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A "Nation. . . Now Degenerate": Shakespeare's Cymbeline, Nova Britannia, and the Role of Diet and Climate in Reproducing Races

Dr. Jean E. Feerick, *John Carroll University*

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A "Nation . . . Now Degenerate"

Shakespeare's *Cymbeline*, Nova Britannia, and the Role of Diet and Climate in Reproducing Races

JEAN FEERICK
Brown University

Readings of *The Tempest* that foreground its colonialist underpinnings—whether with reference to ancient Mediterranean contexts or emergent early modern Atlantic interests—have become a standard feature of Shakespearean criticism today. Scholars have observed the imperial dynamic structuring Prospero's relation to the island's native, suggesting the degree to which he wields a distinctively European, if not English, colonizing optic and how his actions compel Caliban to wage a war of resistance against a relentless enslaving apparatus. But less critical attention has been directed at plays in the corpus that engage the colonial dynamic more obliquely, resisting and confounding the master-slave narratives that have come to be the touchstone of colonialist readings. How are we to understand the move visible in plays roughly contemporaneous with *The Tempest* to undermine the stability of these binary terms, identifying the European self with the dissonance and alterity of savagery, barbarism, and the oppressions of conquest? Or what of the tendency not simply to reverse the binary assignments of self-other but to confound them altogether by perceiving identity in less rigidly defined terms? How would a play that posits a notion of identity as existing on a continuum, one that acknowledges and anticipates movement along that slide of identification, alter our narratives of colonialism?

Cymbeline is, I would suggest, a play that envisions the colonial dynamic from a very different vantage point than does *The Tempest*. But it is no less

I am grateful for the thoughtful feedback of those in attendance at the McNeil Center for Early American Studies seminar in December 2002, where I presented a version of this article. I would also like to thank Peter Stallybrass, Phyllis Rackin, Rebecca Bushnell, and Dan Richter for their feedback on multiple early drafts of this piece; their contributions are everywhere present.

concerned with the modes of conquest and domination that structure the latter. Although the play's meditation on Roman imperialism and the resistance it evokes on British soil should serve as something of a cue to this focus, critical readings of the play have resisted this logic. In cases where this focus has been pursued, critics have tended to narrow the topical relevance to debates about the union spurred by King James's quest to forge a British state. While such analyses have been instructive, they also fail to consider evidence that suggests the extent to which Roman imperial models structured aggression in Ireland, no less than the New World, and should therefore be seen as resonating with debates about colonialism at large. Opening the play to these broader contemporary contexts enables not only more expansive engagements with the play but a revaluation of our colonialist narratives at large.

If a play like *The Tempest* could be said to express and, perhaps, even mystify the master-slave dynamic structuring conquest, then *Cymbeline* can be credited with unraveling such colonialist ideologies, demonstrating their fragility and provisionality. The play is not, of course, overtly concerned with a contemporary colonial context, such as many critics have seen structuring *The Tempest*. Instead, it takes as its explicit focus an episode from British history when Rome's imperial powers had been extended to British soil and yet found insecure. Rewriting these historical events so that they occur during rather than after Cymbeline's reign, the play engages the struggle that ensues between the British court and an encroaching Roman force. While quick to wage verbal valiance against their enemies, the court figures—Cymbeline, his second queen, and his son-in-law Cloten—are exposed as an inflated and corrupt group, shadowing the failures of their aggressors, as embodied by the corrupt Italian Iachimo. As a result, the kingdom's future is found to lie in the hands of the king's children, including his daugther Imogen and his two lost princes, each of whom is brought far from court to the native and rustic landscape of Wales. For the two princes, this movement has occurred roughly twenty years before the start of the play's action, since they are kidnapped at birth and raised in this harsh environment. For Imogen, the translation westward occurs in response to her father's objection to her marriage to Posthumus, whom the king considers of ignoble origins. The challenges they face in this untamed land equip them and, by extension, their people with the strength to resist the invasion and to cast off their servility in its many forms. They also suggest new ways of construing England's engagement with westward expansion.

By envisioning its own land and people oppressed by a dominating foreign power, *Cymbeline* does indeed take an intimate look at colonial processes, albeit one not easily rendered compatible with how we have come to read

English colonial dominance. In this play, Britishness is at least formally associated with the status of being abject, of being beyond history and civility, as Cymbeline's exiled British princes will themselves observe. In taking this view, the play entertains the conquering power's degrading perception of the British people as barbarous and uncouth, connecting them to the native populations of early modern Britain who were actively being subjugated by English colonial policies. And yet the play arouses our empathy for these "savage" Britons, despite or perhaps because of their distance from Roman civility, thereby interrogating a widespread discourse of barbarity that informed conquest on many fronts in the period. The play celebrates as heroism, that is, what a Roman imperial optic would read as northern savagery.

But this inversion of the master-slave trope does less to challenge colonialist ideologies that tend to polarize conceptions of physical and racial difference than the play's investment in fundamentally questioning the axes of identity structuring early modern England, the modes of self-definition that would also inform her colonial engagements. That is, more than just valorizing an untamed native ancestry, the play conducts a sustained meditation on the origins of such collectivities, assessing the relative roles of blood, geography, and cultural practice in forging familial, racial, and national groups. Its willingness to concede a profound malleability to such collectivities, I suggest, is precisely where the play offers scholars of colonialism its most profound intervention. In positing a notion of identity as constantly in-progress, as shifting in response to a range of external agents, the play succeeds in unsettling emergent conceptions of race and nation at a time when such concepts were beginning to be deployed in the service of colonialism. Rather than reifying these coordinates of identity, the play dismantles them, exposing the instability of Englishness by seeing it as produced in time and space rather than as an inalterable essence. In doing as much, the play animates discourses that were then also centrally informing the colonization of Virginia. But where the play would seem to draw energy and momentum in its undoing of stable identifications, the sermons and tracts that encouraged settlement in Virginia express unease and anxiety in confronting a similar set of observations. In both instances the sense that the boundaries of the English colonizing subject are flexible and fragile should give us pause, pointing up the period's investment in a much more porous theory of difference than the force of subsequent epistemologies have allowed us to entertain.

MIGRATIONS

In the concluding moments of *Cymbeline,* when the king is to be reunited with his two lost sons who have unknowingly been held captive in Wales

since infancy, the question of "identity" is suddenly problematized.[1] Cymbeline's faltering questions as he examines the two men—"How? my issue?" (5.5.331)—and his expressions of uncertainty—"If these be they"—raise the specter of imposture and suffuse the moment with doubt. How, indeed, *is* Cymbeline to know his sons from any other young men? Their foster father Belarius, eager to reveal and make amends for the role he played in their disappearance, first gestures toward their earliest royal garment, a "curious mantle, wrought by th' hand / Of his queen mother" (5.5.361–62), which he produces for inspection. But Cymbeline is unconvinced by the "alienable" object. He looks instead for bodily "evidence," for the "mark of wonder," the "sanguine star" that he recalls as having graced Guiderius's neck. The "natural stamp" (5.5.366) discovered, Cymbeline receives both men as his heirs. The body's physical properties, Cymbeline's demand seems to suggest, are the sole arbiters of genealogy, the only stable identifier of one's family and race.

Although this scene valorizes the bare body as the inalterable seat of "true" identity, in contrast to the adornments it receives, the play elsewhere calls such a hierarchy of valuation into doubt. The bodies that the characters inhabit in *Cymbeline* are in fact conspicuously alterable, so subject are they to the imprinting pressures of the physical environment, not least climate and diet. The Italian Iachimo confesses as much when the effects of a northern climate "enfeeble" (5.3.4) his southern body when he arrives with Roman troops to Milford Haven to subdue a rebellious British population. So, too, when Posthumus is banished from Britain on account of his clandestine marriage to the king's daughter, his wife Imogen and servant Pisanio suspect that his travels south to Italy have "infected" him, and his rival Cloten wills it so with his curse "The south-fog rot him!" (2.3.131). The protagonists, that is, are seen as subject to alterations that assault not only familial lines but national identities—whether British or Roman-Italian. Crossing national boundaries in this play is a dangerous venture, resulting in shifts to identity on a physical and, by extension, psychological level.

But if individuals are not hermetically sealed entities, neither are national collectivities. Alterations produced by spatial migrations are further supplemented by the play's engagement with national transformations across time. *Cymbeline*, indeed, seems fixated on the degenerations of Rome's Italian heirs, who hardly seem to be of the same racial "stock" as their Roman forefathers. If we take the play's Italian anachronisms to heart, Lucius's forthright Roman

1. All citations of *Cymbeline* are to the Riverside edition, ed. Blakemore Evans (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1974) and will be cited parenthetically in the text with act, scene, and line numbers in arabic.

courage has degenerated into Iachimo's effeminate circumspection.[2] Iachimo will be mastered in battle by a mere British "carl" (5.3.4). The difference of character between Lucius and Iachimo dramatizes Jean Bodin's well-known observation that the Romans' "neglected discipline" so weakened them that though "they formerly excelled all peoples in their reputation for justice and in military glory, . . . they [now] are outdone in both respects by almost everyone."[3] Certainly, Iachimo's prostration at the play's end undermines any Italian claim to justice or glory. Apparently corrupted by what Bodin calls a "perverse training," Iachimo's good stock, what Bodin refers to as the "natural goodness" of the "character of the Romans," cannot immunize him from racial "corruption." Indeed, he seems to confirm Hamlet's fatalistic view of an inevitable degenerative slide in which "virtue cannot so inoculate our old stock but we shall relish of it" (3.1.116–18). Even good stock, Iachimo reminds us, suffers alteration and decline.

The prospect of racial decline haunts *Cymbeline*, complicating its genealogy of Britain and rendering uncertain the nation's embodiment in the future. Recording not only the "degenerations" of races and nations across time and space, it entertains as well the possibility that races can be revived and restored to a former glory, through a specific set of physical regimens.[4] In the economy of transmigrating peoples and products so central to the play's plot, identity proves anything but constant, racial and national genealogies anything but immune to repeated reinscription.

To the extent that the play reflects on racial alteration—on the slippages that plague both small and large collectivities—it makes evident its own historic-

2. For a fuller discussion of the play's various anachronisms, see Patricia Parker, "Romance and Empire: Anachronistic *Cymbeline*" in George M. Logan and Gordon Teskey, eds., *Unfolded Tales: Essays on Renaissance Romance* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1989), 189–207.

3. Jean Bodin, *Method for the Easy Comprehension of History* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1945), 146.

4. Throughout this article, I use the word *race* in its early modern meanings to denote a "group of persons . . . connected by common descent or origin" (*Oxford English Dictionary*, sb. I), including "a set of . . . descendants" (1a), "a family, kindred" (2a), a "tribe, nation, or people, regarded as of common stock" (2b), or a "group of several tribes or peoples" (2c). I am interested in elucidating the instability of these earlier meanings of race, seeing the unmooring of these identities and the radical instability they suggest as intimately connected to subsequent racial theories that move to define essential differences between people by negating theories of alterability.

ity, its status as a cultural object produced in and through the ideologies of early modern England. At the time Shakespeare's play was being performed on the stages of both the Globe and Blackfriars theaters between 1610 and 1611, England was flooded with printed texts investigating the physical and cultural origins of national difference. Not confined to the educated circles of William Camden's new historiography, which subjected historical evidence to cultural and linguistic scrutiny as part of an effort to demythologize the British past, these discourses were widespread in less elite circles. Ideas analyzing the causes and essence of national difference emanated from the political theorizing of popular continental writers such as Jean Bodin and Giovanni Botero, authors whose writings were newly translated into English in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.[5] They in turn were responding to the flurry of newly translated classical texts, including those that dealt with Roman expansion into Northern territories, as found in Caesar's *Commentaries* and Tacitus's *Agricola* and *Germania*.[6] As Joyce Chaplin has recently argued, these classical writings were well disseminated among a broadly literate audience, given their centrality to the grammar school curriculum. It is not surprising, therefore, to find permutations of their arguments appearing in the popular drama, where a diverse theater-going audience could in turn engage with them.

That the appeal of these antiquarian investigations was a popular and controversial topic can be demonstrated by reference to a series of plays about antiquity that were performed in roughly the same period as *Cymbeline*. John Fletcher's *Bonduca*, the anonymous *Caradoc or a Valiant Welshman*, and William Rowley's *A Shoomaker, A Gentleman* are just some of the plays that competed with *Cymbeline* to entertain London audiences by catering to an interest

5. Bodin's *Six Books of the Commonwealth*, originally published in 1576, was translated into English in 1606 and Botero's *Relations of the most famous Kingdoms and Common-weales thorowout the World* went through six English editions between 1601 and 1630. Although Bodin's *Method for the Easy Comprehension of History* did not get "Englished" until the nineteenth century (it first appeared in a Latin edition in 1566), L. F. Dean has argued that it was read "by most serious English students of history from 1580 to 1625"; see "Bodin and his *Methodus* in England before 1625," *Studies in Philology* (1942): 160–66.

6. For an overview of European editions of these classical texts and their infiltration of the grammar school curriculum, see Joyce Chaplin, *Subject Matter: Technology, the Body, and Science on the Anglo-American Frontier, 1500–1676* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2001), chap. 3, esp. 93–94. Chaplin notes, for instance, that "the first half of the seventeenth century saw more European editions of Tacitus than of any other Greek or Roman historian" (93).

in the nation's ancient origins.[7] Christopher Wortham has convincingly argued that this shift to ancient topics in Shakespeare's repertoire be seen as a function of the transition to a Jacobean court. He connects this shift to a larger movement away from plays focused on a recent English past, which had characterized the last decade of Elizabeth's rule, to those concerned with a British or Roman past—such as occurs in *King Lear, Macbeth*, and *Cymbeline*. Wortham reads this movement as in part a response to the exigencies of patronage, emphasizing both that King James announced his patronage of Shakespeare's company on assuming the English throne and that instances of playgoing at his court increased dramatically from the days of Queen Elizabeth's rule.[8] In part, such plays responded to King James I's desire to merge Scotland and England into a unified Britain, evidenced by his early emphasis on this consolidation as a fulfillment of an ancient Arthurian prophecy and his tendency to style himself a modern "Augustus." To this extent, such plays surveyed the past in an ongoing effort to articulate what it meant to be "British." But such retrospective narratives must also be seen as connecting with interests beyond those of a monarch and as responding to more deeply seated questions about national identity. I would suggest that we read them, as critics have begun to read antiquarianism at large,[9] as implicated in an emergent spirit of empire, and as responding to anxieties produced by the contemplation and experience of movement outward into the world, into foreign lands and climates. In looking to ancient models of conquest, these early modern writers sought out models to shape their engagements with contemporary colonial contexts.

What English readers discovered in these texts was a rather estranging vision of themselves as a barbaric, if courageous, ancient people. These images

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7. For a fuller discussion of these rival plays, see John E. Curran, Jr., "'Royalty Unlearned, Honor Untaught': British Savages and Historiographical Change in *Cymbeline*," *Comparative Drama* 31, 2 (1997): 277–303. Performances of *Cymbeline* at the Globe are recorded in Simon Forman's *Diary* prior to his death in September 1611; subsequent records indicate that it was performed at the Court of Charles I in 1634. For an overview, see Evans, ed., *Riverside Shakespeare*, 1517.

8. Christopher Wortham, "Shakespeare, James I and the Matter of Britain," *English* 45 (1996): 97–122.

9. See for instance, Karen Kupperman's analysis of Tacitus's popularity among English colonists in "Angells in America" in the forthcoming Philip Beidler and Gary Taylor, eds., *Writing Race across the Atlantic World, 1492–1763*. For a discussion of Spenser's connections to the antiquarian movement, see Bart Van Es, "Discourses of Conquest: *The Faeire Queene*, the Society of Antiquaries, and *A View of the Present State of Ireland*," *English Literary Renaissance* 32, 1 (2002): 118–51.

simultaneously aroused their disgust and pride and demanded an assessment of how far they had come (or had slid) from their ancient heritage under the pressures of Roman conquest and, in its wake, the incursions of Saxons, Danes, and Normans. A central part of the classical record on the Roman conquest of Britain were ethnographic accounts of the northerners the Romans aimed to subdue, accounts that were in turn indebted to the Greek philosophies of Hippocrates, Aristotle, and Plato, among many others.[10] The accounts of Tacitus and Caesar, for instance, record a widespread conviction on the part of Mediterranean peoples that northern climates tended to produce physical imbalances. In his *Agricola*, for instance, Tacitus records the "massive limbs" and "ferocity" of the Britons the Romans encountered, which he suggests led them to resist bondage and to desire liberty.[11] Such claims were grounded in natural philosophy and physiological theory, which worked together to categorize people according to their native environment, seeing the body as a porous vessel that was shaped in relation to physical forces like climate, diet, and topography.[12] In addition to the "natural" forces determining identity at birth, which were seen as rooted in the seed of the parents, the theory of the body as a humoral vessel also granted a prominent role to various "non-natural" forces that continued to remake the body after birth.[13]

Such theories tended to divide the world into three climatic regions—the torrid, temperate, and tropical zones—which were in turn connected to dominant physical dispositions among the people inhabiting each zone (see Figure

10. For an overview of the environmental theories of classical texts, see Clarence J. Glacken, *Traces on the Rhodian Shore: Nature and Culture in Western Thought from Ancient Times to the End of the Eighteenth Century* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967), 134–56.

11. Tacitus, *Agricola* and *Germany*, trans. Anthony R. Birley (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 10.

12. For the connections between physiology and environment, see Nancy Siraisi, *Medieval and Early Renaissance Medicine: An Introduction to Knowledge and Practice* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990); see also Mary Floyd-Wilson, *English Ethnicity and Race in Early Modern Drama* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

13. For elaboration of humoralism, see Gail Kern Paster, *The Body Embarrassed: Drama and the Disciplines of Shame in Early Modern England* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1994). Humoralism defines the body as composed of various qualities (hot, cold, wet, and dry) which in turn characterize bodily fluids called humors. One's disposition was considered a function of the dominance of certain humors. The phlegmatic person was ruled by the cold and wet humor called phlegm; the melancholic by the cold and dry humor called black bile; the choleric by the hot and dry humor of yellow bile; and the sanguine person by the hot and wet humor of blood.

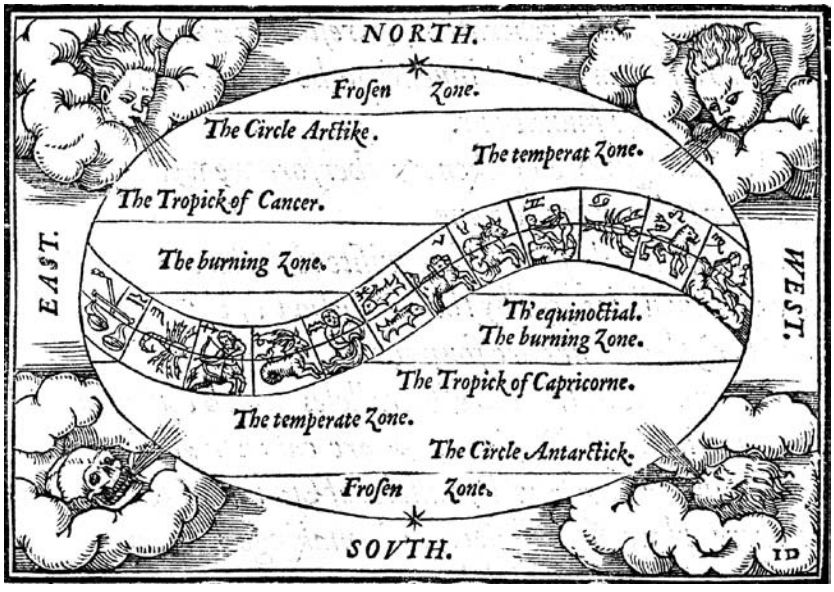

Figure 1. Woodcut depicting climate zones and the zodiac from William Cunningham, *Cosmographical Glasse* (London, 1559), fol. 64. Reproduced by permission of the Huntington Library, San Marino, California.

1). "Those who live in a hot climate are chilled, but those who live in a cold climate have a hot nature," Aristotle's Problem XIV concludes. "Both classes are big, those in cold climates because of the natural heat existing in them, those in hot climates owing to the heat of the place; for growth is due to hot climates and heat."[14] In his *Politics*, Aristotle connects these physical traits to a people's disposition or temperament, arguing that "The peoples of cold countries generally, and particularly those of Europe, are full of spirit, but deficient in skill and intelligence; and this is why they continue to remain comparatively free, but attain no political development and show no capacity for governing others."[15] Clearly connected to Tacitus's conception of the

14. Aristotle, *Problems*, trans. W. S. Hett, Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1936), 2 vols., "Problem XIV," 1:319–21.

15. *The Politics of Aristotle*, trans. Ernest Barker (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1961), VII.vii.1. The passage continues by observing: "The peoples of Asia are endowed with skill and intelligence, but are deficient in spirit; and this is why they continue to be peoples of subjects and slaves. The Greek stock, intermediate in geographical position, unites the qualities of both sets of peoples. It possesses both spirit and intelligence: the one quality makes it continue free; the other enables it to attain the highest

northerner as prone to liberty, such theories would persist well beyond the period of the Roman Empire, exerting profound influence in particular in the early modern period. They would unleash widespread discussion of the relative roles of climate and cultural institutions in shaping national character, figuring prominently in the political writings of Bodin and Botero and in the historical projects of Camden and Raphael Holinshed, among countless others. Bodin's widely influential *Method for the Easy Comprehension of History*, for instance, would echo Aristotle's theories in a contemporary context: "The Mediterranean peoples [i.e., southerners] . . . as far as concerns the form of the body, are cold, dry, hard, bald, weak, swarthy, small in body, crisp of hair, black-eyed, and clear-voiced. The Baltic peoples [i.e., northerners], on the other hand, are warm, wet, hairy, robust, white, large-bodied, soft-fleshed, with scanty beards, bluish grey eyes, and deep voices. Those who live between the two [i.e., in the temperate region] show moderation in all respects."[16] Claiming for his native France the temperate ideal, Bodin participated in a widespread enterprise of national revisionism. Giovanni Botero would echo these characterizations in his *Reason of State*, maintaining that "Those who inhabit the extremes of north and south, in excessive cold or heat, have in them more of the beast than other peoples; both are . . . ill-balanced in temperament, the one being beset by cold and the other suffocated by heat, the one stupefied by an excess of phlegm, the other rendered almost bestial by excessive melancholy."[17] Although Botero would follow Hippocrates rather than Aristotle in arguing that northern climates yielded cold rather than hot bodies, he characterized northern peoples similarly as "tall, broad, full-blooded and vigorous" and therefore "simple and straightforward" in opposition to the southerner's "thin and dry" physique, which made him "sly and artful." Significantly, both white skin and black skin expressed marginal physical conditions, deviations from the temperate ideal. In summarizing the two dispositions, he concludes, "they are as the lion and the fox."[18]

Such revisitations of classical climatology would echo at large through a transnational debate, as authors reiterated and interrogated ancient "mappings" of the world. These debates would work their way as well into popular

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political development, and to show the capacity for governing every other people—if only it could once achieve political unity."

16. Bodin, *Method*, 97.

17. Botero, *The Reason of State & The Greatness of Cities* (1606; transl. Robert Peterson), trans. P. J. and D. P. Waley (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1956), 40.

18. Botero, *Reason of State & The Greatness of Cities*, 38.

texts, underpinning the largest selling book of the period—the almanac—and permeating the period's drama. *Cymbeline,* too, engages them, reworking these classical theories to England's honor, in valuing the physical benefits yielded by her climate—valor, honesty, and liberty—and minimizing its deficits. The play also obliquely points to one contemporary context where revisionist accounts of climate were deployed—the settlement of Virginia.

While these classically derived theories of nations appear to lock nations together with climates into a static formation, it is important to emphasize that such theories allowed for substantial change to individuals and groups when subject to factors like movement to another climate and the espousal of new cultural patterns. Bodin, for instance, emphasized a notion of decline in asserting that "men as well as plants degenerate little by little when the soil has been changed."[19] Such ideas of alterability could resound with particular force in the context of colonialism, when large segments of a nation entertained the prospect of migrating to a foreign place. What changes to identity would migration entail for such a people?[20] Shakespeare's play takes up these questions, exploring them from a range of angles.

