

THE VANISHING VOYAGER AND THE EMERGING OUTSIDER, 1818-1930

Rebecca Nesvet

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Approved by:

Jeanne Moskal

Ruth Salvaggio

Megan Matchinske

María DeGuzmán

Ruth Salvaggio

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## ABSTRACT

Rebecca Nesvet: *The Vanishing Voyager and the Emerging Outsider, 1818-1930*  
(Under the direction of Jeanne Moskal)

While some contemporary scholars have examined the nineteenth-century evolution of voyage and exploration literature, the cultural critic Joseph Roach has shown how “surrogation,” or reinventive replacement of lost elements, produces culture. I integrate these two critical pursuits by examining nineteenth-century literary surrogations of a haunting pantheon: famous British voyagers who mysteriously vanished overseas.

I argue that the occasion of voyager disappearance creates a rupture in the official expedition narrative, which presents writers with the opportunity to reinvent and repurpose that narrative to serve new rhetorical purposes. Nineteenth-century coterie authors repurposed vanished voyagers’ narratives to sidelines official voyagers and instead foreground figures that I call *outsider voyagers*: traveling “savages,” political pariahs, Byronic heroes, non-English Britons, women, and queer subjects.

I contend that nineteenth-century authors including Mary Shelley, Lord Byron, and James Malcolm Rymer present their outsider voyager protagonists as travelers, writers, and cultural critics, whose unauthorized voyage narratives depart from the official voyage-narrative tradition by questioning British imperialism, patriarchy, and other elite ideologies. By surrogating historical and largely forgotten vanished voyagers, nineteenth-century British writers facilitated the emergence of the outsider voyager protagonist.

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## **PREFACE**

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BLJ	<i>Byron's Letters and Journals</i>
CPW	<i>Lord Byron: Complete Poetic Works</i>
CUP	Cambridge University Press
CWOW	<i>Complete Works of Oscar Wilde</i>
DNB	<i>Dictionary of National Biography</i>
EEBO	<i>Early English Books Online</i>
ECCO	<i>Eighteenth Century Collections Online</i>
EUP	Edinburgh University Press
ELH	<i>English Literary History</i>
HUP	Harvard University Press
JHUP	Johns Hopkins University Press
JSTOR	<i>Journal Storage</i>
NCCO	<i>Nineteenth Century Collections Online</i>
MGM	Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Studios
MWSJ	<i>The Journals of Mary Shelley</i>
MWSL	<i>The Letters of Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley</i>
NMM	National Maritime Museum
NSW	<i>Novels and Selected Works of Mary Shelley</i>
OED	<i>Oxford English Dictionary</i>
OUP	Oxford University Press
PUP	Princeton University Press
RN	Royal Navy



SIR	<i>Studies in Romanticism</i>
SRN	Surgeon, Royal Navy
UHP	University of Hawaii Press
UTP	University of Toronto Press
VDL	<i>Sophia Cracroft: Diary, Van Diemen's Land and Voyage to England</i>
YUP	Yale University Press

## Introduction

Louis-Edouard-Paul Fournier's 1889 painting *The Funeral of Shelley* notoriously departs from the historical facts of Percy Bysshe Shelley's 1822 funeral (Eisner 111, London 253, Nicholl 24, Parsons 22, Wheatley "Attracted" 175). In the painting, Mary Shelley kneels in prayer for her husband, while, at center, Lord Byron gazes at the pristine remains.<sup>1</sup> Standing slightly apart from fellow mourners Leigh Hunt and Edward John Trelawny, Byron perhaps sees in Shelley his *doppelgänger*, foreshadowing Byron's imminent death. Most strangely, in July, the mourners wear heavy cloaks and boots, and the windswept "grey and cold" beach (Walker Art Gallery), almost entirely bereft of vegetation, looks less Italian than Arctic.

Fournier's anachronisms, inventions, and incongruities make sense if he envisioned Shelley as an explorer, an archetype that emerged in the nineteenth century (Craciun, "What is an Explorer?" 30). Trelawny's 1858 memoir characterizes Shelley as an explorer, claiming the poet consciously emulated the "daring" of "old navigators" including "Diaz" (Bartolomeu Dias) and William Bligh (Trelawny 95). Shelley's literary activity also associated him with explorers. Two of the most famous Victorian explorers, Sir John Franklin and David Livingstone, wrote memoirs of their travels, then died or disappeared abroad. While Franklin left a pious widow and

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<sup>1</sup>Mary Shelley did not attend. Byron swam out to sea in order not to watch, and died thirteen months later in April 1824 (Holmes 730). Although the body of the historical Shelley disintegrated beyond recognition before its discovery, Fournier's corpse's intactness draws attention to the poet's body as a body. Fournier's depiction of the body's incineration suggests an *auto-da-fé*, affirming Shelley's self-identification as an infidel, or the cremation of Hector with which the *Iliad* concludes.

fellow explorers, so does Fournier's Shelley. Dying at the edge of the habitable world, Fournier's Shelley perfectly embodies the Victorian explorer.<sup>2</sup> Thus contextualized, the painting contains no mistakes. It poses the same question as Sir Edwin Landseer's Franklin-inspired painting *Man Proposes, God Disposes* (1864). Both paintings ask whether explorers' defiance of limits justifies the inherent risks.

Fournier's *Funeral of Shelley* succinctly visualizes the constellation of phenomena that this dissertation investigates. Responding to Robert Browning's wish to have "see[n] Shelley plain," Fournier participates in the culture-making reinvention or, as Joseph Roach puts it, "surrogation" of conspicuously vanished aspects of culture (Roach 2-5). Fournier's imagery also suggests the impact of European imperialist voyagers' mysterious disappearances upon their literary circles, and, via those circles, upon the literary culture of the nineteenth century. These phenomena deserve investigation because voyagers' disappearances affected some of the most celebrated nineteenth-century literary families. In the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Admiralty-backed, official expeditions created absences in the prominent Byron, Graham, and Franklin families. Several members of the *fin-de-siècle* Wilde family fashioned themselves as intrepid voyagers and vanished from British society. How do these vanishing voyagers influence the writings of surviving relatives? To what rhetorical ends do nineteenth-century literary families represent, re-enact, and

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<sup>2</sup>Searchers for Franklin included the young Frenchman Joseph-René Bellot, who drowned on his quest in 1853 (Spufford 94, Cavell 192). Perhaps, therefore, Fournier's Shelley articulates Bellot's narrative.

repurpose vanishing voyagers? In what ways do such reinventions shape the canonical literature that those coterie writers produced?

In response to these questions, I contend that several of the Byron, Graham, Franklin, and Wilde kinship coterie writers surrogate elite vanishing voyagers in new narratives that foreground voyaging outsiders: “savages,” pariahs, non-English Britons and women. These writers derive authority from their self-fashioning as intrepid voyagers, and deploy it to synthesize the unauthorized voyage narratives of traveling “savages,” political pariahs, Byronic heroes, non-English Britons, women, and queer subjects, questioning British imperialism, patriarchy, and other elite ideologies. By surrogating historical and largely forgotten vanished voyagers, nineteenth-century British writers facilitated the emergence of the outsider voyager protagonist.

In making this argument, I integrate two well-established critical pursuits. These are the study of the nineteenth-century evolution of the explorer and the study of nineteenth-century literary families or kinship coterie writers. According to William St Clair, during the Romantic era, the topic of “foreign travel, exploration, and antiquities” proved more popular than any other with the exception of religion (St Clair, *Reading Nation* 253). Amanda Gilroy, surveying the contents of her edited anthology *Romantic Geographies: Discourses of Travel, 1775-1844*, proposes that Romantic “travel writing” was “perhaps the most capacious cultural holdall” because it was interdisciplinary and crossed ideological lines. It offered the potential for the assertion of British superiority, for liberation rhetoric, and for self-reflexive cultural

critique. Speaking to a diverse variety of audiences, this “hybrid discourse” mirrors the heterogeneous nature of British culture during the nineteenth century, a time of imperial expansion and political, social, and scientific flux (Gilroy 1-3).

Voyage lore in particular commanded attention. It circulated in nineteenth-century scientific networks (Fulford, Kitson, and Lee); preoccupied the popular press, which tended to present exploration in the terms of romance (Richard, Cavell); and signified British imperialist masculinity (Hill). Regency and Victorian culture often invited the public to play at imperialist voyaging. Crowds flocked to the London “Arctic panorama” exhibited in 1818 by the impresario Robert Barker to tour its immersive virtual environment (Garrison). Children played the board game *Geographical Recreation or A Voyage Round the Habitable Globe* (1809). Revealing this cultural obsession, Mary Ann Hedge’s novella *The Orphan Sailor Boy, or the Young Arctic Voyager* (1824) features a young boy hero who emulates his grandfather, a veteran of the 1773 Arctic expedition of Constantine John Phipps (later Lord Mulgrave). At the resolution of the story, the boy joins the Royal Navy, ready to replace his late grandfather on the national quest. Such exploration-themed books, games, and spectacles proved not only recreational but re-creational, encouraging players mentally to re-create famous voyages (Bayfield 150), just as, according to Trelawny, Percy Bysshe Shelley childishly did.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>Such exploration-themed “recreations” suggest that exploration itself is a re-creative activity. Imperialist voyagers reinvent and therefore re-create cartography, political geography, and the cultures of the contact zones.

Voyages of exploration fascinated other canonical Romantic writers, too. Early in the twentieth century, John Livingston Lowes argued that Coleridge's *Rime of the Ancient Mariner* and *Kublai Khan* exploit his extensive reading of voyage literature, including William Dampier's *New Voyage Round the World* (1697), William Bartram's *Travels* in North America (1791), and accounts of the 1770s voyages of James Cook and the 1789 mutiny on the *Bounty* (Lowes 44-9, 26-7). More recent monographs have examined Byron's treatment of "border zones," including frontiers (Oliver, *Scott* and "Dark Barriers") and "historical places," including those encountered on his peregrinations (Cheeke 5). Lowes theorized a broader connection between travel, exploration, and the imagination. Physical voyages and exploration of "the nature of men themselves [...] draw together in great fictions" because "voyages into unknown seas," like the *Ancient Mariner's*, "and travels along uncharted roads," like Marco Polo's, "have always profoundly stirred imaginative minds" (Lowes 4). Sea voyages and overland treks both captivated the British imagination, shaping the archetypal voyager and his encounter with the denizens of the "contact zones" (Pratt 9), or spaces where European travelers met indigenous people.

However, in the Romantic era, no single idiom categorically distinguished the protagonist of the voyage-of-discovery narrative from other travelers or maritime professionals. Before the Victorian era, the rarely-used term "explorer" generally connoted espionage. Historically, a number of terms encompassed the types that eventually came to be bundled together as the explorer. These terms litter the indexical titles of Richard Hakluyt's seminal *Principal Navigations, Voyages,*

*Traffiques, and Discoveries of the English Nation* (1586, expanded 1598-1600), William Dampier's *New Voyage Round the World* (1698), and John Hawkesworth's *Account of the Voyages Undertaken by the Order of his Present Majesty, for Making Discoveries in the Southern Hemisphere* (1773), the last of which calls its protagonists "the Several Commanders" (Craciun, "What is an Explorer?" 31). This diversity of terms reveals that the hero of the emerging discovery-voyage narrative was long a creature without a definite name.

That namelessness changed in the nineteenth century, due to the exigencies of British imperialism. From 1818-1845, the "polar publishing nexus" of Admiralty Secretary John Wilson Croker, Undersecretary John Barrow, and the printers John Murray I, II, and III produced a constant stream of literature about Admiralty-backed voyages, often nominally written by the voyagers but actually ghostwritten, that aimed to discover and survey new lands and sea routes and to claim territory for Britain. Meanwhile, the Admiralty confiscated sailors' voyage notes, maligning those voyagers who succeeded in publishing unauthorized memoirs. By simultaneously requiring that voyages be published by established, authorized Admiralty explorers (or requiring at least the appearance of such publication) while delegitimizing the published narratives of civilian voyagers and disfavored Royal Navy men, the nexus helped to shape a new type: an intrepid, fearless, European voyager authorized by Britain (Craciun, "Franklin and Frankenstein" 441, "What is an Explorer" 31-2). He



braves considerable dangers to seek scientific knowledge, to record firsthand observations, and, most importantly, to publish his narrative.<sup>4</sup>

In the later nineteenth century, this voyager-author type came to be bound up in a composite called the “explorer.” This term retroactively described long-dead maritime navigators (Craciun “What is an Explorer?” 29-30). However, as maritime expeditions gave way to exploration of interior spaces, such as the Arctic, Africa, and Western Australia, overland explorers earned celebrity; none more so than the missionary Livingstone (Jeal, *Livingstone* 2). Late Victorian female extreme travelers such as Isabella Bird Bishop, Lady Florence Douglas Dixie, and Mary Kingsley fashioned themselves as explorers, embodying the controversial “New Woman.” Another equally futuristic traveler appeared in *fin-de-siècle* fiction, though not reality: the Time Traveler. In H. G. Wells’s fiction, Chronic Argonaut and the Time Traveler consider themselves explorers, tracing their vocational lineage to Columbus and the mythological ancient Greek navigator Jason.

To investigate the explorer’s shaping by nineteenth-century kinship coterie writers may seem counterintuitive. After all, explorers by definition leave home, distancing themselves from their physical residences in their home countries and from

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<sup>4</sup>The term’s modern connotation, “one who explores (a country or place)” first appeared in 1812, in the *Private Diary of Travels, Personal Services, and Public Events*, of Sir Robert Thomas Wilson (OED; cited in Craciun, “What is an Explorer?” 31). The Army officer and Long War veteran Wilson’s published “private” diary described his adventures in Russia and France. The “explorer’s” martial and continental etymological origin anticipates British imperialism’s development of the explorer archetype. Moreover, Wilson’s title highlights the autobiographical, authorial function of the explorer, expected to publish his “private” experiences and world-changing acts in the same narrative.

the other inhabitants of those residences.<sup>5</sup> However, Royal Navy men did, despite appearances, rely upon their families to transform them into voyagers and explorers. The Admiralty's preferment policies created the Byron naval dynasty, distinguished by John Byron, celebrated circumnavigator, his son George Anson Byron (the poet's uncle) and his grandson, George Anson Byron, Seventh Baron Byron (the poet's cousin and heir). Sir John Franklin's uncle Matthew Flinders, circumnavigator of Australia, secured Franklin a commission and commanded his first voyage. Franklin later promoted his own niece's husband to an unmerited position as second-in-command of the doomed 1845 Arctic expedition.<sup>6</sup> These men's families helped them to become elite navigators.

Romantic and Victorian families also often helped their aspiring explorer members to fulfill the vocation's authorial requirement. In the late eighteenth century, the family became an important engine of literary productivity. William St Clair's 1989 anecdotal portrait of the Wollstonecraft-Godwin-Shelley dynasty as a model "literary family" presents a case study of this phenomenon. Sharon Lynne Joffe

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<sup>5</sup>For example, