Mythic Anglo-Saxonism in John Smith and Pocahontas: The *Generall Historie* and National Narrative

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'The most common error in writing the history of the Virginia Company,' writes Frank Wesley Craven in his early yet still definitive history of the company, 'has been a failure to understand the fundamental character of that corporation,' thus providing an economic framework for the venture.[1] 'Whatever else it may have endured,' Craven continues, 'it was primarily a business organization with large sums of capital invested by adventurers whose chief interest lay in the returns.' Ultimately, Craven argues, 'The true *motif* of the company's history is economic rather than political.' This categorization is far too simple, however. Yes, the Virginia Company dealt in monetary investments for the sale and returns of lands not owned by it; naturally, company adventurers investing in overseas ventures expected a return and thus sought financial gain. However, the continued insistence of Richard Hakluyt on the maritime prowess and concerns of the English, bolstered by the burgeoning dynamism of Elizabethan Anglo-Saxonism promoted by other powerful Englishmen, such as Sir Edward Cecil, John Dee, and Sir Francis Walsingham, created an ideology of Saxon power and rightful English conquest that emphatically argued for English rights to Atlantic lands that ultimately persevered and then funneled its way into various splinter groups, whose concerns were, for one reason or another, ultimately equal and very nationalistic. The means were simply different.[2]

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[1] This and the following quotations are from *Virginia Company of London, 1606–24* (Williamsburg: Williamsburg 350th Anniversary Celebration Corp., 1957); all quotes from 24.

[2] Little is known about the company's origins and initial mission. It was formed by charter in 1606 by a small group of entrepreneurs who were able to get close to then-legendary Robert Cecil, later earl of Salisbury, who had his own private interest in the New World, and they gained rights to half of the northeastern shore of America. Of the eight founding adventurers and leaders, it should be noted that

This essay explores Captain John Smith's and the Virginia Company's use of primary Anglo-Saxon material for the New World settlement of Jamestown, developing the idea that out of the ideological content in medieval and Anglo-Saxon texts, prominent members of the Virginia Company formulate a new, romantic nation-building ideology specifically designed for the Virginia venture. Was Smith a willing participant in the manipulation of New World propaganda? Perhaps—but there was indeed some kind of collaboration, as I shall later suggest. This collaborative effort for which I ultimately argue, in fact, suggests a larger cast behind the production and dispensation of Smith's larger body of work. Even so, Smith's work, especially the material in *Generall Historie of Virginia, New-England, and the Summer Isles* (1624), uncovers further nation building strategies and rightful conquest of North American lands by way of the myth of Anglo-Saxonism, transferred from Elizabethan England to North American shores. In Smith's work, more importantly, these tropes, narrative techniques, and issues of collaboration both ultimately culminate in the infamous Pocahontas story, which best illustrates the strategic representation of the marriage of cultures as fashioned by collaborators of Smith's work, where the powerful Anglo-Saxon myth lurks.

The story of Pocahontas has drawn much critical attention in past years, though the story itself has captured the American imagination for much longer. Robert Tilton dates the interest in Pocahontas from the Revolutionary period, 'when Americans had begun to scan the colonial past in search of figures … who could be rewarded retroactively for their proto-nationalist sentiments.'[3] Tilton explores the later creation of the myth, where, never far from the American imagination, the Smith-Pocahontas narrative evolved into a quintessentially American story that serves as a foundation for future national tropes, manifesting itself later as

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Hakluyt and Sir Thomas Smith, treasurer, were foremost on the list. Seven months following the company's formation, James I, in an effort both to add political weight to and to supervise the company, appointed a council of knighted men to the company, most of them closely connected with the court, some who even sat on Commons. James then granted to the treasurer and adventurers of the London Company of Virginia a sizable tract of land—800 miles at the widest, stretching from Atlantic to Pacific, and 100 miles out in both oceans (which grew to include the Bermuda Islands in 1612)—for the first colony in the New World on May 23, 1609; *Hening's Statutes at Large Being a Collection of all the Laws of Virginia from the First Session of the Legislature, in the Year* 1619 [to 1791], 13 vols. (Philadelphia: William Brown, 1823) 1:58–60.

[3] *Pocahontas: The Evolution of an American Narrative* (New York: Cambridge UP, 1994), 33

the stock Indian representations in the narratives of James Fenimore Cooper. In addition, the myth itself began to assume a specific national value. Pocahontas, as a 'good' and submissive woman, eagerly ready to bow to her superiors, and, madly in love with Rolfe, became the new portrait of America. This cartoonish image spawned literally dozens of romances and other incarnations of the two, each less historical than the previous.[4] Pocahontas and Smith stood as tropes for the native and American—and the values comprised in each. Ultimately, along with Squanto, Pocahontas, who in 1613 was captured, converted to Christianity, and then married Englishman John Rolfe, serves as the most prominent mythic Indian figure from early America. Yet limited scholarly work has been done from a transatlantic perspective, linking of Smith's *Generall Historie* to the development of British imperial narratives as an ideological force in British colonial nation building. This paper intends to fill that gap.

The Pocahontas account, which appears in both *A True Relation of Occurences and Accidents in Virginia, 1608* (1609) and *Generall Historie* serves as the greatest marker of the British influence on North American territories. As such, it is a carefully-crafted, mythic story through which we can read tensions in the hopes and fears of New World colonization, where we become aware of the possibility of peace *and* conquering, Pocahontas stands as a purely American romance of the New World style, a romance on the American soil, which builds upon the Anglo-Saxon element of the *ides,* the link or the peace-keeping woman between two cultures, for the older national purpose used in Anglo-Saxon times—the symbol of peaceful assimilation. And the figure of Pocahontas, the powerfully symbolic Anglo-Saxon *ides,* or 'peaceweaver,' becomes an important tool for colonial settlement, easing concerns over migration, preventing possible resistance to the New World project, and creating, in turn, an international narrative noted for its peacekeeping claim.[5]

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[4] Ann Uhry Abrams has made this point, *The Pilgrims and Pocahontas: Rival Myths of American Origin* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1999), 56–60.

[5] The Pocahontas myth becomes a part of American 'cultural capital,' in the Bourdieuian sense, from Smith's time forward. Pierre Bourdieu, in his work, especially *Distinction,* puts forth an understanding of society based on the movement of 'capital' through social spaces as it is accumulated or lost by individuals. In the Bourdieu's work, 'cultural capital' consists of ideas and qualifications that confer to a certain people some respect to power; 'The Forms of Capital,' *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education*, John Richardson, ed. (New York: Greenwood Press, 1986), 248.

Smith and the Virginia Company employed a new form of Anglo-Saxonism in early American narratives to legitimate aspects of nation state, especially through narrative techniques and borrowings of myth.[6] Quite simply, Anglo-Saxonism in this case becomes an New World version of history, to borrow from Étienne Balibar's notions of narratives of history and ideology. 'The myth of origins and national community,' writes Balibar, is 'an effective ideological form, in which the imaginary singularity of national formations is constructed daily, by moving back from the present into the past.'[7] As Balibar states, repeated and integrated ideas of national character ultimately play a role in the narrative and, subsequently, genesis, of new nation states. It is thus my goal is to analyze how Smith and his collaborators adapted and put to use the historical framework of Anglo-Saxonism in pivotal points of Smith's New World relations, creating a powerfully subtle peacekeeping message that served to justify New World expansion and secure its place as a primary American narrative.

Smith's entrance into the complicated sphere of Elizabethan power and New World ideology was and still remains somewhat of a mystery. Following the debacle of Humphrey Gilbert and Sir Walter Raleigh's failed Roanoke experiment, the Gunpowder Plot, and James's ascension, Robert Cecil the younger (now working under James I as Lord Salisbury) was still trying to garner prospects for New World expansion, this time in southern Virginia. Smith, back from three years in Europe as a renegade soldier and adventurer, was signed on to sail on the *Susan Constant* for Virginia, and in May 1607, he and one hundred some other adventurers set up camp on James's river in Virginia. Smith's writings about these events illustrate the tensions that arise in matters of publishing and authorial intent and the place of the New World individual within the larger fabric of the English elite who promoted a dominant New World ideology; his literary errant knight displaced on New World shores operates within this space.

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[6] 'Anglo-Saxonism,' as I shall use it in this paper, is a fairly new term for an old ideology: it was quite likely first coined by King Alfred in the ninth century to distinguish members of the Angles and Saxons from Germanic islanders in Britain and has been only used recently in academic scholarship beginning with Reginald Horsman, who revitalized and reconceptualized the term in his landmark study, *Race and Manifest Destiny: Origins of American Racial Anglo-Saxonism* (1981).

