisements for Merian's publication appeared in numerous London newspapers, and the book was listed as being sold by the well-known book and print seller, Joseph Smith. *Daily Journal*, 'Classified Ads', 1 May, 1724.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>134</sup> Resta, 1739:40.

<sup>135</sup> Ibid:40.





Figure 108. (left) Jan van Kessel. Insects and Fruit. Oil on copper, c.1660-1665.

Figure 109. (right) Pieter Sluyter, after Maria Sibylla Merian. *Pink-Flowered Rocu and Insects*, in MariaSibylla Merian, *Metamorphosis Insectorum Surinamensium* (1719). Engraving and watercolour.





Figure 110. (left) Mark Catesby. *The Little Sparrow and Purple Bind-Weed of Carolina*, in Mark Catesby, *Natural History* (1731). Engraving and watercolour.

Figure 111. (right) Pieter Sluyter, after Maria Sibylla Merian. *Jasmine plant or vine with snake and insects*, in MariaSibylla Merian, *Metamorphosis Insectorum Surinamensium* (1719). Engraving and watercolour.





Figure 112. (left) Mark Catesby. *The Bead Snake and Virginia Potato*, in Mark Catesby, *Natural History* (1743). Engraving and watercolour.

Figure 113. (right) Maria Sibylla Merian. *Aesculapian false coral snake, banded cateyed snake and frogs*. Watercolour and bodycolour on vellum, c.1705-10.

imagery, we can begin to understand the self-conscious continuation of a venerated artistic style as critical to the success of her work. In light of this relationship, and the reputation that Merian's work enjoyed throughout Europe and in Britain, it seems pertinent that Catesby's publication followed a remarkably similar pattern – both in its textual format and its pictorial style. The combination of birds, insects and plants that characterise the images in the first volume of his *Natural History*, and those in later editions, are distinctly reminiscent of the labyrinthine aesthetic cultivated by van Kessell and continued by Merian (Figs. 110-113).

As noted already, when Catesby was working on his Natural History, Britain was beginning to enjoy a flourishing trade in new world plants to rival the one already established by the Dutch. The continuing growth of British maritime commerce gave "easy access to the natural produce of the entire world", and as enterprising Dutchmen had been doing so for many years, nurserymen in London were increasingly able to offer owners of renowned botanical gardens a wide variety of exotic plants from across the Atlantic. 136 From his early activities sending plants back from America to "Curious Friends" in London, Catesby was particularly au fait with the practice of botanical transplantation from colony to homeland, and would have been well aware of the emerging fashion for such natural commodities. 137 Indeed, even before embarking on his travels, Catesby was involved in the nursery trade, and may even have begun a career in his teenage years as a gardener and botanist. 138 After his return to London, American 'wilderness gardens' became increasingly popular in the capital; this was developed as a 'naturalistic' mode of planting, in which imported flowers, trees and shrubs were arranged "in a serpentine design" that was "visually symbolic of the American natural habitats". <sup>139</sup> A particularly enthusiastic advocate of this style was Thomas Fairchild, who owned a successful nursery

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<sup>136</sup> Frick and Stearns, 1691:87.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>137</sup> Catesby, 1731:v.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>138</sup> O'Malley, 1998:151.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>139</sup> Ibid:161.

in Hoxton, and was a close acquaintance of Catesby. In his 1722 treatise, *The city gardener*, Fairchild not only described which "exotick" and "ornamental" plants would "thrive best in the London gardens", but specifically suggested how they should be arranged. "The plain way of laying out Squares in Grass Platts and Gravel Walks", he explained, "does not sufficiently give our Thoughts an Opportunity of Country Amusements; I think some sort of Wilderness-Work will do much better, and divert the Gentry better than looking out of their Windows upon an open Figure". The decorative floral species' in Catesby's images represented the kinds of plants that Fairchild had in mind for such planting schemes. Given his association with the nursery owner, it seems highly probable that Catesby was conscious of the ulterior function his publication could fulfil as an advertisement for the capital's horticultural trade. Moreover, as we have already identified, Catesby's bilingual publication was also designed for export and so would have been able to publicise the British "horticultural revolution" overseas too. <sup>142</sup>

It may have been with his continental audience in mind that Catesby found inspiration from the emerging 'rococo' style sweeping across Europe at the time. From about 1700 onwards, the *genre pittoresque*, or rococo, established "a new mood of intimacy, elegance, colour and movement" in a range of artistic practices. <sup>143</sup> Between 1713 and 1744, when Britain and France were momentarily at peace, the increased movement of artists and designers between the two countries facilitated rococo's rapid spread. <sup>144</sup> A key feature of rococo was its incorporation of naturalistic elements, with plants and animals playing a pivotal role in many designs. The use of asymmetrical compositions within organised pictorial schemas was also a distinctive characteristic. The influence of rococo design on Catesby becomes evident when we compare some of his engravings with pattern book

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>140</sup> Fairchild, 1722:title page.

<sup>141</sup> Ibid:12

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>142</sup> Laird, 1998:187.

<sup>143</sup> Snodin 1984-27

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>144</sup> Scott, 1995.



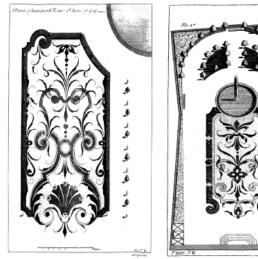
Figure 114. (left)Mark Catesby. *The Bastard Baltimore / The Catalpa-Tree*, in Mark Catesby, *Natural History* (1731). Engraving and watercolour.

Figure 115. (centre) Mark Catesby. *The Rice-Bird*, in Mark Catesby, *Natural History* (1731). Engraving and watercolour.

Figure 116. (right)Mark Catesby. *The Flamingo / Keratophyton*, in Mark Catesby, *Natural History* (1731). Engraving and watercolour.



Figure 117. (left) Pierre-Edmé Babel. Rococo design. Engraving and etching, mid-eighteenth century. Figure 118. (centre) Anon (European). Candle sconce. Gilded wrought iron, mid-eighteenth century. Figure 119. (right) Anon (French). Wall bracket. Carved and gilded lime wood, c.1730s.



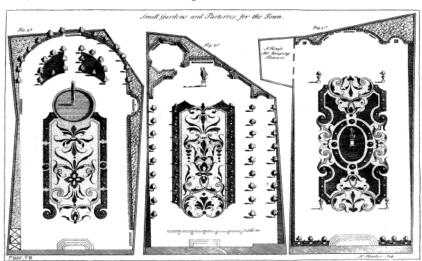


Figure 120. Michael van der Gucht. Rococo garden designs in John James, *The Theory and Practice of Gardening* (1728). Engraving.

prints, ornaments, and interior decorations in this mode (Figs. 114-119). It is also notable that the serpentine lines and augmented symmetry in many of his engravings reflect contemporary rococo garden designs such as those illustrated in *The Theory and Practice* of Gardening (1728) – a work which was translated by John James from a book originally published in French (Fig 120). Together with the comparisons already made between Catesby's imagery and other forms of representation, these stylistic associations reinforce the suggestion that "ecological representationalism was not inevitably a determining factor in his selection of elements". 145 His image of a Flamingo (Fig. 116) perhaps best demonstrates his commitment to reorganising colonial natural history in this way. The bird is depicted standing upright before a maritime vista, in front of what appears to be a strangely bare, stylized depiction of a tree. When we read Catesby's description, we discover that this 'tree', known as a keratophyton, is in fact an underwater plant which grows only to a height of two feet. 146 Thus, in this image, Catesby's improbable juxtaposition of a plant and an animal clearly manipulates reality, augmenting the way in which he witnessed and recorded these specimens in order to present a compositional form that might resonate with contemporary preoccupations in ornamental design. Considering his scientific credentials within the Royal Society, and his evident commitment to the accurate representation of natural subjects, it would be wrong to go so far as to say that Catesby's primary objective was a decorative one. 147 Yet, in light of the comparisons we are able to make between his work and other kinds of visual rhetoric – both old and new – we might understand his images not solely as documents of the natural world of the Atlantic, but as 'monumentalised' British visions of colonial nature, shaped by the tastes of the time.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>145</sup> Wilson, 1970:177.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>146</sup> For this perceptive observation, I credit Wilson, 1970:177

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>147</sup> So highly regarded was Catesby as a naturalist that his *Natural History* became "the sole reference for thirty-eight of the 100 nominal entries of North American birds included by Linnaeus in his 1758 edition of Systema Naturae". Wilson, 1970:169.

### Conclusion

As this chapter has demonstrated, the images used by Sloane and Catesby to illustrate their colonial natural histories cannot be seen simply as objective portrayals of plant and animal life, produced solely to further the empirical systems of knowledge endorsed by the Royal Society, but must be understood as highly controlled forms of representation that were mediated by a range of pictorial conventions in order to fulfil additional concerns. Forming relationships with standard approaches to natural history engraving, as well as prevailing connoisseurial notions of taste and order, these images demonstrate how the manipulation of first-hand studies allowed Sloane and Catesby to integrate the natural world of the British Atlantic within a domestic artistic tradition. By blurring the distinction between the "aesthetic categories of the universal and particular" and employing pictorial abstraction to convey an impression of standardised knowledge, they were able to make a series of broader statements about the interconnectedness of Britain and the Atlantic colonies. 148

Using these pictorial techniques, Sloane and Catesby not only facilitated contemporary viewers' better comprehension of colonial natural history, but increased the appeal of their publications among wealthy gentleman scholars. As a result, they effectively advertised a range of commercial enterprises to potential investors without depicting them explicitly. For example, by providing aesthetically pleasing images of all kinds of natural resources – decorative, medicinal and edible – without discriminating between these categories, their works transmuted the ecological reality of a "monocultural plantation machine" and endorsed a universally pleasing "vision of picturesque intermixture." Clearly then, the graphic art of natural history in the early eighteenth century was one of the most powerful tools used to assert British control over the natural resources of the Atlantic world.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>148</sup> Fowkes Tobin, 1999:202.

<sup>149</sup> Casid, 2004:9.

## CHAPTER THREE

# Native American Anglo-Acculturation in a Circum-Atlantic Economy

On 16 November 1710, an advertisement in the *London Gazette* announced:

This is to give Notice, that the Metzatinto Prints by John Simmons, in whole Lengths of the four Indian Kings, that are done from the Original Pictures drawn by John Verelst, are now ready to be delivered to Subscribers, and Sold at the Rainbow and Dove, the corner of Ivey-bridge in the Strand.<sup>1</sup>

These prints (Figs. 121-124) depicted a group of Native American Indians belonging to the Iroquois League of Nations, who had visited London seven months earlier. Their presence in the capital had been organised as part of a diplomatic mission, arranged by colonial leaders from New England to gain military backing for the reduction of French territories in the American-Canadian borderlands.<sup>2</sup> As ambassadors of indigenous tribes, the four Indian Kings' attendance served to demonstrate to the British monarchy and members of the public the existence of a formal coalition between British colonists and Native Americans. During their visit to London, the four Indian Kings publically declared their allegiance to the British imperial cause in an audience with Queen Anne at St James' Palace. During this event, they expressed their "readiness to assist the English in the Reduction of Canada, and of their Aversion to the French", and intimated their "desire to be Instructed in the Christian Religion."<sup>3</sup>

This chapter examines the role played by John Simon's mezzotints of the four Indian Kings as mobile reproductions of portraits that had originally been painted by John Verelst (Figs. 125-128). In particular, it suggests how the dissemination of these mezzotints promoted an innovative notion of Anglo-acculturation that was simultaneously supported

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> London Gazette, 16 November, 1710.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> The full names of the four Iroquois ambassadors were: Ho Nee Yeath Taw No Row; Tee Yee Neen Ho Ga Row; Sa Ga Yeath Qua Pieth Tow; Etow Oh Koam.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> British Apollo, April 21, 1710.

and destabilised by other printed and painted portraits of the Indian Kings in circulation at the time. This discussion is foregrounded by a detailed examination of the colonial embassy that brought the four Native American ambassadors to London, as well as a comprehensive study of the multifaceted pictorial traditions that Verelst grafted together to construct his portraits. By tracing the later colonial distribution and circulation of John Simon's mezzotints, the final part of this chapter looks at the ways in which the prints were exploited to serve a range of cultural, political and artistic interests.

Identifying the pictorial rhetoric of hybridity as a salient feature of the portraits, I investigate the strategies used to dramatise Native Americans as allies of British colonialism in the early eighteenth century. As Stephen Greenblatt has noted, "it is particularly tempting to take the most admiring European descriptions of the 'Indians' as if they were transparent truths and to reserve epistemological suspicion for most hostile accounts, but this strategy produces altogether predictable, if sentimentally appealing results". Alternatively, we should try "less to distinguish between true and false representations than to look attentively at the nature of the representational practices" employed.<sup>4</sup> In accordance with this methodology, my study of Verelst's portraits deconstructs their constituent elements to recover the different modes of figurative representation through which they were forged. By subjecting them to this kind of formal analysis, we can come to understand them as images less concerned with careful observation, and more contingent upon the calculated construction of symbols and signs. While this process might legitimately be seen as an act of manipulation, I suggest that it was one which was necessary in order to generate meaningful and culturally comprehensible images, appropriate to the roles of the four Iroquois as seen through British eyes.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Greenblatt, 1992:7.



Figure 121. John Simon, after John Verelst. *Ho Nee Yeath Taw No Row*. Mezzotint, 1710.



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Figure 123. John Simon, after John Verelst. Sa Ga Yeath Qua Pieth Tow. Mezzotint, 1710.

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Figure 126. John Verelst. Tee Yee Neen Ho Ga Row. Oil on canvas, 1710.



Figure 125. John Verelst. Ho Nee Yeath Taw No Row. Oil on canvas, 1710.



Figure 127. John Verelst. Sa Ga Yeath Qua Pieth Tow. Oil on canvas, 1710. Library and Archives Canada.

Figure 128. John Verelst. *Etow Oh Koam*. Oil on canvas, 1710. Library and Archives Canada.

Although Verelst's portraits and their mezzotint counterparts are relatively well known today, at least in specialist circles, their pictorial character has not been fully explored in relation to the art historical context in which they were produced; nor have art historians sufficiently attempted to rationalise their place within a highly conventionalised field of early eighteenth century British portraiture.<sup>5</sup> Instead, they have consistently been overlooked in orthodox surveys of British portraiture in this period. Their absence from such mainstream accounts of art history is, it seems, legitimised by their perceived status as anomalies, bound up in complex issues of identity and nationhood which do not sit comfortably alongside the more traditional narratives of British art. Perhaps, as Paul Gilroy has argued with reference to the omission of black culture from early British history, the portraits of the Indian Kings remain absent from such studies as they are perceived as "an illegitimate intrusion into a vision of authentic national life" which demands to be read in isolation from the visual histories of the British Empire. If such idiosyncratic works were more readily included in conventional art histories of the period, we might challenge David Solkin's remark that the early eighteenth century was "a period noted for the predictable dullness of its portraiture".7

In historical accounts of the 1710 embassy, such as Bond's seminal *Queen Anne's American Kings* (1952), Verelst's portraits are typically employed in an auxiliary capacity, simply to illustrate the main protagonists of an event, rather than being subjected to any kind of sustained formal analysis. While Garratt and Robertson's later publication, *The Four Indian Kings* (1985), does present a more focussed reading of the portraits, this study is also fairly limited in its art-historical interpretation. In particular, it downplays the

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> The portraits gained their most recent public exposure through their display in the McMaster Museum of Art's 2011 exhibition, 'Rising to the Occasion: The Long 18th Century' (Ontario, Canada). In 2007, they were included in a major exhibition at the National Portrait Gallery, London, titled 'Between Worlds: Voyagers to Britain 1700-1850'. This exhibition presented them in a trans-historical, thematic context. <sup>6</sup> Gilroy, 1993:7.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Solkin, 1992:4.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Bond, 1952.

significance of the Indian Kings' pictorial hybridisation, the issue which I argue is central to our understanding of them. The authors propose instead that in the absence of a visual tradition appropriate for the depiction of Native American diplomats, Verelst was simply "forced to resort to traditional means of representing nobility". 9 Although Verelst evidently responded to elements of conventional aristocratic portraiture, his manner of representation is anything but 'traditional' and is certainly more multifaceted than is suggested here. Hinderaker's essay on the portraits does examine the relationship between the paintings and their printed counterparts, but does not consider the colonial settings in which Simon's mezzotints were viewed. <sup>10</sup> Muller, by contrast, productively interrogates the portraits as part of a transatlantic programme of dissemination and display, though the extent and significance of the prints' colonial circulation and reproduction is not fully grasped. 11 As I argue, the sustained distribution of the mezzotints in Britain and America allowed Verelst's portraits to function not simply as emblems of the men who took part in the 1710 embassy to London, but to take on various new meanings in a variety of disparate contexts. What I want to argue here is that these multifarious contexts for viewing and interpreting the portraits reflects more generally the transient nature and mutability of graphic art within a circum-Atlantic arena during the period. Considered marginal to normative 'British' art history, Verelst's Indian Kings are here revealed as important documents of a more fluid and unstable Atlantic cultural economy.

It is important to note that one recent commentator, Troy Bickham, has fiercely criticised previous studies which have used the 1710 visit of the four Indian Kings to London "as a window for a glimpse into general British attitudes". Such studies, he argues, "cannot register the development of British interest in Indians and fail to differentiate between fads

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Garratt and Robertson, 1985:143.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> Hinderaker, 1996.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> Muller, 2008.

and sustained enthusiasm." Offering an alternative methodological approach, Bickham examines "representations of Indians in as wide a variety of British contexts as possible". Yet, by adopting such a wide historical purview, his study fails to recognise the complexities of individual case studies. Moreover, by relying almost exclusively on popular print culture to form his argument (because it was primarily in this category, he suggests, that "representations and discussions of Indians flourished") he distorts the full scope of pictorial evidence available. Though there is some truth in Bickham's assertion that "Indians did not loom large in the art world" (meaning painting) until some decades after the Indian Kings' visit to London, the minor role accorded to Verelst's paintings in his study seems to confirm the traditional perception that they are of slight art historical interest in themselves. 13 Indeed, he goes so far as to suggest that "despite the regularity with which Indians appeared in Britain, they remained firmly part of the exotic, bizarre, and curious until the mid-eighteenth century". 14 Considered more fully in relation to the conventions of portraiture, Verelst's paintings emerge instead as clearly opposed to this perception of Native American identity, which was exacerbated by cheap and popular forms of print entrenched in a desire to construct fantastical visions of the 'bizarre' and 'curious'. The importance of Verelst's portraits as antithetical counters to this tradition should not be undervalued.

While reconciling the relationship between paint and print will be an important undertaking here, distinguishing between different types of print will also be a critical task. In particular, John Simon's mezzotint reproductions of Verelst's portraits cannot be categorised among the 'popular' prints that shape Bickham's argument, because "with few exceptions, the discipline associated with mezzotints was oil painting," and thus an implicit

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> Bickham, 2005:10. <sup>13</sup> Ibid:13.

connection can be made between mezzotint and higher forms of artistic production. <sup>15</sup> As we shall see, the painterly quality for which mezzotint was renowned afforded it something of a special status in the process of image transfer between Britain and the American colonies, and in the early decades of the eighteenth century mezzotint prints became critical instructive tools for those who possessed little or no artistic training but had a desire to paint. By examining this function of John Simon's mezzotints, I hope to shed light on the highly permeable and regenerative character of Atlantic visual culture, and its relationship with a physical world that was also constantly subject to rearrangement and reinterpretation.

## The 1710 colonial embassy

To begin, it will be necessary to briefly discuss the circumstances in which the four Indian Kings came to London. The primary purpose of the diplomatic mission they were part of was to muster support for a British attack on the French controlled garrison at Port Royal – a strategic stronghold on the border between these rival nations' territories. Colonial British forces had already attempted to capture the garrison in the spring of 1709, but the operation ended in catastrophe. Although naval assistance had been promised, the designated fleet was diverted to mainland Europe at the last moment to assist with the continuing War of Spanish Succession on the continent, leaving colonial troops and their Native American allies no option but to withdraw. This military debacle not only thwarted the reduction of French territories in North America, but put in jeopardy the stability of the Anglo-Iroquois coalition. With a French as well as an English faction among them, colonists realised that the Iroquois confederation were susceptible to influence from either side; maintaining good relations was thus imperative. Alert to this necessity, while also keen to make clear to the British government the pressing need for

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> Wax, 1990:51

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> For a comprehensive account of the failed siege of Port Royal see Drake, 1910:250-62.

renewed military action, the governors of New England resolved that they should travel to London to put their case forward before Queen Anne. It was decided that the delegation should include four Iroquois emissaries, with the dual purpose of impressing the Indians with the "splendours of London and the might of England", as well as demonstrating to the British crown and public the commitment of the Native American allies. <sup>17</sup> As has been noted already, the Iroquois diplomats who travelled to London were widely referred to as the 'four Indian Kings'. Some contemporary accounts also referred to them as 'Princes', though the former more noteworthy designation was almost always favoured. 18 In addition, Tee Yee Neen Ho Ga Row, who was regarded as the group's spokesperson or leader, also came to be known as the 'Emperour of the Six Nations'. 19 Despite the regularity with which these royal pseudonyms appeared, it is now thought that the men were not of 'kingly' or 'chiefly' status at all, but were simply ordinary members of their communities who had been selected by Peter Schulyer (one of the chief organisers of the delegation) as trustworthy supporters of the British imperial cause. 20 Schuyler was a man of Dutch descent who had allied with the British after the fall of New York, becoming a Commander of colonial British forces as well as the nominated 'Commissioner for Indian Affairs'. <sup>21</sup> He knew more about Native American culture than most colonials, and was more respected and trusted by the Iroquois than any other white man at the time. So highly did they regard him that they referred to him as 'quidor', an Iroquois term for brother.<sup>22</sup> Consequently, Schuyler played an instrumental part in recruiting Iroquois delegates to take to London. As Bond has suggested, it is safe to suppose that he chose the four men on the basis of several sensible criteria such as "appearance, health, proximity, dependability, willingness, and congeniality with him and each other...and some faint knowledge of the English

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> Garratt and Robertson, 1985:6.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> Anon. The History of the Four Indian Kings, 1710:4.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> This title is inscribed beneath his mezzotint portrait.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> Hinderaker, 1996:487.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> Schuyler, 1885 (vol. 2):37.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> Bond, 1952:20.

language". <sup>23</sup> Once a suitable quartet had been selected, the bestowal of kingly titles was simply fabricated to enhance their legitimacy as respectable agents of imperial development. Perhaps more than anything else, this served to alleviate the anxieties of the British public who were generally ill-educated in the social structure of Native American tribes. Most of the population "found it difficult to understand how human beings could live without visible government, religion, or morality, and therefore tended to assume that Indian culture, like all the rest of the world, was somehow organized under a king or an emperor". <sup>24</sup> While the tribes of North America did operate within a hierarchical structure of power, the monarchical identities assigned by Schuyler to his Iroquois allies misrepresented this structure; yet, this was clearly preferable to allowing misguided understandings of Native Americans as savage or barbarous people to impinge upon the success of the mission. <sup>25</sup>

On 19 April 1710, shortly after their arrival in London, the four Indian Kings were invited to meet Queen Anne at St James's Palace. Here, they "made a speech", almost certainly written by colonial governors, which "Major *Pidgeon*, who was one of the Officers that came with them, read in *English*". <sup>26</sup>

GREAT QUEEN, We have undertaken a long and tedious Voyage, which none of our Predecessors could ever be prevail'd upon to undertake. The Motive that induc'd us was, that we might see our GREAT QUEEN, and relate to Her those things we thought absolutely necessary for the Good of HER and us Her Allies, on the other side of the Great Water.

We doubt not but our *Great Queen*, has been acquainted with our long and tedious War, in Conjunction with Her Children (meaning Subjects) against Her Enemies the French; and that we have been as a strong Wall for their Security, even to the loss of our best Men.

To this it was added, with a perceptibly Francophobe bias:

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> Ibid:38.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> Mumford Jones, 1964:57.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> Contemporary popular accounts of Native Americans typically described them as "savage" and "debauch'd". Lahontan, *New voyages to North-America*, 1703 (Vol. 1):unpaginated preface.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup> Boyer, 1711:189.

Since we have been in Alliance with our *Great Queen's* Children, we have had some knowledge of the *Saviour* of the World; and have often been importuned by the French...by the insinuations of their Priests...to come over to their intrest [sic], but have always esteem'd them *Men of Falsehood*: But if our *Great Queen* will be pleas'd to send over some Persons to instruct us, they shall find a most hearty Welcome.<sup>27</sup>

Such staunchly anti-French sentiment would certainly have been well received, particularly at a time when the conflict against France in the War of Spanish Succession was reaching a climax.<sup>28</sup> Indeed, following "the wooing of six Canadian sachems at Versailles in 1696", the Indian Kings' apparent distaste for the religious importunity of French colonists must have been all the more pertinent.<sup>29</sup> Solemnising their loyalty with "a Token of Sincerity", the Indian Kings concluded proceedings by presenting Queen Anne with ceremonial belts of wampum – highly valued strings of shell beads used by the Iroquois for a variety of purposes, including symbolising peace. <sup>30</sup> They were then "conducted back again to their Apartments in her Majesty's Coach".<sup>31</sup>

In the following weeks, the four Indians were fêted throughout the city, attending numerous state functions and organised events. On 21 April they visited Greenwich Park, "after which they were nobly treated by some of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, in One of Her Majesty's Yachts". The next day they saw the "banqueting house and Chappel at Whitehall, and [were] mightily pleased with their kind reception". Several theatrical productions were also put on 'for the Entertainment of the Indian Kings', which were publicised widely in the capital's press. Just over three weeks after their

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>27</sup> Ibid:189-90

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>28</sup> For more on these conflicts, and their relationship with imperial developments in North America and Canada, see Vaughan, 2006:113-136.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>29</sup> Ibid:114.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>30</sup>Anon, *The Four Indian Kings Speech To Her Majesty*, 1710:1. Snyderman's essay on wampum remains an important reference on the subject and its role in Anglo-American relations during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Synderman:1954.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>31</sup> Anon, *The Four Kings of Canada*, 1710:6.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>32</sup> Boyer, 1711:191.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>33</sup> Luttrell, 1857 (vol. 6):572.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>34</sup> For example, see *Post Boy*, Classified advertisements, April 20, 1710. For a more detailed account of the Indian Kings' experiences of London theatres, see Roach, 1996:119-78

arrival in London, the diplomatic mission was completed and the Indian Kings "sail'd from Spithead [on board] her Majesty's Ship the Dragon for New England". 35

The Indian Kings caused a great sensation beyond the confines of courtly and diplomatic circles and became celebrated not so much as 'Kings' but as curious inhabitants of the New World. Thus, while Eric Hinderaker suggests that their regal titles allowed them to "possess the authority of rulers...whose purposes were clearly and explicitly diplomatic". this was certainly not always the case. 36 When we begin to scour the plethora of printed texts that accompanied their visit, we soon find sardonic retorts to claims of their kingship. The mocking tone of one pamphlet, titled *The Royal Embassy*, for example, clearly expresses disbelief at the validity of the Indians' monarchical designations. To the tune of a popular rhyming ditty called 'A Soldier and a Sailor', the author proclaims:

> FOUR Kings, each God's Viceregent, With Right divine inherent, Have lately cross'd the Main, Sir, An Audience to gain, Sir... Which was a wond'rous Thing, Sir, In any Heathen King, Sir, And of an *Indian* Race.<sup>37</sup>

Along with other popular texts and prints, this pamphlet suggests that for many, the coupling of Native American identity with a Western conception of kingliness or godliness was an absurdly oxymoronic idea. Yet, Verelst's understanding of such ambivalences was critical to his construction of a 'polite' image of his subjects. Like the contradictory notion of 'Indian Kings', his hybridised portraits stand as potent symbols of the struggle to comprehend or categorise a stable Native American identity during the period. Their innovative pictorial language is informed by a variety of models, the allusions to which seek to redefine the image of a routinely marginalised ethnographic stereotype.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>35</sup> *Daily Courant*, 11 May, 1710.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>36</sup> Hinderaker, 1996:488.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>37</sup> Anon. 'The Royal Embassy', in *Three Ballads Concerning the Times*, 1710.