On the one hand, *Cymbeline* seems to embrace lineage as a powerful narrative of identity, reading the father as superceding land or climate in authoring identity. In that respect, the play engages the age-old meaning of "race" as "lineage."[21] The princely marks that Belarius discovers on his foster sons, for instance, suggest this sort of emphasis, since the marks clearly testify to the presence of royal blood, a reality unmarred by the long captivity and distant migration of these princes, that is, by the exigencies of time and space. They imply a stable body, one authored by a father who supercedes land or climate in determining his offspring's identity.

But these marks also encode a very different set of potentialities. In alluding as they do to an ancient British practice, they also seem to undermine the stability of lineage, suggesting that far from being fixed at birth by the father's stamp, the body is continually re-created, produced repeatedly through inter-

19. Bodin, *Method*, 87.

20. On the obstacles to travel posed by these physiological theories, see Jim Egan's analysis in *Authorizing Experience: Refigurations of the Body Politic in Seventeenth-Century New England Writing* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1999).

21. The second definition of "race" in the *Oxford English Dictionary* defines it as "A limited group of persons descended from a common ancestor; a house, family, kindred" (sb.; 2a).

actions with a surrounding world and its objects.[22] In having Cymbeline gesture to their "flesh" for proof of identity—to Guiderius's sanguine star—Shakespeare obliquely references the ancient Britons' practice of staining their bodies with woad. Both Camden and historian John Speed describe this practice as a genealogical sign-system, a way of "externalizing" the internal qualities of one's blood. The marks literally tried to imprint patrimony on the flesh,[23] as Speed explains, leaving "an vndoubted marke in the Children representing of what Parents they were borne."[24] Camden, too, elaborates on this practice, linking the ancient word for being "painted and coloured"—*Brith*—with the national ascription "Brit." He goes so far as to associate the princely name "arviragus"—a name that Shakespeare will use for one of Cymbeline's sons—with "Aure," a "faire yellow or golden colour" often used to paint "gallant" men.[25] These ancient British practices he links with those of the Picts, suggesting their consanguinity with the ancient Britons by observing this shared practice of "artificiall pricking." Camden interprets the Picts as engaging in a sort of genealogical semiotics, noting how "their Nobilitie and Gentry thus spotted, may carrie these starres about them, in their painted pownced limmes, as badges to bee knowen by."[26] For both Speed and Camden such bodily practices signify less as an indication of ancient barbarism than as an expression of ancient civility, one that served a function analogous to the elaborate codification of clothes in early modern England. Guided by their observations, Shakespeare takes this process of acculturating the body one step further by transmuting artificial pricks into birthmarks. He does so by assigning his royal heir a natural star-mark on his flesh, thereby designating both his status and his paternity. In doing so, Shakespeare expresses a longing to naturalize culture, to imprint kin ties on the fleshy fabric of the body.

But the artificial sign-system to which Guiderius's birthmark alludes offers

22. For a collection of essays discussing the imbrication of subjects in objects in the early modern period, see Margreta de Grazia, Maureen Quilligan, and Peter Stallybrass, eds., *Subject and Object in Renaissance Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

23. William Camden, *Britain or A Chorographical Description of the Most flourishing Kingdomes, England, Scotland, and Ireland, and the Ilands adioyning, out of the depth of Antiquitie*, trans. Philemon Holland (London, 1610). John Speed, *The History of Great Britaine Under the Conquests of ye Romans, Saxons, Danes, and Normans* (London, 1614).

24. Speed, *History of Great Britaine*, 181.

25. Camden, *Britain*, 26 and 20.

26. Camden, *Britain*, 115.

Figure 2. Title page, John Speed, *Theatre of the Empire of Great Britaine* (London, 1611). Reproduced by permission of the Huntington Library, San Marino, California.

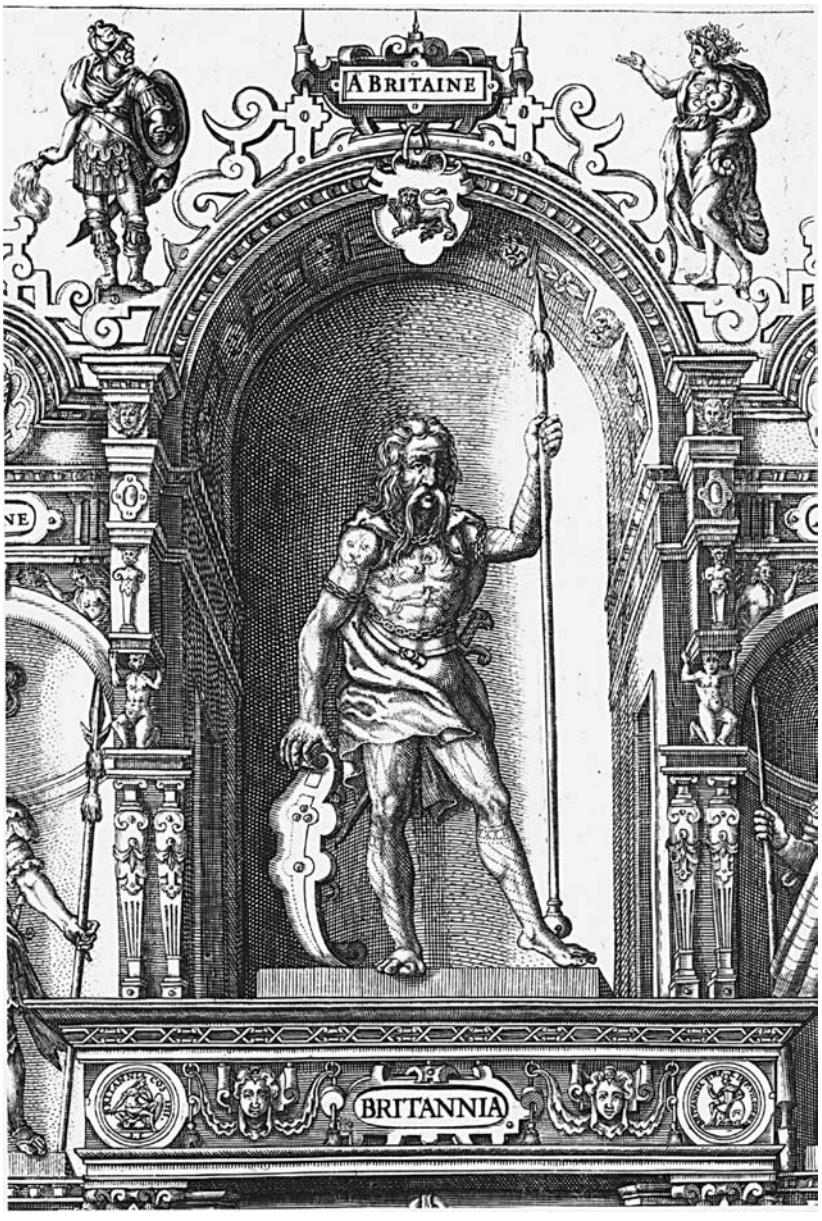

Figure 3. Detail of John Speed's title page showing "A Britaine." The central figure demonstrates the connections of the word "Brith" to the state of being "painted" or "pownced." From the title page of John Speed's *Theatre of the Empire of Great Britaine* (London, 1611). Reproduced by permission of the Huntington Library, San Marino, California.

an implicit challenge to such identifying marks by revealing them to be the products of "artifice" more than "nature." That is, it suggests a fault line in discourses of status, race, and genealogy by highlighting the extent to which the body cannot, in and of itself, speak its identity. The external marks are called on to perform a task not sufficiently answered by the child's blood. They compensate for the body's failures, its inability to receive the full force of its paternal imprint.[27] In adapting this practice for the royal heirs by transmuting the Britons' artificial stains into natural marks, *Cymbeline* would seem to repress the body's alienability—its status as subject to various imprinting processes, which may or may not supplement that of the father. In doing so, it not only domesticates the specter of a barbarous British past but also moves toward stabilizing a body that otherwise appears capable of profound mobility.

The play's other royal offspring, Imogen, also has a natural mark that attests to her identity: the cinque spotted mole below her breast that is likened to a cowslip. Like Guiderius's star, Imogen's mole embodies her royalty at the same time as it identifies her place within a patriarchal system. It, too, seems rooted in ancient British practice, disavowing its antecedent even while shamelessly alluding to it. According to Speed, ancient Britons identified married women through marks like "Moones and Starres &c" that graced their "pappes," distinguishing them from virgins who displayed "the shapes of all the fairest kinds of flowers & hearbes" across their bodies.[28] In being imprinted by a mark at once resembling a flower and, perhaps, a five-pointed star, her flesh attests to her complex status in a marriage at once unconsummated and paternally unrecognized; it figures her as both wife and virgin. Transferring contemporary distinctions of dress to the flesh itself, Shakespeare's marks seek to render genealogical ties material and visible.

The more disturbing possibility that even patrimony may be alienable is explored elsewhere in the play, at a safe distance from the royal family. We learn, for instance, that Cloten has "derogated" from his mother, resisting the stamp of her shrewdness in his characteristic doltishness. As Lord 2 suggests, Cloten's "issues" need not concern themselves with falling off, since he himself has already achieved the ignominious status of being a "derogate," of

27. For a fascinating discussion of physical "imprints," see Margreta de Grazia, "Imprints: Shakespeare, Gutenburg and Descartes" in Terence Hawkes, ed., *Alternative Shakespeares Volume II* (London: Routledge, 1996), 63–94.

28. Speed, *History of Great Britaine*, 182.

having degenerated.[29] Such failures of familial resemblance and, antithetically, the ability to "make" kin-ties where none "naturally" exist—permeate *Cymbeline*, emphasizing the extent to which the play entertains the possibility that physical identity is materially produced in time and space. Indeed the play opens with something of a celebration of the regeneration of Posthumus's stock through his incorporation into Cymbeline's royal family, a regrafting praised by the play's first gentleman even as the jealous Cloten villainously decries such hybridizing. The gentleman describes how Cymbeline "Breeds [Posthumus] and makes him of his bedchamber," and how Posthumus has received his teachings "As we do air, fast as 'twas minist'red" (1.1.45). The process, moreover, is imagined as exceptionally successful, yielding "a harvest" in the "spring." The governing metaphors of crop production used to describe Posthumus's ascendancy will be echoed later in the play when Belarius describes his two royal charges as demonstrating "valor that wildly grows in them but yields a crop / As if it had been sow'd" (4.2.179–81). Though marked by the valiance that Belarius assumes connects them to the king, Guiderius and Arviragus have come to embody that virtue with a difference—"wildly." While on the one hand they retain signs of royal "cultivation," Belarius's young charges have also absorbed aspects of the wild environment they are made to inhabit. Both stocks—royal and common—demonstrate transformative potential, the one toward wildness and the other toward civility, when forced, in effect, to trade places. Neither is static.

These transformations—the possibility they suggest for the remaking and unmaking of identity—form an interesting pattern in the play, pointing beyond the father to a host of agents invested with the power to "generate" people and nations. Not only nurture but also, and perhaps more strikingly from a modern perspective, "foreign" geographies and climates impress themselves on characters, unsettling any notion of self-determination, autonomy, or stability. In *Cymbeline*, indeed, place seems intimately connected with the production and reproduction of people. Wales, for instance, is imagined as a borderland, defined repeatedly as the seat, if not the cause, of many of the play's physical alterations, while Italy is depicted as the breeder and exporter

29. Definition 6 of the verb "derogate" is defined in the *Oxford English Dictionary* as "To do something derogatory to one's rank or position; to fall away in character or conduct from; to degenerate." For a wide-ranging discussion of the mobility of genealogical lines, see Valeria Finucci and Kevin Brownlee, eds., *Generation and Degeneration: Tropes of Reproduction in Literature and History* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2001).

of southern deceptions and of the wiliness of a people parched by the sun.[30] Both geographies produce alterations in the play's characters. In Wales, confusions of identity occur, both willed and unexpected: the disguised Imogen's loyalties shift, as do her national allegiances, evolving from British to Norman to Roman. So, too, she experiences herself as undergoing a process of physical alienation, first as a result of her hunger and subsequently from a diet unfamiliar in its full rawness. Hardness is the mother of hardiness, she claims as she feels herself empowered in ways previously not possible. Iachimo, too, feels himself altered by the "Welsh" elements, his strength seemingly evaporating in a northern climate whose "air . . . Revengingly enfeebles" (5.2.3–4) him, pressing the "heaviness" (5.2.1) of an "honest" disposition upon an "Italian brain" (5.5.196) accustomed to acting "vildly" (5.5.198). National identity seems only as deep in one's flesh as the garments one wears or the climate one migrates to. If the play interrogates the extent to which clothes accurately designate identity, it also leads us to suspect Cymbeline's tendency to locate racial identity—one's relation to kin, tribe, and nation —on the fabric of the flesh itself. The body's properties, that is, seem every bit as malleable as the identities that clothes confer in the play.

Can we assume, then, that Belarius's two young charges, having spent twenty or so years occupying the "foreign" space of "Wales," subject to its "foreign" climate and a purportedly "barbarous" diet, are in fact the "same" princes they once had been? Do they, that is, contain the stamp of identity transmitted, in Renaissance theories of generation, through the father, the genitor, making them his extension through time?[31] In the economy of fluid physical identity that the play borrows in part from its historical sources, which together grant culture and place the power to remake "nature," such an equation is far from self-evident. The princes are arguably self-estranged from their courtly alter egos, physically alien from their former identities in ways that compound the changes wrought by time. Not only do they resist the dictates of common law in murdering the offending Cloten, but, as Belarius reminds us, their blood has been "chafed" and something very near sav-

30. For a fuller discussion of Italy's role in the play, see Thomas G. Olsen, "'Drug-Damn'd Italy' and the Problem of British National Character in *Cymbeline*," *Shakespeare Yearbook* 10 (1999): 269–316.

31. It is interesting to recall that their absent mother is remembered in the play only as the maker of their swaddling clothes ("a most curious mantle, wrought by th' hand / Of his queen mother" [5.5.364–65]); indeed, her role in their reproduction is very much repressed, and is in fact coopted at the play's end by their father, who imagines himself in the moment of reunion as giving birth to the three children ("O, what am I / A mother to the birth of three?" [5.5.371–72]).

agery inscribed upon them by virtue of their exposure to endless physical hardship, to wintery winds and beating sun. Are they British royalty or have they become as alien as those (Welsh) who reside beyond the boundary of the Severn in a land that the play only names by negation as "not Britain"? Or, as Janet Adelman suggests, has the transformative trajectory moved in the opposite direction, from courtly barbarity to savage civility? Though they are touted by Belarius as the noble products of their father's blood—"O worthiness of nature! Breed of greatness!" (4.2.25)—are they not perhaps "purer vials of their father's blood," representing something of a "split-off and hence protected portion of his masculinity?"[32] In such a reading, their relation to a rustic landscape and their exposure to hardship has managed to regenerate them, to protect them from the potential harm of a paternal stigma.

The play indeed seeks to register a profound physical transformation in these two princes, a break in the transmission of qualities from father to son. Land and climate are raised above the father as generators of races, connecting them to a wider community, to a people linked through their habitation of a specific geography and their espousal of a shared lifestyle. Even as the recognition scene that reunites Cymbeline with his two princes seems to celebrate the "fixity" of genealogical and national inheritance—though life-long peasant inhabitants of Wales, they are discovered to be royal British-English—the play elsewhere suggests in ways both tentative and celebratory the extent to which individual and collective racial identity are malleable.

TECHNOLOGIES OF RACE

Like the play, the English and Scottish histories that are one of its primary sources investigate what we might call the evolution (and degeneration) of races, their tendency toward mixture and alteration through conflict and conquest. Many of these accounts note the radical contingency of racial stock, reading it as something produced by environment and behavior as much as inherited through genealogy. Indeed, what is so interesting about these accounts is the extent to which they define the waxing and waning of races without privileging intermarriage as the only, or even main, agent of transformation. Placing contact with another people's physical milieu on par with intermarriage, these texts emphasize the profoundly transformative power of climate and diet.

Critics have frequently demonstrated Shakespeare's debt to Raphael

32. Janet Adelman, *Suffocating Mothers: Fantasies of Maternal Origin in Shakespeare's Plays,* Hamlet *to* The Tempest (New York: Routledge, 1992), chap. 8, esp. 204–5.

Holinshed's *Chronicles* in *Cymbeline*, pointing out Shakespeare's use of the English and Scottish accounts of Cymbeline's rule contained in this multiauthored volume, as well as a range of other passages that draw on its vast archives.[33] Moving beyond the observation that Shakespeare drew from specific passages for his detail and historical data, I would suggest affinities between the play and these sources on a larger scale through their shared interest in the making and unmaking of people and of nations. Holinshed revisits again and again the causes and effects of shifts in national character, which are seen as profoundly connected to changes in diet, habitat, and climate—the very changes that the princes experience in *Cymbeline*. In Holinshed, ethnicity is externalized rather than seen as primarily a fixed and inherited property of blood. Culture, that is, produces nature in startlingly direct ways.

Featured prominently in Holinshed's *Chronicles*, William Harrison's "Description of Britain" repeatedly connects a people's physical milieu to their physical and national constitution. The inhabitants of the Orchards, for instance, he describes as "of goodlie stature, tall, verie comelie, healthfull, of long life, great strength, whitish colour" and attributes these qualities to their "old sparing diets" and their "ignorance of excesse."[34] This praise of a northern climate and a sparse diet—characterizations clearly indebted to the Roman histories that described ancient Britain—is evident as well in the description of the Britons. But here Harrison's praise is partly defensive, directed against continental authors like Bodin who saw the British as a physically strong but weak-witted people by virtue of their cold climate. Refuting their claims, Harrison argues that the long days so characteristic of Britain's northern geography enable the sun to produce "braines" at once "hot and warmed" and therefore capable of intellectual prowess to match the unquestioned physical force of the Briton on the battlefield.[35] He thereby appropriates Bodin's revisionary strategy, defining Britain as a temperate rather than marginal geography. In scorning the consumption patterns of contemporary "north Britons," whose growing dependence on southern European products he blames for "[ingrossing]" their bodies, Harrison implicitly casts continental Europe as decadent, as a locus of degeneracy.[36]

33. Raphael Holinshed, *The Chronicles of England, Scotland, and Ireland*, 6 vols. (1580; New York: AMS Press, 1976). For discussions of Holinshed as a source-text for Shakespeare's play, see Joan Warchol Rossi, "Cymbeline's Debt to Holinshed: The Richness of III.i," in Carol McGinnis Kay and Henry E. Jacobs, eds., *Shakespeare's Romances Reconsidered* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1978), 104–12.

34. Holinshed, *Chronicles*, 1.73–74.

35. Holinshed, *Chronicles*, 1.193.

36. Holinshed, *Chronicles*, 1.279.

Hector Boetius seconds this reading when he attempts to account for the differences between the ancient Briton and the modern-day Scot in his "Description of Scotland." Qualifying his praise of the Scots' courage and hardiness, he claims that these strengths are predicated on their ability to "liue temperatelie, and follow their predecessors in moderation of diet."[37] Alterations in diet, Boetius argues, can break and, in fact, have broken the genealogical continuity of the lowland Scots. By contrast, the Scottish highlanders are, for Boetius, a model of fortitude rather than barbarity. He praises them as having "lesse to doo with forreine merchants" than the lowlanders, and he argues that they are "lesse delicate, and not so much corrupted with strange bloud and aliance." He here places consumption on par with intermarriage as a primary cause of racial alteration, urging that dietary abstinence, along with sexual abstinence, has produced bodies that are "more hard of constitution . . . to beare off the cold blasts, to watch better, and absteine long," and making them "bold, nimble, and thereto more skilfull in the warres."[38]

Boetius depicts the lowlanders, on the other hand, as "falling by little and little from the frugalitie and customs of their forefathers," leading "their vertue and force . . . to decaie" as well. He blames, above all else, their "vnnaturall rauening and greedie desire of forreine things" for this degenerative slide. Where their forefathers ate "such stuff as grew most readilie on the ground," they now enjoy the "immoderate vse of wine" and "gad ouer all the world for sweet and pleasant spices, and drugs," bringing home "poison and destruction vnto their countriemen." He pointedly concludes: "they were temperate, we effeminate." A formerly Northern body has by virtue of these changes become a stranger in its own home, proving unable to weather the "colder regions" because its "inward parts doo burne and parch as it were with continuall fier, the onelie cause whereof we may ascribe vnto those hot spices and drugs which are brought vnto vs from the hot countries."[39] Boetius bemoans the loss of "our ancient sobernesse and manhood" in the majority of Scottish men, detecting only a trace still remaining in some. He thus charts a genealogical break stemming from bad diet and bad daily practice: the Scots

37. Holinshed, *Chronicles*, 2.2.

38. Holinshed, *Chronicles*, 2.2–3.

39. For a complementary argument in relation to New World tobacco, see Jeffrey Knapp's chapter "Divine Tobacco" in his *An Empire No Where: England, America, and Literature from* Utopia *to* The Tempest (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), which suggests evidence of a fear that "tobacco will turn the English body into a torrid zone," literally recoloring its inner parts black (163).

through proximity to their English ancestors came to "learne also their maners," and so to lose themselves.[40]

Like Boetius, Camden celebrates the strengths of a robust, because undiluted, marginal people like the highland Scots, whom he identifies as the descendants of the ancient Picts. Although often associated with an emergent form of history that ridiculed Geoffrey of Monmouth's ancient "myth" of British descent from the Trojans,[41] Camden's account is in fact surprisingly sedimented. Camden betrays, for instance, a deep ambivalence about those unenslaved ancient Britons who wandered north and west, far from the reach of the Roman civilizing forces, evading not only "bondage" to an imperial power but also the softening effects that it brought in its wake. Celebrating their flight from the Romans as a fight against "servitudes, which is of all miseries the extreamest," he records their northern migration and the physical strengths such movement produced. They arrived, he explains, to "these Northerne parts, frozen with the bitter cold of the aire . . . Where being armed not so much with weapons, as with a sharpe aire and climate of their owne, they grew vp together with the native inhabitants whom there they found, unto a mightie and populous nation."[42] Climate here seems to mix with breeding in uniting these two stocks of people and securing their survival.

Those who fled to the mountains of the west benefited similarly. Celebrating these westward Britons as those who "continued the longest free from the yoke both of Romans and also of English dominion," Camden attributes their resistance to the strengths they derived from their environment: he describes them as a "puissant and courageous nation, by reason they keepe wholly in a mountanous country, and take heart even of the soile."[43] Their simplicity of diet, consisting of "white meates, as buter, cheese &c," produces bodies that are of "cleere complexion, goodly feature, & lineaments of body, inferiour to no nation in Britain." Citing John of Salisbury's *Polycraticon*, Camden recounts how these Britons succeeded in making "inrodes," in "assaulting," "winning," and "overthrowing" nearby English settlements because their English counterparts had been "so deintily brought up, and loues to be

40. For Boetius's quotes on the lowlanders, see Holinshed, *Chronicles*, 2.22, 2.23, and 2.26–27.

41. See, for intance, Curran's article "'Royalty Unlearned, Honor Untaught,'" which outlines the various breaks from Geoffrey of Monmouth that Camden's new historiography performs.

42. Camden, *Britain*, 115.

43. Camden, *Britain*, 659.

house-birds and to liue lazie, in the shade, beeing borne onely to devour the fruits of the earth and to fill the belly."[44] Following Tacitus, Camden betrays a distrust of the luxuries that civility breeds, and the physical vulnerabilities that such luxuries produce.[45] He glances back nostalgically at ancient simplicity and fortitude. Civility at the hands of the "Romans" was a vexed enterprise promising material comforts at the same time as its "effeminate" softness subverted a hardy race.

These debates received new and urgent currency in the first decade of the seventeenth century, with James's ascension to the throne and his pressing demands for unifying England and Scotland into Great Britain and his call to naturalize Scottish citizens under English law.[46] Debates on the topic staged many questions. How much would union produce a conformity of manners? What differences of stock existed between the Saxon and British races? What constituted those differences? What qualities inhered in each race and to what extent did custom produce those physical qualities? What effect would political, physical, and cultural proximity have on each group? Circling around distinctions between Scot and Englishman, these debates overwhelmingly emphasized the significance of environment.

Sir Francis Bacon, who was at the center of these debates in his position as attorney general and who came to be an advocate of the union, himself celebrated, in what seems to be a nod toward his Scottish neighbors, the

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44. Camden, *Britain*, 665, 667.

45. See Kupperman's forthcoming "Angells in America," which establishes the widespread consultation of Tacitus during the early seventeenth century and argues for the text as containing models for early English colonial efforts in Virginia. She notes Henry Savile's translation into English of Tacitus's *Life of Julius Agricola* in 1591 as part of *The Ende of Nero and the Beginning of Galba*, and its subsequent publication with Richard Greneway's translation of the *Germania* in 1598. Moreover, she observes the widespread interest and consultation of Tacitus's works by the likes of Camden, Francis Bacon, William Cecil, and members of the Earl of Essex's circle. See also Peter Stallybrass, "The World Turned Upside Down: Inversion, Gender and the State," in Valerie Wayne, ed., *The Matter of Difference: Materialist Feminist Criticism of Shakespeare* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1991), 209–20, esp. 209–10. Stallybrass argues for the central role of Tacitus in republican ideology, but points up the extent to which such ideology is profoundly masculinist, resting on a rejection of the feminine.

46. For a fuller discussion of the union in the context of Shakespeare's play, see Constance Jordan, *Shakespeare's Monarchies: Ruler and Subject in the Romances* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1997), esp. chap. 3. See also Leah S. Marcus, "*Cymbeline* and the Unease of Topicality" in Heather Dubrow and Richard Strier, eds., *The Historical Renaissance* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), 134–68.

benefits of a hard upbringing, going so far as to define it as central to imperial growth.[47] While much of his manuscript on the "True Greatness of the Kingdom of Britain" has been lost to us, enough survives to convey Bacon's praise of the hardy strength of the Briton, his admiration of the strengths produced in people who occupy the margins of civil life. The Swiss mountaineers, for instance, he praises for having defeated various rounds of invaders. Although characterized by "stirring and turbulent" spirits, much as many English perceived their Scottish neighbors to be, he argues that such men of strength are essential to empire. Seeming to refute those who resisted union on the grounds that it would dissipate English wealth, he argues further that national wealth makes a nation vulnerable when it is severed from military virtue, which he associates with poverty. Because wealth must be "joined with martial prowess and valour" to be useful, it is "better when some part of the state is poor, than when all parts of it are rich."

Writing to promote what he saw as a desirable national agenda of expansion, he urged Britain to model itself on "most of the great kingdoms of the world," which "have sprung out of hardness and scarceness of means, as the strongest herbe out of the barrenest soils."[48] Iron, he elsewhere asserts quoting Solon, will outperform gold every time in the contest of nations.[49] Though the Spanish "should of late years take unto themselves that spirit as to dream of a Monarchy in the West . . . only because they have ravished from some wild and unarmed people mines and store of gold," it is "this island of Brittany" that would do best to fill that role, armed as it is with the "best iron in the world, that is the best soldiers of the world."[50] Where other writers were observing the barbarity of the Briton's ancient strengths, leaders like Bacon were quick to connect those strengths to an emergent British colonial enterprise.

In casting the Scots as arguably Britain's leading class of soldiers—describing them as "a people ingenious, in labour industrious, in courage valiant, in body hard, active, and comely"—Bacon not only echoed the accounts of classical ethnographies but also implicitly diagnosed English degeneracy. Although "of one piece and continent" with the Scots, the English

47. Sir Francis Bacon, "Of the True Greatness of the Kingdom of Britain," in James Spedding, ed., *The Works of Francis Bacon* (London: Longman, 1861), 7:47–64, esp. 7:58. See also Constance Jordan's excellent discussion of this text in her *Shakespeare's Monarchies*.

48. Bacon, "Of the True Greatness," 7.58.

49. Bacon, "Speech for General Naturalization," 10:307–25.

50. Bacon, "Speech for General Naturalization," 10:324–25.

have been undone by their wealth, their "reckonings and audits, meum and tuum."[51] In this respect, Bacon's arguments intersect with the accounts of racial slippage registered in the *Chronicles* and represented at large in a widespread national debate. In his notorious antitheatrical tract *The Schoole of Abuse*, for instance, Stephen Gosson was quick to echo the *Chronicles'* doomsday sentiment in associating the theater, like other "foreign imports," with civility's effeminizing excesses, which he blamed for eroding English manhood. Drawing on Holinshed's portrait of a hardier past, Gosson laments that the Englishman's age-old ability to "suffer watching and labor, hunger and thirst" and to feed "upon rootes and barkes of trees," has been replaced by his insolency, his tendency to "gape after meate" and "long for the cuppe." Worst of all was the substitution of "banqueting, playing, piping, and daunc-ing" for the military exercises central to the nation's welfare.[52] Gosson's call for a return to native origins is framed by the observation that the English have in fact outdone the enormities of their incontinent European neighbors:

> Oh what a wonderfull chaunge is this? Our wrestling at armes, is turned to wallowyng in Ladies laps, our courage, to cowardice, our running to ryot, our Bowes into bolles, and our Dartes to Dishes. We haue robed Greece of Gluttonie, Italy of wantonnesse, Spaine of pride, Fraunce of deceite, and Dutchland of quaffing. Compare London to Rome, and England to Italy, you shall finde the Theaters of the one, the abuses of the other, to be ripe among us.[53]

Responding to this challenge with uncanny specificity, while ironically choosing to instruct through the very medium Gosson so rails against, Shakespeare's play both compares London to Rome and England to Italy and in many respects confirms Gosson's diagnosis. Through its unflattering depiction of the British court figures, for instance, the play maps distinctively southern vices onto a British disposition, pointing up the extent to which wealth and the contact with southern people and products that it enables has caused degeneration. Cloten, Cymbeline, and the Queen are linked in their depiction as having dissipated the nation's characteristic ancient strengths. Although together they speak for Britain's inviolability, voicing the play's powerful articulation of nationalism—of Britain as "a world / By itself" (3.1.12–13)—in fact their ties to that nostalgic space have been corroded by the various nonnative practices each of them has embraced.

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51. Bacon, "Speech for General Naturalization," 10.315, 10.325.
52. Stephen Gosson, *The School of Abuse* (London, 1579).
53. Gosson, *School of Abuse*, sigs. B8^{v}-C.

Cloten, for example, demonstrates the effeminacy so denigrated in the histories, a condition Tacitus and the British chroniclers following classical authors describe as being "mollified yet by long peace."[54] In summarizing Tacitus's famous account, Camden observes that the Roman method of subduing the fortitude of Northern peoples like the Gauls and Germans was by diverting them with leisured activities, including instruction in "liberall sciences." By encouraging the Gauls to give "themselves over to ease and idlenesse," Camden explains, "cowardise crept in, and shipwracke was made both of manhood and liberty together." It is, more specifically, their adoption of southern postures—first the wearing of the Roman gown, then their instruction in the Roman tongue, and finally their enjoyment of "sumptuous galleries . . . & exquisite banquetings"[55]—that signals their decline. Though clearly bearing signs of Cloten's connections to ancient British strengths—humorously referenced by Imogen's misplaced lament over "his foot Mercurial, his Martial thigh, / The brawns of Hercules" (4.2.310–11) when she mistakenly believes him to be her deceased husband—his native strength has become so encumbered by soft civil markers, the "unpaid for silk" (3.3.24), which Belarius mocks, as to be impotent. His preoccupation with the leisured activities of bowling, music, and wooing signals his decline from an ancient standard. And while he celebrates those native strengths in defiance of the Roman encroachment—"we have yet many among us can gripe as hard as Cassibelan" (3.1.40)—he also divorces himself from their collective ranks when he urges "I do not say I am one" (3.1.41). Other Britons, he suggests, will ably disburse an impinging Roman force. He, by contrast, proves unable to answer even the personal threats he poses to Arviragus—"Die the death!" (4.2.96)—and feels his words soundly answered by the "rustic mountaineer" (4.2.100). His defeat here dispels the force of his rhetoric and excludes him from association with the elite band of ancient brothers imagined in his own and his mother's rhetoric before Lucius.

As Belarius recalls of Cloten in a former day, he is "nothing but mutation" (4.2.133), the classic failing of the northerner, as outlined by Caesar, Tacitus, and subsquently Camden, Bodin, and a long-line of early modern ethnographers. Poised between the extremes of his body's heat and dampness—its excess of blood and humors—the northerner suffers an "unconstant and variable mind . . . [loving] evermore change and alteration."[56] As Bodin explains, "The inner warmth [of northerners] drives them to action . . . but moisture

54. Camden, *Britain*, 29.
55. Camden, *Britain*, 57 and 29–30.
56. Camden, *Britain*, 15.

brings softness," a duality that he describes as producing a "curious inconsistency of nature," which leads them alternately to seek war and the indulgence of sleep and feasting.[57] Inactivity, that is, forces the strengths of the Northern temperament to give way to "infirmity,"[58] allowing the body's heat to yield to its softer physical component. Cloten seems to embody just such a decline in his shifting loyalties to Imogen—love quickly mutating to jealous, even murderous rage—and in his untempered responses to losing at bowls, dice, and women, the very activities Gosson identified with English decline. As the punning Lord notes, Cloten's status is nothing if not "rank," festering in too much idle time, too many inflated words, and too few martial deeds. He reinforces Imogen's later observation that "Plenty and peace breeds cowards" (3.6.21). Rather than demarcating a privileged genealogical inheritance, Cloten's possessions—the land that he has inherited and the fine clothes he flaunts—have undermined his ancient British genealogy.

Shakespeare repudiates Cloten's genealogical connection to ancient Britons further through the name he assigns him. Actively revising his sources, Shakespeare rejects the way these histories narrate how Brute's line comes to an end. In the *Chronicles* the lineal break with Brute is identified as occurring in the wake of a fatal civil war waged between two brothers, which leads to the ascension of a king named Cloten. Not lineally connected as were the warring princely brothers to the mythic Brute, the arrival of Cloten to the throne marks the bitter end of the prized Trojan genealogy.[59] In rewriting this tragic sequence of events, Shakespeare valorizes the unity of his Briton princes, rather than characterizing them by dissension and warfare. He also takes the more dramatic step of having them violently terminate the progression of Cloten's surrogate, non-Trojan line in having Guiderius sever Cloten's "head." With Cloten's future undone, that of the royal brothers proceeds unencumbered, presumably extending indefinitely through time. Shakespeare thereby rejects the genealogical graft that Cloten embodies, imagining instead the continuity of Brute's (and Britons') strengths in the future.

In fact, Cloten, it seems, holds a lineal connection only to the play's marred figure of womanhood, the Queen, his mother. He alone of the play's young Britons is defined by a matrilineal genealogy, the others, including both the princes and Posthumus, being linked with the heroism of male ancestors like Cassibelan and Leonatus. None of these admirable men has had sustained contact with his mother, Posthumus being literally "ripp'd" (5.4.45) from his

57. Bodin, *Method*, 95.
58. Camden, *Britain*, 15–16.
59. Holinshed, *Chronicles*, 1.450.

mother's womb and the princes removed from an unnamed mother prior to weaning. The Queen's womanly strengths aside, it seems she is unable to "author" Cloten as would a father, producing instead a "derogate," a son notable for having fallen off from a noble line. As Guiderius puts it, Cloten fails to be "worthy [of his] birth" (4.2.93–94). His characteristic "senseless[-ness]" mirrors his mother only insofar as she dotes blindly on an inferior and unworthy heir. Otherwise, her shrewdness does not extend to a son who is characterized instead as a fool. As the Lords note, she is a "crafty devil" (2.1.51) and is "hourly coining plots" (2.1.59). Far from demonstrating the native Briton's "plain dealing," the Queen has imported the scheming of the Italian machiavel, what Harrison describes as the southerner's "subtile practises, doublenesse, and hollow behauiour."[60] She notoriously engages in machinations to secure the throne for her son and assumes a "tyrannical" force in her control of her husband. Her alignment with these southern vices is materially rendered through her association with poisons, defined in *Cymbeline*, as in other contemporary plays, as a product of "drug-damn'd Italy" (3.4.15). But in contrast to southerners like Iachimo, who prove successful in implementing the connivings of their "beastly mind[s]" (1.6.153), the Queen only shadows their sophistication. Whereas the southerner's subjection to the sun's heat produces an excess of black bile, providing the conditions for "highest learning" and "foxlike cunning,"[61] the Queen is largely ineffective in her plots, duping only Cymbeline.

Where his Queen is associated with Italianate vices, Cymbeline's past expresses affinities with imperial Rome, which have altered the plain-dealing nature characteristic of his native people. Nurtured in the Roman court under Caesar, it seems he was too much in the "sun," learning the Italianate mode of distrust in searching out duplicity to his own detriment. Belarius reminds us, for instance, of Cymbeline's fatal choice in believing the "false oaths" of two villains before the plain acts of a friend and soldier, one whose "perfect honor" (3.3.66, 67) was visibly demonstrated not just by feats on the battlefield but a body "mark'd / With Roman swords" (3.3.56–57). Cultivating suspicion for a British soldier of "perfect honor" (3.3.67), Cymbeline is forced to surrender his succession and to accept a wider class of Britons as his kinsmen. Deprived of his sons, he is forced to depend on the "valiant race" (5.4.83) of Britons whose "sword-marks" designate their connection to Britishness every bit as much as do the birthmarks that grace the royal family.

Where the play's primary figures of courtly identity demonstrate various

60. Holinshed, *Chronicles*, 1.193.
61. Bodin, *Method*, 111 and 102.

breaks with native British identity, the princes and Imogen undergo a process of relearning their British ancestry and of resuturing fragmented genealogical connections. Their princely blood, that is, proves insufficient in securing their connection to their British forefathers. Indeed, we witness the "renaturing" of princes into native British subjects. If the princes are regenerated in Wales partly as a tribute to the Welsh genealogy of the Tudors, they are also reformed like the ancient Britons who fled to the Welsh mountains to escape Roman servitude.[62] Following his historical sources, which describe the Britons as "driuen either into Wales [or] Cornewall" during various and repeated rounds of conquest not only by the Romans but also by the Saxons and Normans, Shakespeare removes his royal princes from the corrupting imports at court and returns them to a native landscape. In addition to being transported to a native climate, being "hot summer's tanlings and / The shrinking slaves of winter" (4.4.29–30), they are regenerated by characteristically British cultural practices, returning to a simplicity of diet and activity that counters the excesses at court. Together with Belarius, the young princes hunt hares, goats, and venison and live humbly in a "pinching cave" (3.3.40), donning the simple attire of "clouted brogues" (4.2.214) in keeping with descriptions of ancient Britons.[63] Engaged in labor despite their royal blood, the princes undergo the "drying" and remasculating "sweat of industry" (3.6.31).

Their exposure to British topography, moreover, imprints their bodies with northern features, whitening and strengthening their bodies beyond compare. Though subject to the climate's extremes of heat and cold, Posthumus reminds us that their complexions are, if anything, perfected by the exposure, describing them as "fairer / Than those for preservation cas'd" (5.3.21), and thereby echoing Harrison's description of the Briton as "of a good complexion, tall of stature, strong in bodie, white of colour, and thereto of great boldnesse and courage in the warres."[64] That they demonstrate the northerner's characteristic eruption into wrathful violence, which Bodin distinguishes from the southerner's more "cunning" pursuit of violence and torture,[65] is evidenced by Guiderius's response to Cloten's accusations of treason. Refusing to qualify or conceal his act, he responds to Belarius's anxious questioning by directly asserting that he has "cut off one Cloten's head, / Son to the Queen" (4.2.118–19). Such forthrightness demonstrates his ties to ancient

62. For a discussion of the signifiance of Milford Haven in relation to Henry Tudor, see Emrys Jones, "Stuart *Cymbeline*," *Essays in Criticism* 11, 1 (1961): 84–99.

63. Camden, *Britain*, 123.

64. Holinshed, *Chronicles*, 1.192.

65. Bodin, *Method*, 102.

Britons, recalled as living "in a lawlesse kind of libertie, as bearing themselves bould both upon their owne valour."[66]

Imogen's royal birthmarks are also transformed by the inscriptions of a British land and lifestyle. Retrieving an ancient practice believed to enhance the Briton's military success, she brands herself with what she thinks is Posthumus's blood, calling upon it to "Give color to my pale cheek . . . / That we the horrider may seem to those / which chance to find us" (4.2.330–32). Like her brothers, she is made to forego the comforts of court life, sleeping on the ground and experiencing the restorative, if harsh effects of "famine" (3.6.19). She also assumes the female complement to their labor, by demonstrating her skill as a "huswife" (4.2.45) in preparing their savage fare. Imogen and her brothers unlearn their royal privilege, laboring to survive like modest Britons. Their immersion in native practices suggests the provisional nature of British consanguininity and suggests that geography and work may have as much power as blood in "authoring" a people. Like the royal Boadicea, who was said to have behaved "not as a Ladie descended of so noble progenitors . . . but as one of the common people,"[67] Cymbeline's royal offspring follow the path of "tributary rivers" (3.6.36) in traveling away from the "imperious seas" (l. 35) of courtly life and privilege.[68] Collectively, the royal family distance themselves from wealth, Imogen willingly surrendering her inheritance to her brothers and Cymbeline choosing despite the British victory to pay tribute to the Romans. In making these choices, they assert the virtues of temperance, rejecting luxury and enacting Posthumus's motto of "less without and more within" (5.1.33).

In fact the play resolves the ambivalence it raises regarding the question of human "dust." Whether "clay and clay differs in dignity" (4.2.4) though made of "one dust" (4.2.247) or whether "noble fury" can issue from "so poor a thing" as Posthumus (5.5.8) is roundly answered by Posthumus's triumph. British topography regenerates Posthumus, transforming his "baseness" and "rootlessness" into the new identity of "a Britain born" (5.5.84). The play thus grants "Great nature, like . . . ancestry" a role in molding the "stuff" of human bodies (5.4.48). Early in the play, however, we see Posthumus fall

66. Camden, *Britain*, 659.

67. Camden, *Britain*, 51.

68. Interestingly, in this respect, the play mirrors notions that King James I himself espouses in *Basilikon Doron*, where he advises his son: "ye must be of no surname nor kinne, but equall to all honest men" (as quoted in Arthur H. Williamson, "Scots, Indians, and Empire: The Scottish Politics of Civilization 1519–1609," *Past and Present* 150 [1996]: 46–83).

prey to southern "infection." Posthumus sullies his valorous British lineage when he is forced through banishment to wander far from home through the corrupting south. While demonstrating many of the virtues of his Briton lineage—a line traced first and foremost to those ancestors who fought to preserve British soil against Julius Caesar—Posthumus fails like vegetation that is "not born where it grows" (3.4.56). In fact, his travels through France and his banishment to Italy tutor him in the ways of a southerner, teaching him both the cunning to deceive Imogen and the vindictiveness to murder her (3.4.25). He becomes the consummately jealous Italian, reenacting Cloten's "mutation." Suffering the Northerner's soft impressionability, Posthumus proves susceptible to "strange infection" (3.2.4) through contact with "drug-damn'd Italy" (3.4.15). Iachimo himself connects Posthumus's corruption to the excesses of feasting and viands which denote not just Italian wealth but Italian degeneracy (5.5.155–56). Cloten's curse, "The south-fog rot him!" (2.3.131) appears to have been fulfilled and Imogen concludes that he "Has forgot Britain" (1.6.112–13). Indeed, Posthumus's border crossings do "unearth" him, unraveling his ties to his heroic British ancestors and refiguring him as "orphan."

By immersing himself in the raw "stuff" of his country, though, Posthumus arrests his degenerative slide. He dispenses with civil accoutrements—with "fresh cups, soft beds, / Sweet words" (5.3.71–72)—and adorns himself instead in the meanest of rags. Shaming the "gilded arms" (5.5.4) of his Italian counterparts, he testifies by his rags to his connection to ancient Britons who fought with "neither head peece nor coate of fence" and were the hardier for so doing.[69] "Beggary and poor looks" (5.5.10) are thereby embraced by the play not as the antithesis of "noble races"—signs of those locked outside its circuit of privilege—but as the very condition of such genealogies. Urging Jupiter to peep through his "marble mansion" (5.5.87), Sicilus insists that the deity acknowledge the centrality of his "valiant race" (5.5.83) to British identity. In so doing, he suggests a return to the ancient British practice of raising in common all British children, since "true British Nobilitie is moe [sic] in vertue then in Auncestors."[70]

COLONIAL REGENERATIONS

Engagements with ancient forms of empire by historians and dramatists alike were deeply connected to England's contemporary struggle to forge an identity. The emphasis on antiquity, though, has served as something of a critical

69. Camden, *Britain*, 45.
70. Speed, *History of Great Britaine*, 179.

blinder, impeding our ability to perceive the contemporary resonances of the past.[71] In returning to images of Roman imperialism and to originary accounts of ancient British strengths, Shakespeare and his contemporaries were not merely nostalgic. Rather they sought the justifications and strategies that would position England as a contender on colonial fronts, both with regard to her own "British borderers" and in relation to more distant vistas. *Cymbeline*'s westward movement thus demands critical attention. Although *Cymbeline* powerfully retraces the ancient Briton's flight from imperial Roman forces, the play's westering impulse continues to the play's final words with the image of the "Roman eagle" flying "from south to west on wing soaring aloft" (5.5.470–71). Although on the one hand, the image suggests the translation westward of the ancient Roman Empire, to include the distant land of ancient Britain, the image also gestures beyond its Roman context. It is described as vanishing in the "beams o' th' sun," suggesting a deferral of closure, an evasion of narrow referents. The eagle points England to imperial destinies yet to be pursued, urging her to assume the role of "new Rome" in following the eagle's flight to the west. It was an image that appealed as well to those urging colonization of Virginia. In his *Nova Britannia*, Robert Johnson would warn the English not to imitate the mistakes of the Romans in clipping the "wings" of empire that "shee might take her flight no more."[72]

In *Cymbeline* western movement brings regeneration, where stasis in the English "center" leads to degeneracy. Moreover, the play seems to suggest that such transformations be seen as extending beyond the play's individual characters to a larger national collectivity. Indeed it is striking that Imogen, who serves as something of a symbol for the nation in calling herself "Britain" (1.6.113), experiences herself as being made anew (3.6.15–22) in her movement westward to a land beyond Britain. Her venture toward Milford Haven, and toward a land that Pisanio describes as "not in Britain" (3.4.135), signals a return to the site of Tudor ascendancy. It was to Milford Haven that Henry Tudor came to take the English throne as the British-Welsh ruler of the kingdom, an originary myth that both the Tudors and Stuarts celebrated. Imogen twice visits Milford Haven—once imaginatively to "see" Posthumus depart for Italy and then literally to meet her returning husband.

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71. Many critics, including Leah Marcus and Constance Jordan, have attended to the play's engagement with the unification of Britain, but few have considered its relevance to other "imperial" pursuits.

72. Robert Johnson, *Nova Britannia: Offring Most Excellent fruites by Planting in Virginia* (London, 1609), fol. E2^{v}.

But in the early seventeenth century, the port harbored ships for another western land—the as yet uncharted land "Nova Britannia," which many envisioned as an unspoiled Britain.[73] In referring to "Virginia" as a new "Britannia," English colonists performed a conceptual move similar to that of Shakespeare's play: they cast back in time for models to elucidate the present and to shape the future, framing the New World in the terms of the old world. Imogen's reference to her mother's experience of her own birth (3.4.2–3) as she awaits Posthumus's "delivery" in this unfamiliar landscape, and her tendency to see her travels west as a desirable movement beyond the containment of a "nest" (3.4.139),[74] obliquely point toward the new colonial context.[75] The language of reproductivity, that is, parallels the language of an empire being born.

Shakespeare was writing his last romances after a twenty-year hiatus in efforts to colonize Virginia, following the failures in Roanoke in the early 1580s. That he had connections to a rather broad circle of investors who helped to revive the Virginia enterprise between 1607 and 1611 has been brought to bear on studies of *The Tempest*, given the play's oblique relation to the shipwreck of the *Sea Adventure* on Bermuda in 1609. Such connections, which include the fact that two of Shakespeare's primary patrons, the earls of Pembroke and Southampton, were elected as members of the 1609 Virginia

73. In departing to "North Virginia" in 1603, Martin Pringe records that "We set saile from Milford Hauen" (see "A Voyage Set Out from the Citie of Bristoll," 1603, in David B. Quinn and Alison M. Quinn, eds., *The English New England Voyages, 1602–1608* [London, 1983], 216). See also David B. Quinn, *The new found land; the English contribution to the discovery of North America. An address delivered at the annual meeting of the Associates of the John Carter Brown Library, May, 14, 1964* (Providence, R.I.: Associates of the John Carter Brown Library, 1965). The Pembrokeshire context of the play also carries many affinities with the conquest of Ireland. In providing an account of this region of Wales, for instance, Camden describes Pembroke as the intermediary site enabling the eventual winning of "the walles of Ireland" (652). He also describes the Welsh region of Cardigan as producing Robert Fitz-Stephens, who "set foote in Ireland, and by his valour made way for the English to follow, and second him for subduing Ireland under the crowne of England" (657).

74. For discussions analogizing the Old World to a hive, an image that resonates with that of Imogen's "nest," in the context of sermons about Virginia, see Thomas Scanlan, *Colonial Writing and the New World: 1583–1671, Allegories of Desire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), chap 4.

75. Patricia Parker observes as much when she notes that "Imogen is also linked, as an object to be 'voyaged upon,' to the other imperial history of mercantile ventures upon new worlds" (201, n. 16).

Council, have perhaps been overlooked in critical readings of *Cymbeline*, a play roughly contemporaneous with *The Tempest*.[76]

While not claiming that this play and the Virginia enterprise are directly related in a causal sequence—the notion of context simply being transmuted to text—I do, however, wish to consider the extent to which the Virginia enterprise served as an informing context, if not a determining one, for the play. In fact, it is remarkable to find how closely *Cymbeline*'s themes resonate with those articulated in the Virginia propaganda, a mix of pamphlets and sermons urging plantation, which circulated in the years of the play's likely composition. Reading the two sets of texts together not only helps to elucidate them individually as engagements with nation and empire at a challenging moment for England but reveals as well the extent to which distant conceptions of embodied identity need to be brought to bear on how we understand the emergence of race and nation in this period.

In the years between 1607 and 1611, the settling of Virginia was an enterprise that few Englishmen were eager or willing to pursue. Quite to the

76. Shakespeare's connections to the Virginia enterprise are indeed material as well as theoretical. William Herbert, third Earl of Pembroke, was one of two brothers to whom Hemmings and Condell dedicated Shakespeare's First Folio in 1623. In their dedicatory epistle, they make mention of Pembroke's interest in Shakespeare and his plays. In 1609, Shakespeare's sonnets were published following a dedication to an elusively named "Mr. W.H." Some have connected this person to William Herbert, although others have disputed this assignment on the grounds that the Earl would not have been addressed by means of the title "Mr." Leeds Barroll connects Pembroke to Shakespeare's company, the King's Men, seeing him as an even more interested patron of the arts than Shakespeare's other patron, Southampton. He describes Pembroke as a participant in the "center of intellectual activity at the court"; see *Politics, Plague, and Shakespeare's Theater: The Stuart Years* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1991), 38–39.

Pembroke's connections to an emergent English colonialism include his decision to invest "financially in all of the major colonizing ventures of his time, including the Virginia and Bermudas Companies, the Council for New England and the East India Company (*Biographical Dictionary of British Radicals in the Seventeenth Century*, ed. Richard L. Greaves and Robert Zaller [London: Harvester Press, 1983]). More centrally, he was appointed to the Council of Virginia in 1609—a body which then consisted of 50 men representing roughly 650 investors. The Earl of Southampton and Francis Bacon were also elected to this Council. For Southampton and Bacon, see Wesley Frank Craven, *The Virginia Company of London, 1606–1624* (Williamsburg, Va.: Virginia 350th Anniversary Celebration Corp., 1957), 18. For Pembroke's relation to the Council, see *The Records of the Virginia Company*, ed. Susan Myra Kingsbury, 4 vols. (Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1933), 3:29, 68.

contrary, the early efforts at colonizing Jamestown enjoyed considerable notoriety, provoking dramatic ridicule as an enterprise for Scots and ragamuffins. It was also attacked for its financial and human losses.[77] The Virginia Company took up the charge and struggled to rewrite defeat in terms of a heroic challenge. It was the role of the Virginia Company to offset these associations, to reframe the enterprise so as to attract interest and commitment from men otherwise inclined to heap scorn on the effort. "Why should any frowne or envie at it, or if they do; why should wee (neglecting so faire an opportunitie) faint or feare to enlarge our selves," questioned Robert Johnson.[78] Similarly, in a sermon preached in 1610 before Lord De La Warre famously embarked for Virginia to serve as lord governor, the residue of popular resistance speaks at large in the words of author William Crashaw. To those who maintain that "the Countrie is ill reported of by them that haue been there," Crashaw posturingly responds, "it is not true, in all, nor in the greater or better part."[79]

In a subsequent tract, Crashaw replies less circumspectly to reports of the horrible conditions at Jamestown—the shortages of supplies, the need for continual labor, and resulting disease and starvation—suggesting in his own heightened pitch that such accounts were escalating. His dedication to Alexander Whitaker's *Good Newes from Virginia* starkly reproduces the accusations regarding Jamestown: "When they come there, are they not starued, and do they not die like dogges?"[80] Eager now to blame these failures on the factious behaviors of the colonists, Crashaw also abandons the pretense of denying Virginia's pitfalls. With Johnson, who published a continuation of *Nova Britannia* in 1612 as *The New Life of Virginea*, he was acknowledging that "there is no common speech nor publike name of anything this day, (except it be the name of God) which is more vildly depraued, traduced and derided by such vnhallowed lips, then the name of Virginea."[81] Clearly, these writers had

77. Johnson, Marston, and Chapman's *Eastward Ho* (*The Revels Plays*, ed. R. W. Van Fossen [Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999]), for instance, associates the land with death and beggary and urges transplanting Scots there as a solution to the problem of peopling its vast expanse ("we should find ten times more comfort of them there than we do here" [3.3.51–52]).

78. Johnson, *Nova Britannia*, sig. B2.

79. William Crashaw, *A Sermon Preached Before The Lord Lawarre, Lord Governour of Virginea* (London, 1610), sig. F2.

80. Alexander Whitaker, *Good Newes from Virginia Sent to the Counsell and Company of Virginia* (London, 1613), sig. A4.

81. Robert Johnson, *The New Life of Virginiea: Declaring the fomer successe and present estate of that plantation, being the second part of Nova Britannia* (London, 1612), epistle.

no small task in reframing the individual sacrifices writ large in this effort as deserving embrace.[82]

Just as Shakespeare's play calls for the reproduction of a degenerate people by appealing to the power of geography and native custom, so, too, the great body of tracts urging transplantation to Virginia point to racial slippage as a primary incentive for planting abroad. In fact, it seems that the authors of these sermons and tracts may have culled the same historical sources so central to Shakespeare—those of Holinshed and Camden—in searching out their framing arguments. Assessing the Englishman's "nature" and his resemblance to the "nature" of the nation's forefathers was one line of attack that the Company's propaganda machine actively pursued. Collectively these tracts pressure Englishmen to imitate their "forefathers' strengths,"[83] implicitly charging those who were lukewarm about the westward enterprise with bastardy and/or degeneracy. Looking to Tacitus's argument, which found in Rome's greatness the kernel of its decline, the Company promoted tracts and sermons that warned Englishmen against living too comfortably off the "fat and feeding ground of their natiue countrey" and of living licentiously in a state grown "ripe and rotten."[84] Charging them with having all but "extinguisht" the "ancient valour of English blood," with "so much forget[ting] themselues," the Company urged Englishmen to retrieve the "corporal hardnesse" of their forbears and to "shake off that dull and lazie humour . . . into which our nation is now degenerate."[85] Envisioning those forbears much as *Cymbeline* envisions its ideal British leaders, Crashaw emphasizes that they were constituted through their relation to land and hardship: "they exposed themselves to frost and colde, snow and heate, raine and tempests, hunger and thirst, and cared not what hardnesse, what extremities, what pinching miseries they enured, so they might atchieve the ends they aimed at."[86] Such

82. One might read a good deal of success into this propaganda machine, as Craven does, in observing that in 1609 and 1610, they succeeded in attracting at least ten thousand pounds in funding and successfully shipped fourteen hundred colonists aboard twenty-two vessels to Virginia (23–24).

83. As compared with Shakespeare's play, which seems to value the ancient Briton as against later foreign conquerors like the Saxons, many of these sermons define "forefathers" with reference to "English," which is to say "Saxon" forbears. Consider, for instance, William Symonds's *A Sermon Preached at White-Chapel in the Presence of many the Aduenturers, and Planters for Virginia* (London, 1609), which urges collective rallying around "Noble Saxons Bloud" (fol. 15), the father that "first brought him in his lynes [i.e., loins] from forreigne parts into this happie Isle" (fol. 15).

84. Crashaw, *Sermon Preached Before Lord Lawarre*, sigs. E4 and F1$^{v.}$

85. Crashaw, *Sermon Preached Before Lord Lawarre*, sigs. G^{v}, G3, F4$^{r–v}$.

86. Crashaw, *Sermon Preached Before Lord Lawarre*, sig. F4.

"corporal hardnesse," he suggests, has been lost on their English offspring who scorn the Virginia enterprise and thereby demonstrate their degeneracy, their inability to "indure winter and summer, winde and weather, sunne and showers, frost and snow, hunger and thirst, in campe or garrison, by land or sea."

Drawing much of their material from the ethnographic history of Bodin's writing, these tracts posit an inherent warring of "fluids" at the core of Englishness, attributing the decline to a collective physiological disposition as expressed through inconstancy and indecisiveness.[87] Defining Englishmen as naturally plagued by "muddy and earthly spirits,"[88] the impressionable damp humors characteristic of people inhabiting northern regions, these tracts suggest that too much inactivity—the "want of exercise of armes and actiuitie, want of trades and labour"[89]—has produced a physical decline from the masculine heat of the ancient Britons. They argue that the idleness produced by "peace and plentie" has resulted in "self-forgetting." But the contaminating effects of interaction with foreign peoples and of exposure to foreign places is also blamed for this degeneration. Those like Shakespeare's Posthumus who "wander from coast to coast, from England to Spaine, to Italy, to Rome . . . pulling a world of temptations upon their bad dispositions" are precisely those whom these texts identify as standing to gain most "by these new discoueries, in so great a world,"[90] by a land whose conditions were proximate to those of their heroic ancestors. Framing the New World as a "Nova Britannia," as England's uncorrupted alter ego, these tracts argue for a regeneration of native stock through the "pinching miseries" of a "harder course of life."[91] Through the discipline of their new life, they promise, Virginia will be the means by which they will become "new men," and, collectively, a "new mould."[92] Although framed in the language of "newness," these tracts seek to reclaim ancient strengths, to make anew an ancient mold.

Although the Company's propaganda traced these strengths to Saxon, rather than British, forbears, seeking to distance themselves from what they describe as the barbarity of the more ancient Britons, they implicitly appropriate the strengths of people of the "British margins" for their project, adding

87. For reference to Bodin in these tracts, see, for instance, Robert Gray, *Good Speed to Virginia* (London, 1609), sig. B2.

88. Gray, *Good Speed*, sig. C3.

89. Crashaw, *Sermon Preached Before Lord Lawarre*, sig. F4^{v}.

90. Johnson, *New Life*, sigs. G and G1^{v}.

91. Crashaw, *Sermon Preached Before Lord Lawarre*, sig. F1.

92. Crashaw, *Sermon Preached Before Lord Lawarre*, sig. E4^{v}.

the Welsh and Scottish to the ranks of those celebrated as a "Saxon" race. Noting the multitude that gathered to ward off the Spanish in the year of the Armada, for instance, Johnson's *New Life of Virginea* recalls a hybrid gathering of some "thirtie hundred thousand of English, Welsh, and Cornish men," while also describing Scotland as a "warlike, wise, and stout nation."[93] The authors of these tracts seem to follow Bacon in tracing the source of the degeneracy outlined above to *English* softness, to the idleness and luxury that were produced by *English* wealth. But even as they celebrate the "noble Saxons bloud,"[94] they also begin to move beyond blood-based identifications in striving to anchor identity in geography rather than lineage. Constructed as a new (ancient) Britannia, Virginia is imagined as a space that will replace blood as the authoring agent of a people, extending the benefits of nobility to all. One author anticipates a radical flattening of hierarchies abroad, such that "thou shalt bee more eminent and famous in a yeare, then at home halfe of thy ranke shall bee all their daies."[95] Casting its net to catch the lowly British Posthumus as well as the aristocrat, the Virginia Company, like Shakespeare's play, expanded the meaning of "race." If previously it had usually referred to aristocratic lineage, it increasingly came to mean the nation. Whether that nation was England or Britain remained a contested question.

But if the Company explicitly sought to frame Virginia in the language of "regeneration," fears of degeneration lingered in the margins of these texts. Though hard work and a removal from the luxuries of culture certainly boded well for refining natures grown "soggy" with rest and idleness, migration to Virginia also presented serious questions regarding climate. If British geography and climate had helped to produce them as a people, what would become of colonists when translated to Virginia? What if the land itself could remake Englishmen, transforming them not in accord with their ancient fathers' native strengths, but in the modes and manners of other Old and New World peoples? "Early in the history of colonization, some had speculated that American nativity would produce radically different individuals—Indians, say, rather than Europeans," Joyce Chaplin has argued. "English migrants faced the possibility that, in America, they would become a different people and would be parents of different people."[96] Yet this important observation

93. Johnson, *New Life*, sig. G2.

94. Symonds, *Sermon White Chapel*, 15

95. Symonds, *Sermon White Chapel*, 32.

96. Joyce Chaplin, "Natural Philosophy and an Early Racial Idiom in North America: Comparing English and Indian Bodies," *William and Mary Quarterly* 54 (1997): 229–52, esp. 242. See also her recent book, *Subject Matter*. Chaplin shares many of my observations about the experience of radical embodied flux articulated in

may overemphasize a stable "European" identity being reconfigured by the New World. By contrast, among the fears audible in early English colonial accounts is the prospect of becoming not just "creolized," as Chaplin suggests, but renatured in the form of a southern European, an Italian, or, worse, a Spaniard.

In Crashaw's defensive denial of excessive heat in Virginia, we see anxieties rooted in *European* difference. To those concerned with the experience of travel itself, he asserts: "We come not neere the Sunne, nor vnder the Aequinoctiall line, to distemper our bodies." And he argues that, once arrived, voyagers will find "it is not so hot as Spaine," but rather of a temper with which they will be well content."[97] Similarly, Edward Hayes would seek to assuage fears that northwest America might too closely resemble southern Europe to be suitable for English settlement. Having identified Virginia's location as "betweene 40. and 44. Degrees of latitude, vnder the Paralels of Italy and France," he insists "yet are not they so hot," since the sun's heat is "qualified in his course ouer the Ocean."[98]

As these references to Spain, France, and Italy suggest, Europeans did not at this time assign themselves a homogenous transcontinental identity, certainly not one linking them through a shared phenotype of "whiteness." Rather early modern European writers identified themselves with a diverse set of "complexions of body and conditions of mind," produced by their exposure to varying climates and cultures.[99] These varying humoral complexions were in turn visible through the subtle distinctions of skin color they observed among each other. According to Bodin "under the tropics [people] are unusually black; under the pole, for the opposite reason, they are tawny in color . . . down to the sixtieth parallel, they become ruddy; then to the forty-fifth they

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and through English colonization of America. I find, however, that her emphasis is more forward-looking than my own, given her desire to trace a teleology of "essential difference" as expressed in the consolidation of racist attitudes to Native Americans. Trying not to look at history through the lens of its subsequent incarnations, insofar as that is possible, I seek instead to allow the full force of this experience of self-alterability to speak, to let the experience of national and racial mutability have its own history.

97. Crashaw, *Sermon Preached Before Lord Lawarre*, sigs. E and E2.

98. See his "A Treatise, conteining important inducements for the planting in these parts" in John Brereton, *A Briefe and true Relation of the Discoverie of the North part of Virginia, 1602*, in Quinn and Quinn, eds. *The English New England Voyages*, 168.

99. Peter Heylyn, *Cosmographie in four bookes, containing the chorographie & historie of the whole world : and all the principal kingdoms, provinces, seas, and isles thereof* (London, 1657), fol. 121.

are white; . . . to the thirtieth they become yellow, and when the yellow bile is mingled with the black, they grow greenish, until they become swarthy and deeply black under the tropics."[100] To move between and among Europe's diverse climates invited physiological changes, altering one's complexion—both external and internal.

In fact, the dangers of moving south to hot climates were thought to present unique threats to northerners like Englishmen since such climates were at a great remove from England's own cool nature.[101] Bodin and others had argued, following classical accounts, that northern peoples moving southward suffered notorious deficiencies. Because produced by a generally damp climate, northerners, they argued, would "dissolve in perspiration when they make their way to the south or wage wars in the warm regions," much like cattle which "lose their fat, fail to give milk and suffer a general decline."[102] The same observation resonated in Richard Eden's 1555 translation of Peter Martyr's *Decades* in its account of Hispaniola. In this context, Martyr had recorded the force of tropical heat on natural objects ranging from wheat to cattle. He observed a pattern of transformation among these species, noting how wheat transplanted to this tropical climate "groweth into holowe reedes, with fewe eares." Similarly, "Neat or cattall, becoome of bygger stature and exceadynge fat, but theyr flesshe is more vnsauery, and theyr bones . . . verye waterysshe."[103]

Although presumably recording the effect of such heat on Spanish "races" of wheat and cattle, the observation would resonate with even greater force to English ears. Indeed, accounts of such transformations litter the early colonial record, as Joyce Chaplin has documented, originating with and further informing European discourses of man, world, and nature. Himself a reader of these early encounters, an author like Montaigne would digest their collective wisdom in saying: "the forme of our being depends of the aire, of the climate, and of the soile, wherein we are borne, and not onely the hew, the stature, the complexion and the countenance, but also the soules faculties . . . In such manner that as fruits and beasts doe spring up diverse and different; So men are borne, either more or lesse warlike, martiall, just, temperate and docile

100. Bodin, *Method*, 89.

101. See Karen Ordahl Kupperman, "Fear of Hot Climates in the Anglo-American Colonial Experience," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 41 (1984): 213–40.

102. Bodin, *Method*, 95.

103. *The first Three English books on America. Being chiefly Translations, Compilations, &c. by Richard Eden, from the Writings, Maps, &c. of Pietro Martire, Sebastian Munster, and Sebastian Cabot*, ed. Edward Arber (Millwood, N.Y.: Kraus Reprint Co., 1971), 104.

. . . good or bad, according as the inclination of the place beareth, where they are seated; and being removed from one soile to another (as plants are) they take a new complexion."[104]

Fears of such transformations are audible as well in the literature promoting settlement in southerly Virginia. Guarding against the fear that Virginia's climate would quite "undo" them as Englishmen, the tracts again and again claim that Virginia is "very agreeable to our natures,"[105] that "The aire of the Countrey . . . is very temperate and agreeth well with our bodies."[106] These authors repeatedly insist that Virginia's climate approximates that of England, Crashaw even imaginatively linking the two land masses through the image of a bridge: "onely this passage into Virginiea, being into the West Southwest, or thereabouts, is in that true temper so faire, so safe, so secure, so easie, as though God himselfe had built a bridge for men to passe from England to Virginia."[107] Conceding that Virginia is indeed lower in latitude than En-

104. Michel de Montaigne, "An Apology for Raymond Sebond," in George Saintsbury, ed., *Essays*, trans. Florio (1603), 2 vols. (New York: AMS Press, 1967), 2:297–98. In light of these observations linking human complexion to climate, I find very convincing Karen Ordahl Kupperman's observation that early English emphasis on the "perfect constitution of body" observable in the Indians should be seen as in part demonstrating "the holsomnesse and temperature of this Climate"—that is, as a response to anxieties of *self*-alteration on the part of the English; see her *Indians and English: Facing off in Early America* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2000), esp. 9. I also see this sort of defensive recuperation at work in English insistence on the "whiteness" of native skin color; by emphasizing the extent to which Native Americans have been altered in color through the application of dyes and oils, rather than by exposure to Virginia's climate, the English appeased their own fears that they would be remade in an unfamiliar climate. For a discussion of native skin color, see, for instance, William Strachey, *The Historie of Travell into Virginia Britania*, ed. Louis B. Wright and Virginia Freund, The Hakluyt Society (London: Maclehose, 1953), 71 and 113; see also Karen Ordahl Kupperman, *Settling with the Indians: The Meeting of English and Indian Cultures in America, 1580–1640* (Totowa, N.J.: Rowman and Littlefield, 1980), 35–37. In his *New Englands Prospect* (London, 1634), by contrast, William Wood preys on these fears. He argues that New England's climate is ideal for "English bodies" (7) by contending that Virginia is too hot to be "suiteable to an ordinary English constitution," since the heat alters the natural English complexion by "[drying] up much English blood. . . . changing their complexion not into swarthinesse, but into Palenesse." By contrast, he observes that the New England climate maintains their "naturall complexions," which he describes not as "white" but as "ruddy," denoting a sanguine (i.e., hot and wet) temperament characteristic of northern nations (9–10). He, therefore, defines the English as a red race.

105. Johnson, *Nova Britannia*, sig. B4.

106. Whitaker, *Good Newes from Virginia*, sig. I2.

107. Crashaw, *Sermon Preached Before Lord Lawarre*, sig. E^{v}.

gland, these authors nevertheless try to minimize the implications of these differences, analogizing Virginia's climate to the "south of England," and thereby casting the as yet unfamiliar terrain in familiar terms. To shore up their claims, they would point to the as yet brief experience of English planters abroad, insisting that they "doe not complaine of any alteration, caused by distemper of the Climate."[108] But intimations to the contrary would eventually arrive home. In fact notions of mutability, degeneration, and racial decline would centrally inform the colonial experience for decades, even centuries to come, attesting to the power of ancient theories of embodiment and eluding the efforts of stage and page to strategically deploy them.[109]

GENEALOGIES

That is not to say that these media lacked a shaping influence on such theories of identity. Quite the contrary. Accounts surrounding settlement in Virginia, like contemporary plays on the London stage, participated in a shift in conceptions of racial identity for the early modern period. Part of the cultural work that together they performed was to replace "lynes" with "lands" as the authoring agent of a people, expanding earlier definitions of "race" defined as lineage to include emergent notions of "race" defined as nation. Conceptions of identity as passing from one generation to the next were slowly transmuted into spatially based identities. But even as they embraced a notion of "English bodies" produced by an English geography, such ideas would in turn generate anxieties regarding the instability of land-based identity. For these emergent notions of race-as-nation were expressed in and through discourses of the early modern body, a body felt to be porous, permeable, and prone to change. Just as this body could not defend itself against the ravages of time, it could not evade the transformations brought about by spatial dislocation. Both sets

108. See Crashaw, *Sermon Preached Before Lord Lawarre*, sig. E2.

109. For an excellent discussion of how this ambivalence, this "dynamic of dread and regeneration," characterized settlement in the New World, see Michael Zuckerman, "Identity in British America: Unease in Eden" in Nicholas Canny and Anthony Pagden, eds., *Colonial Identity in the Atlantic World, 1500–1800* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1987), 120. Zuckerman quotes John Lawson's observation of 1709 regarding "how apt human nature is to degenerate" (137). For an excellent discussion of the alien nature of America for early English settlers and fears of its transformative powers, see also John Canup, *Out of the Wilderness: The Emergence of an American Identity in Colonial New England* (Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan University Press, 1990). For the perception that America produced her English "offspring" as degenerative still later in the eighteenth century, see Kariann Yokota, "'To pursue the stream to its fountain': Race, Inequality, and the Post-Colonial Exchange of Knowledge across the Atlantic," *Explorations in Early American Culture* 5 (2001): 173–229.

of experience would be recorded under the term "degeneration." Like the bloodlines of noble British and Saxon fathers, which were believed subject to dilution through a range of physical agents, national bodies, because the "products" of precise geographies and climes, could themselves be rewritten by foreign conditions. Denying the alterity at the heart of the English and British races would be the project of subsequent racialisms. But in *Cymbeline* and the Virginia tracts, "race" remains a question and a problem. Is race defined by "noble Saxons bloud" or can blood itself be transformed for better (by the rigors of a Welsh or Virginia climate and lifestyle) or worse (by the heat and luxury of the south)?