[7] 'The Nation Form: History and Ideology,' *Race, Nation, Class: Ambiguous Identities,* Étienne Balibar and Immanuel Maurice Wallerstein, eds. (London: Verso, 1991), 88.

With the Pocahontas myth, for which he has garnered the most fame, Smith connects directly to the Elizabethan appropriation and manipulation of nation-building myth in text and printing—meaning, Smith was part of a larger justification plot. That Smith became deeply entrenched in England's drive for claims on New World development is a well-known fact: he contributed to what the Virginia Company envisioned as a favorable marketing source for the New World in himself, and he undoubtedly wanted self-promotion. In turn, though, Smith profited nicely in other significant ways. He certainly did not have had the power to disseminate his persona into the national consciousness alone, so his writings, enabled by his involvement in the Company, bolstered the quasi-chivalric Smith image and helped to create the larger than life literary persona for which he is known.

Even then, having read his material, other would-be travelers, including the New England Leyden Separatists, would come to consult him on all matters concerning the New World. With his broad knowledge of American plant, animal, and native life, his touted mapmaking skills, and his adventurous spirit and public persona, Smith was a *cognoscente du jour* of the New World. Later, his works, with added embellishments by Virginia Company members, famed medieval scholar, collector, and Anglo-Saxonist Sir Robert Cotton among them, included for the very purpose of providing a sustainable argument for democratic English rule in the New World, continued this meteoric rise to public fame. Cotton was especially attracted to the strikingly medieval figure of Smith. In Smith, the antiquarian Cotton found the perfect knightly persona to portray in the charge against royal authority, especially James I; in Smith, too, Cotton could emphasize the revival of English liberties, freedoms, and a specifically natural and national originator of the dream of the British *coventus* as described by the Roman Tacitus in his *Germania,* a tract that put forth perhaps one of the first histories of the Anglo-Saxons, where hard and lusty freedom-loving men ruled together, and whose successful adventures with the Powhatans could provide a seamless transference to the British New World. Finally, in Smith, Cotton could work in tandem with the Virginia Company to promote the peaceful promotion of possibilities in the New World concerning migration and settlement.

Smith's first writing from the New World, *True Relation,* opens up the possibilities for deeper exploration into the tensions between author, message, and textual history as it relates to New World Anglo-Saxon ideology. Begun as a letter that was ostensibly penned to a mysterious

friend whose identity remains unknown even to this day, *True Relation* was rushed by Smith to Captain Nelson at Cape Henry at the last minute before Nelson's departure for England in 1608. *True Relation* covers roughly the thirteen-month period of the Jamestown colony from December 1606 to Nelson's return to England in early 1608, but it was not, like the rest of Smith's writings, revised and included in Smith's *Generall Historie*; following four printings in 1608, it went virtually unprinted until the nineteenth century. Because he was still in Virginia, we can be sure that Smith remained undoubtedly divorced from the printing process. What this means is that once aboard Nelson's ship, Smith had no further contact with the missal, which creates a thorny problem of textual transmission between Smith and the Virginia Company. Given this uncertain transatlantic path and sketchy publication history, *True Relation* nevertheless offers a way in for understanding the complex relationship between the Virginia Company and Smith.

Following a very brief introduction, the narrative begins *in medias res* on April 26, 1609. In *True Relation,* Smith as author narrates his adventures overcoming the enemy on the new *terra*, a tactic that would be reversed later in the Pocahontas narrative. But *was* Smith the actual author of *True Relation*? Because of the Virginia Company's involvement in the enterprise, all options must be weighed, especially regarding the gravity of the situation. Certainly, representations of peaceable conquest would have provided the Virginia Company with ample fiduciary and public support. Thus, with the emergence of puissance in the Smith figure as *chevalier* in the New World narrative of *True Relation* also arises the subtle interplay of power tensions between the Virginia Company and Smith. *True Relation* illustrates this disconnect. The space between composition and publishing illuminates an imbalance of agendas. And, since there does exist a gap of historical data between the finished 'product,' or the polished version of *True Relation* that was completed in England, we must turn briefly to London printers and the problem of authorial intent. During the period in which *True Relation* was published, printers played a major role in all authors' works; as has been noted in much scholarship on Elizabethan drama, publication of manuscripts was a collaborative event during the early seventeenth century.[8] We must remember, too, that as Smith's *True Relation* was being printed in 1608, Shakespeare's *King Lear* was beginning what would turn out to be a long and tedious history of corrupt

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[8] Especially helpful is Heather A. Hirschfeld study, *Joint Enterprises: Collaborative Drama and the Institutionalization of the English Renaissance Theater* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2004), 1–28.

folios and mysterious Stuart printing practices, leading scholars on the quest for the authorial quarto.

Manuscripts were regularly chopped, rearranged, and otherwise altered without the author's knowledge. Even Smith's *The True Travels, Adventures, and Observations of Captain John Smith in Europe, Asia, Affrica*, *and America, from Anno Domini 1593 to 1629* (1630)*,* which started as a short exposé for his friend the narrative-collecting Samuel Purchas, was edited, trimmed, and manipulated, once in Purchas's hands, largely by Purchas himself. Further, with the rise of manuscript production came the growth in political debates formulated in part through the dissemination of various types of manuscripts, and since this period was one of rapid growth in the English antiquarian movement, politics and antiquarianism collided. The earlier official formation of the Stationer's Company in London (1557) brought together lawmakers, scriveners, and antiquarians. As political propaganda in the form of Anglo-Saxonism increased, so did publishing. Powerful men like Cotton and Robert Cecil, Lord Burghley collaborated with antiquarians like Matthew Parker and others to solidify connections to the past through records, treatises, and political tracts. Most of these figures worked together for similar ends. As historian Margaret J. Ezell has observed, our ideas of authorship during this period remain obscure in part because 'our notions of what constitutes authorship and how we evaluate a text in this situation are … linked to venue and textual production.'[9] Printers, too, added to the problem of authorship, as they had favorite patrons and certain agendas they liked to follow; in most cases, power equaled production. Modern criticism has so long been obsessed with the author that we tend to forget at times to position the actual early American English writer in with the editor, scribe, copyist, collaborators, and patrons.

Although *True Relation* marks the entrance of Smith's heroic narrative persona into the New World, one which he would continue to develop throughout his literary career, authorial questions plague the meaning. Smith's autobiography, *True Travels,* further highlights these problems. Most notably, I think, it improves upon the heroic knightly figure and inserts him into a more expansive narrative. In doing so, *True Travels* illuminates the involvement of authorial collaboration that, in all probability, links Smith to a larger manipulation of national narrative for

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[9] *Social Authorship and the Advent of Print* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999), 17, 20.

ideological purposes, establishing Smith as an archetypal hero like the Welsh King Arthur or the Saxon King Alfred. This was not a random analogy. In fact, to add to the medieval mystique, *True Travels* was first printed in a tall, handsome, and decorative folio, accompanied by various medieval illustrations, including Smith's own alleged coat of arms, which thus provided a certain *persona* for Smith as knight-errant—an important feature of medieval romances. Often deprecated for its patchwork quality, Smith's writing style in *True Travels* contains a number of additional romance qualities, some borrowed but others completely refashioned and new; his work remains clearly indebted to the medieval literature he had favored as a child, as well as the newly revived medieval romance literature of the period.[10] In fact, as Laura Doyle points out, in Smith we witness 'a tapping of available genres (chronicle, anatomy, ethnography) and then a composition of those genres into a loosely coherent narrative.'[11] Doyle's description reflects the breadth of medievalism in Smith's work; his autobiographies, most notably *True Travels,* contain a few admixtures from both early French and English romances. A 'medieval' borrowing offers to the author of history an earlier age wherein it is possible to exist with honor; thus, most medieval historical writers, from Eusebius to Augustine to Bede were purposeful re-creators of the past, trying actively to create a social world and unity rather than just to glorify a passive nostalgia over individual heroics.

A small portion of Smith's *True Travels* first appeared in his friend Samuel Purchas's *Hakluytus Postumus, or Purchas His Pilgrimes* in 1625.

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[10] As a boy, Smith tells us, he possessed a fantastic imagination and held a great love for chivalric romances. Following a period of seclusion in which he stayed alone in the forest, read romances, and heroically slept in his clothes in a small bower and re-fashioned himself, he emerged from the woods longing for adventure. For a complete biographical account of Smith, the standard biographies are Barbour, *The Three Worlds of Captain John Smith* (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin Company, 1964) and *Captain John Smith: His Life and Legend,* Bradford Smith, ed. (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1953). In the Elizabethan era, the rise of printing saw the rapid increase in readership of medieval romances, which became the equivalent of the pulp fiction, and both Spenser and Shakespeare had been famously influenced by them; see especially Phoebe Sheavyn's pioneering study, *The Literary Profession in the Elizabethan Age* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1969), 188–95 and Helen Cooper, 'M is for Merlin: The Case of the Winchester Manuscript'' in *Medieval Heritage: Essays in Honor of Tadahiro Ikegame,* M. Kanno et al. eds. (Tokyo: Yushodo Press, 1997), 93–107.

[11] *Freedom's Empire: Race and the Rise of the Novel in Atlantic Modernity, 1640–1940* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2008), 99.

Purchas included about ten folio pages of Smith's adventures, which he entitled 'The Travels and Adventures of Captaine John Smith in divers parts of the world, begun about the yeere 1596,' which publication likely attracted a good number of English readers, including members of the Virginia Company and Cotton. Following the success of his stories in *Pilgrimes,* Smith later published these in book form in 1630; *The True Travels* was praised by William Strachey and generally hailed by later readers as an exceptional history of the true international adventurer. Apart from setting Smith up as an errant knight in the New World, *True Travels* contains a number of other medieval features, all transposed onto the New World. The romance tradition has not simply provided a character for Smith—the powerful, even awe-inspiring explorer and self-described 'captain'—it also seems to have offered a basic plot: A noble and fairly young man with no title or lands embarks upon adventures, ending up in the New World, where he will later attempt to fashion a heroic society in the face of oppressive rulers. The hero in stock romances often comes from beginnings that are shrouded in mystery. In Smith, too, a new feature arises in the stock romance—he is quintessentially English, or Anglo-Saxon, and, as an active national actor, he provides a more human presence in the ideological power struggle that plays out on a 'virgin territory' or *terre de pesme aventure*.

Yet these romantic features of *True Travels* further add to the questions of the veracity of Smith's work and why it was important for American nation-building during this time. We must always keep in mind Cotton, famed antiquarian and collector of Anglo-Saxon and medieval manuscripts, whose presence was always felt in Virginia Company dealings. He involved himself with the most important collectors of then-contemporary travelogues, such as Purchas. And Cotton, at least, knew the power of the medieval romance—and he knew exactly *which* features would serve the narrative of the New World well. The first, and perhaps most, important feature of the New World chivalric narrative is the manner in which it is presented—the authorial voice. Although Smith proclaims toward the beginning of *True Travels* that 'because I have ranged and lived amongst those llands, what my authours cannot tell me, I thinke it no great errour in helping them to tell it my selfe,' the narrative is replete with accounts by Smith that are largely romanticized, confused and mistaken, and, at times, borrowed from Purchas, his model, who seems to have

plagiarized them himself.[12] Thus, when Smith writes in *True Travels* that he 'cannot make a Monument for my self … having had so many copartners with me,' he was not simply alluding to the 'partnerships' of Purchas, with whom he first published his material, or Cotton, his later patron, but to the various texts from which he freely borrowed—or were borrowed for him.[13] Smith likely had numerous sources from which to draw. For example, a Smith snippet appearing for the first time in Purchas's *Pilgrimes* had an almost identical description of the Turks as that in William Biddulph's *The Travels of Foure Englishmen* (1612). According to Smith biographer Barbour, even Smith's dealings with the Turks might on some level be attributable to a text by Knolles entitled *Historie of the Turkes* (1136).[14] In fact, Purchas had a great deal of accumulated material either he or Smith could have used to augment Smith's writings.

    In the *Generall Historie,* the massive work that relates all of Smith's dealings with the Virginia Company, Powhatan and his people, or other Englishmen, through the chivalric actor, Smith exists primarily as a caricature, an action-driven hero whose medieval escapades often create the very trouble from which he must extricate himself. The narrative also, as has been mentioned, compiles history for an purpose. Whether in Smith's hand or someone else's, it presents the reader with a quick synopsis of all previous Elizabethan ideologies concerning the New World—the narrator recounts the stories of Madoc, Frobisher, Gilbert, and Raleigh, all of which echo necromancer John Dee's fantastic claims that the land, belonging already to England, required a formal, recovery action, which Smith and company immediately provided. Smith also documents the history of the Roanoke expedition, condensing versions found in Hakluyt's *Principle Navigations.* Importantly, he provides Raleigh's supposed relation of 'The great courtesie of a Woman' to the travelers, a beatific vision of mythic homecoming. In this fantastic anecdote, a native woman, the wife of Granganmeo, runs to greet and help the sailors in the water, orders her fellow tribesman to carry them from their boats to the shore, and dries the sailors' clothes, feeds them, and entertains them. This powerful woman then had the bows and arrows of entering tribesmen broken in two when she saw the fear in the Englishmen's eyes. Following this account, Smith traces the remainder of the English expeditions until

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[12] All citations are from *The Complete Works of Captain John Smith* (hereafter *CWJS),* 3 vols, Philip L. Barbour, ed. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1986) 3:235.
[13] Ibid.*,* 3:141–42.
[14] Ibid., 3:168–69; see notes 5–6.

1606, when he begins his narrative proper as well as his tenure on New World shores.

Book One of *Generall Historie* quickly situates the reader within the context of rediscovery—but it does so with a subtle hint of ethos. While he opens the book with chivalric visions of past heroes—'For the stories of Arthur, Malgo, or Brandon, that say a thousand yeares agoe they were in the North America'—Smith immediately distances himself, writing, 'I know them not.'[15] Smith chooses to begin, as he does in paragraph two, with Madoc: 'The Chronicle of Wales report, that Madock, sonne to Owen Guineth, Prince of Wales … arrived in this new Land in the yeare 1170.'[16] Thus can he tie the current history to the mythic Madoc and Richard Hakluyt, Purchas's mentor, and begin to create a new beginning from this older extended lineage—*not* via the more 'fanciful' notions of Arthur. Smith introduces—or *re*introduces—the various explorations, beginning with Madoc, through Gilbert, Raleigh, and Drake. He describes, in brief, the inhabitants, curiously remarking on a matriarchal system of religious belief: 'For mankinde they say a Woman was made first, which by the working of one of the gods conceived and brought forth children; so they had their beginning.'[17] Following this brief detour, Smith returns to the explorations and concludes Book One with George Waymouth's 1605 voyage.

So much of the introduction concerns itself with situating the New World project as rightful conquest that Smith's proper entrance into the *Historie* comes only in Book Two, where he, in a technique clearly borrowed from the Saxon Bede in his descriptions of England in *Historia Ecclesiastica Gentis Anglorum,* outlines the geography, vegetation, and flora and fauna of Virginia for his readers. Smith's ethnography, however, leaves something to be desired. He concludes of the natives only that they are 'inconstant … craftie … very ingenious … all savage[s],' covetous of gold, beads, and 'such like trash,' and, generally, 'their far greater number is of women and children'; so, Smith claims that although he 'lost seaven or eight men,' he 'yet subjected the salvages to our desired obedience.'[18] This ethnographic section then leads into the history proper. In the Third Book, Smith qualifies why progress in the New World has been so slow up to that point. Here we see the tension that exists between accounts of divine

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[15] Ibid., 2:61.
[16] Ibid., 2:61–2.
[17] Ibid., 2:78.
[18] Ibid., 2:114–5, 129.

intervention and Smith's historiographical practice that favors a carefully constructed account of an impersonal world wherein man stands at the center and where past notions of national history do not detain the reader; the secular adventures of the individual offer the promise of a new creation of that history. For example, Smith takes credit for winning over the natives, especially in the famous Pocahontas scene, when, should we believe the narrative, his life is saved, yet, following literary fashion, he gives the credit to God: 'But almightie God (by his divine providence) had mollified the hearts of those sterne Barbarians with compassion.'[19] Soon after, however, the silver-tongued Smith convinces the colonists, who were beginning to blame him for their misfortunes and ready to quit the project, that he will save them, saying he 'quickly tooke such order with such Lawyers, that he layed them by the heeles.'[20] Having saved the day, Smith then recounts how the Indians, led by Pocahontas, bring provisions, thus saving the lives of the weary colonists.

As seen in Smith's crude attempt to trace the cosmology of Indians, the power of women remains important in *Generall Historie.* Along with Squanto, Pocahontas, who in 1613 was captured, converted to Christianity and then married Englishman John Rolfe, is the most prominent mythic 'heroine' of Indian captivity lore. Although limited scholarly work has been done in the context of Native American captivity as an ideological force in British colonial nation building, I have found Pauline Turner Strong's work especially informative.[21] In her study, Strong argues that Pocahontas, 'who represents salvation, communion, and colonial legitimacy,' became a legendary figure primarily because she was a tragic hero.[22] Strong I think rightly observes that Pocahontas was a captive long before she was deemed 'savior' of and convert to the English and the symbolic nature of her capture seen as a transnational tragedy. Historically, she has been called the Joan of Arc of America for good reason: the Pocahontas story exhibits the twofold nature of the romance in America, one free but manipulated agent and one liberated from the tyranny of social forces. [23] Smith's 'myth' of capture, Pocahontas's mysterious placation of

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[19] Ibid.*,* 2:152.

[20] Ibid.

[21] *Captive Selves, Captivating Others: The Politics and Poetics of Colonial American Captivity Narratives* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1999).

[22] Strong, 19.

[23] Ann Uhry Abrams, in 'The Pocahontas Paradox: Southern Pride, Yankee Voyeurism, Ethnic Identity, or Feminine Heroics,' a paper delivered at the annual meeting of the American Studies Association, Miami, Fla., October 1988.

Powhatan, and her subsequent, implicit role reversal and marriage to John Rolfe all center on the tidy unification of a nation building plot. One social means for English writers to advance notions of peace in early English nation-building activity is the romance myth, which bears great structural similarity to its similar peace-keeping tactics of medieval England. (The birth of the *romans* itself was a period noted for its civil disorder for various reasons, including relaxing of feudal ties, growing pressures within the legal system and economy, and the rise and growth of social mobility.) In the Pocahontas tale there exists a manipulated *mythos*, a reversed medieval romance with Smith at its center, which seeks to reinforce the legitimacy of the New World conquest through literary re-representation of a 'divine gesta,' to borrow from Mircea Éliade, whereby an eternal repetition may be played out in such a way as to celebrate the union of England and America in the metaphorical re-reversing of the myth through the 'marriage' of Indian to English.[24]

The historical events of the capture center essentially on a few adventurers, two of whom had very important ties to the Virginia Company's promotion of nation-building in the most Anglo-Saxon sense— Samuel Argall and Sir Thomas Dale. The basic outline of the kidnapping follows. In 1613, on someone's order—no solid evidence exists as to whose—Argall was charged with capturing Pocahontas allegedly to end the adventurer's 'war' with the Powhatans. A young linguist in the colony named Henry Spelman, having 'acquired' some Indian friends during his two years in the forests, assisted Argall. Publicly, Spelman had been deemed 'lost' or even sold, as some reports ran, one of which was Smith's, which accounted for his whereabouts in the forest those years; in reality, however, he had been planted and was working undercover for the Virginia Company.[25] Following the capture, Argall notified the chief that Pocahontas was being held hostage in order that he might set the captive colonists free, return some stolen munitions, and, in general, cease warring on the colonists. The story goes that months followed without an answer, and, finally, Powahatan succumbed and delivered the goods. But it was too late. The English, by this time, had become fed up, and, mysteriously, Pocahontas was a changed woman, having fallen in love with the English

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[24] *The Sacred and the Profane: the Nature of Religion* (Orlando: Harcourt, 1957), 96.

[25] This method was nothing new: Smith planted his own undercover 'spy' to learn the language in 1608, leaving the boy Samuel Collier in the care of Warraskoyak chieftain Tackonekintaco; Karen Ordahl Kupperman, *Indians and English: Facing Off in Early America* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2000), 207–8.

and especially tobacconist Rolfe. In addition to kidnapping Pocahontas, Argall apparently 'saved' young Spelman in 1610.

Thus did national concerns appear to determine the plot. And Argall and Dale remain important for their ties to the Old World mythology of Elizabethan England, especially to the powerful Cecils and, ultimately, to King James, for their participation continues the spark of North American land interests first conceived of by Dee and Lord Burghley.[26] Argall, whose fame in the history of early America comes from being the actual captor, was a noted thief, an extortionist, a 'shameless' and 'treacherous' man who was, at times, 'despotic' and 'fraudulent.'[27] In 1609, when reports of the

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[27] J.S. Bassett, 'The Relation between the Virginia Planters and the London Merchants,' *American Historical Association Report* (1901), 554; William Wirt Henry, 'The First Legislative Assembly in America,' *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 2 (1893), 155. Argall came from a line of well-connected people. His two-year stint in Virginia has been deemed by historians as nearly ruinous to the colony and was filled with acts of bribery, intimidation, and thievery. Argall was, it would seem, what we might now call a 'soldier of fortune,' a mercenary. He was born into a well-to-do family, and he was related by marriage to Thomas Smith, treasurer of the Virginia Company and active leader in the Company from its inception. Much of the early American scholarship on Jamestown ignores Argall's ancestry, which is important to his connections to the English mission. His grandfather Thomas, a successful bureaucrat, lived on the grounds of the Archbishop at Canterbury and served highly important administrative positions of church and state. As his will, dated August 19, 1583, shows, his father Laurence Argall was on quite friendly terms with Sir Francis Walsingham, among other Elizabethan gentry. In fact, Walsingham was very well-acquainted with the Argall clan; Rowland worked under both Walsingham and Burghley as operations officer in Ireland, with the former even mediating a personal land issue for Rowland. The Argall family had a distant link to Sir Humphrey Gilbert. Though this might seem trivial on the surface, it was not; as Alsop notes, 'the blood tie between the two families might not in itself be significant if it were not easily demonstrable that the Argalls [and other involved families] were all prominent Kentish gentry who formed close relationships from the middle of the sixteenth century'; James D. Alsop, 'Sir Samuel Argall's Family, 1560–1620,' *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 90:4 (1982), 483. Subscribers of the company included prominent descendents of the Argalls' friends and connections, such as Walsingham; further, there were numerous relatives of the Argalls who were shareholders in the Virginia venture. Most importantly, however, was Samuel's first cousin, Sir John Scott, council member on the Virginia Company and brother of Thomas Smith, treasurer, to whom Argall was thereby related. As a side note, Richard (son of Thomas) Argall's widow married one Laurence Washington, from whom George Washington is descended.

emerging anarchy in Jamestown reached the Virginia Company, they had James draw up a second charter, for which Argall was recommended. When De La Warr assumed command of Jamestown, Argall, along with Ralph Hamor, was given a 'special appointment' as an officer in the new government. He became governor from 1617–18, presiding over the colony with Thomas Dale.[28] Dale, who enjoyed some renown during Elizabeth's reign, serving first in the Netherlands under Robert Dudley, first Earl of Leicester, and later in Ireland in the military, was a sometimes patronee of Robert Cecil. Dale acknowledged that it was *Cecil* who bade him go to Virginia: he writes, 'Cecil [was] pleased to imbark me for the plantation in Virginia.'[29] As Dale's biographer Darrett B. Rutman has observed, 'scant as the record is concerning Dale's background ... the friends were powerful indeed.'[30] In late 1609 and early 1610, plans had started to secure Dale's release in order that he might join the Virginia project; De La Warr, in fact,

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[28] Interestingly, John Rolfe favored Argall's position (thus implicating himself, it seems) writing to Sandys in 1620, when charges were still lingering, 'I assure you that you shall find many dishonest and faithless men to Captain Argall, who have received much kindness at his hands and to his face will contradict, and be ashamed of much, which in his absence they have intimated him.' Rolfe worked in concert with Argall: '[I] cannot chose but to revele unto you the sorrow I conceyve, to heare of the many accusacons heaped upon Captaine Argall, with whom my reputacon hath bene unjustly joynted'; Rolfe to Sandys, January 1620, in *The Ferrar Papers,* 'Records of the Virginia Company,' vol. 3, Bernard Blackstone, ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1938), 247.

[29] Dale to Sir Dudley Carleton, October 18, 1617, in Alexander Brown, *The Genesis of the United States*, 2 vols. (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin and Company, 1890) 2: 870. Following the well-known debacle of Essex at Elizabeth's hands, however, he began to lose favor at court, and, petitioning Cecil for help, Dale attempted to quash charges against him, which then resulted in a warrant for his arrest. Following this, however, Dale somehow rose again, this time to captain, and gained command of an English army in Dutch service. Partly because he was so well-liked by important people, Dale interested the Virginia Company as a leader in New World operations; thus, he entered into its service.

[30] 'The Historian and the Marshal: A Note on the Background of Sir Thomas Dale,' *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography,* 68:3 (1960), 291. Dale's brother-in-law was the infamous William Throckmorton. Prior to 1612, Dale, along with Edward Cecil (Burghley's grandson), Gates, and Strachey created a 'law' to form and colonize (no trace is left). In 1612, Dale, taking around 300 settlers from Jamestown, created Henricus, named after the Prince of Wales. By this time, Cecil had been promoted to general of the fleet by Buckingham, and he worked with Samuel Argall in an expedition to Cadiz against Spain.

had already named him in early 1610 'marshall of the colony' months before he left.[31] Dale sailed in March of that year.