## The portraits

Though Verelst's portraits of the four Indian Kings were produced under the esteemed aegis of Royal patronage, is seems notable that the original warrant for their production was ordered by the Lord Chamberlain, Charles Talbot, 1st Duke of Shrewsbury. 38 When the Indian Kings arrived in London, Talbot had only held this position for ten days and was yet to make his mark in the role. His appointment had come during a major political shakeup in which "Queen Anne had dismissed her Whig Lord Treasurer and appointed Tories to most of the positions of power within the British Ministry."<sup>39</sup> Fortuitously for the colonial organisers of the embassy, the Tories advocated a 'blue water' strategy to warfare, believing that the most effective way to usurp British rivals in North America was by taking direct military action in the colonies. Not only did they believe that this was the best way to safeguard Britain's future role overseas, they also felt that this strategy of colonial warfare could provide "an opportunity to use naval power to extend Britain's commercial presence to the far corners of the Atlantic world."40 Though Talbot was a Whig, he supported this belief; yet it was still necessary for him to convince his Tory colleagues that he was fully committed to their plans. In view of this political context, we might see his commissioning of the four Indian Kings' portraits on behalf of Queen Anne as a powerful demonstration of his personal support for his Tory associates, as well as a symbolic gesture of approval towards the organisers of the colonial embassy who had requested military aid.

While this provides a new perspective on the commissioning of the portraits, the choice of John Verelst to complete the task remains unexamined. Very little is known about this artist, and he appears to have had only a modest reputation.<sup>41</sup> Few contemporary references

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>38</sup> Oxford Dictionary of National Biography. 'Talbot, Charles, duke of Shrewsbury (1660–1718)'. For the original warrant signed by Talbot see the National Archives collection of records relating to the Lord Chamberlain, LC 5/155 (page 36).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>39</sup> Plank, 2003:54.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>40</sup> Ibid:54.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>41</sup> Oxford Dictionary of National Biography. 'Verelst, John (c.1675–1734)'.

to him survive and only eighteen works firmly attributed to him are now in public British collections. Portraits by John Verelst do occasionally appear at auction today but these are typically of lesser known or unidentified members of the aristocracy and are not particularly distinguishable from works by other minor portraitists of the period. Virtually all that Ellis Waterhouse has to say about John Verelst in his dictionary of eighteenth century British painters is that "he makes his sitters look rather unattractive and has a very curly 'V' to his signature." While this evidence of Verelst's rather humble status raises the question why he was given a Royal commission to paint the portraits of the four Indian Kings, no attempts have yet been made to provide any answers. Yet, by piecing together the few surviving contemporary records relating to him and his family, we can recover some of the potential reasons for his selection.

As well as painting portraits, there is evidence to suggest that early in his career John

Verelst was involved in the distribution of printed portraits. In particular, an advertisement placed in the *Daily Courant* on 30 December 1703 cites "J. Verelst" as the retailer of a portrait of "*Charles* III King of *Spain*". <sup>45</sup> According to the advertisement, the print was based on "the Original Picture drawn at *Vienna* and sent by the Emperor to Count *Wratislau* his Envoy to Her Majesty of *Great* Brittain [sic]". <sup>46</sup> Before emigrating to London in the late seventeenth century, John Verelst's father Harmen (also a painter, of Dutch origin) had "resided a while in the Emperor's Court at Vienna", presumably being employed as an artist. <sup>47</sup> It was probably as a result of this association with the Bohemian Court that John Verelst came to be involved with the distribution of this print, perhaps in

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>42</sup> Figure sourced from the Public Catalogue Foundation's 'BBC Your Paintings' online database. There are undoubtedly more works by John Verelst in private collections, and probably others which are unsigned and thus have not been attributed to him.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>43</sup> Waterhouse, 1981:389.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>44</sup> Though Hinderaker describes John Verelst as "a competent though unremarkable figure in the London art world" he fails to explore why such a seemingly unexceptional artist was given the royal commission. Hinderaker, 1996:496.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>45</sup> I thank Joseph Friedman for drawing my attention to this previously undiscovered reference to Verelst.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>46</sup> Daily Courant, Classified advertisements, 30 December 1703.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>47</sup> Buckeridge, 1706:474.

collaboration with the envoy Wratislaw. 48 Count Wratislaw, who appears to have been a central figure in the print's production, was an important Bohemian diplomat working in London at the time to establish an alliance against France in the War of the Spanish Succession (1701-1714).<sup>49</sup> The war had begun in 1700 when the Spanish monarch Charles II died childless, with no obvious heir. On one side were those who supported the French claimant to the Spanish throne, Philip V, and on the other were members of a multinational alliance (which included Great Britain) who fought for the right of the Austrian candidate. Charles VI of Habsburg. Though the French had gained the upper hand in 1701 when Philip was officially recognised as the new Spanish King, opposition to the decision continued and a series of battles ensued. Britain's interest in the dispute was rooted in a concern with protecting its Atlantic colonies, especially those in North America. It was feared that the possible unification of Spain and France would endow French colonies in the region with greater power, posing a serious threat to adjoining British territories. Though the Austrian claimant to the throne had been denied the right to sovereignty, his printed portrait – distributed by John Verelst – announced him as 'Charles III King of Spain'. Thus, the image dramatised him as the rightful monarch, questioning the legitimacy of the ostensible French heir and symbolically negating the rise of French colonial power. As a form of anti-French propaganda relating to the War of Spanish Succession, the function of this portrait can be seen as analogous to Verelst's later portraits of the Indian Kings, who publically supported British military action against the French colonies in a North American offshoot of the same war. 50

It is perhaps also notable that before John Verelst was commissioned to paint the portraits of the four Indian Kings, his father, Harmen, had painted the portrait of another diplomatic

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>48</sup> It is not known when John Verelst was born, but based on the fact that he was first active as a painter from around 1697, it seems likely that when his father was based at the Austrian Court in the 1680s he was still a young boy, at home.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>49</sup> Hattendorf, 1983.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>50</sup> Roach, 1996:120.

visitor to London – 'The Morocco Ambassador'. <sup>51</sup> Named Mohammed bin Hadou, the ambassador visited the capital in 1681 under the instruction of the Moroccan ruler, Muley Ismail, "to make peace with [the British] crown". 52 As a symbol of these peace negotiations, the ambassador caused a great sensation throughout London, being likened to an English gentleman and becoming "the fashion of the season". 53 Upon his arrival, he was granted an audience with the King; contemporary accounts of this event offer a suggestive precedent to descriptions of the Indian Kings' encounter with Queen Anne some years later. An article in the London Gazette on 11 January 1682 reported that "the Ambassador from the King of Fez and Morocco had his publick Audience of their majesties. He was brought...in his Majesties Coach...to the Council-Chamber and after a short stay there to the Banqueting-House". Following a series of introductions and announcements before the amassed audience, "The Ambassador having made a short Speech, presented to His Majesty a Letter from the King his Master...and finished what else he had to say, was reconducted in the same manner he came, to his House."54 At this time, the future of the British colony at Tangier was in some doubt as the Moroccan King hoped to negotiate its return to home control. Though somewhat different from the imperial circumstances surrounding the visit of the four Indian Kings in 1710, there are certainly echoes between the two episodes in terms of the way in which the ambassadors were treated. Indeed, the Royal welcome received by the respective delegations seems similarly staged to curry favour with potentially influential imperial allies. Thus, if we imagine that Harmen Verelst's portrait of the 'Morocco Ambassador' sought to symbolically uphold an Anglo-Moroccan alliance in an attempt to preserve the future of a British African outpost, there

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>51</sup> The portrait referred to here, which is now lost, is listed as lot 119 in a 1728 auction of pictures sold by John Verelst (British Library, General Reference Collection C.119.h.3.(3.) - also available transcribed at www.artworld.york.ac.uk) The description reads 'The Morocco Ambassador, a whole length, by Mr. Verelst'. Though no first name is given, the 1681 date of the Moroccan Ambassador's famous visit to London allows us to confidently attribute the work to John Verelst's father, Harmen, who was a recognised portrait painter at that time. According to the annotations in the British Library's copy of this sale catalogue, this picture sold for a sum of £15.15 making it one of the most expensive lots in the auction.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>52</sup> London Gazette, 5 January, 1682.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>53</sup> John Evelyn, quoted by Nash, 2003:54.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>54</sup> London Gazette, 9 January, 1682.

are clear similarities with John Verelst's later images of the Indian Kings which formalised an Anglo-Iroquois partnership that, it was hoped, would strengthen the British colonial position in North America.



Figure 129. William Verelst. *James Oglethorpe presenting the Yamacraw Indians to the Georgia Trustees*, oil on canvas, 1734. Winterthur Museum.

A later work by John Verelst's son, William, further suggests that the Verelst family of artists were recognised contemporaneously as producers of commemorative diplomatic paintings. This group portrait (Fig. 129), completed in 1734 to memorialise the inauguration of the colony of Georgia, depicts James Oglethorpe (the colony's founder) instigating a meeting between the local Yamacraw Indians and the British Georgia Trustees. A young member of the Indian tribe, dressed in English period clothing, occupies a prominent position in the central foreground. The employment of this figure to symbolically bridge the gap between the two communities develops a new mode of representing the Anglo-acculturation of Native Americans. The reputation of two successive generations of painters may well have been an influencing factor in the selection of William Verelst to produce such a work. It is perhaps also worth noting that before John Verelst was commissioned to paint the Indian Kings, his uncle, Simon Verelst, had established a family connection with the production of paintings for the British court.

Apparently a rather bullish character, who arrived in London around 1671, Walpole recalls him saying of Charles II: "He is king of England, I am King of painting, why should not we converse together familiarly?"<sup>55</sup> A relationship evidently formed, as Simon Verelst is known to have painted portraits of sitters "drawn only from the Court circle [including] Charles II and Prince Rupert."<sup>56</sup> Queen Anne also owned a half-length portrait by him of the Duchess of York.<sup>57</sup> Together with the aforementioned family ties to diplomatic portraiture, this Royal connection certainly offers us an intriguing new context for understanding John Verelst's commission to paint the portraits of the Indian Kings.

Despite these apparent connections, it is important to note that by painting the portraits of Native Americans in oil on canvas, within a fine art tradition, John Verelst's undertaking was virtually unprecedented. Constructed in piecemeal fashion, the portraits do not adhere to a single set of conventions, but draw together a variety of figurative tropes from a range of sources. The pictorial and symbolic relationships that Verelst forged with established traditions sought to reconcile contemporary views about the unsuitability of 'barbarous' races as subjects for polite forms of art. As the Dutch painter and theorist Gerard de Lairesse suggested:

"Painters will not give themselves the trouble to design unusual or barbarous Histories, such as the *Indian*...because no Authors have written any thing about them worth sketching, those Nations affording no other Scene than Cruelties, Murthers [sic], Tyrannies, and such disagreeable Objects, which would rather offend than delight: Moreover, that the Oddness of their Dresses, Manners and Customs do not at all quadrate with the Grace and Beauty of the Antique...It's therefore no Wonder, that we have no Relish for such odd Subjects, since *Europeans* are too conversant with real Beauty, to be pleased with such Shadows and Ghosts". 58

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>55</sup> Walpole, 1796 (vol.v):58.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>56</sup> Millar, 1963 (vol. i):132.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>57</sup> Ibid:132. Simon Verelst later developed a reputation as a painter of still life flower-pieces. He is best remembered for these works today. Batchelor (ed.), 2012:6-8.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>58</sup> Fritsch, 1738:114.

Lairesse's text implies that the innate characteristics of 'Indian' people, and their social traditions, were considered antithetical to the principles of 'beauty' and 'grace' to which European painters aspired. Yet as Benedict Anderson has suggested, "half-civilized was vastly better than barbarian"; this notion of an acceptable 'inbetweenness' was critical to the construction and function of Verelst's portraits. <sup>59</sup> Rather than removing all signs of the Indians' otherness, Verelst's images dramatise his subjects as men who are undergoing a programme of physical and sociological metamorphosis. This was not a mythologised concept but responded to a concerted contemporary effort to acculturate, Anglicise and Christianise indigenous tribes living within the British Empire in North America. This process relied upon the willing participation of Native Americans in what Homi Bhaba calls 'mimicry':

...mimicry emerges as one of the most elusive and effective strategies of colonial power and knowledge...Within the conflictual economy of colonial discourse...mimicry is the desire for a reformed, recognizable Other, as a subject of a difference that is almost the same but not quite...Mimicry is, thus the sign of a double articulation; a complex strategy of reform, regulation and discipline, which 'appropriates' the Other as it visualizes power. <sup>60</sup>

Bhabha's articulation of mimicry, which is implicated in "the traditions of *trompe-l'œil*, irony...and repetition" provides a useful framework for analysing the inner workings of Verelst's portraits and their pictorial borrowings.<sup>61</sup>

An important ethnographic precedent that Verelst would certainly have been aware of, and seems to reference quite explicitly in his portrait of Ho Nee Yeath Taw No Row, is the work of John White, whose portraits of indigenous Americans were the first to be recorded by an Englishman. As noted in the previous chapter, White travelled to America in the late 1580s with the explorers Richard Grenville and Sir Walter Raleigh as part an effort to

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>59</sup> Anderson, 1991:13.

<sup>60</sup> Bhabha, 1994:122.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>61</sup> Ibid:122.

establish a colony in the New World. During his time on the eastern seaboard of North America he produced a large collection of drawings and watercolours of flora and fauna, as well as portraits of local Indians, showing "their manners and customs in their natural state before communication with Europeans."62 These images were subsequently used as models for engravings by Theodor de Bry, which were published in Thomas Hariot's A Brief and True Report of the New Found Land of Virginia (1588). The distribution of this book allowed White's work to gain wide recognition. 63 Although White's original draughts remained in the hands of his descendants and were seen by very few people until Hans Sloane managed to acquire them in 1717, Sloane had earlier obtained a set of watercolour copies which he showed to visitors to his library, generating renewed interest in White's work at the beginning of the eighteenth century. By this time, the images stood as important records of the first British attempts to colonise the Americas. 64 In view of Bhabha's assertion that "colonialism takes power in the name of history". Verelst's own mimicry of these materials can be understood as a deliberate effort to cultivate a sense of authority and gravitas associated with the past. 65 By imitating aspects of White's work, his portraits configured a relationship with images of Native Americans that would certainly have been recognised as 'historical' by early eighteenth century viewers.

The "distinctly Mannerist proportions" of John White's portrait of an Indian 'werowance', or chief (Fig. 130), offers an almost quasi-classical view of the aboriginal man.<sup>66</sup> In spite of his near-nakedness and profusion of tattoos, which must have appeared alien to British eyes, there is an implication of decorum and respectability that establishes a connection between primeval Native American society and the ancient civilisations of the western

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<sup>62</sup> Sloan, 2007:224.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>63</sup> Through their reproduction in this publication, White's images of Native Americans became well known across Europe, and apparently further afield too. An early seventeenth century Mughal miniature painting in the collection of the British Museum (registration number 2008,6014,0.1) is clearly based on a composition conceived by White and translated into print by de Bry.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>64</sup> Sloan, 2007:224-233.

<sup>65</sup> Bhabha, 1994:122.

<sup>66</sup> Prown, 1980:17.

world. Though White's subject brandishes a large bow, there is no sense of immediate threat or danger, and he has no arrows; rather, this hunting accessory seems to operate as a motif to authorise his masculinity. As part of a propaganda campaign to promote new outposts in America, such images of Native Americans addressing us, the viewer, in a seemingly non-confrontational way, were privy to the construction of a "fantasy about Indian people who would welcome and help establish an English colony on their territory". <sup>67</sup> Verelst clearly emulates this strategy, perhaps reproducing the pose of White's Werowance so overtly that contemporary viewers would have recognised his doing so (Fig. 131). However, developing White's ethnographic prototype, which separates the human form from an environmental context – almost like a natural history specimen to be examined on the page – Verelst fills his canvas with a well-balanced landscape, framing his subject in a manner more characteristic of contemporary formal portraiture.





Figure 130. (left) John White. *An Indian werowance*, Watercolour and graphite, 1585-1593. Figure 131. (right) John Verelst. *Ho Nee Yeath Taw No Row*. Oil on canvas, 1710.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>67</sup> Chaplin, 2007:52.

Developing this connection further still, Verelst animates the pictographic totem symbols of the Indians' clans into living beasts (Fig. 132). During their visit, the four Indian Kings recorded these symbols – a bear, a wolf and a tortoise – on a document, which Verelst was presumably shown (Fig. 133).<sup>68</sup> His alteration of these primitive looking motifs, physically drawn by the Indian Kings, also implies their own process of correction or improvement.

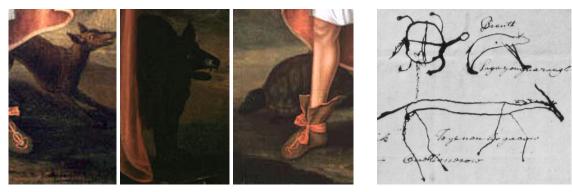


Figure 132. (left) Details of Figures 125,127,128.

Figure 133. (right) Clan totem marks of the four Indian Kings. Ink on paper, 1710.

More importantly, the alteration of these symbols allowed Verelst to approximate the conventional image of an aristocratic male figure accompanied by a loyal canine or equine companion. Anthony van Dyck's portrait of *James Stuart, Duke of Richmond* (Fig. 134), and John Michael Wright's depiction of *Sir Neil O'Neill* in the guise of an Irish chieftain (Fig. 135), exemplify this pictorial practice. The Greyhound, a breed renowned for its adeptness at coursing game, is not only an animal suitably matched to the sitter's noble status in Van Dyck's portrait, but is supposed to represent a particular dog which was reputed to have saved the Duke's life during his travels on the continent. <sup>69</sup> Similarly, the Irish Wolfhound that accompanies Sir Neil O'Neill functions simultaneously as a symbol of aristocratic ownership as well as standing as a symbol of Irish heritage; its presence here referring to the Catholic status of both the sitter and the artist. When considered in relation to these examples, the indigenous North American animals that accompany the Indian

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>68</sup> The animal clan totems of 'Bear', 'Wolf' and 'Tortoise' are identified by Garratt, 1985:144. Bond describes the document on which the Indians inscribed these symbols as a letter of thanks to the Archbishop of Canterbury. This document is owned by the Lambeth Palace Library but currently held at the Bodleian Library of Commonwealth and African Studies at Rhodes House (S.P.G. 'A' MSS., vol. v, No. 86). Bond, 1952:9;101.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>69</sup> Stainton and White, 1987:86.

Kings in Verelst's portraits seem to function as more than merely symbols of their totem clans, but operate as motifs which form a constituent part of Verelst's cultivation of a civilised Native American identity. The European hunting rifle held by Sa Ga Yeath Qua Pieth Tow clearly operates within this pictorial dialect too, and together with the bear that attends him provides a strong sense of this aristocratic gentlemanly ideal (Fig. 136).



Figure 134. (left) Anthony van Dyck. *James Stuart, Duke of Richmond*. Oil on canvas, c.1634. Figure 135. (centre) John Michael Wright. *Sir Neil O'Neill*. Oil on canvas, 1680. Figure 136. (right) John Verelst. *Sa Ga Yeath Qua Pieth Tow*. Oil on canvas, 1710.

As the Indian Kings had pledged their willingness to fight in the proposed military campaign against the French at Port Royal, Verelst's attentiveness to the practices of naval and military portraiture also seems pertinent. The casual repose of the three Indians who hold weapons calls to mind portrayals of army leaders in portraits such as Peter Lely's *Sir Edward Massey* (Fig. 137) and Godfrey Kneller's *John Churchill*, *Ist Duke of Marlborough* (Fig. 138). Lely's portrait typifies the compositional arrangement of such portraiture, in which an officer stands, at ease, before a scene of conflict. The armed lieutenant Massey in Kneller's painting also exudes a sense of calm authority and leadership as a distant battle ensues. Correspondingly, in the backgrounds of Verelst's portraits are scenes of conflict, presumably between competing tribes (Fig. 139). On the one hand, these scenes authorise the physical capabilities of Native Americans as part of a

colonial military taskforce, but at the same time it seems notable that each of the Indian Kings steps out of the action, to take centre stage as an important colonial diplomat, or commander, in charge of proceedings. Like the pictorial model of gentlemanly warfare inaugurated by Lely and later adopted by Kneller, Verelst's portraits subscribe to an idealised vision of the noble, dignified warrior. Equating the Indian Kings with this western conception of gentlemanly martial leadership challenges contemporary assumptions about the barbarity and ignominy of Native American combat.



Figure 137. (left) Peter Lely. Sir Edward Massey. Oil on canvas, c.1647. Figure 138. (centre) Godfrey Kneller. John Churchill, 1st Duke of Marlborough. Oil on canvas, 1700. Figure 139. (right) John Verelst. Etow Oh Koam. Oil on canvas, 1710.

As Jones and Stallybrass suggest, clothing has long been "the means by which a person [is] given a form, a shape, a social function". The attire of the Indian Kings in Vereslst's portraits therefore demands serious consideration. Troy Bickham has given this subject some thought, proposing that they are shown "wearing their native finery" 1. However, Abel Boyer's contemporary account of the visit records that upon their arrival in London, the Indian Kings were "Cloath'd...at the Queen's Expence". <sup>72</sup> Likewise, a later commentator asserted that their outfits were "directed by the Dressers of the Playhouse"

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>70</sup> Jones and Stallybrass, 2000,2. <sup>71</sup> Bickham, 2005:26.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>72</sup> Boyer, 1711:189

specifically for their visit, and did therefore not truly represent their native habit.<sup>73</sup> The "yellow Slippers, and loose scarlet Mantle...bound with a Gold Galloon" that witnesses recalled them wearing largely corresponds with the costumes in Verelst's paintings.<sup>74</sup> Adopted "instead of a blanket", these elaborate red and gold cloaks seem to deliberately transform a traditional Native American garment into something more regal.<sup>75</sup> Though they wear long white shirts, which formed an essential part of a contemporary British gentleman's undergarments, they do not wear them in the customary manner. As Linda Baumgarten notes, this was not simply a stage-managed form of attire in which the Indian Kings were dressed, but something embraced by Native Americans in their homelands. "Indians readily adopted imported linen shirts but wore them in distinctly non-European ways. Rather than tucking their shirts into the breeches waistband, as European men did, native men wore them as overshirts, usually shunning the impractical breeches altogether."<sup>76</sup> At a fundamental level then, an image of a Native American wearing a white shirt established him as a consumer of British manufactures and thus an integral part of the British Atlantic trade and circulation of goods. More symbolically, in the context of Verelst's portraits, the loose fitting shirts worn by the Indian Kings with the chest slits wide open seems evocative of the classical toga, and is perhaps combined with the display of muscular flesh to echo a historicised paradigm of heroic masculinity.<sup>77</sup>

Marking him out from the other three members of the delegation, Tee Yee Neen Ho Ga Row (who, as discussed earlier, was styled as an 'emperor') wears a black jacket, black breeches and black buckled shoes of a European style (Fig. 140). At the time of the visit, "the court was in mourning for the death of the Prince of Denmark", and so on the occasion of their meeting with the Queen, the Indian Kings were "dressed in black under-

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>73</sup> Smith, 1757:122.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>74</sup> Anon. *The Four Kings of Canada*, 1710:7.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>75</sup> Anon. 1773 (vol. ii):37.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>76</sup> Baumgarten, 2002:71

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>77</sup> Myrone, 2005:3.

clothes after the English manner". <sup>78</sup> The 'emperor's' undergarments evidently allude to this, and Verelst's desire to depict the perceived leader of the Iroquois in black mourning attire seems to purposely signify his ability to politely observe social etiquette. He is also the only one who does not bear a weapon, and the scene behind him displays no sign of conflict. Instead, he holds a belt of wampum, which was the peace gift presented to Queen Anne. This disruption of the portraits' standard format instils a critical sense of individualism. Although there is still a strong implication of unity among the four men,

Tee Yee Neen Ho Ga Row's difference – expressed chiefly through the medium of fabric – acts as important counter to assumptions of tribal homogeneity among new world societies. While the beaded wampum being held aloft in this portrait serves primarily to symbolise the gift of wampum that was presented by the Indian Kings to Queen Anne, it is notable that its design is atypical of the monochrome patterns usually used in Iroquois wampum (Fig. 141). Instead, it is woven as a series of crosses, or crucifixes, perhaps evoking the Indian Kings' reported desire to be "Instructed in the Christian Religion."







Figure 140. (left) John Verelst. Tee Yee Neen Ho Ga Row. Oil on canvas, 1710.

Figure 141. (centre) Iroquoian wampum belts. Wool, skin, porcupine quill, glass, fibre. Early eighteenth century.

Figure 142. (right) Anon, after Bernard Lens II. William Archbishop of Canterbury. Mezzotint, c.1700.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>78</sup> Anon, 1773 (vo. ii):37.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>79</sup> British Apollo, April 21, 1710.

Moreover, we might develop this reading and draw a comparison between this long narrow strip of wampum and an Anglican priest's stole – a vestment worn over the shoulder to form two vertical bands (Fig. 142). Extending this ecclesiastical interpretation of the portrait further still, the long black undergarment might be said to evoke the traditional black cassock also worn by clergymen. Consequently, Tee Yee Neen Ho Ga Row is not only dramatised as the political head of the group, but the spiritual leader too. Such nuanced religious undertones perceptibly allude to the ulterior religious motives attached to the 1710 delegation, as well as pre-empting a missionary programme to Christianise Native American allies of the British Empire. <sup>80</sup> In light of these discussions, clothing, or more broadly, cloth, seems to act as a significant metaphor for the entangled relationship between America and Europe, and how the latter of these continents hoped to reinvent the former – both materially and ideologically – during the early years of colonisation. <sup>81</sup>

## Contemporary display at Kensington Palace

While Verelst cultivated a reformed sense of the Native American 'other' as "a subject of difference" who was "almost the same but not quite", the contemporary display of his paintings at Kensington Palace offered an ambiguous spectacle of the Indian Kings which operated "between mimicry and mockery". 82 In an account of the Palace's decorative scheme in 1710, provided by the diary of the German tourist Zacharias Conrad von Uffenbach, we are afforded a unique glimpse into the environment in which the portraits were viewed:

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>80</sup> Though influenced by the 1710 visit, the later activities of British priests among the Iroquois are not of direct relevance to my discussion. A further exploration would be superfluous here. However, extensive readings of this topic are provided by Bond:1952 and Garratt:1968.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>81</sup> Such a concept is just as pertinent today, as Yinka Shonibare's act of "Re-dressing History" suggests. Shonibare, a Turner Prize nominee in 2004, ironically recreates historical figures dressed in 'African' print costumes, as well as using similar fabrics to cover pieces of British furniture. His work invites us to question "What is African? What is European? Who creates and consumes these identities?" Considering Shonibare's questions of contemporary national character alongside Verelst's construction of a hybridised, corruptible, colonial identity, it seems evident that the racial interrogations of his portraits are as relevant now, in a postcolonial era, as they were during the period of colonial development in which they were produced. Hynes and Picton, 2001:60,62.

<sup>82</sup> Bhabha, 1994:122,123.

On the morning of 25 Oct. we drove to Kensington. The house is not very large but new and regular, having many handsome and well-furnished rooms. In several we saw various pictures of Holbein and other fine paintings, of which the Birth of Christ, a night-piece, and the Sacrifice of Elijah were the most elegant. We saw also here a barometer of Tompion with a round disc as a clock. We were taken into a room where paintings of the English admirals, fourteen of them, were hung. This opened into a small room in which were portraits of the four Indian kings who some time ago paid a visit to London. In another we saw a curious screen before the fireplace, on which there were all manner of Indian birds in relief with their natural feathers stuck on it.<sup>83</sup>

The most striking aspect of this account is perhaps that the room adjoining the one in which the Indian Kings were hung contained fourteen portraits of admirals. The authenticity of this schema, described by von Uffenbach, is confirmed by a contemporary inventory of pictures at Kensington Palace. Here, the 'English admirals' are numbered 168-181 and are individually named. An adjoining caption records that "These 14 Admls are ½ lengths done by Sr G Kneller & Mr Dahle". A large bracket to the side simply reads "4 whole lengths of ve 4 Indian Kings bought of". 84 Significantly, the Indian Kings are not named, have no individual numbers in the inventory, and the identity of the artist is not given. Though the inventory does not provide specific details of their display, it clearly implies that the Indian Kings were intended to be read in direct comparison with the portraits of admirals painted by Kneller and Dahl. Oliver Millar's catalogue of pictures in the Royal collection identifies these naval portraits (Fig. 143), explaining that they were commissioned by Queen Anne and "hung in the Little Gallery at Kensington". Millar adds that they were "probably planned as a sequel to Lely's [Flagmen of Lowestoft]."85 When we cast our eyes across these paintings, the uniformity of the men's poses and the repetition of maritime vistas creates a distinctive sense of togetherness that unites them. Likewise, the sense of regularity across the four portraits of Indian Kings seems to mimic this indication of fraternal affiliation. Although Kevin Muller argues that the juxtaposition

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>83</sup> Uffenbach, quoted by Quarrell and Mare, 1934:157.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>84</sup> British Library Manuscripts, Add MS 20013.

<sup>85</sup> Millar, 1963 (vol. i):142.



Top: (left to right) Godfrey Kneller. Vice-Admiral Sir Stafford Fairborne; George Byng, 1st Viscount Torrington; Sir Thomas Dilkes; Vice-Admiral John Graydon; Admiral Sir John Leake; Vice-Admiral John Benbow.

Bottom. (left to right) Michael Dahl. Captain Robert Harland; Vice-Admiral Sir Thomas Hopsonn; Rear-Admiral Sir John Munden; Admiral Sir George Rooke; Sir Cloudesley Shovell; Rear-Admiral Sir William Whetstone; Sir James Wishart.

Oil on canvas, c.1700-1712.

of these two sets of portraits at Kensington promoted "the ferocity of Iroquois warriors" as a "powerful fighting force against New France", we might alternatively suggest that being contrasted with Kneller's and Dahl's admirals, the Indian Kings appeared rather less heroic. Ref Overwhelmingly outnumbered, and situated in a 'small room' setting, the disparity between the modest group of Native Americans and the imposing congregation of admirals must have been striking. Indeed, the collection of admirals would certainly have required a considerably larger hanging space, which would inevitably have had a grander feel. Notably, Verelst's full length representations of the Indian Kings were some forty percent smaller than Kneller's and Dahl's half-length portraits of the admirals, and therefore represented an unconventional combination of size and format. This disjuncture would have been made all the more peculiar by the two series' juxtaposition. By drawing attention to these incongruences, we might argue that the arrangement of the portraits at Kensington Palace deliberately sought to establish a visual hierarchy of authority in which the Iroquois diplomats were presented as subordinate, rather than equivalent, to Britain's great naval heroes.

It is perhaps also notable that immediately after mentioning the Indian Kings, von Uffenbach describes "a curious screen...on which there were all manner of Indian birds in relief with their natural feathers stuck on it". 89 The proximity of this decorative object to Verelst's portraits in von Uffenbach's account suggests that they were positioned relatively close to one another in reality – or were at least juxtaposed in a way that elicited him to remember and describe them sequentially. In light of the geographic interchangeability of the term 'Indian' at the time, the description of the birds on the screen almost certainly responds to a general exotic aesthetic, rather than specifically referring to either of the

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<sup>86</sup> Muller:41

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>87</sup> Despite extensive research of Kensington Palace inventories, and correspondence with Royal Collection Curator Jennifer Scott, it has not been possible to identify the exact location of this 'small room'.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>88</sup> See Appendix I for a more detailed discussion of the unconventional size of Verelst's portraits.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>89</sup> Uffenbach, quoted by Quarrell and Mare, 1934:157.

regions known to Britons as the 'Indies'. 90 As Hugh Honour notes, "gaily colored birds played a prominent part in the visual image of the New World", which when employed as a decorative scheme often amalgamated disparate geographic contexts to create an overall effect that paid little heed to geographic specificity. 91 While the screen adorned with 'Indian birds' cannot be identified, contemporary inventories do reveal that other images of this kind were on display near the Indian Kings. In particular, a number of works by the renowned painter of exotic birds, Jakob Bogdani, are listed. 92 Though the reference simply mentions the artist's name, and gives no exact hanging location, a work by Bogdani that remains in the Royal Collection today, and which is described as 'Painted for Queen Anne', is certainly a potential candidate (Fig. 144). This work typifies Bogdani's oeuvre, presenting an idealised Arcadian landscape in which exotic species (in this case a Peacock) are juxtaposed with more familiar domestic fowl such as chickens and ducks.



Figure 144. Jakob Bogdani. Birds in a Landscape. Oil on canvas, c.1710.

<sup>90</sup> Kupperman, 1995:3.91 Honour. 1975:34

<sup>92</sup> British Library Manuscripts, Add MS 20013; Add MS 17917.

If we are to imagine Verelst's paintings as part of a sequence or enfilade of rooms, framed on one side by Kneller's and Dahl's admirals, and on the other by decorative expressions of the exotic, the mode of their display at Kensington seems to emphasise both their familiarity and their strangeness, presenting them simultaneously as 'heroes' and 'specimens' and demonstrating "the difference between Self and Other" On the one hand, they are portrayed as serious Native American allies of British imperialism, like the naval admirals depicted by Kneller and Dahl; on the other, they seem divorced from their roles as diplomatic envoys and inserted into a standardised conception of the New World, and are marginalised as exotic or fetishized beings whose national or cultural identity is of little significance. Underscoring this notion, it is significant that the frames in which Verelst's paintings were thought to have been displayed at the time (and which they remain in today), are highly gilded and richly ebonised examples of the decorative technique known as 'Japanning' (Fig. 145). 94 This type of ornamentation, developed in Britain in the late seventeenth century, was designed to imitate true oriental lacquer and achieved its effect by layering elaborate gold embellishment on top of a black coloured or simulated tortoiseshell ground. Though culturally distinct from the ethnicity of the Indian Kings, this acculturated form of decoration – inspired by the orient, but transformed into an active part of British material culture – resonates with the element of masquerade and artifice that was implicit in the construction of Verelst's portraits. The ethnic fusion of the paintings and frames might be seen less as a naïve mismatch than a concerted effort to formalise a global aesthetic that was resistant to the boundaries or constraints of nations, cultures and languages. Contrived by artists and craftsmen working in Britain, this type of cultural manipulation demonstrated the nation's increasing ability to control and stage-manage worldly trade and commerce. As contemporary commentators recognised, the purely

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<sup>93</sup> Bhabha, 1994:72.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>94</sup> Madeleine Trudeau (Curator) and Robin Ashton (Conservator) at the National Archives Canada, believe that the present frames in which Verelst's portraits are housed are the originals, dating to 1710. In conversation, February 2012.

'visual' had distinct advantages over the 'literary' in communicating this notion. In their 1688 treatise on the art of Japanning, Stalker and Parker noted:

Begging the Muses pardon, I should prefer a Picture to a Poem; for the latter is narrow and short-liv'd, calculated to the Meridian of two or three Countries, and perhaps as many Ages; but Painting is drawn in a character intelligible to all Mankind, and stands not in need of a Gloss, or Commentator, tis an unchangeable and universal language. 95



Figure 145. The four Indian Kings, in their original frames.

Though most of Stalker and Parker's book is concerned with the practical manufacturing process of Japanning, such poetic digressions continually punctuate the text and divert our attention to contemplate the more symbolic function of oriental design in early eighteenth century Britain. These descriptions offer a crucial insight into the way in which contemporary (and later) viewers might have thought about the Indian Kings in their

<sup>95</sup> Parker and Stalker, 1688:i.

Japanned frames at Kensington Palace. Significantly, visual splendour seems a key characteristic of such work, and Parker and Stalker routinely use phrases such as "delightful and ornamental beyond expression", as well as words like "beautiful", "rich" and "Majestick". As Ethan Lasser has noted, the use of adjectives normally reserved for literary criticism is also a key feature of the text. At various points the authors refer to Japanning's "errata," "passages," and "conclusions," and speak of the object's "author" and his "pen". "These characterizations align Japanned objects with narrative structures: they indicate that Parker and Stalker, and by extension their readers, thought that there was something story-like about Japanned furniture." In light of de Lairesse's suggestion that nothing more "disgusts in a fine Play...than ordinary Action, bad Dresses, and a contemptible Stage", the framing – or staging – of the Indian Kings in this way seems particularly pertinent. 97 Moreover, as we find the term 'Indian' routinely associated with Japanning, we might also imagine that the generic naming of Verelst's subjects as 'Indian' inherently evoked notions of narrative, drama, and theatricality. 98 In the 1701 treatise, Art's master-piece, readers were presented with details of "the newest Experiment in Japaning," to imitate the Indian way"; in London's auctions, objects such as "an Indian Japan'd Chest of Drawers" were commonplace; a mezzotint by Bernard Lens II of a lady in Asian-style dress, standing in a distinctly oriental garden, is titled 'An Indian Lady' (Fig. 146). 99 In each of these contexts, 'Indian', like 'Japanned', becomes a pseudonym for theatrical or decorative exoticism. We might see this ambiguity as part of a project described by Joseph Roach as "the memorial condensation of race and nation in the interstices of circum-Atlantic amnesia". 100 Thus, while Verelst may not have conceived his portraits in quite this way, as the memory of the Indian Kings and their temporary diplomatic roles faded after

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<sup>96</sup> Lasser, 2009:5

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>97</sup> Fritsch, 1738:114.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>98</sup> It is perhaps also notable, as Joseph Roach points out, that Dryden's Restoration plays *The Indian Queen* and *The Indian Emperour* remained popular in the early eighteenth century. Roach, 2003:105.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>99</sup> C.K, 1701:title page; Lot 86 in 'A Curious Collection of Paintings and several Other Curiosities by the best Masters', 22 October, 1691.Transcribed at www.artworld.york.ac.uk.

<sup>100</sup> Roach, 1996:122.

they left London, the renegotiation of their identity in line with this prevailing concept of 'Indian' was perhaps inevitable.<sup>101</sup>



Figure 146. (left) Bernard Lens II. *An Indian Lady*. Mezzotint, c.1680-1725. Figure 147. (right) Anon. Detail of Japanned frame for Verelst's portraits, 1710.

## The mezzotints and other likenesses

Produced by London's preeminent mezzotint engraver and sold by subscription, John Simon's printed copies of Verelst's paintings were clearly conceived as high-end authentic replicas. Yet, being published almost six months after the Indian Kings had left the capital, they were preceded by a multitude of other portraits of the Native American ambassadors. At the uppermost end of this market were portrait miniatures, painted on vellum by Bernard Lens III – two complete sets of which are today in British Museum (Figs. 148-149). It is certainly possible that these works formed part of an even more extensive studio production of miniatures depicting the Indian Kings, which Lens based on studies of the Iroquois that he had drawn from the life while they were in London. As with Verelst's portraits, these images were reproduced in mezzotint format to facilitate their wider

<sup>101</sup> Kidd, 2004:260.

Ntdd, 2004.200.

The mezzotint derived from Lens' miniatures is titled as 'Done after the Original Limnings Drawn from ye Life by B. Lens junr.'. Bond also states that "A note on No.50 in the 1789 edition of the *Spectator* remarked that the miniatures were inscribed upon the back 'Drawn by the life, May 2, 1710, by Bernard Lens, Jun." Bond, 1952:134.

circulation. This print (engraved by Lens' father, Bernard Lens II) grouped the four heads of the Indian Kings together on a single sheet (Fig. 150). <sup>103</sup> By systematically reorganising the sitters in this way, the mezzotint corresponded with the typical format used to present multiple portraits of nobility or royalty.





Figure 148. (left) Bernard Lens III. *Oh Nee Yeath Ton No Rion*. Watercolour and bodycolour with graphite on vellum, 1710.

Figure 149. (right) Bernard Lens III. *Oh Nee Yeath Ton No Rion*. Watercolour and bodycolour with graphite on vellum, 1710.





Figure 150. (left) Bernard Lens II. *The Four Indian Kings*. Mezzotint, 1710-1720. Figure 151. (right) Bernard Lens II. *The Royal Family*. Mezzotint, c.1689-1694.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>103</sup> The British Museum's catalogue entry for this print cites 'Bernard Lens III' as the engraver. However, this is evidently an error, as the younger Lens was not known as an engraver. The elder Lens (Bernard Lens II) was a renowned producer of small mezzotint portraits and so is a much more likely candidate.

This "use of the prevailing oval format", Carol Wax has suggested, points to an "incongruous stylization" resulting from the lack of "first-hand knowledge of these people". 104 However, we may argue instead that Lens' handling of his subjects self-consciously sought to evoke a sense of the Indian Kings' hybridity, borrowing pictorial tropes in a way that mirrored Verelst's approach. When we examine a contemporary mezzotint of the four members of the British Royal Family (Fig. 151), also engraved by Lens, the constitutive elements used to restyle the Indian Kings are clearly visible. The oval borders that surround them are evidently derived from the ornamental garlands and crowns which frame the British monarchs. Yet, adapting these conventions, Lens surmounts the Indian Kings with pseudo-heraldic plumages made up from different forms of Native American weaponry and frames them with more naturalistic flowing embellishments, perhaps alluding to their rural forest tribal living. By interpreting his New World sitters in these ways, Lens, like Verelst, seems to dramatise the Indian Kings as important noble figures, yet simultaneously acknowledges their cultural differences by adeptly modifying the conventions of his chosen medium.

At the lower end of the graphic spectrum, a multitude of cruder engravings of the Indian Kings were published during their visit. These ranged from theatre playbills and pamphlets, to ballads and broadsides, and were produced anonymously by engravers who evidently lacked finesse. These graphic materials seem to have been only of momentary topical interest, and there is no evidence to suggest that they travelled widely beyond the city. Collectively they attest to the fact that for many, Native Americans were simply understood as marginalised, alien savages at the Empire's periphery. Destabilising the polite perceptions of the Indian Kings forged by images like Lens' and Simon's, these images offer a stark reminder of the power of print as a disruptive agent, able to cultivate

<sup>104</sup> Wax, 1990:74.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>105</sup> For a comprehensive survey of all the known contemporary ballads and popular images relating to the four Indian Kings see Garratt and Robertson, 1985.

ambiguity, confusion, and misunderstanding. As Bickham has suggested, such popular prints reveal a curiosity which "rested almost solely on generic Otherness rather than any attachment to British interests in North America." One of the earliest images of this kind appeared as part of a theatrical playbill for a performance advertised in the *Post Boy*:

"For the Entertainment of the Four INDIAN KINGS, lately arriv'd. At the Queen's Theatre in the Hay Market, on Monday next, being the 24<sup>th</sup> instant, will be presented the Tragedy of MACKBETH". 107

Although this advertisement described the performance as a production specially laid on for the entertainment of the Indian Kings, who were officially promoted as important envoys belonging to a serious diplomatic mission, the main draw for most Londoners, it seems, was the opportunity to ogle at the unfamiliar features of men from the New World. On the night of the performance, "the Mob, who had possession of the upper gallery, declared that they came to see the Kings, 'and since we have paid our money, the Kings we will have" Despite being assured that the four Iroquois were seated in the front box, the braying crowd insisted that they could not see them "and desired they might be placed in a more conspicuous point of view". <sup>109</sup> Duly obliging, the theatre staff placed four chairs upon the stage, on which the Iroquois sat throughout the performance. Similarly, although there is no record of such demands from the audience, a playbill published on 1 May 1710 announced that a "NEW OPERA, Performed by a company of Artificial Actors, call'd The Last Years Campaigne" would be performed "For the Entertainment of the Four Indian Kings". 110 The 'Artificial Actors' referred to in the playbill allow us to identify this entertainment as a puppet show. Yet, the image promoting the performance depicts the figures of the Indian Kings on the stage (Fig. 152) – perhaps pre-empting a repeat of the events witnessed a week earlier at the Queens Theatre in Haymarket. This dramatisation of the ambassadors suggests that for attendees of the performance, the Indian Kings' role at

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>106</sup> Bickham, 2005:26.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>107</sup> Post Boy, Classified advertisements, April 20, 1710.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>108</sup> Genest, 1832,(vol. ii):451.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>109</sup> Ibid:451

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>110</sup> Playbill of performance of *Powell's Puppets for the Entertainment of the Four Indian Kings*. 1710.

the theatre was much akin to that played by the 'Artificial Actors', or puppets, who were merely effigies of real human actors.

The mounting intrigue surrounding the Indian Kings provoked a demand for many other quickly produced and easily obtainable images. One such print declared itself as *The true Effiges of the Four Indian Kings taken from the Original Paintings done by Mr Varelst* (Fig. 153). By suggesting that the portraits in this image were based on Verelst's paintings, the producer of the print evidently hoped to claim a certain kind of authority; yet, the way in which the Indian Kings are depicted here seems driven by a less sophisticated, arbitrary curiosity, quite different from the ostensibly political objectives of Verelst's work.



Figure 152. (left) Anon. Detail of a playbill for *The Last Years Campaigne*. Engraving, 1710. Figure 153. (right) Anon. The true effigies of the four Indian Kings taken from the original paintings done by Mr Varelst. Etching, 1710.

For instance, although the simple depictions of the Indian Kings' totem clan symbols in the centre of the print might suggest some concern with ethnographic details, the handling of these symbols seems reminiscent of the labelling techniques used in natural historical texts

of the time. Like the identifying marks habitually used to annotate images of natural specimens, an 'a', 'b' and 'c' appear beside each totem symbol so that we may match it to a corresponding letter next to each portrait. Moreover, the print's description of these symbols as 'Coats of Arms which they use instead of Signing thier [sic] Names', seems to suggest a kind of illiteracy which marks the New World out as somehow less culturally sophisticated than the Old. Such treatment of the totem marks contrasts with the way in which they were handled by Verelst, who sought to subtly integrate them into an established Western pictorial discourse, rather than drawing attention to them as signs of cultural otherness. Other inaccuracies indicate that the print was produced in a hurry to capitalise on public interest in the Indians while they were still in town, and that the artist had little interest in the kind of visual project that Verelst was engaged in. Although variant spellings of words were commonplace in the early eighteenth century, the incorrect spelling of 'thier' seems indicative of a hasty production, as the same word is spelt correctly elsewhere on the sheet. In addition, the names beneath each bust are completely muddled, displaying an absence of detailed knowledge about the Iroquois, as well, perhaps, as a lack of regard for them as individual figures, as opposed to ethnographic types. 111 Furthermore, the details of the men's tattoos and body piercings seem so exaggerated and densely rendered that the portraits take on an almost grotesque, caricature-like quality, which implies that potential purchasers of the print would have been expected to be more interested in the physical and cultural idiosyncrasies of the Indian Kings than their roles as important agents of imperial development. Indeed, this bizarre group portrait, driven by an arbitrary fascination in all things 'curious', seems hardly appropriate for the depiction of sitters of supposedly notable status. In this respect, the image emblematises the antithesis of the visual language that John Verelst hoped to cultivate.

<sup>111</sup> Closely studying the titles given to the Indian Kings in John Simon's mezzotints, it is clear that three of the four Indians' names are mixed up in *The true Effiges* print.

Significantly, Verelst himself, evidently livid that an association had been made between *The true Effiges of the Four Indian Kings* and his own, official portraits, denounced their authenticity in a notice placed in the *Tatler* on 13 May 1710:

Whereas an Advertisement was publish'd in the Supplement Yesterday, That the Effigies of the Four Indian Kings were drawn from Mr. Verelst's original Pictures; these are to give Notice, That Mr. Verelst has not permitted any Person to take any Draught or Sketch from them: If he should, he would take Care to have it correctly done by a skilful Hand, and inform the Publick thereof in the Tatler. JOHN VERELST. 112

As noted already, it was not until six months later, in November 1710, that this advertisement was followed up by Verelst, who in the interim period had employed the 'skilful Hand' of John Simon to produce the official mezzotint reproductions of his portraits. Operating in sharp contrast to engravings like *The true Effiges*, Simon's mezzotints would undoubtedly have been understood as luxury products on the London print market. Indeed, the fact that they were initially sold by subscription and "delivered to Subscribers" indicates their relative exclusivity. 113 The principal market for Simon's mezzotints, we can assume, would have been a middling class: adequately cultured to admire portrait painting, yet not perhaps wealthy enough to own original works. Being a tonal rather than linear medium, mezzotint allowed for a smooth and fluid finish, and so provided consumers with the ideal means of approximating the effect of brush on canvas in their homes. As this nascent 'middle class' of art buyers grew during the first half of the eighteenth century, the mezzotint enjoyed its heyday in Britain too. During this period, close associations between mezzotint engravers and portrait painters were commonplace, and it was usual that "the best engravers and painters sought each other out." <sup>114</sup> For example, John Smith – an artist proclaimed by Walpole as "the best mezzotinter that has appeared" – enjoyed over thirty years as the principal mezzotinter for Godfrey Kneller, the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>112</sup> *Tatler*, Classified advertisements, 13 May, 1710.

<sup>113</sup> London Gazette, 16 November, 1710.

<sup>114</sup> Wax, 1990:56.

leading portrait painter of his day. 115 However, at some point between 1708 and 1711, "Kneller and Smith disagreed, and came to a rupture of their artistic relations". As a result, during these years Kneller temporarily required "another engraver who should interpret him in no less satisfying a manner" and promptly hired John Simon to fill the vacancy. Simon was already noted for treating the practice of mezzotint in a way of his own, "with a touch more sensitive than any of his contemporaries, aiming at refinement in tone and quiet harmony of effect"; however, his association with Kneller can only have enhanced his reputation. 116 By 1710, he was recognised as one of the leading mezzotinters in London, and so a degree of prestige and desirability would have been inherent in his copies of Verelst's portraits. At around the same time, he also produced an important set of mezzotints of the Raphael Cartoons at Hampton Court, as well as many portraits of the nobility after Kneller's own paintings. The fact that he was chosen to engrave the Indian Kings' portraits while handling other important commissions indicates the level of importance with which the reproductions of Verelst's paintings were held. The employment of mezzotint to reproduce the portraits of the Indian Kings might also be understood in relation to recent arguments made by Michael Gaudio about the use of Western printing technology to depict Native Americans. In his 2008 book, Engraving the Savage, Gaudio questions how "the materials and techniques of the engraver [might] reveal the structures as well as the limits and ambiguities in the imagining" of indigenous communities. 117 More specifically, he suggests the ways in which the first printed images of Native Americans, produced as a result of European voyages to the 'New World' at the end of the sixteenth century, might also be understood in terms of the 'newness' of copperplate engraving itself, which at that time was a relatively "new art", reflective of progress and discovery. 118 In doing so, he makes a powerful case for "technology as a measure of

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>115</sup> Walpole, 1796 (vol. v): 202.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>116</sup> Salaman, 1906:81.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>117</sup> Gaudio, 2008:xiv.

<sup>118</sup> Ibid:xvi.

civilization during the early phase of European exploration and settlement of the Americas". 119 The use of a relatively modern medium such as mezzotint to depict the four Indian Kings in 1710 can be seen in a similar light. Moreover, the nationalist agenda associated with mezzotint's introduction to Britain might also be understood as an important factor in its employment to depict four Iroquois supporters of British imperial expansion. It was in John Evelyn's 1662 publication, Sculptura: or the History and Art of Chalcography and Engraving in Copper, that mezzotint was first described to the British public, as a "new way of Engraving" that was "Rare, Extraordinary, Universally approv'd of [and] admired by all which have consider'd the effects of it'. <sup>120</sup> Evelyn's treatise also asserted that the process of mezzotint engraving had been discovered and developed by Prince Rupert – the nephew of Charles I. 121 Only two years after the Restoration, the implication that a member of the Royal Family had been responsible for introducing a new form of image-making, capable of furthering Britain's artistic credentials, clearly served to solidify mezzotint's status a nationalised art form. Thus, the depiction of the Indian Kings in mezzotint not only symbolically civilised them through the use of a refined modern medium, but implicated them in what was understood at the time as a peculiarly 'British' visual discourse. Furthermore, "the superiority of the medium when it came to mimesis" made mezzotint a particularly suitable tool for those wishing to use printed designs as models for new images in paint. 122 Thus, as the final part of this chapter suggests, the circulation of the Indian Kings' mezzotint likenesses in the British American colonies encouraged their reproduction and integration within a broader colonial practice of emulation and assimilation.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>119</sup> Ibid:xviii.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>120</sup> Evelyn, 1662:145.

This assertion is somewhat dubious. It is thought that mezzotint had in fact been invented twenty years earlier by a Dutchman, Ludwig von Siegen, in 1642. The full transcript of a letter written by von Siegen, in which he describes the process of engraving he developed, is reproduced by Pissarro, 1956:2 Siddons, 2013:74.

## The colonial circulation of John Simon's mezzotints

While the upper ranks of London's print buying public remembered the Indian Kings' visit with the aid of elegant mezzotints like John Simon's, the attention of those who had organised the Anglo-American embassy turned swiftly to more pressing matters on the other side of the Atlantic. With the Anglo-Iroquois coalition preserved, and British military support granted, a new raid on the French garrison at Port Royal took place in early October 1710. Over a period of nearly two weeks, a fleet of "four Ships of sixty Guns, two of forty, and one of thirty-six accompanied with three Thousand Land Forces, under the Command of General *Nicolson* [sic]" decisively captured the fort, and the territory was promptly renamed 'Annapolis Royal' in honour of Queen Anne. On 6 November, the *Boston News-Letter* announced that "Articles of Capitulation [had been] agreed upon for the Surrender of the Fort of *Port Royal* Betwixt *Francis Nicholson* Esq, General and Commander in Chief, of all the Forces of Her Sacred Majesty *ANNE*". A month later, on 13 December 1710, news reached London. *The British Mercury* reported that:

Colonel Nicholson had made a very successful Expedition from Boston, against the French Settlement at Acadia, of which he had made himself Master, by the Reduction of the Fort there, call'd Port Royal, the Governor and Garrison of which (consisting of 200 Men) had been made Prisoners of War. There were about 500 French Inhabitants there, who are now subject to her British Majesty, there being a Garrison of 500 English left in the Fort by Colonel Nicholson, who is safely arriv'd at Boston. <sup>125</sup>

While Colonel Nicholson's troops included many Iroquois whose loyalties had been cemented following the 1710 embassy to London, the capture of Port Royal allowed the British colonial regime to gain even more local support in the form of Iroquois dissenters from the fallen French territory. Those who had earlier sided with the French and defected to the British were said to have "opened their eyes" and "at last…found that the Notion which had been always instilled into them of the Superiority of the *French*, proved only an

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>123</sup> Anon, A Geographical History of Nova Scotia, 1749:90.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>124</sup> Boston News Letter, 6 November, 1710.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>125</sup> British Mercury, 13 December, 1710.

empty Amusement." <sup>126</sup> Keen to win further Iroquois support without delay, the indefatigable Colonel Nicholson, who had been instrumental in bringing the four Indian Kings to England a year earlier, returned to London in the early months of 1711 to request further backing for the preservation of the Anglo-Iroquois alliance and the continued subjugation of French territories. By the time he returned to New York in August his hopes had already come to fruition: British colonial and Iroquois forces had regrouped and were once again poised for military action. The Boston News-Letter announced that "On Friday 24<sup>th</sup> [August, 1711], 699 Indians of the 5 Nations...joyned Col. Ingoldsby, Col. Schuyler and Col. Whiting. Tomorrow General Nicholson and the 5 Nations March for Canada". 127 On the day of the proposed 'March for Canada', Iroquois chiefs and colonial leaders met to discuss the details of the expedition. 128 At this meeting, the Iroquois representatives declared that as a token of their "willingness to come down and assist...against Canada", they had brought offerings of "4 Belts of Wampum and two Bever Skins [which] should be kept as a memorial & Testimony of their obedience and subjection to Her Majesty." <sup>129</sup> In return, Colonel Nicholson presented them with 'souvenirs' from his recent trip to London. These gifts were John Simon's mezzotints – brought to America for the very first time. The minutes of the meeting record the details of their presentation:

Lieut Gen Francis Nicholson, being lately arrived safe from England has brought the Pictures of the 4 Indians that were in Great Brittain last year, & gave each Nation a sett & 4 in Frames with glasses over them to be hung up in Onnondage...the center of the 5 nations where they always meet. <sup>130</sup>

This presentation marked the beginning of an extensive programme of circulation and dissemination which saw the imagery of the four Indian Kings spread widely throughout the American colonies, in both Iroquois and British expatriate communities. Just one year later, Robert Hunter, the Governor of New York, received from Queen Anne an additional

<sup>126</sup> Anon, A Geographical History of Nova Scotia, 1749:90.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>127</sup> Boston News Letter, 3 September, 1711.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>128</sup> For a full account, see Drake, 1910:267-283.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>129</sup> O'Callaghan (ed.), 1855:268.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>130</sup> Ibid:270.

fifty-one sets of John Simon's mezzotints, which arrived with clear instructions as to how they should be dispersed. Three sets in frames were to be sent to New York and Boston to be placed in the Council Chambers, and another to Onondaga – the centre of Iroquois government. Of the remaining forty-seven unframed sets, eight were sent to New York, four to Jersey, eight to Boston, four to New Hampshire, four to Conneticut, four to Rhode Island, four to Pennsylvania, one to each of the Five Nations and the River Nations, one to each of the Governors of Maryland and Virginia to hang in their Council Chambers, and one to each of the four Indian Kings themselves. 132

At this time, the practice of distributing portraits of Native Americans among their own communities was unprecedented; however, the more general giving of pictures to Native American allies was a well-established "diplomatic initiative". 133 The dispersal of Royal portraits in particular was thought to be an effective way of motivating veneration of the British monarchy among the Iroquois. In this respect, it seems notable that when the Indian Kings left London, they were presented with copies of the 'Queen's picture'. 134 As Brendan McConville notes, a year earlier, medals bearing Queen Anne's effigy had been presented to Iroquois leaders by Governor Robert Hunter to be kept at the Five Nations' main villages. Silver medallions bearing the Queens head were also given to the chief warriors to wear around their necks. Thus, "the queen's image realized her authority on the empire's far rim by establishing personal-political ties to the Five Nations' head-men." 135 Simultaneously, "imperial officials sent formal monarchical portraits to the American

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>131</sup> Garratt incorrectly writes that these 51 sets of John Simon's mezzotints were brought to America and distributed by 'Reverend Andrews', a missionary priest. *The Memorial History of the City of New York* clearly states that Robert Hunter, Governor of New York, was responsible for their distribution. There is no traceable evidence to suggest that they were distributed in a religious capacity. Wilson (ed.), 1892:146. <sup>132</sup> Ibid:146.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>133</sup> McConville, 2006:129.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>134</sup> The 'Queens picture' is listed in an 'Invoice of sundry merchandizes bought by order & for account of the Indian Chiefs'. This invoice is referred to in the Calendar of Treasury Papers, Volume 4: 1708-1714. The full document can be seen at the National Archives, Record T 1/121, item 52.

<sup>135</sup> McConville, 2006:129.

provinces as gifts to colonial governments designed to solidify royal authority." This kind of image distribution was evidently intended to further a partisan reverence of the British monarchy among both white colonists and their Native American allies; at the same time (perhaps inadvertendtly) it effected a mutual form of spectatorship among these respective communities, establishing the consumtion of British visual culture as a univerally shared colonial experience. Beside monarchial portraiture, the list of gifts presented to the Indian Kings before leaving London suggests that more playful forms of imagery (which were undoubtedly familiar to most émigré Britons living in the colonies) were deployed among Iroquois allies to acculturate them to developing Western conceptions of art as a communal form of entertainmanet. Among the items they were given was a 'Magick Lanthorn with Pictures' (Fig. 154).<sup>137</sup>

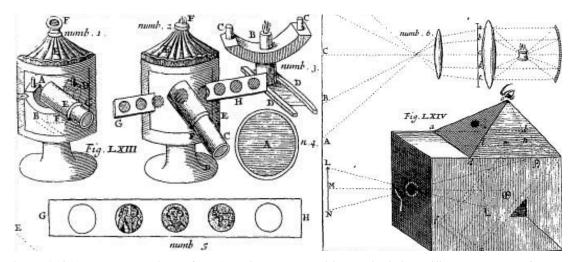


Figure 154. Anon. Illustrations of the 'Magick Lanthorn' in *Mathesis juvenilis: or a course of mathematicks for young students* (Vol. 2, 1708). Engraving.

Although there is no record of the images provided for the Indian Kings to use with this piece of apparatus, newspaper reports which advertised 'Magic Lantern' shows as a form of public entertainment in the British North American colonies suggest that they were probably light-hearted forms of figurative imagery, not intended to serve any overtly iconographic or propagandist purpose, but simply to be enjoyed as a curious cinematic

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<sup>136</sup> Ibid:128-9.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>137</sup> This is recorded in the document cited in note 133. Other 'sundry merchandizes' listed here include cotton and linen shirts, brass kettles, lead bars, firkins, looking glasses, knives, scissors, tobacco boxes, razors, combs, swords, pistols, vermillion powder, and gunpowder.

spectacle. A later article in the New-York Evening Post advertised "the House of Mr. Wood Furmans" as a place where spectators could see "the Curious and Surprizing Magick Lanthorn, representing upwards of 30 humourous and entertaining Figures, larger than Men or Women". 138 While the effects of these shows presumably enthralled some viewers, evidence suggests that the Iroquois were not as enamoured with the spectacle as might have been hoped. Reports fed back to Britain explained that many Iroquois were "so affrighted at the sight of the magick lanthorn" that they were "hardly prevail'd on to see any more curiosities of that nature." <sup>139</sup>

Being images of their own people, construed through a visual discourse that was not a part of their own culture, the Iroquois' acceptance of John Simon's mezzotints might be seen as a willing recognition of their own acculturation. At the same time however, the portraits display a British sensitivity to Iroquois culture, which the recipients would have been expected to recognise. For example, the Iroquois custom of 'burying the hatchet' as a sign of peace was dramatised by Verelst (and reproduced by Simon) through the depiction of a partially obscured tomahawk axe in the foreground of each portrait. As the early colonial historian Robert Beverley had observed in 1705, "They use...very ceremonious ways in concluding of Peace...such as burying a Tomahawk...in a token that all Enmity is bury'd with the Tomahawk, that all the desolations of War are at an end, and that Friendship shall flourish". 140 By demonstrating an understanding of this practice, the mezzotints publicised a clear message that British colonisers were respectful towards Iroquois traditions and ways of living. Similarly, the careful depiction of each man's features, including the specific design of his tattoos, meant that "Iroquois viewers could see that these images represented real men, perhaps acquaintances or kin", who the artist undoubtedly understood and had some affinity with, and who were all the richer as a result of their

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>138</sup> *The New-York Evening Post*, 9 September, 1746. <sup>139</sup> *Grub Street Journal*, 12 September, 1734.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>140</sup> Beverley, 1705:27.

cooperation with the British. 141 Imported fabrics, accoutrements and European weapons are interspersed with native weapons and textiles, positing British trade goods as integral to the Iroquois' material development. Aside from these emblematic aspects of the portraits, which perhaps suggest that the idea of dispersing them among the Iroquois had been conceived before Verelst began work on the commission, the way in which they were presented as part of a process of gift exchange might also be seen as a carefully engineered procedure that carried an obligation to reciprocate. The "exchanging of gifts upon making alliances" was a natural transition from the old Iroquois custom, and for Europeans, diplomacy and gifts went hand in hand. 142 As Mauss suggests, it was well recognised within tribal communities such as the Iroquois that any kind of gift indebted to the receiver to whoever gave it. 143 Thus, while inter-colonial exchanges like Nicholson's and Hunter's took place in the form of presents generously given, their reciprocation would have been understood as obligatory. "In the gesture accompanying the transaction", Mauss stresses, "there is only a polite fiction, formalism, and social deceit...when really there is obligation and economic self-interest." <sup>144</sup> The presence of such forms of etiquette in Iroquois culture, we may argue, permitted the use of John Simon's mezzotints as a reminder of the Iroquois' own obligation to reciprocate, materially or otherwise, the gifts given to them by their British associates.

Part of this obligation would have been to disassociate with French colonisers, in terms of trade, warfare, and religion. Indeed, the initial giving of the portraits on the eve of anti-French military action seems to have been a well calculated manoeuvre on the part of Colonel Nicholson, to simultaneously reaffirm the relationship forged a year earlier between the Indian Kings and the British Crown, and to initiate a pact between the two

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>141</sup> Muller, 2008:43.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>142</sup> Fenton, 1998:12.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>143</sup> Mauss, in Hall (trans.), 1990:1-9.

<sup>144</sup> Ibid· 4

nations for the future. By explicitly stating that the framed set of mezzotints should be displayed at Onondaga – the geographic and symbolic centre of Iroquois culture and policy making – Colonel Nicholson seems to have been highly perceptive to the fact that both the timing of the images' presentation, as well as the context of their display, was particularly important. While we can only speculate where in Onondaga the framed mezzotints were displayed, the most likely location is the Longhouse – an important place of spiritual congregation, which can be conceptually understood as representing a microcosm of Iroquois societal values and ideals:



Figure 155. Reconstruction of a traditional Longhouse. Ganondagan State Historic Site, New York State.

the [Onondaga] Longhouse is not only used for religious purposes. It is a meeting place for tribal discussion, and a kind of hospital for the post-curative rites...It is an informal schoolhouse for the young and carries on the process of traditional socialization. It is a dance center and a feast hall. It is a reception room for greeting visitors and chiefs from related Iroquois Nations. The Longhouse as an institution is functionally integrated into almost every aspect of Iroquois life. Due to its prominent role in fulfilling so many varied needs of the community, its contribution to cultural solidarity is immeasurable...The Longhouse then, is the agent through which the prestige factor is seen, the center of communication, and the mainstay of ideological security. It is the central thread in the tapestry of culture running throughout Iroquois society, aiding native forms of expression, and acting as the show case for displaying native practices, social, religious, and political organization, and national character. <sup>145</sup>

At this time, a strict policy of official neutrality operated at Onondaga, which authorised open interaction between French and English allied Iroquois. <sup>146</sup> As a bold indication of the material prosperity, personal wealth and power that an alliance with the British could

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>145</sup> Blau,1965:251.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>146</sup> On the policy of neutrality at Onondaga, see Fenton, 1998:13.

bring, the display of the mezzotints within this environment must have been seen as a vital diplomatic tool in seeking to upend such a policy.

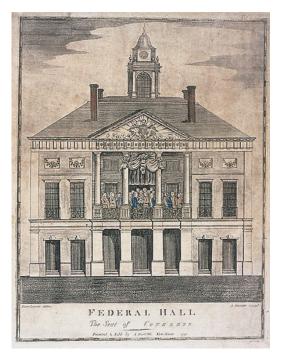




Figure 156. (left) Amos Doolittle. *New York City Hall (Federal Hall)*. Engraving, 1790. Figure 157. (right) Samuel Hill. *The Massachusetts State House, Boston*. Engraving, 1793.

Some three-hundred miles away, in the council chambers at New York and Boston (Figs. 156-157), the mezzotints would have performed a rather different function. New York's City Hall, where the council chambers were housed, had been relatively recently completed in 1700, while the Massachusetts State House, where the Boston Governors met, was completed in 1713, after the earlier wooden framed 'Town House' was destroyed by fire in 1711. Such grand civic structures, built or rebuilt during this period, reflected the burgeoning spheres of political, economic and social life. As Martha McNamara has suggested, when fire destroyed Boston's old Town House in 1711, "the province, county, and town built an edifice that embodied the changes spreading through Massachusetts society...the new town house served as the seat of government, accommodated the Superior Court of Judicature and Suffolk County courts, housed Boston town meetings, and, on the ground floor, contained the merchants' exchange." Similarly, as different

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>147</sup> McNamara, 2001:133

modes of polite, stylised public gestures developed, the City Hall in New York became an important arena for these new types of ritualised personal exchanges. 148 Like London's Royal Exchange – "a building whose actual operations depended on collective experience, in real space and time, for the benefit of far flung and isolated consumers" – these buildings were implicitly connected to colonial American life, yet simultaneously had deep roots embedded in faraway forms of European culture, architecture, and display. 149 In this respect, they can be seen as sharing a symbolic relationship with the images of the Indian Kings, which themselves combined European and Native American influences in "an imaginative and material space where metropole and colony emerged simultaneously". 150 The explicit mirroring of British metropolitan culture in Boston and New York signifies how strongly the pull of London as the "centripetal origin of empire" was felt in these centres. Moreover, evidence of this mirroring allows us to challenge the assumed dichotomy of 'home' and 'away' in this period of colonial development. <sup>151</sup> Indeed, in the context of buildings like the City Hall and State House, the images of the Indian Kings would not have seemed distant or exotic as they might have done in London, but would have emblematised nearby and familiar collaborations with Iroquois, which were, in the minds of colonists, at the forefront of imperial development. In 1743, Benjamin Franklin famously declared that "The first Drudgery of Settling new Colonies...is now pretty well over; and there are many in every Province in Circumstances that...afford Leisure to cultivate the finer Arts". The display and appreciation of John Simon's mezzotints some thirty years earlier, in the refined civic settings of New York and Boston, signal the first beginnings of such a shift.<sup>152</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>148</sup> Agnew, 1988:152-61; Bushman, 1992:30-99.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>149</sup> Quoted from the abstract of Christine Stevenson's paper – *Court, City, cosmos: mediations of London's second Royal Exchange*, presented at the conference 'British Art 1660-1735: Close Readings', at Tate Britain, 20 May 2011.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>150</sup> Burton, 2003:11.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>151</sup> Ibid:4.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>152</sup> Franklin, 1743:1.

## **New painted contexts**

In the years following the display of the mezzotints in council chambers across the British North American colonies, the iconography of the Indian Kings seems to have spread further afield, gaining visibility in more private arenas. In particular, we can say with some confidence that the images were known to Captain Archibald Macpheadris, an opulent Scottish merchant and member of the King's Council who commissioned the building of a grand private residence in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, some fifty miles north of Boston. Built in 1716-18, Macpheadris' palatial home was lavishly decorated, and incorporated a number of wall paintings which were later described by the American columnist, Charles Brewster. Speaking of one fresco of particular note, Brewster recalls:

At the head of the stairs on the broad space each side of the hall windows, there are pictures of two Indians, life size, highly decorated, and executed by a skillful artist. These pictures have always been in view there, and are supposed to represent some with whom the original owner traded in furs, in which business he was also engaged. 153

While Brewster suggests that the two figures in this fresco were intended to represent local Indians with whom Macpheadris traded in furs, they are clearly derived from John Simon's mezzotints of Etow Oh Koam and Ho Nee Yeath Taw No Row (Figs. 158-160). 154 At a time when no academically trained artists were active in Britain's North American colonies, the prints were evidently used as designs by a jobbing painter of modest technical ability, striving to meet the demands of a consumer society ever more driven by artistic expression. As we shall see, these paintings operated as part of a much more extensive decorative scheme, influenced by a whole range of other European prints. The specific positioning of the Indian Kings within this scheme, on a small landing between the ground floor and the first floor, might be critically read in terms of Renée Green's symbolic

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>153</sup> Brewster, 1859:138. Macpheadris' house is now known as 'The Warner House' after a later occupant.

<sup>154</sup> It is believed that these murals were painted when the house was built. Allen, 1971:22.



Figure 158. Anon. Painted mural of Indian Kings in the former home of Archibald Macpheadris, Portsmouth, New Hampshire. Oil on plaster, c.1716-18 (with later restoration).





Figure 159. (left) John Simon, after John Verelst. *Etow Oh Koam*. Mezzotint, 1710.

Figure 160. (right) John Simon, after John Verelst. *Ho Nee Yeath Taw No Row*. Mezzotint, 1710.

interpretation of spaces that function as "a pathway between the upper and lower areas of a building". Developing this idea, Bhabha suggests that:

The stairwell as liminal space, in-between the designations of identity, becomes the process of symbolic interaction, the connective tissue that constructs the difference between upper and lower, black and white. The hither and thither of the stairwell, the temporal movement and passage that it allows, prevents identities at either end of it from settling into primordial polarities. This interstitial passage between fixed identifications opens up the possibility of a cultural hybridity that entertains difference without an assumed or imposed hierarchy. <sup>156</sup>

According to Bhabha's logic, the placement of the Indian Kings in a liminal space between the upper and lower levels of the building develops a notion of hybridity that is already an inherent part of the portraits' formal construction. Furthering such a reading, it is notable that the two figures are framed by a large decorative canopy with swags of fabric hanging either side – a typical motif in printed images venerating enthroned monarchs. For example, in a highly politicised and ardently anti-Catholic print of Charles II, produced in the late seventeenth century, the King is shown seated on his throne with a canopy above his head from which bands of drapery hang (Fig. 161). He points his sceptre at a kneeling female figure of the Church while Catholic traitors are executed on the right. Sectioned off by the decorative framework of the canopy and raised on a pedestal, the print establishes a sense of the King as a divine and authoritative ruler. Mutating this iconography, the painted reproductions of the Indian Kings in Captain Macpheadris' colonial home are positioned not directly underneath but to the side of a similar structure, suggesting their subordination to monarchical leadership, but nevertheless establishing a Royal connection that perhaps acknowledges the story of the Indian Kings' visit to London. While the print of Charles II might not have been used as a direct model by the anonymous colonial artist responsible for this painting, the use of such a motif at least suggests knowledge of such western graphic iconography, presumably gained from an imported printed source.

<sup>155</sup> Green, quoted in Bhabha, 1994:5.

<sup>156</sup> Bhabha, 1994:5.



Figure 161. Anon. Untitled depiction of Charles II seated under a canopy. Engraving, c.1670.

Indeed, the use of printed sources characterises the entire painted interior of the house, which fuses different kinds of popular and religious imagery to form an eclectic decorative scheme, drawn from a range of Western graphic traditions. For instance, on one part of the main staircase, a painting illustrates the Old Testament story of the sacrifice of Abraham (Fig. 162). This parable enjoyed a long tradition in the genre of biblical illustration for books, of which George Pencz's sixteenth century engraving is typical. (Fig. 163). Religious and historical texts, old and new, were widely accessible in the colonies and would have been a likely source for the artist hired by Macpheadris. As Jennifer Mylander notes, "most seventeenth-century households in English America contained at least a Bible, and many boasted substantial libraries of London imprints". At the bottom of the staircase, another mural depicts a lady sitting at a spinning wheel, surrounded by an eagle clutching a chicken, a small swooping bird and a leaping dog (Fig. 164). Prints after

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>157</sup> Mylander, 2009:124.



Figure 162. (left) Anon. Painted mural of Isaac and Abraham in the former home of Archibald Macpheadris, Portsmouth, New Hampshire. Oil on plaster, c.1716-18 (with later restoration).

Figure 163. (right) Georg Pencz. The sacrifice of Abraham. Engraving, c.1543.



Figure 164. Anon. Painted mural of a lady at a spinning wheel, dog and eagle, in the former home of Archibald Macpheadris, Portsmouth, New Hampshire. Oil on plaster, c.1716-18 (with later restoration).



Figure 165. (left) Anon. Dummy board of a lady sewing. Oil on European Scots Pine board, early eighteenth century.

Figure 166. (right, top) Francis Place, after Francis Barlow. Eagle catching prey. Etching, c.1694.

Figure 167. (right, bottom) Jan Griffier, after Francis Barlow. Hunting dogs (detail). Etching, c.1694.

Francis Barlow's bird and animal designs may well have inspired the latter of these subjects (Figs. 166-167). The seated lady who appears almost like a cut-out figure is reminiscent of the painted dummy boards which were popular decorative features in many New England houses at the time, and had enjoyed the height of their popularity in Britain earlier in the seventeenth century. <sup>158</sup> A British dummy board which is thought to have been imported to the colonial town of Portsmouth in the early eighteenth century (Fig. 165) offers a suggestion of where the influence for the lady with a spinning wheel on the wall of Macpheadris' house (which was also in that town) might have come from. <sup>159</sup>

These decorative elements, which were reliant upon the accessibility of imported forms of Western imagery, help us to identify Macpheadris' residence as an exercise in mimicry, emblematic of the consequences of a constantly ebbing and flowing Atlantic trade. As Ronan Donohoe has noted, the Portsmouth Athenaeum today holds vast quantities of documents which identify the enormous extent of Macpheadris' involvement in trans-Atlantic shipping – both to and from Britain – which helped to shape the cultural development of both Europe and America. The fundamental construction and appearance of his house, which was built in red brick, mimics the residences of London merchants, such as No.37 Stepney Green, built in 1694 for the merchant Dorner Sheppard (Figs. 168-169). The use of this distinctively British design and materials set buildings like Macpheadris' apart as "the houses of the gentry as they stood upright on the landscape." This practice of assimilation evidently extended into the house's interior furnishings, as an original bill of lading records that all of the furniture was shipped from

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<sup>158</sup> Fletcher Little, 1989; Graham, 1988.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>159</sup> This dummy board, in the collection of the Portsmouth Athenaeum, is thought to have been in the town since it was first shipped from Britain.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>160</sup> Ronan Donohe is a Co-Chair on the Warner House Association Board of Governors, and an active member of the Portsmouth Athenaeum. His assistance with retrieving this information and communicating it in correspondence has been extremely helpful.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>161</sup> Taylor, 2001:119.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>162</sup> Bushman, 1992:133.

Britain. <sup>163</sup> It is perhaps important to consider that while Macpheadris' house mimicked those inhabited by his London mercantile counterparts, their houses were also increasingly dominated by consumable trade goods and materials made accessible by Atlantic commerce. The emergence of this cyclical mercantilist system in which "Britain sold its manufactures to the colonies [and] they sent their produce in return" strikes a chord with the way in which the Indian Kings and their various pictorial representations were collectively part of a regenerative and multidirectional process of material and social exchange. <sup>164</sup> As Quilley and Kriz suggest, "these multi-directional processes undermine any fixed notion of 'nation' or 'national culture'" and highlight a "push-pull" dynamic of circum-Atlantic cultural exchange. <sup>165</sup>



Figure 168. (left) Façade of 37 Stepney Green, London. Built for the London Merchant, Dorner Shepperd in 1694.

Figure 169. (right) Façade of Archibald Macpheadris' house, Portsmouth, New Hampshire. Built between 1716-18.

## **Conclusion: William Johnson and acculturated Britishness**

As this chapter has demonstrated, the portraits of the Indian Kings – conceived by John Verelst and mobilised by John Simon – cannot be interpreted in a single historical, geographical or sociological framework, but must be understood as part of an active and

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>163</sup> Archives of Warner House, made accessible at the house with the assistance of Tara Ball and Ronan Donohoe in February 2012.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>164</sup> Middleton, 1992:201.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>165</sup> Quilley and Kriz, 2003:1.

constantly shifting sphere of graphic circulation, repetition and manipulation. This evolving process, enacted across a broad Atlantic framework, must be seen as one which was interminable – the full scope of which cannot be fully registered within the confines of this discussion. However, a mezzotint portrait of William Johnson, who served for decades as an intermediary between the British and the Iroquois Confederacy, offers an insight into the fluidity of acculturation as a condition reified by print. 166 After arriving in colonial British America Johnson developed enormous respect for the Native Americans and learned that "he could live, work, and dress with them as brothers. He learned their language, discovered their forms of social conduct and their government, and hence learned to work and speak in their terms." 167 His work towards the preservation of Anglo-American alliances earned him a baronetcy from the crown and a reward of £5000 from parliament. 168 In February 1756, as part of a reorganisation of imperial governance, he was officially instated as the superintendent of Indian affairs. He was much admired among the Iroquois community who depended upon him for "guns and cloth" as well as other "products of European technology". 169 He imported from Britain all the items they desired that were manufactured there. 170 In recognition of his achievements, Johnson was celebrated in a portrait by a now little known artist named T.Adams, which was subsequently reproduced as a mezzotint by Charles Spooner (Fig. 170). 171 In this image he is depicted leaning on the muzzle of a cannon and holding a baton, standing in a woodland setting, before a scene of men firing rifles in the distance. Remarkably, when we compare this this image with the portrait of Ho Nee Yeath Taw No Row (Fig. 171), it becomes clear that the forested backgrounds are virtually identical, and that John Simon's mezzotint was used a direct model.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>166</sup> For a recent biography, see O'Toole, 2005.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>167</sup> Hamilton 1976:23

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>168</sup> Oxford Dictionary of National Biography. 'Johnson, Sir William, first baronet (1715?–1774)'.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>169</sup> Fenton, 1998:12.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>170</sup> Ibid:12

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>171</sup> Today only the mezzotint version of this portrait survives.



Figure 170. Charles Spooner after T. Adams. Sir William Johnson, Major General of the British forces in America. Mezzotint, 1756.



Figure 171. (left) John Simon, after John Verelst. *Ho Nee Yeath Taw No Row*. Mezzotint, 1710.

Figure 172. (right) Michael Dahl. *Admiral Sir George Rooke*. Oil on canvas, c.1705.

Standing in the space previously occupied by his Native American predecessor, Johnson is dramatised as a military commander highly accustomed to, and at ease in, a forest environment familiar to the Iroquois. Where a partially clothed tribesman firing an arrow can be seen in the distance behind Ho Nee Yeath Taw No Row, the same space in Spooner's print contains figures using European weapons; rendered as shadowy silhouettes, their ethnicity is ambiguous, perhaps intending to evoke the multi-cultural colonial military taskforce which Johnson led. Like the Indian Kings, whose costumes can be seen as disruption of their traditional attire, the manner in which Johnson wears his uniform also signifies a departure from formal British militaristic modes of personal display. When we return to one of the portraits of the English admirals by Dahl, which hung in Kensington Palace alongside Verelst's paintings of the Indian Kings, the origin of Johnson's pose seems unmistakable (Fig. 172). Yet, unlike Sir George Rooke in Dahl's portrait, who stands passively, with his baton hanging loosely by his side, Johnson grasps his baton in both hands, poised for action as Ho Nee Yeath Taw No Row is with his bow. Moreover, while Rooke's jacket is worn rather formally, with most of the buttons fastened, Johnson's jacket is completely open, in a manner that seems to reflect the typically wideopen garments of the Iroquois. The distinctive visual prototypes which are grafted together the form Spooner's pictorial identity render him as an acculturated product of the British Atlantic. Moreover, like the mezzotints of the four Indian Kings, his graphic persona calls into question fixed notions of 'British' or 'American' identity during the period. As both Simon's and Spooner's mezzotints confirm, adopting an Atlantic perspective towards British graphic art is critical if we are to see beyond such cultural fictions.

### CHAPTER FOUR

#### **Portraits in Paint and Print**

Using a series of case studies that trace the movement of people and print between homeland and colony, this final chapter develops some of the concerns addressed by Chapter Three, and seeks to establish the complex role of engraving as a catalyst for artistic production in colonial British America. In particular, it focuses on the situation in early eighteenth century New England, where portraiture dominated above all other genres. Imported mezzotints, produced after painted portraits, became particularly important in several regards: as communicators of painterly technique and style; promoters of European fashion and personal deportment codes; symbols of global commerce, abundance and homogeneity; or as locally specific ciphers of respectability and sophistication – mezzotint portraits in this colonial context had many guises and bore a range of influences on artistic practices. Yet, like other forms of printmaking that have been implicated in the telling of a national British art history, the medium of mezzotint continues to be referred to colloquially by British art historians as the *manière anglaise*, and thus is inexorably defined as an art form which (particularly in its early eighteenth century context) reflects a national condition, aesthetic, or form of manufacture. Perhaps as a result of this ardent categorisation by scholars like Antony Griffiths and Tim Clayton, the broader circulation and production of mezzotint portraits beyond these shores remains largely unexamined.<sup>1</sup> Yet, as I argue, drawing attention to this hitherto marginalised context can only enrich our understanding of 'British' graphic art's character and geographical reach. More crucially perhaps, by confronting and challenging the usefulness of designations such as 'early

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup>Griffiths, 1998; Clayton, 1997. See also the National Portrait Gallery's online essay on the 'Early History of Mezzotint', which describes this mode of printmaking as 'la manière anglaise'. http://www.npg.org.uk/research/programmes/early-history-of-mezzotint.php

When speaking of 'British' mezzotints, I refer not only to prints produced in the British Isles, but include mezzotints made by artists of British origin in British colonial territories. As I argue throughout this chapter, the first mezzotints produced by British émigrés in the North American colonies demand to be read not simply as part of an early American graphic culture (as they have been in the past), but as an extended, constituent (yet nonetheless important) aspect of Britain's printmaking tradition.

American', 'colonial' or 'British', this chapter questions the fundamental employment of national ciphers as determining features when describing works of art. Many of the works discussed in this chapter do not sit comfortably within any single national context. In this respect, and in view of the historical context in which they were produced, they might be best conceived as 'Atlantic'.

Following on from my earlier discussion of interior painting in the colonial town of Portsmouth, in which assorted graphic sources were employed as prototypes for the decoration of a wealthy merchant's lavish dwelling, I shall begin by examining more broadly the mechanisms of the trade which allowed prints to be imported into (and disseminated within) the colonies. The port of Boston will be an important case study here. It will become clear that the printed images that entered the colonial infrastructure through this central hub served a multiplicity of purposes in colonists' lives, and together with other imported goods, were integral to the construction of a vernacular material culture which closely mirrored that of the mother country. As a point of departure to investigate these issues, I shall trace the professional development of a young Bostonian named Nehemiah Partridge, who from 1712 worked as a merchant trader, entertainer, chocolatier, decorative craftsman, and a painter of portraits using imported mezzotint sources as models. Through our reading of Partridge's multifarious activities, I shall seek to resituate his portrait painting as part of a broader material culture self-fashioned by imitation and assimilation. In the second section of the chapter, I shall turn my attention to a Londontrained mezzotint artist named Peter Pelham, who in 1728 relocated to Boston, becoming the first practitioner of the medium (and indeed one of the first professionally trained engravers of any kind) to work in the North American colonies. Positing Pelham's migration as a seminal moment in the development of a localised graphic culture, I shall investigate a range of local religious, intellectual and bibliographic traditions to which his

work was closely allied, and which allowed him to inaugurate a fresh context for appreciating engraved art in Boston and the surrounding area. In contrast to portraitists like Nehemiah Partridge, whose work recycled reproductive mezzotint prints back into painted forms, Peter Pelham endorsed an alternative use of the mezzotint which privileged ink over paint and opposed the more common commodified use of the medium. As we shall see, though Pelham's career as a colonial mezzotinter was ultimately short lived, his early endeavours came to profoundly shape the way in which the 'local' colonial mezzotint was understood. Indeed, a small corpus of images produced in paint *en grisaille* immediately after Pelham's arrival reinforce this suggestion, and our study of these works shall lead us towards this chapter's conclusion. As a discrete category of painting with few surviving examples, these trompe l'oeil imitations of mezzotints exemplify the way in which the norms that usually underpin our understanding of a stable paint / print relationship can be complicated in a way which articulates a specifically colonial experience.

For the most part, the colonially produced images studied in this chapter have remained entirely absent from British art history: they are typically found woven into narratives of 'early American' art. However, by excavating the patterns of exchange that led to their production, I hope to demonstrate the value of integrating such works into a totalising account of 'British' art. Although the modern conception of post-Revolutionary America as a distinct nation with its own cultural character has perhaps proved a barrier to such a way of thinking in the past, it is important to note that periodic attempts have been made to foster a 'British imperial approach' to this phase of American history. Lawrence Gipson, for instance, has suggested that the colonisation of North America should be seen as an integral part of British history rather than a subsidiary appendage. Within this paradigm, Gipson argues that "London, the capital of the Empire" should always be seen as "the

nerve center" controlling the cultural growth of the colonies. More recent studies in Anglo-American visual exchange have also called for British cultural history to be more fluidly intertwined with narratives of new world colonisation, suggesting that the artistic practice of British émigrés, though geographically dislocated from the mother country, can be validly considered as part of the normative discourse of British art history.<sup>3</sup> Most pertinently perhaps, David Peters Corbett and Sarah Monks have reminded us that "whether as metropolis and colony, interdependent vet often belligerent nations, or client state and superpower, Britain and America have experienced a mutual cultural interchange that has ebbed and flowed across the Atlantic without ever being fixed, generating distinct characters at different moments from different points of vantage." Thus, while this chapter seeks to highlight the cultural dependence of colonial artists on the mother country at a very particular moment in time, we should be mindful that the transmission of visual knowledge across an Atlantic framework persisted long after the Declaration of Independence and the fall of the British empire, and so it would be naïve to attribute an intrinsically politicised or institutionally 'colonial' cause to this kind of exchange in its early eighteenth century context. On the contrary, the artistic development of colonial British America should not be seen as a programme of unilateral cultural hegemony imposed by the British imperial state, but must be understood as an internally driven, perhaps organic, process of self-definition.

It is also important to note that while this chapter takes as its focus the fairly specific case study of New England and the north-eastern colonies, the development of the visual arts across the many sites of empire in the Atlantic world was certainly not coherent or uniform. Yet, as this thesis has already demonstrated, the study of fragmentary histories in Britain's colonial territories is nevertheless a productive exercise in conceptualising the

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Gipson, 1966:185.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Breen, 1986:468.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Peters Corbett and Monks, 2011:634.

prismic way in which imagery was diffused across these dislocated spaces. Moreover, by illuminating the vast disparities in the use and interpretation of printed images in this relatively small geographic area, I hope to underscore the impracticability of attempting to speak of a singular colonial body politic. As Mark Towsey has argued in his recent review article, 'An Empire of Print', the growing impetus among scholars to "reject the monolithic view of Britishness advanced by Colley" has led to a greater recognition of the "precarious sense of self" that marked colonial life. "National identity", he suggests, "is no longer considered the 'trump identity' that it once was... Instead, there is now an increasing recognition that other group or individualized identities might complement or even substitute for the 'national'". Developing Towsey's proposition, I hope to demonstrate that while circum-Atlantic dialogues in word and image facilitated a colonial milieu fundamentally shaped by imported or replicative forms of 'British' culture, these exchanges operated beyond the remit of a stable, unified, or institutionally nationalised British "imagined political community". As Benedict Anderson suggests, "communities are to be distinguished...by the style in which they are imagined". 8 In this case, the discrete forms of art and culture produced in New England, which were developed from a range of British pictorial and decorative prototypes, must be seen as a distinct aspect of a multifaceted yet no less connected 'imagined material community'. Thus, while the emergence of a highly mobile print culture in the early eighteenth century is often seen as central to the cultivation of predetermined values and beliefs, the patterns in pictorial representation facilitated by the movement of printed images must be seen as transcendent of this process.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Towsey, 2011:1170.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid:1170

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Anderson, 1991:6.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid·6

### The colonial trade in imported prints

As noted already, by the early decades of the eighteenth century, printed images were a ubiquitous part of life in the British American colonies. In the most developed urban centres like Boston, advertisements for a wide range of graphic products routinely appeared in local newspapers. As the practice of engraving had barely developed as a local form of artistic production, almost all of these advertisements publicised goods that had been imported from London. Even for prints designed locally, like the *Prospect of the* Great Town of Boston, which was sold in various editions throughout the 1720s, the mechanisms of the London printing trade were relied upon. For this particular venture, Price employed the laborious procedure of sending pencil draughts back to the capital where a copper plate could be professionally engraved and printed, before the resulting impressions were shipped back across the Atlantic for distribution. Prior to carrying out this process. Price announced in the *Boston Gazette* on 6 May 1723 that his print had been "Designed [to be] Curiously Cut on Copper Plate" and would be "carried on by Subscription, as such Expensive Works generally are." <sup>10</sup> Necessarily, the advertisement for this prospect view was speculative and requested "all Gentlemen to be speedy in their Subscription, in order to the speedy sending of the Drawing for England, for unless Subscriptions come in it will not be Printed."11. While this ambitious and innovative enterprise stood virtually alone at the uppermost end of the Boston print market, a more abundant selection of "Pamphlets", "Pictures" and a "great Variety of other Prints" were also routinely "Imported from London". 12 Samuel Gerrish, a noted bookseller and publisher, was one of the most prolific distributors of such prints, and like others who dealt in these goods he almost always advertised them as being "very Cheap". 13 He also offered his customers the option of purchasing prints "in Frames or without", as did his

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Reps. 1973.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> Boston Gazette, 6 May, 1723.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> Ibid:1723.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> New England Weekly Journal, 12 February, 1728; New England Courant, 17 July, 1725.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> New England Weekly Journal, 12 February, 1728; New England Courant, 17 July, 1725.

contemporaries who marketed prints "in frames & glaz'd" or separately advertised "Picture-Frames [and] Glass to put over Prints". 14 These framed prints were evidently intended to furnish the walls of local houses, as inventories like George Jaffrey's suggest. In Jaffrey's town house, "seventeen prints and maps" were displayed on the walls of the parlour alone. 15 Likewise, the inventory of Governor William Burnet evidences his interest in decorative prints, listing "17 masentinto [sic] prints in frames" among fifty other miscellaneous engravings. 16 An additional function of imported prints was to fuel the popular pastime of "Painting on Glass" – a polite activity that had emerged in Britain during the late seventeenth century and was popular among the aristocracy, and increasingly, the 'middling sort'. 17 Essentially, this process involved pasting a printed image (usually a mezzotint) face-down onto a sheet of glass, before carefully rubbing away the fibres of the paper with a wet cloth from behind until the print was so thin that it became translucent, and paint applied onto the reverse could be perceptible from the front. "Done properly", Kim Sloan explains, "it was perceived as means of producing something similar to an oil painting, without the necessity of first learning to draw." Various manuals offered instruction in this method, including John Smith's *The art of painting in* oyl, which included a chapter titled 'The Art of Back Painting Mezotincto Prints with Oyl-Colours'. 19 Although this palimpsestic use of prints was understood as a pastime for the leisured classes, the practice of remodelling printed motifs into new painted contexts was (as we have seen already) integral to the working methods of jobbing artists too. While line engravings were important sources of visual information, the tonal medium of mezzotint had the added benefit of guiding untrained painters in the use of brushwork and

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> Boston Gazette, 6 May 1723; New England Weekly Journal, 12 February 1728; New England Courant, 17 July 1725

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> Å reproduction of Jaffrey's probate inventory (1749) and a recreation of his parlour, complete with decorative effects, can be seen on display at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> Haines, 1924:197.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> The Boston Gazette, 20 May, 1728.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> Sloan, 2000:68. See also Clarke, 1928.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> Smith, 1723:82. Other descriptions of the process are provided by Salmon, 1700 (vol. ii):930-936; and Parker and Stalker, 1688.

chiaroscuro. Due to its ability to convey the qualities of paint on canvas more completely, or at least in more immediately legible ways than other printing techniques, using selfexplanatory tonal mimesis rather than translating painted surfaces into graphic notations which needed to be interpreted, mezzotint was the preferred modus operandi for reproducing fashionable portraits by artists like Godfrev Kneller. <sup>20</sup> These voguish engravings not only offered ideal blueprints for untrained colonial portrait painters, but allowed their elite patrons to adopt the modern pictorial language of "English gentility as a social insulator which distinguished [them] from other colonists". <sup>21</sup> So prevalent was this practice that the use of British mezzotints as prototypes can be identified among almost all the portrait painters active in colonial America before the mid eighteenth century.<sup>22</sup> Those who commissioned such portraits at this time ranked among the colonies' richest inhabitants, and were typically of British origin, or were descended from Dutch families who had continued to live in the region under British jurisdiction following the fall of Dutch territories.<sup>23</sup> The painters who fulfilled their requests for fashionable portraits were usually of British or Dutch lineage, and also tended to emanate from the more privileged spheres of colonial society. With the colonial population sparsely dispersed, it was almost always necessary for these artists to operate itinerantly. Nehemiah Partridge, a second generation British émigré, epitomises this kind of peripatetic artist from privileged stock, and shall act a key case study here.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>23</sup> Blackburn and Piwonka trace the continuing Dutch presence in British colonial America. Blackburn and Piwonka, 1998. T.H. Breen and Timothy Hall provide a broader overview of the region's ethnic demography. Breen and Hall, 2004:258-9.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> As Louise Siddons suggests, "instead of offering a sign for texture or tone, mezzotint engravers presented their audiences with the textures and tones themselves". Artists were quick to "acknowledge the superiority of the medium when it came to mimesis" over "the carefully developed linear language developed by engravers and praised by connoisseurs". Siddons, 2013:74.
<sup>21</sup>Steele. 1980:19.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> The American art historian Waldron Phoenix Belknap suggested in the 1940s that early portrait painters in the colonies based many of their works on imported mezzotints. Belknap died before he was able to publish his research, but his selected notes were published posthumously by the Harvard University Press in 1959.

<sup>23</sup> Blackburn and Piwonka trace the continuing Dutch presence in British colonial America. Blackburn and

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> For an overview or artistic mobility in the British American colonies in the later eighteenth century, see Hancock, 2012.

# Nehemiah Partridge

Born in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, in 1683, Nehemiah Partridge was the son of British parents who had settled in the colony shortly before his birth.<sup>25</sup> His father, William Partridge, was an eminent figure in commerce and politics, working as a shipwright and merchant in the timber trade as well as serving as a treasurer, receiver general, lieutenant governor, and governor of New Hampshire.<sup>26</sup> With his wife Mary, William had five children: William, Mary, Richard, Elizabeth and Nehemiah. Aside from Elizabeth, who is not served well by historical records, all of the Partridge siblings are known to have developed careers in commercial or governmental roles. William junior followed in his father's political footsteps, becoming clerk of writs for the New Hampshire province in 1699. Mary married into the Belcher family – one of the most prominent mercantile families in Boston at the time. Her husband, Jonathan Belcher, was a powerful figure in local politics and was elected the colonial governor for the British provinces of Massachusetts Bay, New Hampshire, and New Jersey. Richard Partridge – who was already a successful merchant and political agent in his own right – came to act as Jonathan Belcher's representative. 27 Nehemiah, though primarily remembered for becoming one of New England's first professional portrait painters, began by working in the field of trans-Atlantic mercantile trade. Although this early period of Nehemiah Partridge's career has been briefly noted, its relationship with his later employment as a portrait painter has not been explored. 28 Yet, as I shall suggest, the social and economic circumstances in which prosperous colonial families first had their likenesses recorded, and the style of portraiture they tended to favour, owed much to the prevailing culture of importing goods and ideas, and so Partridge's commercial and artistic careers demand to be reassessed as fundamentally intertwined.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> Blackburn and Piwonka, 1988:236.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup> American National Biography Online. 'Partridge, Richard'.

American National Biography Online. 'Belcher, Jonathan'.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>28</sup> Saunders, 1987:4-5.

As part of a growing community of traders who imported goods into the British American colonies at the beginning of the eighteenth century, Nehemiah Partridge provided local consumers access to a plethora of manufactured products from Britain and the continent. By the time he began trading in around 1710, Boston had a population of 9,000 and was continuing to grow at a steady rate.<sup>29</sup> It had emerged as the largest urban settlement in colonial British America, having around three thousand more inhabitants than New York and two thousand more than Philadelphia.<sup>30</sup> In demographic terms, its size was more or less akin to British port towns and cities like Manchester, Leeds, Liverpool, Newcastle and Plymouth. 31 Legislation imposed by the Navigation Acts enforced strictly nationalised trade routes between Britain and her colonies: the implementation of these acts led to distant settlements, at home and in the colonies, becoming vitally connected – economically and materially. Beginning in 1710, the construction of Boston's 'long wharf' created a vast series of docks and warehouses which extended nearly half a mile into the harbour, increasing the town's capacity to act as a key hub within this trading network. As a consequence, Boston became a "bustling waterside metropolis linked by a flying shuttle of ships to the Old World", and thus functioned as a central conduit for incoming goods and ideas.<sup>32</sup> As Karen Friedmann has noted, the merchants who traded in and around Boston's wharf did not specialise in one particular commodity, but dealt in a diverse range of products including "textiles, tools, household goods, staple foodstuffs and other groceries, luxuries of many sorts – anything [they] could buy and sell."33 This portrayal of a 'jack of all trades' certainly resonates with the advertisements placed by Nehemiah Partridge in local newspapers though these years. In1712, for example, he announced that:

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>29</sup> Kennedy, 1992:255.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>30</sup> Greene and Harrington, 1932:19,92,117.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>31</sup> Pincus. 2009:62-65.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>32</sup> Flexner, 1969:17.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>33</sup> Friedmann, 1973:199.

There is lately come from England an Engine, which grinds Chocholat very well, If any Person would have Cochoa ground, or Chocholat ready made, they may be accommodated on reasonable and moderate Termes, by Nehemiah Partridge, at Mistress Fordage's in Treamount Street, Boston, near the Orange tree, where all sorts of Japan Work are also done by him.<sup>34</sup>

Broadening the scope of his trade to include other decorative arts and technical crafts, an advertisement placed the following year publicised that:

All sorts of Paints and Oyl [are now] to be sold by Wholesale and Retayle by Mr. Nehemiah Partridge, Japanner upon the Mill Bridge Boston, likewise all Sorts of Japanning Painting, and all Sorts of Dials to be made and done by the said Partridge at Reasonable Rates.<sup>35</sup>

Five months later, again diversifying into new territories, he announced his procurement of a "Moving Picture", or "Italian Matchean [machine]". Publicising this entertaining form of automata, he noted in *The Boston News-Letter* that curious viewers could marvel at:

"Wind-Mills and Water-Mills moving round, Ships Sayling on the Sea, and several curious Figures, very delightful to behold, to be daily shewn by Mr. *Nehemiah Partridge*, at his House in Water-Street Boston, at the Head of *Oliver's* Dock, for Twelve Pence a Piece" 36

Though piecemeal, these traces of Nehemiah Partridge's early activities are nevertheless useful in helping us to build a picture of the archetypal Boston merchant as a versatile entrepreneur who imported the latest fashionable entertainments and commodities, and was also able to turn his hand to a variety of manual labours, handicrafts and decorative arts.<sup>37</sup> Collectively, these goods came to critically shape the material life of the colonies, stimulating patterns of consumption and social behaviour that closely resembled the mother country, or more particularly, London.<sup>38</sup> By this point, London had emerged as Europe's largest city, having a population of around 630,000 in 1715. With a diverse immigrant population, and a steady stream of travellers coming and going from all over the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>34</sup> Boston News Letter, 31 March, 1712.

<sup>35</sup> Boston News Letter; 21 September, 1713

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>36</sup> Boston News Letter; 7 March, 1714.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>37</sup> As Richard Saunders has noted, "the tenuous nature of colonial painting made any sensible person prepare to do a variety of tasks". Thus it "was the rule, rather than the exception" to find painters advertising a range of other commercial services. Saunders, 1987:1.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>38</sup> My analysis of 'material culture' in the following paragraphs has benefited from the interpretive methodology offered by Prown in his 'Introduction to Material Culture Theory and Method' (Prown, 2001:69-95).

globe, the capital came to function as an important trading centre into which culturally diverse ideas entered, were absorbed and consumed, before being regurgitated and exported as 'Anglicised' products.<sup>39</sup> Thus, as Peter Borsay has suggested, "the metropolis might be characterised less as an innovator and more as an entrepôt for a wide spectrum of cultural influences introduced from the Continent and elsewhere." <sup>40</sup>Critically then, although we might view Partridge's advertisements for things like 'Chocholat', 'Japan Work' and the 'Italian Matchean' as responsive to disparate global cultures, the arrival of these products in the colonies must be understood as primarily instigated by the mediatory 'melting-pot' of London. 41 For example, though a natural resource of Central America and the Caribbean, Cocoa became a popular product in Boston only after Hans Sloane had developed chocolate as a consumable commodity in London in the late seventeenth century. So thoroughly did Boston rely on London for its production of chocolate that even in 1712 it was only with the assistance of "an Engine...from England" that Partridge was able to process cocoa beans into a consumable form. Similarly, the rise of 'Japan Work' as a fashionable type of decoration in New England owed its debt to the vogue for oriental design in Britain. Indeed, with no eastern passage operating from Asia to North America at this point, the transmission of knowledge and ideas from Japan to New England required a mandatory passage through Europe. We can be quite certain that the production of Japan Work in colonial centres like Boston relied upon methods that had been devised in the workshops of London. As noted in the last chapter, the craft of Japanning sought to emulate true oriental lacquer, and was described in practical manuals such as Parker and Stalker's *Treatise of Japanning* (first published in London in 1688). With easy access to Boston's thriving trade in imported books, Partridge would certainly have been able to obtain a manual of this kind in order to hone his skills as a Japanner. In much the same

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>39</sup> Roger and Shearer, 1986:37-59.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>40</sup> Borsay, 1994:28.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>41</sup> This 'pluralist' model of London as a market place for culture, rather than a place where it emerged, is proposed by Borsay, 1994. Though Borsay briefly points to the transfer of cultural ideas between Britain and her colonies, his account focuses on cultural diffusion between London and the domestic provinces.

way, the introduction to Boston of metropolitan entertainments like fancy 'moving pictures' illuminates the central role played by London in the development of polite colonial amusements. Though advertised as 'Italian', the moving picture show described by Partridge correlates with similar amusements routinely marketed in London as exciting continental imports, which often depicted exquisite Mediterranean vistas. When we compare the following advertisement for such a show in London with the notice placed by Partridge in Boston, the resonances in descriptive vernacular are quite striking:

"An entire new Moving PICTURE...Is now to be seen daily, next Door to the Grecian's-Head Coffee-House ...representing several magnificent Ships and Vessels sailing out of a Port...A Windmill continually turning round...and an abundance of other Movements and Figures...Price 12d."<sup>43</sup>

Recalling Partridge's advertisement, it is noticeable that almost all of the features he mentions replicate those described here. Indeed, even his entry fee of 'Twelve Pence a Piece' corresponds with the admission charged by his London counterpart. Thus, while at first glance Partridge's moving picture appears to betray a cosmopolitan European identity, its indebtedness to the same kind of entertainment typically seen in London indicates a British impetus. Thus, his intention to reproduce an experience available to consumers in the cultural heart of the English speaking world – London – seems irrefutable.

As T.H Breen has noted, these kinds of material exchanges, forms of spectatorship and modes of display, were critical components in a vast 'Empire of Goods' which was fundamental to the 'Anglicization of Colonial America'.<sup>44</sup> Thus, while the institutional, political and military ties between Britain and her Atlantic possessions were often volatile and continually tested throughout the eighteenth century, the colonists who adopted "buying habits...[that]...mimicked English gentlemen" and "eagerly sought English manufactured goods", helped to codify a materially interdependent empire that remained

43 Supplement, Classified advertisements, 2 January, 1710.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>42</sup> Rossell, 2005.

<sup>44</sup> Breen, 1986.

constant.<sup>45</sup> This interdependency was often noted by Britons who visited the colonies. For example, during a sojourn in Boston in 1720, David Neal observed that:

In the Concerns of Civil Life, as in their Dress, Tables, and Conversation, they affect to be as much *English* as possible; there is no Fashion in *London*, but in three or four Months is to be seen at *Boston*...The Conversation in this Town is as polite as in most of the Cities and Towns of *England*; many of their Merchants having travell'd into *Europe*; and those that stay at home having the Advantage of a free Conversation with Travellers; so that a Gentleman from *London* would almost think himself at home in *Boston*, when he observes the Numbers of People, their Houses, their Furniture, their Tables, their Dress and Conversation. 46

Similarly, after emigrating to Virginia, the British scholar Hugh Jones identified the parallels between the 'polite' culture of Jamestown and London:

The habits, life, customs, computations &c of the Virginians are much the same as about London, which they esteem their home; the planters generally talk good English without idiom and tone and can discourse handsomely upon most common subjects...They live in the same neat manner, dress after the same modes, and behave themselves exactly as the gentry in London.<sup>47</sup>

Though neither Jones nor Neal explicitly refers to the visual arts, we might argue that the paintings they surely encountered on their travels could quite feasibly be added to such reports of cultural emulation. While contemporary anecdotal evidence to support this hypothesis is lacking, a sizeable body of paintings from the period do remain, including a number of portraits by Nehemiah Partridge. Continuing our case study of Partridge with an analysis of some of these works, and situating them within the framework of material culture already set out by this chapter, it is proposed that colonial painting can be considered as a constituent of a much broader assimilative environment.

The first indication of Partridge's success as a portrait painter can be ascertained in a document dating from 1718, which records a deal brokered with Evert Wendell – a merchant trader of Dutch origin – for ten pounds and four portraits in exchange for a

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>45</sup> Ibid:487,481.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>46</sup> Neal, 1720(vol. ii):614,590.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>47</sup> Jones, 1724:43.

horse. 48 In common with a growing number of wealthy patrons of art, Wendell clearly felt that his accrual of great land holdings and financial fortunes were achievements that "should be emphasized by the preservation of [his and his family's] personal likenesses for posterity". 49 The portraits produced by Partridge for Wendell and other clients in the ensuing years attest to the fact that he was deemed well able to satisfy this demand. Following on from his acquisition of a horse, Partridge seems to have been increasingly mobile around Boston, and thereafter further afield throughout the eastern colonies. His earliest portraits depict sitters from a variety of towns and provinces in Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York and the Hudson Valley – all locations within a two hundred mile radius of Boston. A grouping of later subjects can be placed within communities in Maryland and Virginia, some four to six hundred miles south of Boston. As Mary Black has suggested, Partridge's connections with merchant traders who had financial interests in Virginian tobacco plantations, and his personal acquaintance with Francis Nicholson (a former lieutenant governor of Virginia), were critical in allowing him to travel by sea to these parts where new patrons awaited. 50 The aesthetic character of Partridge's work suggests an uneasy handling of paint and a limited knowledge of colour mixing, while his sitters appear relatively stiff, and the drapery is characterised by a stark handling of light and shade. These traits not only betray the signs of an inexperienced hand but more specifically indicate a style developed through copying monochrome printed sources. Our ability to identify exact mezzotint blueprints for many of Partridge's works demonstrates quite conclusively that he worked in this way. As a result, we can almost tangibly imagine Partridge picking and choosing visual elements from a whole cache of imported prints, like an improvised pattern book which he carried with him on business-getting ventures. For example, in his portrait of Elizabeth Brodnax (Fig. 173), a whole host of elements including the sitter's posture, the arrangement of drapery and the wreathed garland she

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>48</sup> Wendell, Evert. Account books, 1695-1758. New York Historical Society Mss Collection.

<sup>49</sup> Vlach, 1988:109.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>50</sup> Black, 1980.

holds, replicate details from a portrait of Princess Ann painted by Godfrey Kneller and translated into mezzotint by John Smith in 1720 (Fig. 174). Tather than dramatising subservience to the British monarchy, Partridge's use of this model perhaps expresses a more universal pretension to aristocratic grandeur. His re-contextualisation of the youthful Princess Royal's image as a framework for his sitter – a young heiress to a colonial fortune – suggests the desire among wealthy planter classes to demarcate themselves as the self-styled leaders of the new world.





Figure 173. (left) Nehemiah Partridge. *Elizabeth Brodnax*. Oil on bed ticking, c.1723. Figure 174. (right) John Smith, after Godfrey Kneller. *Her Highness Princess Ann*. Mezzotint, c.1720.

Similarly, in a portrait of Catryna ten Broeck (Fig. 175), the wife of a landowning merchant, we can clearly see the way in which Partridge has emulated the body shapes, gestures, and even the folds of fabric from at least one mezzotint source. <sup>52</sup> Placed alongside Kyte's mezzotint after Kneller's portrait of the Countess of Godolphin (Fig. 176), the highlights and shadows in Partridge's drapery, the positioning of the sitter's body within the composition, and the defined edge of a rocky cliff in the background, all seem to point to the use of this print as a model. Yet, diverting from this prototype, the sitter's head

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>51</sup> This comparison is identified by Mary Black, 1980:21.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>52</sup> Blackburn and Piwonka. 1988:168-171.

and left hand are repositioned – a variation which could be interpreted in several ways (as indicating the conflation of two printed sources, or as a gesture towards originality by Partridge, or a response to a patron request). As Joseph Roach's paradigm of "circum-Atlantic" culture suggests, such portraits of the colonial elite reveal lives that were fundamentally shaped by "self-referential" expressions of "memory and substitution", and thus they must be read in terms of a broad geographic framework.<sup>53</sup>





Figure 175. (left) Nehemiah Partridge. *Catryna van Rensselaer ten Broeck*. Oil on bed ticking, 1720. Figure 176. (right) Francis Kyte, after Godfrey Kneller. *The Countess of Godolphin*. Mezzotint, c.1700-1720.

While these kinds of parallels might encourage us to conceptualise Partridge's portraits as analogous to other forms of colonial material culture (that is, as objects self-consciously moulded by British and continental fashions), such paintings have consistently been analysed quite contrarily – as distinctive emblems of an unsophisticated or culturally adolescent 'new world' society. <sup>54</sup> Yet, for a man whose portraits so clearly reflect an awareness of European style, culture, and commerce, it seems illogical that Partridge should be included in a book titled *American Naïve Paintings* in which the authors define

<sup>53</sup> Roach, 1996:4.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>54</sup> Wax, for instance, suggests that "the character of the paintings [based on British mezzotints] remained uniquely Colonial." Wax, 1990:91. An exception is Jules Prown, who speaks of such portraits as "a distant provincial echo of the courtly style". Prown, 1980:19.

'naïve' as denoting a "freshness of vision". 55 Yet, this is the art historical discourse he normally inhabits. <sup>56</sup> For example, in the catalogue accompanying the 1987 exhibition, American Colonial Portraits, Partridge's technical flaws are read as signs of "disarming honesty that place directness above flattery". 57 However, the suggestion that Partridge and his clients valued candidness above beauty seems highly unlikely. On the contrary, the eminent studio style he was attempting to replicate was polished, refined, and unquestionably aimed to flatter the sitter. Similarly, Carol Wax has suggested that "despite the similarities of poses, backgrounds, and costumes between the American paintings and those of the English mezzotints, the character of the paintings [by artists like Partridge] remained uniquely Colonial." She continues, "Whereas Europeans expected painters to idealize their features to conform with prevailing concepts of beauty, American Colonists required their portraits to capture a true likeness of the sitter."58 More likely, it seems, "Beauty...figured into the calculus of consumption" as much with portraits as it did with other manufactured goods.<sup>59</sup> Likewise, though his analysis of colonial American portraiture acknowledges the pervasive impact of British mezzotints, Wayne Craven makes a similar claim that these models were "too purely English" and so a "modification of aesthetic components" was employed by artists in order to convey "the real American character".60

Such critiques not only cultivate misguided ideas about early colonial portraits and those who produced them, but suggest that the colonial psyche was ubiquitously staid or primitive, and thus misconstrue the imperial province as a locus of simplicity or naivety.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>55</sup> Millon (ed.),1992:xi

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>56</sup> A recent exception to this framing of colonial portraiture is Margaretta M. Lovell's *Art in a Season of Revolution* (Philadelphia, 2005). In her assessment of 'Painters, Artisans, and Patrons in Early America', Lovell identifies the use of imported mezzotint sources among 'early American' painters, yet the examples she cites all date from post-1750. While she suggests that mezzotints may have served a similar purpose in Britain, she does not venture to expound upon this idea. See, especially, pages15-21 and 73-79.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>57</sup> Saunders, 1987:5. This exhibition was held at the Smithsonian National Portrait Gallery, USA.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>58</sup> Wax, 1990:91.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>59</sup> Breen, 1986:496.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>60</sup> Craven 1986:125.

Yet, as we have seen already in our examination of Boston as an international hub with a thriving trade in modern and sophisticated goods, this was certainly not the case. While I want to counter such readings, it will also be necessary to address the fact that for many years, colonial painters like Partridge have occupied a liminal position in art historical scholarship in both Britain and the USA, generating very little interest among researchers on either side of the Atlantic. In their introduction to 'Art and the British Empire', Barringer, Quilley and Fordham suggest that the "desire to construct a genealogy for the art of the United States" can be seen as the cause of "reluctance on the part of American scholars to integrate works produced in the American colonies into a totalising account of art in the British Empire". 61 Similarly, John Michael Vlach has guestioned the tendency among some scholars to theorise colonial portraits as "unique products of the American soil". This kind of historiographic framing, he suggests, has fostered an ill-founded yet tenacious "mythology [that posits] American folk art as the wholesome expression of a national identity". 62 At the same time, British art historians have been equally reluctant to explore the artistic achievements of expatriated Britons in the Americas before the mid eighteenth century, and thus early colonial painters like Partridge have remained absent from narratives of 'British' art. This seems unsurprising, perhaps, when we consider the relative neglect that artists working in the domestic provinces have suffered while London has remained the main focus of attention for art historical studies of the period. Though Peter Borsay has offered great insight into eighteenth century British provincial visual culture, regional painting has remained off the beaten track for the majority. Yet, critically, as I shall suggest, it is precisely to these regions that our attention must turn in order to illuminate the strong bonds that existed between cultural formation in the colonies and at home, in Britain.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>61</sup> Barringer et al. 2007:8. <sup>62</sup> Vlach, 1988:xii-xiii.

# **Provincial British portraiture**

Much like the affluent residents of Boston and other New England towns at the beginning of the eighteenth century, well-heeled members of British regional society increasingly sought to demonstrate their wealth and social standing through the material environments they lived in, the possessions they owned and the forms of personal display they advocated. In each of these contexts the creative hub of London acted as "the dominant source of taste and ideas". 63 Accordingly, most of the portraits commissioned by wealthy provincials were shaped by the preeminent London studio style. In the same way that mezzotint prints transmitted this mode of portraiture to the British American colonies, they also mediated its dispersal to the domestic regions. As we shall see, this can be identified in a number of portraits produced across a wide range of contexts. For example, in an unsigned portrait of Mary Chute (Fig. 177), whose family resided at The Vyne in Hampshire, there is an evident dependence upon Kyte's mezzotint after Kneller's portrait of the Countess of Godolphin (Fig. 178) – the same print used by Nehemiah Partridge to construct his portrait of Catryna ten Broeck at around the same time. While the unidentified painter of Miss Chute's portrait perhaps demonstrates a greater adeptness with brush and paint than Partridge, each artist's primary project to replicate a standardised model of fashionable beauty for the aggrandisement of a wealthy patron is ultimately the same. Likewise, another anonymously produced portrait, thought to be of William Molyneux of Croxteth (Fig. 179), uses a mezzotint source to forge a familiar model of the stylish aristocratic military gentleman. Molyneux, a member of a distinguished Royalist family, occupied an ancestral seat just outside Liverpool, some two hundred miles north of London. In his portrait, the artist has clearly borrowed elements from a portrait of Thomas Maxwell, Commander of the Royal Regiment of Dragoons, which was painted by John Closterman and scraped into mezzotint by John Smith in 1692 (Fig. 180).

<sup>63</sup> Borsav. 1994:21; Brewer, 1997:493-531.





Figure 177. (left) Anon. Mary Chute. Oil on canvas, c.1715-20.

Figure 178. (right) Francis Kyte, after Godfrey Kneller. *The Countess of Godolphin*. Mezzotint, c.1700-1720.





Figure 179. (left) Anon. William Molyneux. Oil on canvas, c.1695.

Figure 180. (right) John Smith, after John Closterman. Thomas Maxwell. Mezzotint, c.1692.

As paintings whose authorship can be determined through the clear presence of identifiable signatures, pendant portraits depicting Charles Brandling of Newcastle (Fig. 181) and his wife Margaret (Fig. 182) allow us to more accurately pinpoint the use of mezzotint sources within a specific artist's own technical development. Painted by a twenty-two year old John Verelst, these portraits are among his earliest known works, and were produced some

twelve years before he was active in London when he gained the commission from Queen Anne to paint the official portraits of the four 'Indian kings'. At this early stage in his career, Verelst appears to have been working mainly in the north of England, in Yorkshire and Northumberland, where his patrons included the Brandlings of Newcastle, as well as other local gentry such as Henry and Elizabeth Iveson of Skipton. There is no indication that he had received any formal or academic training by this point, but he had certainly spent some of his youth living in London with his father, Harman, who Bainbrigg Buckeridge later noted "educated several sons and one daughter in the same way of drawing". 64 After arriving in England in 1683, Harman Verelst became a relatively well established painter in the capital, producing history scenes, flower pieces and portraits for private clients as well as supplying works to a burgeoning auction trade. In the earlier part of his career he had developed a reputation as an itinerant artist, working in Amsterdam, The Hague, Liubliana, Rome and Vienna. 65 Perhaps encouraging his son to develop a similarly peripatetic practice, within the context of the British regions, we might imagine that Harman equipped John with some rudimentary artistic training before sending him away to refine his craft in a less competitive environment where he was more likely to gain commissions from the provincial elite. Indeed, we can be quite sure that during this period of artistic immaturity, John Verelst was highly dependent on mezzotint prints after paintings by the capital's leading portraitists. His likeness of Charles Brandling (Fig. 181), for example, is clearly a direct transposition of Godfrey Kneller's portrait of Charles Montagu, as communicated through Smith's mezzotint of the painting (Fig. 183). The smallest details in drapery and shading, as well as the landscape background, are copied with quite deliberate precision. The stark tonal variations that we have already noted as characterising Partridge's works in paint copied from mezzotints are plainly visible here too. Likewise, though it has not been possible to identify a precise blueprint for Verelst's

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>64</sup> Buckridge, 1706:474.

<sup>65</sup> Oxford Dictionary of National Biography. 'Verelst, Harmen (b. 1639, d. in or after 1691)'.

pendant portrait of Margaret Brandling, it seems highly likely that the same process was used for this work. The flat awkwardness of the Bichon Frise dog and the sculpted putti, together with the ill proportioned head of the sitter, stand as further signs to indicate that Verelst was largely reliant on a two dimensional printed source.





Figure 181. (left) John Verelst. *Charles Brandling*. Oil on canvas, 1698. Figure 182. (right) John Verelst. *Margaret Brandling*. Oil on canvas, 1698.



Figure 183. John Smith, after Godfrey Kneller. *Charles Montagu*. Mezzotint, c.1693.

A final example of this practice, recently unearthed from a private estate in Jersey, seems particularly pertinent as an equivalent to works produced by artists like Partridge in the British North American Colonies (Fig. 184). Though much closer to home, Jersey was nevertheless a British domain separated from the mainland by sea, and so may be conceived in much the same way as other geographically dislocated territories. In this small scale full-length portrait of an unidentified gentleman, not only does the pose and composition entirely reproduce Kneller's 1708 portrait of Sir John Perceval (Fig. 85), but it is painted on almost exactly the same scale as John Smith's mezzotint after this work. Thus, the print can be firmly attributed as a direct model. Just as Smith's mezzotint made the short journey across the channel to be used as an instructive aid in Jersey, we can be confident that it also made the much longer voyage across the Atlantic Ocean to be used for the same purpose. In his 1718 portrait of Johannes De Peyster (Fig. 186), the son of one of the Hudson Valley's most renowned tycoons, Nehemiah Partridge unmistakably employed a section of the same mezzotint as a prototype for his half-length likeness.





Figure 184. (left) Anon. Unidentified man. Oil on canvas, after 1708. Figure 185. (right) John Smith, after Godfrey Kneller. *Sir John Perceval Bart of Burton*. Mezzotint, 1708.



Figure 186. Nehemiah Partridge. Johannes de Peyster. Oil on bed ticking, 1718.

## Practical manuals and the 'imitation of draughts'

As these comparisons illustrate, the distribution of elite mezzotint portraits across a British Atlantic framework fuelled forms of artistic expression and codes of personal deportment that, despite being scattered over a vast geographic space, were inextricably embedded in the same "network of material practices". 66 However, for the untrained artists whose task it was to mimic these printed images in paint, at least a very basic understanding of draughtsmanship and colour mixing would have been a prerequisite. Providing the necessary education for these basic skills were a variety of printed texts which allowed anybody who wished to learn an art or craft the means do so by following a series of verbal instructions. As Janice Schimmelman has argued, of all the educational tools available, these practical manuals "contributed most to the survival of the provincial American artist because they provided clear descriptions of fundamental drawing, painting, and perspective techniques."67 Through a vast network of booksellers and dealers, such books were

Veeser, 1994:14.
 Schimmelman, 1984:193.

dispersed widely across the British Isles and shipped overseas to the colonies where they were often included in large bibliographic auctions. <sup>68</sup> For aspirant painters who had little or no experience in colour mixing, an accessibly written treatise such as Albert Durer revived (1698) which described "the names and mixtures of colours used by the picturedrawers", must have been invaluable – especially as mezzotints only conveyed visual information monochromatically. Educating readers in "the art of painting", this book gives directions "How to make...A Flesh Colour", "Colours for Landskips", "Colours for the Skie" and "Colour in Garments". 69 With further instructions "for the Compounding of Colours", the treatise recommends which colours should be used to complement one another, suggesting that "Blews" should be "set off with Reds, Whites and Browns". 70 Perhaps acting on such advice, Nehemiah Partridge's works can be seen to adhere to these combinations. Likewise, the British portraits copied from mezzotints that we have also examined in this chapter employ complimentary colour palettes which are balanced in a similar way. Other manuals, such as the Art's Master-Piece (1701), provided check lists of the tools and equipment one should obtain before developing their artistic skill through a series of practical exercises. Beginning with simple tasks such as delineating "the Circle, Square, Oval, Cone, Triangle, [and] Cylinder", the treatise then recommends that one should progress by sketching "Fruits and Flowers...and from these proceed to practice on Birds [and] Beasts". 71 Only after mastering these things, the author makes clear, should one attempt "Humane Faces and Bodies, wherein lies the excellency of this Art". 72 Critically, the author suggests that that "till your Mind can well frame such Ideas, it will be proper to have good Drawings to imitate". 73 The flexibility of the word 'drawings', which at this time referred not only to pictures in pencil, but other kinds of graphic imagery too,

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>68</sup> Rivers (ed.), 2001.

For a complete list of book sales held in British colonial America, see Winans, 1981. See also Raven, 2002. <sup>69</sup> Anon, *Albert Durer revived*, 1698:13-14.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid·14

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>71</sup> C.K. Arts Master-Piece, 1701:8-9.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>72</sup> Ibid:10.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>73</sup> Ibid:9-10.

may allow us include prints among the visual materials that readers were encouraged to 'imitate'. In its introductory epistle, the *Art's Master Piece* is lauded as the most "curious and compact" book of its kind; indeed, being fairly comprehensive yet small enough to fit in the palm of one's hand (Fig. 187), we can certainly imagine that the volume would have been an ideal portable point of reference for itinerant or non-studio based artists. The ultimate aim of the manual, its author goes on to state, is that its readers may be educated in a practical art that will not only bring them "pleasure", but also "profit". <sup>74</sup>



Figure 187. Scale demonstration of Art's Master Piece (1701).

In its advocacy of 'print' (in both its verbal and pictorial form) as a legitimate agent of artistic development and profitability, the *Art's Master Piece*'s tutelage may be seen to resonate with a method of learning laid out quite explicitly by William Salmon in *Polygraphice: or, the arts of drawing, engraving, etching, limning, painting, varnishing, japanning, gilding, &c.* This encyclopaedic discourse was printed in numerous editions throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and we can be certain that it was available in Boston by the time that Nehemiah Partridge began painting. In Samuel Gerrish's auction of "Curious and Valuable Books", held at Boston's "Crown Coffee-House" on 26 October 1719, "Salmon's Polygraphice" is clearly recorded in the catalogue as Lot 465. As only a handful of colonial book auction catalogues from this period

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>74</sup> Ibid:5-6.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>75</sup> BL.Mic.F.863/Evans.39701.

survive, we cannot be sure how many other copies of Salmon's text were imported into New England, though it seems likely there would have been more than this sole example. In his treatise, Salmon describes two means by which one can develop as a proficient draughtsman: 'Imitation of the life' or 'Imitation of Draughts'. In order to master "Imitation of the Life", he states, "it will be necessary...to choose a good Master, with whom you may spend two Days in a Week at least; or else a Society of about half a score or a dozen young Men, who are experienced to draw after the Life, by the Advice and Example of whom, and your own diligent Observations and Care, you may come not only to mend one anothers Faults, but also one anothers Judgments." Alternatively, should this not be possible, one may develop his skill through "the Imitation of Draughts" – a process by which "the Learner must, by many and often Trials, get a Habit of Imitation" by "drawing after a Print or Picture". 77 In copying a draught, one must "first observe the thing in general, in respect of the circumferent stroaks...then consider in like manner the parts. and supposing the parts each to be a whole, you may come to represent the parts of parts, and by the same means to express the whole of any Draught whatsoever." Salmon also explains how an "excellent pattern or print" might be copied as a re-scaled image in "other proportions" – a piece of advice we can well imagine being heeded by those who chose to imitate mezzotint portraits on a larger scale in paint on canvas.<sup>79</sup> In light of such guidance, we might conclude that in the context of a colonial or provincial society devoid of drawing masters or societies of art, learning to paint through the "Imitation of Draughts" was less of a personal choice than a way of educating oneself made mandatory by the prevailing socioartistic and economic climate.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>76</sup> Salmon, 1701 (vol.i):13. <sup>77</sup> Ibid:16,10.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>78</sup> Ibid:18.

While the regimented approaches to portrait painting we have examined thus far demonstrate the way in which the distribution of printed media – both pictorial and textual – had the potential to motivate homogenised forms of artistic expression across a broad geographic space, the second part of this chapter explores how the emergence of mezzotint as a local colonial art form prompted the development of a quite distinct arena of graphic consumption and appreciation. <sup>80</sup> As we shall see, the relocation of the mezzotint artist Peter Pelham from London to Boston in 1728 dramatically shifted the dynamic of a hitherto underdeveloped native graphic culture in New England, which had long been associated with the colony's religious and intellectual elite. Establishing the colonial mezzotint as a medium of esteem, value, and credibility, Pelham's colonial practice profoundly shaped attitudes towards colour, acting as a catalyst for other forms of monochrome visual art. While Pelham's work in the colonies shall be our primary focus throughout the following pages, our proper understanding of the context in which he learnt his craft is critical, and so it is in London where our discussion of the artist shall begin.

### **Peter Pelham**

In 1713 London's leading mezzotint engraver, John Simon, enlisted a sixteen year old apprentice named Peter Pelham. <sup>81</sup> In the years that followed, this young student mastered his tutor's art, becoming one of a growing number in the capital working in the medium. Like others who specialised in mezzotint, Pelham operated almost exclusively as a copyist, reproducing painted portraits by artists such as Kneller, Dahl and Hysing. <sup>82</sup> The sitters in these works were wide ranging: from royalty, aristocrats and politicians, to churchmen, military figures and celebrities of the stage. In addition, Pelham also engraved some images after paintings rooted in classical history and religion, including a set of mezzotints depicting Raphael's cartoons. This series, advertised in the *London Journal* in 1722, was

<sup>80</sup> Steele, 1980:3

<sup>81</sup> Oxford Dictionary of National Biography. 'Pelham, Peter (1695?–1751)'.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>82</sup> For a comprehensive list of Pelham's portrait prints, see Chaloner Smith, 1878-83 (vol iii):964-978.

boldly proclaimed as being "much more correctly" done than other graphic translations of the Italian master's famous tapestry designs. 83 Such an audacious marketing statement clearly involved an element of puffery as some of Europe's best line engravers had been responsible for earlier copies of the images. Rendered in a cheaper and more commercial form of engraving, Pelham's mezzotints would certainly have had less scholarly appeal among connoisseurs. Nonetheless, his copies of the cartoons were well placed to challenge assumptions that mezzotint – Britain's most modern form of graphic art – was incompatible with esteemed academic subjects. What also seems notable is that up until this point, the only other man to have engraved Raphael's cartoons in mezzotint had been John Simon, Pelham's own tutor. 84 Perhaps then, by seeking to surpass his master's efforts, Pelham had aspirations to become the new chief exponent of mezzotint in Britain. His unpublished study of Louis de Boullogne's elaborate allegory on 'Water', produced around the same time, certainly supports the notion that he was keen to experiment with the medium and elevate its perceived status. Indeed, the fact that he sought to supplement his contemporary portrait output with exercises in the classical tradition suggests that he was well attuned to philosophical discourses which sought to reconcile 'ancient' and 'modern' modes of learning.<sup>85</sup> There are other indications that Pelham was an erudite character with a sound education, and was at ease with genteel and learned company. The principal publisher of his work at this time was Edward Cooper, the most distinguished print publisher of his generation who not only commissioned works by contemporary artists but dealt in old master paintings too. A recognised authority on the fine arts, Cooper was a member of the Society of the Virtuosi of St Luke and was one of George Vertue's chief advisers about art history. He and Pelham appear to have enjoyed a close relationship that

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>83</sup> London Gazette, Classified advertsiements, 10 March, 1722.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>84</sup> For more on the role of the Raphael cartoons in the development of British history engraving, see Clayton, 1997:49-53.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>85</sup> As Levine suggests, the practice of looking back to classical examples to find inspiration in one's modern endeavours was advocated particularly vociferously by John Evelyn. As evidenced by diverse sources, from "schoolbooks [and] gentlemen's manuals" to "the correspondence of tutors and masters, fathers and sons", this debate prevaricated discussions concerning the nature and origin of modernity. Levine, 1999:60,23.

exceeded that which we might expect a powerful print publisher and one of his many employees to share. Indeed, bearing in mind that Cooper had wide connections across the London art world, it seems notable that Pelham was chosen to reproduce portraits of the publisher and his wife after paintings by van der Vaart and Dahl. 86 The fact that when Cooper died in 1725 Pelham provided assistance with the dispersal of his estate also suggests the two men's intimacy. Shortly after Cooper's death, the London Daily Post announced an auction to disperse his remaining stock and the contents of his shop, including "Copper Plates, both Graved and Mezzotinto, with all the Prints of both sorts, likewise his Collection of Pictures, Italian Prints and Drawings, with several sorts of Materials belonging to Painting and Printing". Potential buyers were informed that catalogues could be obtained from "Mr. Pelham". 87 As well as being involved in the administration of the sale, Pelham also made a number of purchases for which he was invoiced nineteen pounds and ten shillings – a sum equivalent to approximately seventeen hundred pounds today.<sup>88</sup> Though there is no descriptive record of what he purchased, it is quite possible that with such a large amount of money he acquired something as substantial as a rolling press with the intention of setting up shop as an independent printer and publisher following the death of Cooper, whom he had earlier relied upon to fulfil that role. If this was his ambition, it was certainly not in London that he planned such a venture, for a print dated 1726 was to be the last that he produced in the capital before he disappeared from the London art world forever in circumstances that remain unexplained. Two years later, in Febrarary 1728, an announcement appeared in New England's Boston Gazette bearing Pelham's name.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>86</sup>Although the NPG and British Museum suggest that the subject of Pelham's mezzotint titled 'Mrs Priscilla Cooper' is possibly Edward Cooper's daughter, Tim Clayton notes in his DNB entry that both Cooper's wife and daughter were named Priscilla. A slightly earlier mezzotint portrait, engraved by John Simon, is titled 'Priscilla Cooper' and depicts a young girl – probably Cooper's daughter. The subject of Pelham's mezzotint is clearly a much more mature woman, who is denoted as 'Mrs'. Thus we can be fairly certain that his subject is Cooper's wife.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>87</sup> Daily Post, Classified advertisements, 27 May, 1725.

Monies received of Mr Pelham for Goods bought in the Auction, recorded in Probate inventory of Edward Cooper, 14 October 1725, The National Archives PROB 3/24/190. Comparative monetary value calculated using the National Archives' historical currency conversion tool



Figure 188. Peter Pelham. Cottonus Matherus. Mezzotint, 1728.

### PROPOSALS,

For Making a Print in *Metzotinto*, of the late Reverend Dr. COTTON MATHER, by *Peter Pelham*.

The particular desire of some of the late Doctor's Friends for making a Print in Metzotinto, being Communicated to the said Pelham, but as the Author can prove the Charges, in the produce of the work, will run high, Numbers are Requir'd to make it easy: Therefore it's humbly hop'd by the Author to find Encouragement on his PROPOSALS, which are as follow, viz.

- I. THE Copper Plate to be 14 Inches by 10. which is the Common Size of most Plates in *Metzotinto*, by the said *Pelham*, and others.
- II. IT shall be done after the Original Painting after the Life by the said *Pelham*, and shall be Printed on the best Royal Paper.
- III. EVERY Subscriber to pay *Three Shillings* down, and *Two Shillings* at the Delivery of the Print, which will be begun when a handsome Number of Subscriptions

is procur'd: Therefore as the Author hopes to Compleat the work in *Two Months*, he desires all those who have a mind to Subscribe, to be speedy in sending their Names with the first Payment.

IV. For the Encouragement of Subscribers, those who take Twelve shall have the Thirteenth *Gratis*.

N. B. SUBSCRIBERS and others may see some Prints in Metzotinto, of the Author's doing by way of Specimen, at his House in Summer Street, facing the New South-Meeting, where Subscriptions are taken in, and Receipts given for the first Payment. And likewise Subscriptions taken in at Mr. Jonathan Barnard's, in Cornhil, facing the Town-House. 89

Under the bold heading of "PROPOSALS", this notice described his plans "For Making a Print in Metzotinto, of the late Reverend Dr. COTTON MATHER", the most venerated Puritan minister of his generation, and a leading Doctor of Divinity at Harvard College, who had died just a week earlier. When this mezzotint was completed some weeks later, it became the first to be published in colonial America. Though this development did not abate the mass importation of mezzotints from Britain, it did create an additional facet to the way in which prints (and particularly printed portraits) were understood and used. Had Pelham produced such a print in London where numerous reproductive mezzotint engravers supplied a thriving trade, his status as "a skilled but subordinate craftsman, dutifully responding to the demands of the more powerful institutions of the print market" would have remained unchanged. By emigrating to New England however, and independently inaugurating mezzotint portraiture as a local form of artistic production, he became an esteemed member of the community and came to occupy a central position in subsequent cultural developments. As a result, he is today remembered in the United States as a man whose "activities helped to transform the provincial town [of Boston] into

<sup>92</sup> Hallett, 1999:17.

<sup>89</sup> Boston Gazette, 19 February, 1728.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>91</sup> Pelham's mezzotint of Cotton Mather was probably also the first to be made anywhere outside of Europe.

a leading cultural center of colonial America."93 In contrast, he is largely unknown in British art historical scholarship and remains entirely unstudied. As I shall argue, a closer inspection of Peter Pelham's contrasting oeuvres, on both sides of the Atlantic, can productively destabilise the dogmatic way in which the early eighteenth century 'British' mezzotint has been conceptualised in recent years. Pelham did not seek to establish mezzotint portraiture in New England as an import replacement for British prints; nor did he endeavour to generate a market for mezzotints that was analogous to London's. Rather, it was his intention to foster a separate graphic culture with its own specific character, in which printed images of eminent local sitters enjoyed an altogether different status.

The first public announcement made by Pelham in Boston offers us a clear indication of his ambitious intent upon arriving in the new world. The detail in which he described his plans contrasted greatly with the way in which prints were normally advertised in the colonies, and by choosing to sell his work by subscription he imbued his undertaking with an air of gravitas not normally associated with rudimentary mezzotint portraits in Britain. On a more practical level, this method of selling also allowed him to test the water and ascertain whether enough interest could be generated to make his proposed venture a profitable one. With a population roughly two percent of London's, there were far fewer potential buyers for any one print in Boston, and so with a smaller print run a greater profit margin was required to recoup costs. Consequently, Pelham's print came with a hefty price tag of five shillings – a sum that was "three times that of an equivalent print published in London". <sup>94</sup> Recognising that this might be perceived as a steep price to pay, Pelham assured potential subscribers that he could "prove the Charges" involved in producing the work would "run high", and so the substantial cost was unavoidable. 95 Though Pelham's

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>93</sup>American National Biography Online. 'Pelham, Peter'. Despite being heralded in this way, Pelham has received little attention from American scholars.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Oxford Dictionary of National Biography. 'Pelham, Peter (1695?–1751)'.

<sup>95</sup> Boston Gazette, February 19, 1728.

print was publically available to purchase by anyone wished, there does seem to be a suggestion that the work was privately commissioned (or at least privately encouraged) by a small group of local Puritans who had been close acquaintances of the Cotton Mather. As Pelham's advertisement explained, "some of the late Doctor's Friends" had informed him of their "particular desire" to have a "Print in Metzotinto" made of their recently deceased companion. 96 In view of this evidence, it seems likely that is was the same friends of Cotton Mather who had enlisted Pelham to record his likeness in paint some months earlier (Fig. 189), during a period in which the ageing minister was suffering with increasingly ill health. Throughout the winter months he had been on a steady decline, becoming very weak, and when he passed away in February 1728 it was not wholly unanticipated. <sup>97</sup> The imminence of Mather's death may well have been a motivating factor in the production of his portrait, and the choice of Pelham to carry out the task may also suggest that the idea to produce a mezzotint in memoriam was conceived at this time too. 98 As far as can be gathered, Pelham had not been employed as a painter at any point earlier in his career, and there is no record of him painting portraits while he was living in Britain, so it is unlikely that he was tasked with recording Mather's likeness on the merit of his ability with brush and paint. Indeed, it seems notable that when advertising his mezzotint, Pelham did not invite potential buyers to inspect the original painting from which his print derived, but offered other "Prints in Metzotinto...by way of Specimen" to demonstrate his oeuvre. 99 It has been suggested that Pelham was simply forced to paint the model he needed because the colony had "no portrait painters whose works were suitable for mezzotint

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>96</sup> While the specific identity of these 'friends' remains unknown, and no comprehensive subscription list for the mezzotint can be traced, a single receipt in the name of Reverend Benjamin Colman survives. This is owned by the Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston. Oliver, 1973:136.

<sup>97</sup> Middlekauf, 1971:367.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>98</sup> As Jonathan Richardson remarks in his *Essay on the Theory of Painting*, "The Picture of an absent Relation, or Friend, helps to keep up those Sentiments which frequently languish by Absence and may be instrumental to maintain, and sometimes to augment Friendship, and Paternal, Filial, and Conjugal Love and Duty." A portrait of a deceased religious leader like Mather, therefore, can be seen as a critical mnemonic device to remind one of a continuing duty or responsibility. Richardson, 1725:13-14.

reproduction". 100 Yet, while reasonably competent, Pelham's portrait is certainly no superior to the work of other painters active in New England at the time. More critically perhaps, this assumptive reasoning negates the idea that Pelham made a deliberate choice to paint his own prototype – perhaps for financial reasons, but also ideological ones. While this would have allowed him to maintain commercial independence, it would also have provided an opportunity to propagate new ideas about authorship and the perceived value of prints. He was evidently keen to promote his mezzotint as part of an independent creative project, boldly stating in a caption at the print: "P. Pelham ad vivum pinxit ab Origin, Fecit et excud" (painted from the life, engraved and printed by Peter Pelham). By publicising the fact that his mezzotint derived from a work that he had drawn from the life, he therefore created a more visible relationship between paint and print: dismissing the connection between the two mediums as purely functional; elevating the perceived status of mezzotint engraving; and re-establishing printed portraiture as the end product in a sequential creative process, and not (as other colonial artists advocated) an ancillary medium to be prostituted into new painted contexts and then casually eschewed.

If Pelham had intended to bifurcate mezzotint portraiture into this new ideological and intellectual territory – antithetical to the idea of profligacy and abundance, and more concerned with local specificity and academic integrity – his first subject could not have been more fitting. Perhaps the most respected theologian in Boston at the beginning of the eighteenth century, Cotton Mather hailed from an esteemed line of Puritan ministers and Doctors of Divinity associated with Harvard College. His father, Increase Mather, and Grandfather, Richard Mather, had established the Mather name as central to local theocracy and academic learning for almost a century. While Cotton Mather was sensitive to the traditions of Puritan orthodoxy established by his forebears, he was well connected to contemporary developments in religious, academic, literary and scientific thought on

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>100</sup> Oliver, 1973:135.

both sides of the Atlantic. His correspondences in Britain included nonconformist ministers as well as members of the scientific elite. 101 He recognised that a hard-line approach to religion was not conducive to the more liberal mentality of the colony's future religious leaders and "he, better than anyone of his generation, sensed the cultural shifts of his time." 102 He understood that the younger generation's "desire for fashionable clothes, their scoffing at religion and their sensitivity to scorn, their perception of the variety of attitudes towards Christianity in New England, were expressions of a larger cultural change." <sup>103</sup> Though Mather certainly did not advocate materialism and indulgence as an alternative to living a learned, modest and godly existence, he evidently felt that visual imagery could be a powerful force in Puritan culture. 104 Yet, fantasising about one's role in colonial society as akin to the British aristocracy did not feature as part of this culture. On the contrary, the ostentatious colonists who had gaudy-coloured portraits produced by artists like Nehemiah Partridge were routinely subjected to criticism. As Brendan McConville has noted, it became a trope of contemporary literature, especially among Puritan writers, "to denounce those who had made their fortunes and put on the airs of a superior rank". 105 Newspaper columnists from Boston to Philadelphia published a range of articles on subjects such as "The Contemptibleness of Granduer without Virtue", condemning ostentatious material or visual gestures as "Counterfeits of Politeness, that wear the stamp of its Beauty, but have not the true substance of its worth. 106 Those guilty of such avarice, one writer decreed, "think that nothing short of Granduer can be worth their pressing after." Another columnist, writing in the decidedly Puritan New-England Weekly Journal, launched a

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>101</sup> Beall, 1961.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>102</sup> Middlekauff, 1971:199.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>103</sup> Ibid:200.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>104</sup> As Sarah Burns and John Davis have noted: "One of the common misunderstandings of the Puritans of New England is that they were iconophobic – that they feared or mistrusted all visual images. Puritans certainly recognized the power of images, and it is true that they criticized the Roman Catholic Church for its manipulative use of the visual arts in the practice of worship and the staging of the mass...Such a direct, active use of painting or sculpture would never have found a place in a Puritan meeting house. Still, nonreligious imagery, especially portraits, was permitted." Burns and Davis, 2009:11.

<sup>105</sup> McConville, 2006:123.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>106</sup>American Weekly Mercury, 20 March, 1729; New England Weekly Journal, 23 October, 1727.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>107</sup> American Weekly Mercury, 1 May, 1729.

similar attack on those "more eager after what glitters and dazzles upon their Imaginations, than what instructs their Reason". <sup>108</sup> Accordingly, the manner in which Pelham depicted Cotton Mather (presumably with his sitter's support) adhered closely to the formal conventions used in Britain to depict ecclesiastical sitters, and especially academic 'Doctors of Divinity'. <sup>109</sup> A 1711 portrait of Robert Jenkin, Master of St. John's College Cambridge, typifies this restrained kind of portraiture in its simple formal construction as well as in its muted palette, which is almost entirely monochrome apart from the face (Fig. 190). This conservative use of colour must have seemed highly appropriate for the relative restraint of New England Puritanism, and as an antidote to brash connotations of brightly coloured portraits in this environment.



Figure 189. (left) Peter Pelham. *Cotton Mather*. Oil on canvas, 1727. Figure 190. (right) Anon. *Robert Jenkin D.D.* Oil on canvas, 1711.

While working under the supervision of John Simon as a trainee mezzotinter, Pelham seems to have experimented with this use of this format in print, as a more germane kind of

<sup>108</sup> New England Weekly Journal, 5 August, 1727.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>109</sup> The large majority of these portraits in Britain are associated with Cambridge University. It is notable that the area in which Harvard College was built was renamed Cambridge – in honour of the great British university, and as a statement of the founders' aspirations. The designation 'Doctor of Divinity' (commonly abbreviated to D.D) was distinct from merely being noted as an ordained priest, and identified one who had been licensed by a university to teach Christian theology or related religious subjects.

portraiture suitable for a broader range of sitters. A sequence of mezzotints in the British Museum reveals the process by which he re-engraved and adapted one of his master's plates, transforming a portrait of the reverend Benjamin Pratt into one of the satirist, essayist, political pamphleteer, poet, cleric and Dean of St. Patrick's Cathedral Dublin, Jonathan Swift (Figs. 191-193). Below the finished adapted plate, a rhyming verse proclaiming Swift's multifaceted talents proclaims: "Four Brilliant Gems In this Great Genius Shine, The Scholar, Poet, Statesman and Divine". In view of Cotton Mather's renowned status as a polymath, this precedent certainly seems an appropriate one.



Figure 191. (left) John Simon, after Anon. *The Reverend Mr Benjamin Pratt AM*. Mezzotint, c.1715-20. Figure 192. (centre) John Simon / Peter Pelham. Untitled transitional plate, face altered. Mezzotint, c.1715-20. Figure 193. (right) Peter Pelham. *Jonathan Swift S.T.D.* Mezzotint, c.1715-20.

### The Mather printed portraits: a Puritan family tradition

As noted already, Pelham was not just a forward thinking artist, but was perceptive to (and keen to uphold) the traditions of the past. This is certainly evident when we examine his portrait of Cotton Mather in relation to the Mather family's history in New England, and the graphic portrait tradition associated with Richard Mather and Increase Mather. Richard Mather had been the first member of the family to settle in Boston after leaving Britain in 1635 to seek religious asylum in the New World. His arrival came just a year before Harvard College was founded as a training centre for the colony's Congregationalist and

Unitarian clergymen. 110 As a reputed minister with an Oxford education, he soon became a lauded figure and a central architect of local Puritanism, and when the first printing press arrived at the newly established Harvard College in 1638 he immediately became one of the most prolific producers of sermons, catechisms and other printed forms of doctrine. A 1670 woodcut of Richard Mather is today commonly cited as "the first American print". 111 After his death in 1669, Richard Mather's son Increase (who had trained as a minister at Harvard) inherited his reputation as the preeminent Puritan author in New England, and went on to contribute more than any other of his generation to the Harvard press, helping to secure Boston's status as "the literary metropolis of Anglo-America". 112 By the early 1680s Increase Mather was widely recognised as the guiding voice of Puritan authority in New England and he worked tirelessly to uphold the colony's religious independence from outside control. A 1701 image of Increase Mather is considered to be "the first copperplate portrait engraving produced in the colonies". 113 When he died in 1723, Increase had already passed the baton of spiritual leadership to his son Cotton, who by that time was the most respected writer of Puritan doctrine of the day. The close association between Richard and Increase Mather and the development of a local Puritan press may be seen as the chief reason why they, above anyone else, became the subjects of two of the colony's first printed portraits. Mapped onto this chronology, it cannot be seen as coincidental that twenty seven years later, the next major landmark in the development of New England's graphic culture involved Cotton Mather. As I shall suggest, those who purchased Pelham's mezzotint of Cotton Mather would have undoubtedly been aware of this sequence of printed family portraits, and would have recognised the project as continuing a local pictorial tradition connected with the religious literary press, while simultaneously elevating colonial printmaking to a new level of modern sophistication, reflective of

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>110</sup> Pierce, 1833; Paige, 1877.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>111</sup> Foster et al., 1980:7

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>112</sup> American National Biography Online. 'Mather, Increase'.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>113</sup> Foster et al., 1980:7; Saunders, in Saunders and Miles, 1987:81.

Cotton Mather's forward thinking attitude and position within a circum-Atlantic network of pious academics. Situating Pelham's mezzotint properly within this fragmented literary and pictorial discourse is a task that is long overdue, and one which shall shape much of the following discussion.

In much the same way that first printed images made in Britain were produced predominantly as illustrations for books, there is substantial evidence to suggest that the earliest printed images made in New England were also closely allied with the production of printed texts. 114 As already noted. Richard Mather published extensively via the Harvard press during his lifetime, and by the time of his death in 1669 his reputation as one of its most important contributors had long been cemented. His portrait, which was cut in wood, and appears to have been printed shortly after his death, depicts him holding an open book and seems to plainly acknowledge his importance as a canonical literary figure (Fig. 194). The image was produced by a local man named John Foster, who was an alumnus of Harvard and also a close friend of the Mather family. As a student, Foster had nurtured an interest in printing books and almanacs by gaining experience using the college's printing press. After graduating, he decided to pursue a career in the field of publishing, and later learnt how to produce simple printed images. Intaglio printing had not yet been established in the colonies, and thus producing relief cuts in wood was the most effective and easily achievable alternative. Local pine was a plentiful material which could be sculpted and printed with relative ease, and little training or specialised equipment was required. From the wooden block into which Foster incised his portrait of Richard Mather, only five impressions are known today. One of these was discovered prefixed as a frontispiece to a volume containing twenty tracts and sermons printed at Harvard, including Increase Mather's 1670 eulogy to his father, *The Life and Death of* that Reverend Man of God, Mr. Richard Mather (Fig. 195). The others, which today exist

<sup>114</sup> Godfrey, 1978:13-18

as loose leaves, are printed on the same scale, which would have allowed them to sit comfortably within period texts from the Harvard press. 115 It seems highly likely, therefore, that Foster's image was created with a bibliographic purpose in mind.

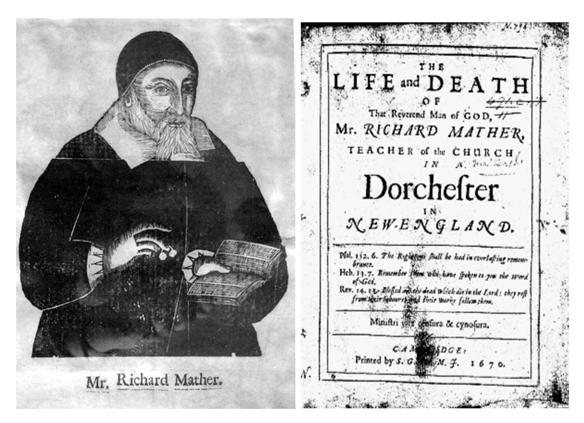


Figure 194. (left) John Foster. *Mr. Richard Mather*. Woodblock engraving, c.1670. Figure 195. (right) Title page to Increase Mather, *The Life and Death of Richard Mather* (1670).

While its physical size reinforces this suggestion, it also seems fitting that like Richard Mather's prose, which was described by Cotton Mather as being "very plain...and aiming to shoot...not over the heads, but into the hearts" of his readers, Foster's print conveys a directness and simplicity that would have sat well alongside the minister's sober writing style. In her study of frontispiece portraits, Janine Barchas has defined the role of author portraits as serving to negotiate a "triangulated relationship between the reader, the author, and the work's narrative persona", often standing in as "a miniature surrogate of [a] book's

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>115</sup> The Harvard College impression of the portrait was discovered printed on a double width sheet and bound as a frontispiece to a volume of twenty early new England sermons, which included Increase Mather's 1670 eulogy to his father, *The Life and Death of that Reverend Man of God, Mr. Richard Mather*. The other four copies of the image, discovered loose, are to be found at: The American Antiquarian Society; The Massachusetts Historical Society; Prineton University; and the University of Virginia. Holman, 1970:25-26. <sup>116</sup> Cotton Mather, in Sprague, 1859 (vol. i):79.

absent author". <sup>117</sup> In view of this reading, it seems notable that Foster's portrayal of Richard Mather depicts the minister gazing stoically, and perhaps ambiguously, while holding an open book – at once seeming to address us, yet simultaneously appearing to look beyond us in pensive contemplation of the text he is proffering. Posthumously applied to his own writings, or to works by other Puritan ministers who had learnt by his example, we can well imagine Richard Mather's portrait fulfilling the requirements of a figurative frontispiece as defined by Barchas. While framing Foster's woodcut in relation to a European frontispiece portrait tradition may be productive to some extent, we should also be mindful of the 'period eye' of colonial viewers, whose society had produced almost no other printed images. <sup>118</sup> Indeed, it seems especially notable that one of the only other printed images known to have been produced in New England during this period was an official seal for the Massachusetts Bay Colony, cut in wood by John Foster (Fig. 196). <sup>119</sup>



Figure 196. John Foster. Massachusetts Bay Colony Seal. Woodcut, c.1670s.

The primary purpose of this seal was to authenticate formal documents relating to colonial affairs, such as charters, contracts and banknotes. Foster's woodcut "appears on a very considerable number of documents" from this period and so we can surmise that "nearly all

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>117</sup> Barchas, 2003:28,22.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>118</sup> This interpretive method originates in Baxandall, 1972.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>119</sup> For a full history of the Massachusetts Bay Colony seal, its uses, and details of its various engraved incarnations, see Rex, 2011:61-93.

official printing" went to him. <sup>120</sup> Perhaps then, in the same way that Foster's seal was conceived and understood as an effective hallmark of legitimacy on official documents, we might also imagine that in the eyes of contemporary colonial viewers his portrait of Richard Mather was understood as embodying "some of the features of a mint, setting an official seal of authenticity" on the Puritan doctrine it accompanied. <sup>121</sup>

It was perhaps with a similar intent that a portrait of Increase Mather was printed in Boston some thirty years later in 1701. This image was among the first copperplate engravings of any kind produced in the North American colonies, and it is thought to have been the first portrait printed there via the intaglio process. Soon after its production, it was employed as a frontispiece in a number of Increase Mather's sermons and tracts. <sup>122</sup>An inscription at the foot of the print identifies Thomas Emmes as the engraver, and Nicholas Boone (a Boston bookseller) as a distributor. No other prints by Emmes are known to survive, and he was evidently not an experienced engraver; his rendering of Mather displays very limited technical ability and his use of the burin lacks fluency. Despite being revered today as a "milestone in American printmaking", Emme's engraving is clearly identifiable as a copy of an earlier frontispiece portrait, produced by Robert White in 1688 while Increase Mather was visiting London. 123 Though the visual connection between these two works has been documented, the circumstances that led to White engraving Mather's portrait have not been explored. Recounting the highly politicised nature of Mather's visit to the capital, investigating the personal connections he made there, and tracing the movement of his portrait print back to Boston, shall be necessary tasks in order to properly demarcate Emme's engraving as an image pictorially informed by, yet ideologically detached from, a British art historical tradition.

<sup>123</sup> Saunders and Miles (eds.), 1987:81.

<sup>120</sup> Jones, 1934:40.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>121</sup> Amory, 2007:84.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>122</sup> Emmes' print has been found as a frontispiece in *The Blessed Hope* (1701); *A Discourse Proving that the Christian Religion is the Only True Religion* (1701); and *Ichabod* (1702).

When James II sought to gain a tighter control over the British Empire after ascending to the throne in 1685, Increase Mather grew increasingly fearful that the loss of local authority in New England would lead to the total eradication of the Puritan bedrock on which the colonies had been founded. Among a raft of changes, James proposed to dramatically alter the administrative structure of North American territories, amalgamating a number of previously separate areas into a single region known as the 'Dominion of New England'. In order to establish new laws, including a more tolerant religious climate, a governor in chief named Edmund Andros was sent to Boston without local consultation to oversee the management of the new Dominion. <sup>124</sup> In opposition to Andros' presence, Increase Mather voyaged to London with a petition from the colonists to fight for a return to colonial self-administration. 125 Upon arriving in the capital, he quickly harnessed the power of London's press and distributed a raft of politically charged pamphlets, including A narrative of the miseries of New-England, by reason of an arbitrary government erected there (1688); A brief relation of the state of New England from the beginning of that plantation to this present year (1689); and New-England vindicated...to Shew...That the Charters in those Colonies were Taken from them on Account of their Destroying the Manufactures and Navigation of England (1689). These texts provoked much hostility from Britons who felt that the colonies should exist solely for the benefit of the home nation. One outraged reader who proclaimed himself to be a "true lover of his country" argued that regaining total control of New England was essential to guarantee that the colonies would continue to "produce a prodigious Income to their Mother England". 126 While the dispute over colonial governance raged for many months, the timing of the Glorious Revolution proved to be fortuitous for Mather, providing the necessary momentum for a revolt in Boston in 1689 which saw Edmund Andros overthrown and allowed the externally governed Dominion of New England to be disbanded. Though

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<sup>124</sup> Lustig, 2002:141

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>125</sup> Middleton, 1992:139-147.

Anon. A Short Discourse, 1689:unpaginated.

Increase Mather's time in London had been marked by intense feuding, he did find time to also forge alliances with marginalised Nonconformists who supported his endeavours and "looked upon New England as the promised land where their principles were being given perfect practical expression". 127 Mirroring the oppression his father had experienced some fifty years earlier before seeking refuge in the New World, the plight of these ministers clearly resonated with Mather. 128 One Nonconformist with whom he formed a particularly close bond was John Flavel. Like Mather, Flavel was a prolific writer of sermons, and the two evidently shared similar views. In a religious tract published by Flavel while Mather was still in London, the New Englander contributed an opening address eulogising his friend's doctrine and calling for his "Renowned and Learned" name to be made "precious and famous in both Englands." 129 As was common with most of Flavel's publications, this text was appended by a frontispiece portrait that had been engraved by Robert White (Fig. 197). This stripped-down likeness, surmounted by a quasi-architectural framework, typifies the highly conventionalised style of engraved portraiture that routinely prefaced the writings of dissenting clergy in the decades following the Act of Uniformity in 1662. Following this act, which saw over one thousand Puritan clergy ejected from their Church of England parishes, such homogenised likenesses became a powerful symbol of solidarity, dramatising the spiritual connectedness of a religious community that was becoming increasingly fragmented physically. The frontispiece to A Compleat Collection of Farewell Sermons – a book published immediately after the act was passed – depicts twenty four of the most notable Nonconformists of the day (Fig. 199) and can be seen as an important precedent for later individual portraits like those produced by Robert White.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>127</sup> Murdock, 1924:32.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>128</sup> In his DNB entry Kelly notes that Flavell's "printed sermons and reflections, through which the author identifies ingeniously with an absent congregation, form an integral part of a ministry which was widely admired by, among others, Cotton and Increase Mather." Oxford Dictionary of National Biography. 'Flavell, John (bap. 1630, d. 1691)'.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>129</sup> Flavell, 1689:unpaginated preface.

LIBERTY

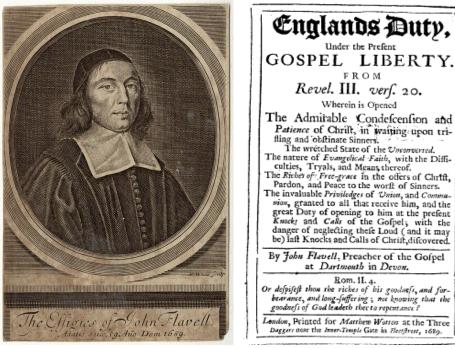


Figure 197. (left) Robert White. John Flavell. Engraving, 1689. Figure 198. (right) Title page to John Flavel, Englands Duty (1689). Letterpress.

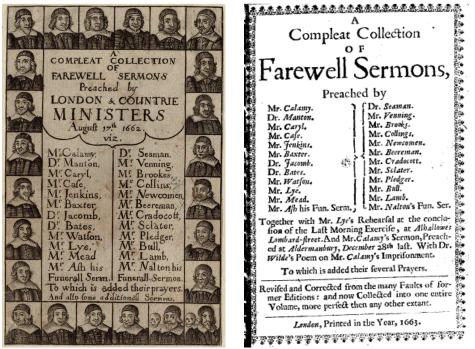


Figure 199. (left) Anon. Frontispiece to Edmund Calamy, A Compleat Collection of Farewell Sermons (1662). Engraving.

Figure 200. (right) Titlepage to Edmund Calamy, A Compleat Collection of Farewell Sermons (1662). Letterpress.

Increase Mather clearly recognised the special efficacy these portraits could have in unifying a like-minded ecclesiastical fraternity, and saw how in the context of Flavel's work an author portrait could allow his readers to feel closer to the minister whose words they were reading. Indeed, as a surrogate for a minister preaching a sermon from a pulpit,

providing a visual and literal experience to a congregation who could listen from their pews while occasionally looking towards the preacher from whose mouth those words were being spoken, we might imagine that the pictorial presence of a preacher looking out to his readers from the front of a printed sermon offered the same kind of comforting presence. Thus, before leaving London, Increase Mather employed Jan van der Spriet to paint his portrait and subsequently appointed Robert White to translate the image into a small scale bust akin to Flavel's (Fig. 201). After returning to Boston, Mather employed this image as a frontispiece to a number of his published collections of sermons, such as Angelographia (1696) (Fig. 202). By 1701, a new engraving, based on White's model, had been produced locally in Boston by Thomas Emmes (Fig. 203). As noted already, this print is now thought to be the first copperplate portrait engraving produced in the colonies. Following its production in 1701, it was used as a frontispiece in newly published works by Mather, such as *The Blessed Hope* (1701), acting as a surrogate for White's original engraving (Fig. 204). Though it is possible that Mather had simply used all of the copies of White's portrait he had brought back from London, it seems unlikely that he would not have been able to request more impressions from the engraver, who was presumably still in possession of the original plate. Alternatively, we might argue that the decision to commission a new, locally produced print was a deliberate choice. As a voluntary surrogate for White's frontispiece, Emmes' engraving might seem to our modern eyes a rather inferior imitation, but in the context of early eighteenth century Boston it would have offered a powerful demonstration of colonial ingenuity and modernity, publicising a new form of local image making – intaglio printing. The rawness of the image and its many technical flaws offer a frank insight into the heuristic nature of its making,

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>130</sup> The model for White's print was a portrait painted by the Dutch artist Jan van der Spriet during Mather's visit to London. It is not known why van der Spriet was chosen, or how Mather met his acquaintance, though the artist had recently arrived from a small town near Rotterdam, where Increase's brother Nathaniel Mather served as a pastor, and so there may have been a mutual connection. A meeting with Robert White is recorded in the journal kept by Mather while he was in London. It reads: "At R. Whites, who drew my effigies". This document is held at the American Antiquarian Society, Record ID: 271821. Details provided by Lauren B. Hewes, Andrew W. Mellon Curator of Graphic Arts.



# ANGELOGRAPHIA, O R ADICOUTE Concerning the Nature and Power of the Boly Angels, and the Great Benefit which the True Fearers of GOD Receive by their Ministry: Delivered in Several SERMONS: To which is added, A SERMON concerning the Sin and Adiffery of the Fallen Angels: Also a Disquission concerning Augelical Apparations. By INCREASE MATHER, President of Hannel Colledge, in Cambridge, and Prescher of the Gospel at Boston, in New England. Are they not all Ministring Spirits sent for them who shall be best of Salvation? Heb. 1.14. Boston in N. E. Printed by B. Green & G. Ahen, for Samuel Phillips at the Brick Shop 1696.

Figure 201. (left) Robert White. *Crescentius Matherus*. Engraving, 1688. Figure 202. (right) Title page to Increase Mather, *Angelographia* (1696).



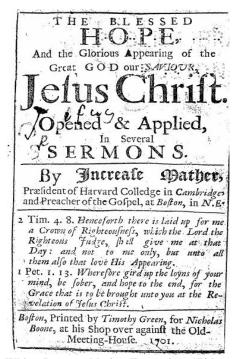


Figure 203. (left) Thomas Emmes, after Robert White. *Increase Mather*. Engraving, 1701. Figure 204. (right) Title page to Increase Mather, *The Blessed Hope* (1701). Letterpress.

dramatising a process of learning and emergent change in action. Critically, these ostensible signs of both the artist's and the subject's desires to 'improve' allow us to witness first-hand the emergence of a colonial psyche attuned to the notion of a "modern self" that carried with it clear "expectations of ...progress". <sup>131</sup> The replacement of Latin

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<sup>131</sup> Wilson, 1996:69.

script with English perhaps reflects a gesture towards forward-thinking universality.

Presented directly alongside Increase Mather's writings, which endeavoured to codify the new world as a legitimate site of progressive and innovative literary thought, Emmes' engraving, despite its ostensible crudeness, can therefore be seen as a fitting demonstration of the colony's pretensions to pictorial modernity.

These readings of Foster's and Emme's portrait prints allow us to better understand why such value was ascribed to Pelham's mezzotint of Cotton Mather at a time when imported mezzotints of comparable quality were still treated as relatively inexpensive commodities. Moreover, in light of these precedents, we can more visibly understand the ways in which Pelham's project at once perpetuated a colonial artistic tradition with deep roots in local religious and literary culture, while simultaneously introducing an alternative, more refined aesthetic, liberated from the context provided by book illustration. Not only did Pelham promote self-sufficiency by offering his work as form of import replacement, his visual rhetoric of fineness and sophistication demonstrated that the colony was becoming culturally and technologically able to match the Old world in its endeavours. This seems particularly apposite when we consider the ambitions and achievements of Cotton Mather himself who was something of a transitional figure between the ancien régime of New England Puritanism and the new generation of Puritans who saw themselves as forward thinking and innovative. For example, as noted briefly already, Mather was interested in scientific developments and did not see this interest as jarring with the Puritan faith. He was instrumental in establishing the Boston Philosophical society – a company of "agreeable Gentlemen, who met once a Fortnight for a Conference upon Improvements in Philosophy and Additions to the Stores of Natural History". 132 The interests and collections of the Boston Philosophical Society "were not inferior to what interested the elite of the learned world" and Cotton Mather routinely corresponded with the Royal Society in

132 Mather, 1724:86.

London, who duly published his letters in its *Philosophical Transactions*. <sup>133</sup> In his theological writings too, and in his encouragement of the press, he was equally progressive: as Phillip Round notes, "his career straddled the great divide between the dominance of local scribal communities and print practices and the post-Restoration rise of an imperially centralized print network and other colonial presses." 134 As this chapter's earlier biographical sketch of the young Peter Pelham noted, reconciling the teachings of the ancients with developing modern ideas was a constant subject of debate in Britian; similarly, this was an issue of some importance to Mather and his contemporaries in Boston. As his nephew Mather Byles wrote, in an edition of the New England Weekly Journal in 1727, men should not "form so great an admiration of the Ancients they will scarce deign to read a Modern Author". However, neither should they succumb to "the contrary extream of preferring the Moderns to the Ancients". 135 Through each of these examples we can clearly identify a preoccupation with consolidating the past with the present, and the Old world with the New world, and can thus theorise Pelham's mezzotint as an extension of this philosophy. By bringing "local identities, as well as a global angle" simultaneously together "in sharp relief", we might conclude that Pelham's introduction of mezzotint to New England pushed the boundaries of local print culture, resulting in what Uriel Heyd has described as a "glocalising" effect, and thereby "making new and old interest germane to a growing diverse clientele". 136 Though Heyd refers specifically to newspaper writing when he suggests that the creation of "vernacular print capitalism" was "practically a prerequisite" for the development of an imagined colonial community, this premise certainly resonates with the issues of emerging identity addressed by the printed images studied in this chapter. 137

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>133</sup> Beall, 1961:372.

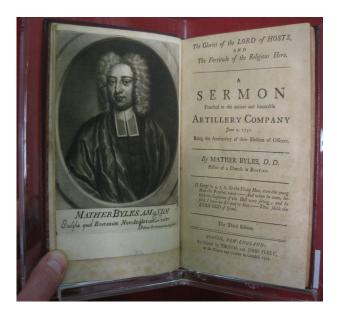
<sup>134</sup> Round, 2012:41.

New England Weekly Journal, 23 October, 1727.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>136</sup> Heyd, 2012:2-3.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>137</sup> Ibid:6.

### Pelham's later endeavours



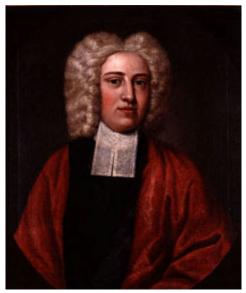


Figure 205. (left) Peter Pelham. *Mather Byles*. Mezzotint, c.1732 Bound with a collection of Byles' sermons at the American Antiquarian Society.

Figure 206. (right) Peter Pelham. Mather Byles. Oil on canvas, c.1732.

Despite elevating New England's native graphic culture to a new level of modern sophistication, Peter Pelham did not go on to become a prolific printmaker in Boston, finding that the small size of the population was too much of a barrier to commercial success. However, recognising the thriving local production of ecclesiastical books, and the earlier use of frontispiece author portraits in these works, Pelham did experiment with smaller scale mezzotints, and for his second subject chose the Reverend Mather Byles (Fig. 205). Continuing to work in the painter-engraver tradition that he had earlier inaugurated, this print was based on a portrait that he had painted from the life (Fig. 206). Yet, as no similar prints followed, we can suppose that this line of business also proved too limited to support him in full-time employment. Though Pelham remained in Boston for the rest of his life, he produced only a dozen more mezzotints over a period of twenty three years before his death in 1751. The arrival of the London trained portrait painter John Smibert did provide collaborative opportunities, but this work was extremely sporadic. Smibert found some success painting portraits of sitters from many different walks of colonial life; however most of the mezzotint commissions Pelham received from him were of local

ministers, and were executed in the same style as his print of Cotton Mather (Figs. 207-208). It was perhaps hoped that by recapturing the essence of his inaugural colonial mezzotint Pelham could heighten the perceived status of these ministers, and bolster the sale of their prints. In spite of Smibert's unrivalled ability as a portrait painter in the colonies, "Boston did not generate sufficient patronage to enable him to support himself though painting alone" and in 1746 he put his brush down for the last time. <sup>138</sup> Following Smibert's retirement, the young local artist John Greenwood, who had been born in Boston in 1727, painted the portrait of the clergyman Thomas Prince, which Pelham reproduced as a mezzotint (Fig. 209). Yet, a successful partnership between Pelham and Greenwood did not come to fruition, and like many other aspirant artists in Boston, Greenwood found little business there. After briefly turning his own hand to engraving, he "departed for more fertile territory and achieved success as a portrait painter, printmaker, and auctioneer in South America, Amsterdam and London." <sup>139</sup> In the penultimate year of his life, still striving to work as a painter and engraver following the retirement of Smibert and the departure of Greenwood, Pelham produced portraits in both paint and print of Reverend Timothy Cutler (Fig. 210). Three further paintings and engravings of local ministers followed before his death a year later. 140 While these works suggest that Pelham never fully gave up on his wish to find employment as a portraitist in Boston, his primary source of income came from other cultural initiatives. He established public dances as a local pastime, organised the first musical concert in the colony, and ran a school where "Young Gentlemen and Ladies" could be taught "Dancing, Writing, Reading, Painting upon Glass, and all sorts of Needle Work. 141 Produced as a side-line to these businesses, according to

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<sup>138</sup> Prown, 1980:25.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>139</sup> Saunders, 1995:121. By emigrating from his native Boston and eventually settling in London, Greenwood foreshadowed a long line of artists from the colonies who did the same in order to further their abilities and gain greater patronage and fame: the most notable examples are John Singleton Copley and Benjamin West. <sup>140</sup> These final portraits painted and printed by Pelham were of The Rev. Charles Brockwell, The Rev. Henry Caner, and The Rev. William Hooper. Oliver, 1973:172-73.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>141</sup> Boston Gazette, 15 May, 1738; Boston Gazette, 30 January, 1738. The concert that Pelham organised in December 1731, which is thought to be the first public musical performance in colonial America, is noted by Tawa, 2001:5.

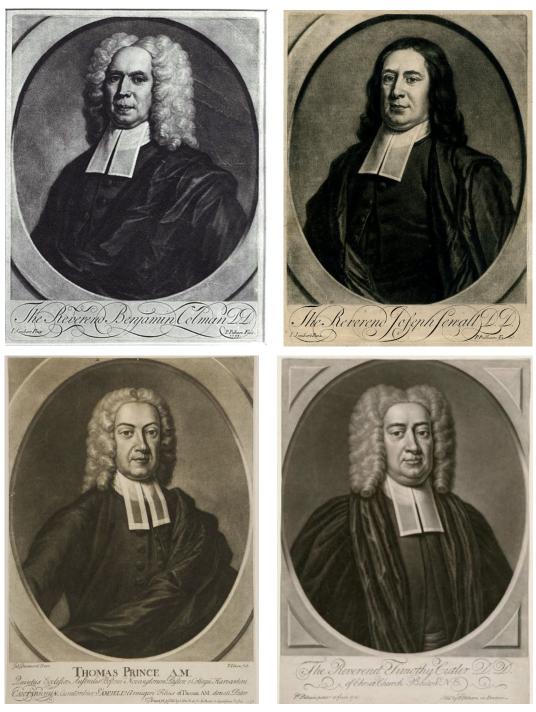


Figure 207. (top left) Peter Pelham, after John Smibert. *The Reverend Benjamin Colman D.D.* Mezzotint, 1735. Figure 208. (top right) Peter Pelham, after John Smibert. *The Reverend Joseph Sewell, D.D.* Mezzotint, c.1735. Figure 209. (bottom left) Peter Pelham, after John Greenwood. *Thomas Prince A.M.* Mezzotint, 1750. Figure 210. (bottom right) Peter Pelham. *The Reverend Timothy Cutler D.D.* Mezzotint, 1750.

the ebb and flow of local life, but changing very little in style or method over time,

Pelham's colonial mezzotints relate to a slower process of artistic evolution, antithetical to
the status of mezzotint portraiture in Britain as a proliferous, rapid form of print
production. Their history offers a warning against identifying as essential, inherent
qualities of the medium as such properties which were actively generated through

economic and cultural exchange. Mezzotint was not fundamentally or necessarily a medium of mass production and rapid dissemination, inevitably tied to the expansion of a commercialised public realm: it could, in another context, be exclusive, limited, and valued as such.

# **Conclusion: Nathaniel Emmons and paintings of prints**

Though Pelham's initial impact as a mezzotinter in Boston may have been short lived, and did not fuel a rapid surge in the production and consumption of local portrait prints, it did seem to have a surprising and almost immediate effect on local approaches to portrait painting. In the same year that he published his portrait of Cotton Mather, a new kind of painted imagery, directly imitative of mezzotint, began to appear in Boston. Rather than using mezzotints as models for larger paintings in colour, as artists like Nehemiah Partridge did, these works made a virtue of mezzotint portraiture's intimate size and monochromatic aesthetic. All of the examples of this short-lived mode of colonial portraiture that are known today are painted in oil on board, and closely correspond with the dimensions of "14 Inches by 10" which Pelham publicised in the Boston Gazette as being the "Common Size" of mezzotint portraits by him. Two of these works are dated 1728 and bear the signature of Nathaniel Emmons, and are the only examples that can be firmly attributed to a known artist. The first depicts Andrew Oliver, a young merchant and public official, aged 22 at the time of sitting (Fig. 211). Painted in oil on wood, en grisaille, the portrait evidently intends to imitate a mezzotint; tellingly, the painted lettering beneath it mimics the engraved script usually seen applied to contemporary mezzotint portraits. Specifically, Emmons' composition seems to derive from John Smith's mezzotint after Kneller's portrait of Charles Montagu, 1st Earl of Halifax (Fig. 212). The second example signed by Emmons depicts the Boston Puritan minister John Lowell, aged 24 at the time (Fig. 213). Employing another composition familiar to contemporary British mezzotint

portraiture, this painting is conceived as a simple head and shoulders bust within a feigned oval. In this respect, it perpetuates the conventions used by Pelham to depict Cotton Mather, which was itself derived from earlier British models (Fig. 214).





Figure 211. (left) Nathaniel Emmons. Mr. Andrew Oliver. Oil on panel, 1728. Private Collection.

Figure 212. (right) John Smith, after Godfrey Kneller. The Right Honourable Charles Montagu. Mezzotint, c.1693.



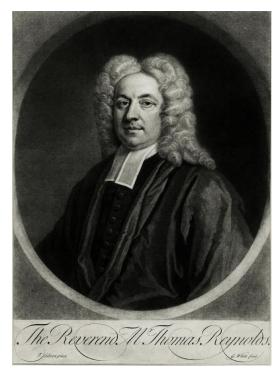


Figure 213. (left) Nathaniel Emmons. The Reverend Mr. John Lowell. Oil on panel, 1728.

Figure 214. (right) George White, after Thomas Gibson. The Reverend Mr. Thomas Reynolds. Mezzotint, c.1720.

The next subject we find depicted in this manner is Samuel Sewall, a Boston judge and noted philanthropist, who died in 1730 (Fig. 215). The lower part of this painting is obscured by an affixed strip of paper which identifies the sitter, gives his age as seventy-seven, and is dated 1728. No signature is present. No mezzotints depicting Sewall are known to have been produced, but the year following the purported date of this grisaille, John Smibert painted Sewall's likeness in colour, on a more conventional scale for a head and shoulder portrait in oil (Fig. 216).





Figure 215. (left) Anon. Samuel Sewall. Oil on board, 1728.

Figure 216. (right) John Smibert. Samuel Sewall. Oil on canvas, 1729.

Two further pendant portraits in the same style and size as the other grisailles mentioned depict husband and wife, Samuel Prince and Mercy Hinckley (Fig. 217-218). As in the portrait of Sewall, fragments of paper beneath each of these images contain handwriting, though the script is severely deteriorated and barely legible. Samuel Prince was the son of a local Pastor and academic, and in his adult life worked as a merchant; his wife Mercy

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>142</sup> Though the painting was examined at the American Antiquarian Society in February 2012, it proved impossible to ascertain whether there are (or ever were) any further inscriptions or painted details beneath the affixed strip of paper. Finding out such detail would require either forcible removal of the paper or x-ray analysis.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>143</sup> Oliver et al, 1988:80.

Hinckley was the daughter of a former Massachusetts governor. Though neither of these unsigned images is dated, Prince died in 1728, aged 79, and Hinckley, who is 65 here, is shown wearing mourning dress, so it is possible that both paintings were produced at the time of his death as an act of memorial.

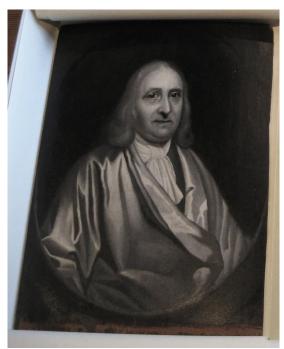




Figure 217. (left) Anon. *Samuel Prince*. Oil on board, c.1728. Figure 218. (right) Anon. *Mrs. Samuel Prince*. Oil on board, c.1728.

As the only identifiable artist among this group, Nathaniel Emmons offers a few clues as to how these painted imitations of mezzotints might have operated in a nascent New England visual culture. Though very little is known about Emmons and only a few works can be attributed to him, his will cites him as a 'painter stainer', suggesting that his employment as an artist extended to house and sign painting. 144 His obituary, published in the *New England Journal* on 27 May 1740, describes him as "the greatest Master of various Sorts of Painting that was ever Born in this Country", and notes that as well as painting "Faces" he was renowned for his "Rivers, Banks and Rural Scenes". 145 As Nina Fletcher Little's study of decorative interior painting in the New England colonies suggests, contrived picturesque landscapes were typical of the subjects depicted on fireboards, over mantle

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>144</sup> Flexner, 1947:287;

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>145</sup> New England Journal, 27 May, 1740.

panels and walls, and were considered as a form of "fancy architectural painting" to enliven plain domestic interiors. 146 Within such schemes, a range of imitative techniques were commonly used: walls painted to imitate wood grain or marble; emulations of drapery painted around covings; stencilled patterns on staircases to mimic carpet runners; and furniture in imitation painted styles like japanning were all typical features. 147 Similarly, as was discussed in the previous chapter, imported prints and motifs from pattern books inspired the decoration of many interior surfaces too. Other forms of trompe l'oeil described by Fletcher Little include paintings of shelves with ornaments and false windows offering views onto imagined landscapes. 148 Within these kinds of interiors. utterly concerned with artifice and illusion, a clear logic for portrait paintings imitating mezzotints can be conceived. Indeed, further study of Emmons' obituary helps us to understand the centrality of imitation to the local artistic culture of the day. "Some of his pieces", it explains, "are such admirable imitations of nature...that the pleased eye cannot easily leave them. And some [of his works] are so exquisite, that tho' we know they are only paints...they deceive the sharpest sight while it is nearly looking on them." Herein, lies Emmons' (and by implication, other colonists') fascination with the reproductive mezzotinter's craft: for the ability to demonstrate one's skill as a copyist or imitator was essentially what distinguished a good reproductive mezzotint artist from a poor one. There are certainly British precedents for paintings which imitate prints, and in the surviving auction catalogues of picture sales from late seventeenth century London one occasionally stumbles across descriptions of works such as 'A Mock-Print on a Dealboard' and 'a painting in imitation of a print, on board'. 149 As the terminology used in these catalogue entries may indicate, such images were not intended as surrogates for

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>146</sup> Fletcher Little, 1989:25.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>147</sup> Fletcher Little, 1989.

<sup>148</sup> Ibid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>149</sup> Lot 145 in A Sale of paintings at the Long Dog in New Palace Yard, 6 November 1691; Lot 151 in A Sale of paintings and furniture next to Bedford Gate in Covent Garden, 2 December 1690. Both of these catalogues transcribed at www.artworld.york.ac.uk.

prints but were positioned as knowing imitations whose interest and effect depended not on the absolute effectiveness of their illusion but rather their exposure as illusions. It was a convention of the genre to introduce elements which draw attention to the image's illusory status: a curling corner, a tear, a fly, or broken glazing.



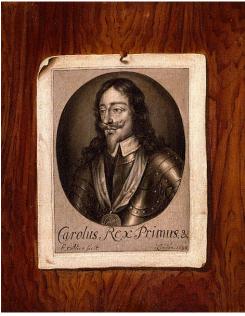


Figure 219. (left) Anon, after John Faber. A trompe l'oeil with a portrait of Mrs. Faber, the engraver's wife. Oil on canvas, mid-eighteenth century.

Figure 220. (right) Edward Collier. Carolus Rex Primus. Oil on canvas, 1698.

An anonymous painting, produced in this mode, was recently sold by Sotheby's, in 2012 (Fig. 219). It depicts Mrs Faber, the wife of the mezzotint artist John Faber, who originally engraved the portrait after a painting by Thomas Hudson. The painting of the print creates the illusion of broken shards of glass, lying on top of the surface of the paper. Perhaps the best known 'painter of prints' in London at the turn of the eighteenth century was Edward Collier, whose 1698 painting of a mezzotint of King Charles I (Fig. 220) not only imitates ink on paper, but mimics the grain of wood on which the curling print is fixed with a pin that appears to jut out from the picture plane. <sup>150</sup> Unlike the paintings of prints produced in and around Boston in the late 1720s, these works share a desire to convey a sense of three-dimensionality: the print in these paintings is an object within the image, rendered

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>150</sup> For a further discussion of this and other such paintings of prints in London, see Monteyne, 2013:1-3.

illusionistically. In contrast, the colonial imitations of prints considered here do not represent the graphic image as an object, they imitate and stand in for the graphic image. While the monochrome paintings produced by Emmons and his colonial contemporaries seem to serve to demarcate their sitters as people of prominence, whose portraits (hypothetically) might have been of enough interest to warrant their mass circulation, they paradoxically acknowledge print's empowering quality as a repeatable statement through the means of a single visual gesture, which will ultimately be viewed by a limited number of people as a static object in a single context. Their existence epitomises the status of circum-Atlantic print culture as a highly unpredictable and heterogeneous category for which no single definition can be given.

### **CONCLUSION**

One of the principal aims of this thesis has been to investigate the role of the 'Atlantic' in British graphic art during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. In order to achieve this aim it has been necessary to bring together a diverse range of printed images that are not normally considered together. Despite the apparent heterogeneity of these sources, they are united by a shared preoccupation with reconfiguring and transforming established pictorial conventions to create something 'new'. This newness responds, in part, to the space of the Atlantic, which was considered part of the 'New World' and provided a variety of new subjects for British artists. It also relates to the emergence of new contexts for producing and viewing art: from the institutional spaces frequented by London's collectors and connoisseurs; to the official spaces of palaces, longhouses and government buildings; to the domestic spaces inhabited by Britons in the provinces and the colonies; to the creative spaces in which expatriate artists sought to wrest new forms of imagery from old forms of print. In each of these settings, different images conveyed different meanings to different people at different times; yet each may be seen as implicated in the telling of a shared art historical narrative. This complex and contradictory paradigm of British graphic art as seen from an expanded geographical perspective critically underscores the inherent instability of print. To this end, the four chapters of this thesis tackle a fundamental assumption about the development of print culture and technology in this period as "unifying Great Britain". While we might identify print as a force which at a grassroots level had the potential to enact a certain degree of unification, in the context of a wider sphere of circulation across a swathe of dislocated British territories, it clearly had the power to destabilise or undermine a collective sense of national character or connectedness. In this light, we might argue that print not only

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Colley, 1992:40.

thwarted the creation of a unified British Atlantic, but made the very conception of such a cohesive identity impossible.

Chapter one demonstrated how the cartographic printing trade of Restoration London was rooted in old traditions of map and atlas making, yet was also highly ambitious and innovative in its refashioning of established iconography. By copying and editing Dutch sources. British publishers pictorially dramatised the transition of power between these two nations in the Atlantic world. From the modest navigational manuals used by seamen, to the lavish atlases enjoyed by the leisured classes, this process is evident in a range of imagery including metaphorical frontispieces, topographical views, charts and maps. Although the influence of a Netherlandish tradition is routinely acknowledged in more familiar aspects of British art from this period (paintings, sculpture and fine art print reproductions), its effect on the visual rhetoric of British cartography and its associated imagery is rarely scrutinised by art historians. Yet, if these materials are more readily seen as part of a broader art historical tradition, the significance of the Atlantic as a stimulus for artistic exchange might be more clearly understood. As was shown, the push-pull dynamic of protracted maritime struggles was registered in the pictorial strategies employed by publishers like John Seller and John Ogilby, whose work in turn influenced other aspects of British art and culture. Thus, these case studies suggest how cartography's perceived authority and avowal of integrity allowed an appropriated and augmented visual language to be established as an authentic trope for the nation's expansionist objectives. While this chapter examined many representations of faraway places, it also demonstrated how images of London, and particularly the River Thames, were critically aligned with imperial expansion. As the capital came to act as a symbolic nodal point for maritime activity, the creation of a figurative parallel between the landscape and architecture of the Thames

estuary and the shores of Britain's Atlantic territories provided an important conceptual link between homeland and colony.

In chapter two, the role of graphic art in the formulation of a 'British Atlantic' natural history was explored through case studies focusing on Hans Sloane and Mark Catesby. It was demonstrated how the flora and fauna of 'new' and unfamiliar colonies came to be regulated by a range of emerging and established pictorial discourses. As a result, we can look upon even the most careful observations as discriminating and selective, and recognise that the graphic culture of the Atlantic's natural world was significantly modified and distorted by a range of commercial, political, and intellectual motives. The culture of antiquarianism and collecting; the growing taste for rococo design across Europe; and the modes of representation employed in chorographical accounts of British natural history, were all identified as having a marked effect on the pictorial language of Sloane's and Catesby's works. By comparing Sloane's imagery with illustrations of archaeological remains used to symbolise ancient inhabitants of Britain, it was demonstrated how his work dramatised significant and very present human threats to British control in Jamaica as part of a narrative consigned to the annals of history. Elsewhere, nuanced references to the imagery of the Elizabethan explorer John White allowed Sloane to construct and sustain a connection to a venerated narrative of British imperial progress and ambition in the Atlantic. This chapter also examined how the preeminent British artist of animal subjects, Francis Barlow, transformed a prosaic domestic tradition of natural history engraving into a new and dynamic form of art which was understood as both decorative and scientifically accurate. Catesby's indebtedness to Barlow illuminates the fine line between fact and fiction in a mode of graphic art which claimed to align Atlantic natural history with the Royal Society's authoritative principles of scientific empiricism.

Chapter three considered the depiction of Native Americans in early eighteenth century British portraiture, and explored the use of print to disseminate these images to audiences across Britain and in the North American colonies. Employing the case study of the socalled 'Four Indian Kings', it examined the way in which the portrait painter John Verelst grafted together a range of figurative conventions to produce hybridised images of Iroquois tribespeople. Examining the various contexts in which these images were viewed on both sides of the Atlantic revealed them to be more complex than has hitherto been recognised. As contemporary commentaries suggest, the "Oddness" of Indian "Dresses, Manners and Customs" was seen to jar with polite forms of portraiture that were used to depict "Europeans...conversant with real Beauty". However, the manner in which Verelst portrayed his Native American subjects reflects his awareness of this preconception, and allows us to trace the strategies he employed to overcome the disjuncture between their ethnicity and the aristocratic mode of portraiture in which he normally worked. Significantly, the employment of mezzotint to reproduce Verelst's portraits can be understood in relation to prevailing notions of the medium as a new or novel form of graphic art. These refined forms of print, which deliberately evoked painterly modes of 'fine art', can be contrasted with popular types of print which located the Indian Kings within a visual discourse of intrigue, curiosity and public spectacle. More broadly, this chapter suggested how the study of multiple social contexts in the British Atlantic can productively help to challenge myths about the stability of printed images and the way in which they were used and acted upon by viewers. Identifying the political and diplomatic functions of Simons' mezzotints in colonial society; recognising the ways in which they affected new forms of art; and investigating their impact on the representation of acculturated British citizens, all helped to achieve this aim.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Fritsch, 1738:114.

The final chapter traced the movement of people and print between Britain and the American colonies, identifying resonances and disjunctions between artistic practices in these two locations. It suggested how the circulation of various forms of print simultaneously solidified and destabilised a circum-Atlantic British artistic tradition. The port of Boston was noted as a critical hub through which the art and culture of the mother country was diffused into new colonial contexts. In particular, the use of imported mezzotints by Nehemiah Partridge suggested how notions of colonial society's primitiveness might be challenged, and how a greater parallel might be drawn with the working practices of portraitists in the domestic British provinces. The final case study, which focused on the mezzotint artist Peter Pelham, offered an opportunity to tackle fixed notions about the cultural economy of graphic art in the eighteenth century. Pelham's contrasting experiences in London and Boston exemplify the limitations of approaching British graphic art in a domestic context only. Moreover, the niche market that his prints commanded in New England suggests that the medium should not necessarily be assumed as one reflective of abundance and utility. The multiple contexts of production and spectatorship brought to light by this chapter remind us that 'print culture' cannot be aligned with a single "monolithic cause" or "logic"; nor can it compel people to react in circumscribed ways.<sup>3</sup> Printed images must therefore be "interpreted in cultural spaces the character of which helps to decide what counts as a proper reading." Moreover, as Adrian Johns suggests, positioning "the cultural and the social...at the center of our attention" allows us to adopt a more transitive perspective and think about the ways in which "print culture might emerge from print". 5 Extending this proposition, we may also think about how print culture might emerge from paint, or indeed how painted culture might emerge from print. Pelham's short-lived career as a colonial mezzotint artist certainly encourages us to ask such questions, and represents an often unrecognised transient and intermedial

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Johns, 1998:20.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Ibid:20.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Ihid·19

quality to graphic art. Similarly, the small group of painted mezzotint mimics that were produced in New England after his arrival problematise the way in which we might think about the mutable relationship between paintings and prints, copies and originals in any given context. Indeed, while these images suggest that the status of print in a wide-ranging Atlantic milieu cannot be simply determined by a normative logic, they also reinforce a notion that a proper understanding of British graphic art demands that we recover the construction of different print cultures in different circumstances. Thus, whether paintings derived from prints of paintings; prints of paintings; or paintings of prints of paintings which do not actually exist; the images studied in the final chapter of this thesis hit home the fact implied in the first three chapters that the terms in which we discuss 'British graphic art' demand to be seriously reconsidered.

A more ambitious agenda for a history of British graphic art embraces "new approaches to understanding the differentials of reception" and production across time and space. To some extent, this requires us to organise or consolidate an "indistinguishable plurality of individual acts according to shared regularities". Yet, it simultaneously encourages us to think beyond broad uniformities and focus on "fragments" of print culture, reflective of singular experiences. Critically, in the context of seventeenth and eighteenth century Britain, when the nation's cultural character was increasingly influenced by a rapidly expanding imperial and global economy, this approach allows us to recover a potentially richer definition of 'Britishness'. The point of studying disparate or marginal forms of print, and broadening scholarly perspectives beyond Europe, is not so much to re-write British graphic art history or degrade existing scholarship in the field as to stimulate more nuanced accounts of the relationships between different disciplines, methodologies, and cultural perspectives. In a similar vein, the emerging approach to "new global studies"

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Raven, 1998:268.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Chartier, 1989:156.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Pandey, 1992:28.

outlined by Felicity Nussbaum seeks to juxtapose "alternative paradigms...with more familiar models of understanding in order to tell stories from the less visible interiors of the world...[and]...revamp the disciplinary boundaries that impede alternative forms of historical knowledge." In its examination of British graphic art from an Atlantic perspective, this thesis offers an introduction to a new historiography that is exploratory and suggestive rather than comprehensive. It is hoped that it will foster greater collaboration and debate among art historians and scholars in other disciplines to forge a broader, more dynamic and intermedial understanding of seventeenth and eighteenth century print culture.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Nussbaum, 2003a:9,11.

### **APPENDIX**

# Provenance and display history of John Verelst's portraits of the four Indian Kings

Although the exact date of the portraits is unknown, the first contemporary reference to them appears in *Tatler*, 13 May, 1710. The original warrant for the paintings' production, signed by the Lord Chamberlain, Charles Talbot, 1st Duke of Shrewsbury, is dated 30 September 1710. This is held in the National Archives (Lord Chamberlain's Department, LC 5/155). It records the payment of £100 to John Verelst for the commission. The details of the Royal warrant were later published by the Treasury in December 1710 (Calendar of Treasury Books. Volume 24: 1710). The four Indian Kings arrived in London on 19 April (*Evening Post*, 20 April, 1710) and left the capital on 1 May (*British Mercury*, 1 May, 1710).

The first description of the portraits' contemporary display at Kensington Palace is found in the diary of Zaccharius von Uffenbach, dated 25 October 1710 (see Quarrell and Mare's translation of the diary, 1934:157). This is the only known written account made by a contemporary viewer. As the Royal Collection Curator Jennifer Scott has confirmed, the paintings were first listed in a Royal Collection inventory written between 1705-10, which was later annotated by Thomas Coke, the Vice-Chamberlain, between 1710 and 1712. This inventory is reproduced in two undated manuscripts at the British Library ('A list of Her Majesties pictures in Kensington, Hampton Court and Windsor' Add MS 20013, and 'A CATALOGUE of Her Majesty's [Queen Anne's] pictures in Kensington House' Add MS 17917). By 1835, the portraits are listed as being at Hampton Court, in an inventory today held by the Royal Collection ('Inventory of the collection of George IV and William IV at Kensington, Buckingham Palace, St. James's, Kew and Hampton Court: [1828-1835]' RCIN 1112486). This is their last appearance in a Royal inventory.

At some point between 1835 and 1851, Verelst's paintings were sold to the Petre family of Thorndon Hall, Essex, where they are listed in an 1851 inventory (D/DP F232B, Petre Papers, Essex Record Office). The portraits remained in the Petre collection until they were bought from the family by the Canadian Government in 1977. Today, they are cared for by the Library and Archives Canada, and are permanently stored at The Preservation Centre in the city centre of Gatineau, about 25 kilometres away from the Archives' Ottawa headquarters. In researching the portraits, access to the Preservation Centre and confirmation of this provenance history was kindly provided by Madeleine Trudeau, Curator of Portraits at the Library and Archives Canada, in February 2012.

# Assessment of the authenticity of the present works in the collection of Library and Archives Canada

There is no contemporary documentation of the size of John Verelst's portraits, and dimensions are not given in any of the inventories cited. The Royal Collection inventories are typical in describing them simply as '4 whole lengths' of the '4 Indian Kings'.

Measuring approximately 91.5 x 65.0cm each however, the works in the collection of the Library and Archives Canada are unconventional for 'whole lengths' of the period. Yet, they are the only paintings of the Indian Kings known to exist today. It has been questioned whether larger primary versions ever existed and if there is a possibility that these are smaller secondary copies. Given the various gaps in the provenance history of the present works in Canada, this question must be taken seriously – especially in view of the fact that the attribution of these works as those originally painted by Verelst for Queen Anne relies solely on the aforementioned provenance history.

In a 1728 auction of works belonging to John Verelst, lot number 21 is described as 'Four half lengths of the Indian Kings, by Verelst' (British Library, General Reference Collection C.119.h.3.(3.), available as a transcription at http://artworld.york.ac.uk). It is not clear whether the use of the term 'half length' here refers to the size of the canvases or the manner of depiction. If the former is the case, then these paintings would seem to fit with the description of those that are today in Canada. If the latter is true, these untraceable portraits may have been preliminary works produced by Verelst in preparation for his Royal commission, or perhaps were contemporary copies in reduced format that he intended to sell but never did. It is also possible that he painted them specifically for his 1728 auction (of various works that he owned, mainly by other artists) to try and generate interest in the sale through the nostalgic evocation of his originals in the Royal Collection.

In support of the authenticity of the works in the Canada Archives, it should be made clear that the contemporary use of the terminology 'whole length' cannot be seen as an indication of size: for example, though each of John Simon's mezzotint copies of John Verelst's paintings measures only approximately 45 x 28 cm, they were nevertheless described as 'whole lengths' (*Tatler*, 11 November 1710; *London Gazette*, 16 November 1710).

Furthermore, in late seventeenth century and early eighteenth century auction catalogues, we often find portraits of whole length figures that are produced in reduced scale described as 'whole lengths' (for example, 'Lot 36. Two Ladies, small whole Lengths' in *Mr. Gouge's Sale of Pictures* (1712), and 'Lot 193. K. William and Q. Mary, in little, whole lengths' in *A collection of curious original paintings...* (1690) – both available to view transcribed at http://artworld.york.ac.uk). In light of the important diplomatic role that the mezzotints played when distributed around the colonies, it might also be suggested that the primary reason for Vereslt's commission was to produce modelos for John Simon to work printed copies from, and thus it was suitable for him to paint them on a small scale.

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