Both of these figures represent the link between Old World money and power. They exemplified the prestige and wanton nationalism of the Cecils and John Dee, whose Welsh ideas—mostly involving property 'rights' to North America via the tenuous link to Madoc's supposed discovery—promoted conquest and development for capital's sake. (Dee strongly promoted a medieval 'right' to England based upon flimsy evidence of Madoc's alleged claim, an argument which Burghley supported.) As such, they symbolize precisely the type of nation building impulse against which Smith was reacting. Dale and Argall provided the link back to Dee. In fact, after he had been in England some years, Smith would reflect on the events in Virginia given what he learned from the Indians, reflections which became the basis for the *Generall Historie.* Smith writes that he despised Argall and all he stood for, partly because following Smith's departure, De la Warr and his new regime, including Argall and Dale, along with William Strachey, secretary and lieutenant governor of Virginia, began a series of cover-ups beginning in 1610 to bolster the Virginia Company's position in the public eye and ostensibly to breath 'new life' into the colony by Gates and suppress waves of negativity brought forward from Smith's tenure as president of Jamestown. Strachey figures in importantly here because the production and transmission of his *True repertory of the wreck and redemption of Sir Thomas Gates, July 15, 1610* (published later by Purchas), a response to Smith's writings, was taken to the Virginia Company by Gates himself. The *Historie* remains interesting, however, especially where the Virginia Company is concerned, since Strachey's narrative contains information regarding Pocahontas that Smith's did not, namely that she was married to a tribesman prior to her fabricated 'relationship' with Rolfe, and, more importantly, details of her perceived sexual appeal—he calls Pocahontas a 'well-featured but wanton yonge girle.'[32] Not surprisingly, then, Smith's version of events was preferred reading for the general public; Strachey's steamier chronicle was quashed by the Virginia Company, lying dormant until 1849, when it—and

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[31] This was despite the fact that he was again in garrison with the army and still on the payroll of the States-General; *The Records of the Virginia Company of London*, 4:126.

[32] William Strachey, *Historie of Travell into Virginia Britannia* (1612), Louis B. Wright and Virginia Freund Hakluyt, eds. (London: The Hakluyt Society, 1953), 72.

nineteenth-century interest in the mythos of the Smith-Pocahontas story—was reborn.[33]

    The question of *which* account to use for New World promotion lingered in the minds of Virginia Company adventurers. As Mark Netzloff has shown, the internal problems of the colony during the advancements of charters—especially the period of change from the first to second charter that brought in Argall and Dale—was a period fraught with internal strife and manifold, and often murky, notions of liberty. It was of this period about which both Smith and Strachey wrote, and, to be fair, in Strachey's writings, attempted some form, however slight, of historical truthfulness. Always, however, his publications were repressed; instead, public sources, documents, and ideas were borrowed from the Virginia Company 'official' version of events, *A True Declaration of the Estate of the Colonie in Virginia* (1610). As the company concluded:

> Wee have thought it necessary, for the full satisfaction of all, to make it publikely knowne, that, by diligent examination, wee have assuredly found, those Letters and Rumours to have been false and malicious; procured by practice, and suborned to evill purposes: And contrarily disadvowed by the testimony, upon Oath, of the chiefe Inhabitants of all the Colony.[34]

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[33] As S.G. Culliford, Strachey's biographer notes, 'Strachey's failure to achieve publication is not surprising [because] not only had he been preceded by John Smith, but the final chapters of the work could never gain approval of the Virginia Company'; 162. Fearing that Strachey's version was not ideologically sound enough, the Virginia Company opted to leave Smith's as the public record: Culliford claims, 'at a time when public enthusiasm for colonization waned [Strachey's work] could never gain the approval of the Virginia Company'; *William Strachey, 1572–1621* (Charlottesville: The University Press of Virginia, 1965), 162. *The historie of travaile* was finally published in 1849. Strachey was also an eye-witness reporter of the 1609 shipwreck on the uninhabited island of Bermuda of the colonial ship *Sea Venture*, which was caught in a hurricane while sailing to Virginia, the same wreck that would provide Shakespeare with material for *The Tempest*; this account was also squelched by members of the Virginia Company until 1625 on account of the bad publicity it would bring.

[34] *A Declaration of the State of the Colonie and Affaires in Virginia With the Names of Adventurors, and Summes adventured in that Action By his Majesties Counseil for Virginia* (London, 1620), 3.

Thus, while both Strachey and Smith portrayed similar events in the New World, it was the latter's that was favored by the Virginia Company of London, gaining English and, later, international, acclaim.

It is also important to remember that Smith was writing during the period immediately following the Indian massacre of 1622. By that time, the Virginia colony was developing well and had a population of around 4,000 colonists; the tobacco growing was becoming lucrative, and Richmond opened up as tobacco farmers and new colonists moved upriver. This left the original Virginians' colony somewhat open and vulnerable, but there had been no attack in eight years, and the English had become complacent. The peace did not last. According to reports, an Indian chief the English called Jack of the Feather killed a white man, and he was subsequently murdered in return. In retaliation, Pamunky Indians killed 347 people near Berkeley Plantation along the Chesapeake Bay, around ten percent of the total population of Virginia. In *New England Trials,* Smith argues in favor of strategic reason, claiming that 'they did not kill the English because they were Christians, but for their weapons and commodities.' But the English were frightened. Up to this point, New World migration had slowly crept into the national consciousness via plays such as *The Tempest* and *Eastward Ho!* While the drama for earlier English historians, such as Bede and St. Gildas, sixth century British prophet, played out in a shift of power on the *same* island, in this case, the drama of New World history played out on an island stage populated by those who crossed the sea and those who inhabited the island. Following the Indian attack of 1622, the English became particularly alarmed, and questions concerning New World ventures took center stage. In London, furor arose as some began to argue that the English had no right to the New World lands and no ethical cause to injure Indians. The Virginia Company panicked. To quell these fears, Smith wrote, 'But must this be an argument for an English man, or discourage any either in Virginia or New England? No: for I have tried them both.'[35] In Smith, the Virginia Company found the link to New World conquest as a peaceable mission, and in the newly-fabricated Pocahontas narrative, its most powerful tool for national-building mythology.

The story itself provides the most important, and most famous, romantic episode in the colonial American romance genre. Most important for marking the transference to North American soil, the incident is the

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[35] *CWJS* 1:432.

most well-known because it was the work of a master manipulating of a powerful Anglo-Saxon literary technique: the story of the *ides*. In his dedication to Lady Francis in the 1624 printing of the *Generall Historie*, Smith positions the Pocahontas rescue among his other romantic exploits with women: he claims the Turkish Lady Tragabigzanda, 'when I was a slave to the Turkes, did all she could to secure me'; Lady Callamatta, of the Tartars, 'supplied my necessities'; and, 'that blessed Pokahontas, the Great Kings daughter of Virginia, oft saved my life.'[36] Purchas, who had published this part as one of the excerpts in his *Pilgrimes,* mentions almost in passing that Smith had been captured—he writes that Smith 'had fallen into the hands of the Virginians,' in one of two mentions of this episode.[37] Truthfully, Smith spent the better part of two months in captivity before Powhatan apparently decided to have him executed. Curiously, in *True Relation,* there exists no account of the story—Pocahontas *is* mentioned, but only once, and there is no reference to her saving Smith. Thus, the fullest account of the episode comes from the *Generall Historie*:

> Having feasted him [Smith] after their best barbarous manner they could, a long consultation was held, but the conclusion was, two great stones were brought before Powhatan: then as many as could laid hands on him, dragged him to them, and thereon laid his head, and being ready with their clubs to beat out his brains, Pocahontas, the king's dearest daughter, when no entreaty could prevail, got his head in her arms, and laid her own upon his to save his from death: whereat the emperor was contented he should live to make him hatchets, and her bells, beads, and copper; for they thought him as well of all occupations as themselves. For the king himself will make his own robes, shoes, bows, arrows, pots; plant, hunt, or do anything so well as the rest.[38]

Here, in a reversal of medieval romance roles, adventurer Smith is saved by the teenage Pocahontas, who, cradling his head in her arms, stops the magnanimous chieftain from going through with the execution. Perry Miller calls this 'one of the most charming demonstrations [of] native spontaneity.'[39]

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[36] Ibid., 2:41–2.
[37] Ibid*.,* 3:314.
[38] Ibid*.,* 2:150–51.
[39] *Nature's Nation* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1967), 5.

However, the omission from *True Relation* adds to the gap between authorial intent and publishing purpose. As Henry Adams famously argued in his early study of Smith, since *True Relation* makes no mention of various exaggerations found in the 1624 edition of the *Generall Historie,* we must be wary of any truthfulness in the story. I am inclined to agree. Although the supposed savagery of the natives is depicted in both accounts, the *Generall Historie* adds other numerous descriptors not present in *True Relation*. For instance, Smith's capture comes after he, facing 200 bloodthirsty savages and using one tied to his own arm as a buckler, was finally taken prisoner, whereafter 'many strange triumphs and conjurations they made among him.'[40] In *True Relation*, no mention of such danger exists. As was previously noted, Smith's 'captivity' is amicable, for, following his capture, he is treated well and even informs Powhatan he must leave as soon as it occurs. And all of the Indians' actions in *True Relation* are extremely cordial and humane; there is none of the peril of the *Generall Historie* account, where death always hangs over Smith's head. Additionally, in *True Relation*, Smith says of Powhatan, 'Hee kindly welcomed me with such good wordes, and great Platters of sundrie Victuals, assuring mee his friendship, and my libertie,' and of his captors in general, 'So fat they fed mee, that I much doubted they intended to have sacrificed mee.'[41] Powhatan, claims Smith, sent him gifts and wanted to meet Smith's father, and Powhatan's tribe would creep near the fort at night, 'every of them calling me by my name, would not sell any thing till I had first received their presents.'[42] Such is Smith's account of his imprisonment; only once does he mention Pocahontas—on Smith's company's return with two Indian hostages and 'with such trifles as contented her.'[43]

What is even more strange than Smith's later addition of Pocahontas's rescue of him is that in that revised account, following Powhatan's decimation of a number of Englishmen, including John Ratcliffe, in a 1609 botched trade attempt, Smith tells us Pocahontas also 'rescued' the young Spelman (odd, indeed, considering that Spelman, in his account, claims Smith *sold* him to the Powhatans): 'Pokahontas the Kings daughter saued a boy called Henry Spilman, that liued many yeeres after, by her meanes,

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[40] *CWJS* 2:146.
[41] Ibid., 1:150.
[42] Ibid., 1:151.
[43] Ibid., 1:95.

amongst the Patawomekes.'[44] 'Aided in his escape by Pocahontas,' the account runs, 'Spelman took refuge among the somewhat autonomous Potomacs, ignoring Powhatan's orders to return.'[45] In point of fact, Spelman's inclusion *at all* remains a bit of a mystery. As a scholar and antiquarian, his uncle's weight in the English world was great; there was practically no one above him in matters of historical English law, even Robert Cotton. Cotton would have certainly been interested in Spelman, as he often worked with him and John Selden in matters of English Common Law.[46] In fact, when young Spelman returned to London, he met with Cotton and provided Purchas with material for his *Pilgrimes*, but for reasons unknown, his uncle Henry was eager to ship him back to the New World. In a 1612 letter, the elder Spelman wrote: 'Argall has requested Henry as an aide or companion'; and in a letter to his brother, John Spelman, Henry, who appears somewhat put off by John's silence about young Henry's whereabouts, desires to know when Henry will sail again: 'Mr Hackluyte can provide the information,' writes Spelman, 'or else [John] should approach Lord de la Ware himselfe.'[47] Spelman did return, however, on Argall's ship, in whose charge he was returned by his uncle—he had previously worked under Argall and, before him, De La Warr—and was promoted to captain, serving from that time until his death in the 1623

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[44] Ibid.*,* 2:232. Henry Spelman's story is strange. Due to primogeniture issues, young Spelman was disinherited by Sir Henry the elder, presumably his uncle and a famed antiquarian, forced into servitude, eventually signing up for the Virginia venture. Spelman became fluent in native languages and published a tract, *A Relation of Virginea*, an account that serves primarily as an ethnography: he records various habits, dress, and customs and pastimes of the natives, revealing little about himself.

[45] Qtd. in Strong, 63.

[46] All three, it will be remembered, argued that the Normans imposed a yoke of feudalism on the free and democratic Saxons; Selden composed part of the second charter for the Virginia Company. The elder Spelman's chief historical interest was the Church of England and finding antiquarian records to that end. Spelman's *Concilia* is a veritable trove of information documenting the history of English Church practices and procedures, beginning with the Britons, who, Spelman claims, were Christianized soon after Jesus' crucifixion, through the coming of Augustine's mission in 576 to 1066. Importantly, Spelman's corpus took on a rather pro Anglo-Saxon view—he held that the Normans imposed on the true church. Spelman also published an Anglo-Saxon glossary and became involved in drawing up patents for the Council of England, himself being a member, starting in 1620; Catherine Drinker Bowen, 'Historians Courageous,' *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 101: 3 (1957), 249–254.

[47] *Spelman Correspondence,* Survey Report, no. 345, British Museum, Ms. 34599, f. 29.

massacre, essentially acting as a go-between for the French (Spelman was also fluent in French) and the Indians.

All of this appears to have been shaped around the dealings in Virginia. The Virginia Company needed justification—quickly. The company's great regard for the political instability of concerns arising from migration that manifested itself as the *adventus Americanum,* the providential migration to the New World, demanded immediate attention, especially given public negativity in plays such as *Eastward Ho!,* Jonson's *pièce rosée* which almost celebrated the 'lost colony' of Roanoke and alluded to the integration of whites and Indians. Thus, the Virginia Company needed to shift the focus away from the dangers of the New World and its native inhabitants: young Spelman's being saved by and living peaceably among the Indians was one way. The impressive story of the marriage of Pocahontas was quite another. And it was even more powerful. The notion of producing peace by symbolically focusing upon Indians was nothing new. Since a variety of accounts from the New World were hardly encouraging, often emphasizing disease, pestilence, and Indian attacks, a literary attempt to confront and counteract this and the other negative publicity produced by earlier settlements, such as the Roanoke and Popham colony debacles, had been for years necessary. As early as 1612, the company produced an extensive series of travel literature in order to promote possibilities of success to potential financial backers and adventurers. Often authored in concert with the Council, a number of promotional tracts focused on creating an image of peace through extensive and deceitful propaganda.[48] The company's idea was to transform the threat of the 'barbarous' Indian in the public consciousness to one of possible peaceful assimilation, a marrying of cultures: 'The image of the submissive, attractive, and marriageable aboriginal transformed the stereotype of the 'savage' native, which had the desirable effect of spurring interest and investment in the colony by defusing a major obstacle to settlement.'[49]

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[48] 'A Justification for Planting Virginia,' the Virginia Company's own publication, highlights its own awareness of the propagandist mission: 'It was proposed that some forme of writing in way of Justification of our plantation might be conceived, and pass [. . .] into many hands'; *Records of the Virginia Company,* Susan M. Kingsbury, ed. (Washington D.C.: Government Printing House, 1938) 3:1.

[49] David Stymeist, '"Strange Wives": Pocahontas in Early Modern Colonial Advertisement,' *Mosaic* 35 (2002), 110.

As it turned out, the added twist to the Pocahontas story in Smith's *Generall Historie* could add support to the Virginia Company's enterprise with the promise of much more positive propaganda than had originally been imagined. Set in a darkly transitional period of nation building, the implicit marriage of cultures and the conjoining of white and Indian served as a link between the old ways and the new—and *Old* World and New. This matrimonial depiction, started in the New World with a Saxon *chevalier* as narrator, creates an entirely providential national narrative. It was, in essence, the beginnings of an American 'bootstrap' ideology. Implicit, too, are the multiple discourses that surround and define these events as they would be represented to later readers: the myth of a free man in a native land, carving out an existence for future generations. Smith became the new and quintessentially American Saxon, and these heirlooms would become part of the mythological heritage bequeathed to later generations out of a largely national and manipulative discursive practice. Thus, the claims to any 'truth' are historically negligible. In fact, the Virginia Company's use of New World discourse, in the Foucauldian sense, and their manipulation of this mythos for the production and control of *all* signifying practices regarding New World cultural narratives produced a false veneer, an image of the possibilities of success, precisely through the language of this mythic marriage material. As Foucault states, 'discourses' are 'tactical elements or blocks operating in the field of force relations'; these 'forced relations' are relations of power, including social institutions or groups who intend to govern social control.[50] The Virginia Company had every intention of positioning Smith, a New World *chevalier*, and England, by association, into the rightful heritage of Arthur and Madoc; the Other was simply different. King Arthur evolved into the New World cavalier, Captain John Smith the Knight, which ennoblement made to acknowledge the growing concern of unknown danger, served also to constitute more fully new structures of the order. A success of the New World *romans* could establish ideological control for England and the Virginia Company. The *romans* served as the primary discourse of colonization. As Stuart Hall puts it, 'it is discourse, not the subjects who speak it, which produces knowledge. Subjects may produce particular texts, but they are operating within the limits of the episteme, the discursive formation, the regime of truth, of a particular period and culture.' The Virginia Company thus manipulated the narrative to evoke the expressions of a collective memory of the community, that in England and America. The collective memory, in turn, would be very much influenced by any

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[50] *The History of Sexuality,* vol. 1 (Hammondsworth: Penguin, 1981), 101.

emerging national myths, especially in a land where there *were* no historical stories for the English.[51]

Thus, the prominent attention paid to a powerful female figure in the symbolic Pocahontas story made famous by Smith is crucial to American nation building. Recently, David Stymeist has elaborated on the noteworthy cultural symbolism in the Pocahontas narrative:

> The promotion of Anglo-Indian intermarriage in Colonial travel literature became a substitute for actual hybridization in the English colonization of the New World and concealed the reality of open hostility. The figure of Pocahontas represented an icon of miscegenation that masked the cultural and genetic endogamy in early modern English colonial enterprises.[52]

Thus, the fantasy of intermarriage becomes a significant part of the official advertisement for the settling of Virginia in the period between 1605 and 1622. In the fictive account of her provided by Smith and quite likely amended later by certain collaborators, readers might embrace a sort of New World 'morality' that fused the spiritual, social, and historical worlds of migration. Recall, for example, the true Pocahontas as the newly Christianized 'Rebecca' was whisked away to England in a ceremonial tour with husband Rolfe in 1616.[53] To add further to the ceremonious

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[51] As Bernard Lewis states about collective myth, the most powerful entail 'a conflict, a clash between the group, usually exemplified in representative figure, which is to say, the heroes of the narrative, and external forces' may be human or supernatural. Any especially heroic romance or epic tale remains the most powerful, such as those found in Homeric epics and the like; *History: Remembered, Recovered, Invented* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975), 43.

[52] Stymeist, 112.

[53] One Thomas Spelman, the younger brother of Henry, sailed on *George* on the return trip to London with Pocahontas, along with the young Henry Spelman, who was in the employ of Argall at the time. Though the Rolfes enjoyed fame in England, by the time of 'Rebecca's' arrival, Indians in England were not a new trend—Martin Frobisher had carried one to England in 1576, perhaps the fifth in forty years. There were other Native American converts on this voyage, but little information about them exists. For more, see *Records of the Virginia Company* 1: 485, 496. What seems important to note is Rebecca's royal treatment: compared to two other indigenous women who converted and traveled to England, she was given twenty times the monetary help. The literature on this topic is, in general, somewhat lacking. The best resource to date is Alden T. Vaughan, *Transatlantic Encounters:*

symbolism of the marriage, several other Powhatans accompanying Rolfe and his bride were Christianized by none other than Reverend Purchas and one of Dale's men (acting as interpreter); two of the women traveling with Pocahontas were duly renamed 'Elizabeth' and 'Mary.'[54] The drama was very much a Company affair. Since all finances were paid by the Virginia Company for this trip, all of the details were worked out by certain Adventurers—at the head of the list was De La Warr. Appropriately enough, the group stayed in London at the aptly named 'Belle Sauvage Inn'; Pocahontas, with James I and Queen Anne, watched Ben Jonson's masque 'The Vision of Delight' in what Stymeist calls 'the crowning moment of this visit to England; the royal approval of Anglo-Indian intermarriage consecrated the Virginia Company's use of Pocahontas as sexual advertisement and proof of their missionary success.'[55] The important depiction of peace, a *myth* of unification read through Anglo-Saxon ideologies, proved far more important than the actual peace, and the later Pocahontas visit to England was, for all intents and purposes, 'more for show than substance'—just as well, since peace did not prevail, and no extreme Anglicanization resulted.[56]

To better understand these events and the power behind the creation of the mythos through which New World development of Anglo-Saxonism occurred, I must briefly return to Smith's dedication in *True Travels,* for this seemingly innocuous nod provides a key into a larger, darker, and more sinister realm of national self-fashioning and nation building. Smith dedicates the volume to 'William, Earle of Pembroke' and 'Sir Robert Cotton, that most learned Treasurer of Antiquitie, having by perusall of my Generall Historie, and others, found that I had likewise undergone diverse other as hard hazards in the other parts of the world, requested me to fix the whole course of my passages in a booke by it selfe, whose noble desire I could not but in part satisfie.'[57] Pembroke was a powerful man, possibly the richest man in England at the time, and was extremely influential in matters of Virginia, being both an adventurer in the Virginia Company and a board member on The Council for New England. Naturally, both Pembroke and Cotton were prominent figures in the Virginia Company; in fact, they both were brought in with Selden who was recruited in 1619 to

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American Indians in Britain, 1500–1776 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006).
[54] Vaughan, *Transatlantic Encounters,* 92–3.
[55] Stymeist, 115.
[56] Vaughan, *Transatlantic Encounters,* 235.
[57] *CWJS* 3:141.

strengthen the colonization effort. The Company wanted to bolster their mission by creating and codifying a system of laws under the new charter to defend against any resistance that might weaken its overall structure.[58] Smith was in a strange position. Naturally desiring fame, he sought publication for his book; however, he was still operating within the greater power structure of the Virginia Company, and the ensuing interplay between the two drives creates a strange contrapuntal mix of individual and social struggle for some kind of truth.

In his persuasive but not exhaustive study of the Pocahontas story, J. A. Leo Lemay vehemently dismisses all claims of Smith's falsehood. Taking up a more romantic vision of Smith, Lemay argues, 'Cotton would not have asked Smith to write the *True Travels* if he thought Smith was lying.'[59] Compelling as this rationale seems, I disagree, for the very reason that Cotton and others might have lied as well; if so, then Lemay's entire argument collapses. Further, *how* the story was manipulated negates any question of veracity. Lemay seems oddly naïve in this respect, claiming, 'if [Smith] had lied, they would have learned about it'—'it' being the rescue and 'they' being Cotton and other men involved in the eventual transmission of the story.[60] Again, the claim appears to beg the question, since if *they* knew *and were a part of it,* it might very well be true. Yes, they probably would have learned about it, since Cotton was an erudite scholar. For the most part, too, members of the Virginia Company of London were well-educated men. In fact, these were some of the most well-connected men in all of Stuart England, so we can be certain that they would have known about it—if they were not *part* of it.

Cotton, for one, was very much tied to the idea of English liberty and desired to see its full rise again out of the ashes of James's reign in the New

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[58] David Sandler Berkowitz, *John Selden's Formative Years: Politics and Society in Early Seventeenth-Century England* (Washington: Folger Books, 1988), 55.

[59] *Did Pocahontas Save Captain John Smith?* (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1992), 56. Lemay's conclusions may be succinctly summed up thus: 'There are eight unmistakable references in Smith's writings to Pocahontas's saving his life […] if we had only one of these accounts, we would nevertheless have excellent evidence that Pocahontas saved his life […]'; ergo, all eight of these 'proves beyond a shadow of a doubt that Pocahontas rescued him'; 98. Arguing this way, the claim is essentially a *non sequitur,* or, at the very least, Lemay commits a fallacy of circular reasoning. Simply because Smith mentions it eight times, how do we know he is telling the truth? In other words, it really doesn't matter how many times Smith writes it, the question of veracity still exists.

[60] Ibid.*,* 100.

World. A means of defense against the growing superstructure might be produced in an elaborately created *mythos*, one that involved John Smith, whose chivalric character had drawn Cotton in since he had first read Smith's writings in Purchas. The antiquarian that he was, Cotton could link an heroic figure to the New World project, assist in creating an ideological mythos for the public. Indeed, there was no man in England more qualified. And Cotton could link this all in a way that complied with the 'Christian' mission of the adventurers.[61] One important fact that Cotton would have known about Christian Anglo-Saxon verse is that while the domineering tendency favors male heroics, it frequently accommodates occasional but influential female figures in cultural situations. Cotton would also no doubt be familiar with the notion that, differing greatly from the more subdued heroines of later medieval romances, these often Christian female depictions played out in Anglo-Saxon verse at times to intervene in the course of human events with profound influence (as such, for example, the Virgin is very often exalted in Old English poetry).[62] So, too, naturally, is the male Germanic hero an almost god-like character; unflinching in the face of certain doom, the Germanic hero pushes onward.

   Having acquired the early Anglo-Saxon texts such as *Beowulf*, *Judith*, and *The Wife's Lament,* all of which portray strong female depictions, Cotton would surely see the obvious portrayals: even if we take into account the idea of translation issues and scholarship, Beowulf is clearly a warrior prince and Judith is the fabled biblical woman savior.[63] Thus, more

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[61] The main end, according to the Virginia Company's polished manifesto, was first 'to preach the Gospel, to *recover* out of the Armes of the Divel, a number of poore and miserable soules, wrapt up unto death in, almost invincible ignorance'; Thomas West, third Baron De La Warr, Sir Thomas Smith, Sir Walter Cope, and Master Waterson, *A True and Sincere Declaration of the Purpose and Ends of the Plantation Begun in Virginia ...* (London, 1610), in Alexander Brown, *The Genesis of the United States: a narrative of the movement in England,* 2 vols. (Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1890) 2:339–40.

[62] That Cotton was a great collector of manuscripts is no secret; that he was so importantly connected to a wide number of texts needs further clarification. Of Cotton's manuscripts, the Nowell Codex is probably the most famous. Named after Laurence Nowell, the alleged first owner, the text contains both *Beowulf* and *Judith*, the two texts in question. These works in the Nowell Manuscript differ from works in the Junius (Caedmon) Manuscript; the latter contain virtually all Old Testament narratives, such as *Genesis* and *Exodus*, while the former contains, among others, these more fanciful, romantic texts.

[63] The issue of translation is tricky, but there is ample and clear evidence to support the idea that Cotton would have had a fundamental, if not rudimentary, command of

convincingly and equally plausible—perhaps more so, given the plethora of texts, historical and otherwise, in Cotton's possession, and his medieval imagination—is the powerful and symbolic figure of the Anglo-Saxon *ides*, the aristocratic woman or peace-keeping queen, as she was sometimes known. In her compelling look at the Anglo-Saxon *ides,* Jane Chance examines its function in various Anglo-Saxon written material and lore, both Anglo-Saxon and Germanic texts and, later, in Tacitus's *Germania,* where the female *ides* serves as the 'peaceweaver,' or *freoðuwebbe*, or the one who keeps the peace (*friðusibb*). Close-mouthed, loyal, loving, and wise, her chief role was to keep the peace between two tribes through marriage and children.[64]

In its literary setting, the Anglo-Saxon *ides* serves two worlds. Because she is married outside of her tribe, the exogamous role of the *ides* represents a very real, historical concern: she can be viewed as a peace weaver/keeper or, as is often the case, a 'foreign captive.'[65] It is vital that she be 'held' symbolically, for, in either case, her symbolic presence marks the centripetal force upon which the narrative turns. A good example of the early Anglo-Saxon *ides* may be found in the figure of Danish Queen Hildeburh in the Anglo-Saxon epic *Beowulf*. Married to a Finn, Hildeburh's son becomes a Frisian warrior battling the Danes, of which her brother is a part. The Dane Hengest and Hnæf, Finn's brothers-in-law,

Anglo-Saxon vocabulary, at least enough to get the story behind *Beowulf*; *Judith*, being a biblical text, would have been much easier. Beowulf is called to the new land (new, at least, for him) to slay the dragon that has infested King Hrothgar's kingdom; in the Anglo-Saxon *Judith,* the heroine saves the town, and the role of the biblical figure is 'of the church triumphant over the demonic forces behind paganism'; Richard J. Schrader, *God's Handiwork: Images of Women in Early Germanic Literature* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1983), 41. Here, the Anglo-Saxon poet condenses the story of *Judith* down to essentially two main protagonists—Judith and Holofernes, Nebuchadnezzar's general—and Judith, now Christianized, prays to the Holy Trinity for strength: 'Ic ðe, frymða god ond frofre gæst, / bearn alwaldan, biddan wylle/ miltse þinre me þearfendre,/ ðrynesse ðrym' (translation: 'I pray to you, the Lord of Creation, Heaven's Son and Spirit of Hope, for mercy, Mighty Majesty, in my need'; 83–6). This 'new' Anglo-Saxonized Judith is a bit different than her Hebraic counterpart in that emphasis appears to be on her strong intellect and virginal qualities, and the heroic codes translate, in this case, to the feminine and into a religious context.

[64] *Woman as Hero in Old English Literature* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1986), 1–11.

[65] Janet T. Buck argues this point; 'Pre-Feudal Women,' *Journal of Rutgers University Library* 34 (1971), 48.

battle and she loses all relational connections: Finn dies, so Hildeburh loses her son, brother, and husband. Thus, she weaves the peace pledge but then becomes ironically caught within it: 'she is the central focus of the alliance that results in the death of all those men to whom she is most closely related.'[66] Ultimately having failed as peace weaver for the two groups, then, she is torn between both worlds, and, though her marriage was intended to weave peace, it has failed. The marriage dissolves in violence between the two tribes, and Hildeburh is sent back in disgrace.

In the colonial American version, Pocahontas as *ides* served to prevent this type of dissolution, if even only fictitiously. Smith, or, more probably, an erudite editor or collaborator, cleverly alludes to this saving grace of the *ides* mythology: 'God made Pocahontas the Kings daughter the meanes to deliver me: and thereby taught me to know their trecheries to preserve the rest.'[67] Depicted as a Native American who later 'marries' Englishman Rolfe, this mythological tool would easily pacify the members of the Virginia Company, other adventurers, and, in general, shape English opinion of the enterprise. Pocahontas's exogamy served the same function as the Anglo-Saxon *ides*; the marriage was 'a political maneuver for furthering the alliance between hostile groups' and publically promoting this alliance.[68] In short, the Saxon *mythos* of the *ides*, reinvigorated through the figure of Smith as the heroic Saxon, could unite the nation building *ethnie*. What is most striking about the Pocahontas story is that it represents a tension in the *mythos* of American Anglo-Saxonism that was developing in and around this time, a double-consciousness of or disconnect among the actions and character of a 'John Smith' *author* and Pocahontas *subject*, the *ides* that will 'marry' the two cultures in a deceptively innovative story that actually *reverses* the typical *romans*, ultimately uniting two cultures on the foreign *terra*.

This British New World adaptation of the Anglo-Saxon *ides* narrative also defines Smith's and the Virginia Company's rocky relationship as well as the tensions that exist between the individual and the larger socially conscious structure. But Smith seemed to have remained conflicted about

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[66] Patricia Clare Ingham, 'From Kinship to Kingship: Mourning, Gender, and Anglo-Saxon Community,' *Grief and Gender: 700–1700*, Jennifer C. Vaught and Lynne Dickson Bruckner, eds. (New York: Palgrave, 2003), 24.

[67] *CWJS* 1:432.

[68] Janemarie Luecke, '"Wulf and Eadwacer": Hints for Reading from Beowulf and Anthropology,' *The Old English Elegies: New Essays in Criticism and Research,* Martin Green, ed. (London: Rutherford, 1983), 195.

his allegiances, and, consequently, his 'additions' to the mythic creation seem stilted and awkward. Nevertheless, in the 'improved' description of events in the *Generall Historie,* he underscores how right ethics and Saxon values can deliver the English from the hands of the *divel* in the New World. And in a letter to Queen Anne which Smith was supposed to have written in 1616, he explains that Pocahontas's marriage could be used in favor of justification for conquest: 'Seeing this Kingdome [of England] may rightly have a Kingdome [America] by her means.'[69] (Oddly, however, the 'little booke' Smith claims to have presented to the Queen has been largely called into question: neither is there record of Smith having sent a book to the Queen, nor were his works published by 1616 [except for the brief Purchas portion mentioned above].)[70] Thus, the example of Smith serves a dual function in early American nation building; while he develops a chivalric *mythos* in his corpus by exemplifying the New World acting man, or heroic individual, his historical accounts that shape the New World also reposition the darker ideology carried forward from Elizabeth's reign to disrupt the historical construct of the narratives. That is, the pattern of 'lawful recovery' of lands thought to belong to Madoc first, thus England forever, continues in the Virginia Company's language. After all, in the publicly made reports printed, the company argued for the 'appearance and assurance of Private commodity to the particular undertakers, by recovering and possessing to themselves a fruitfall land, whence they may furnish and provide this Kingdome, which all such necessities.'[71] The tensions we see in the relationship between Smith and the Virginia Company essentially represent as well a larger contest for originary notions of New World myth between emerging economic and political factions and the chivalric values and characteristics of what will come to be seen as the American individual. Taken at face value, Smith's writings represent the possibilities of the *individual* in the New World; in their alteration from private authorship to collaborative emendation, however, Smith's work illustrates this developing freedom and liberty twisted and manipulated by the greater powers of the Virginia Company of London and other members of the English elite, thus providing a curious, and dark, subtext. Within Smith's writings, the Virginia Company could couch certain implicit

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[69] *CWJS* 2:260.

[70] See Brown, *The Genesis* 2:784.

[71] Thomas West, third Baron De La Warr, Sir Thomas Smith, Sir Walter Cope, and Master Waterson, *A True and Sincere Declaration of the Purpose and Ends of the Plantation Begun in Virginia ...* (London, 1610), in Brown, *Genesis* 1:339–40.

symbolism and depict for the reading public in England a vision of rightful migration and conquest to ensure future control of lands gained; simultaneously, the English figure of Smith was a public way to link and justify the growing nation-building ideology of an emerging American nation and its founding mythology.

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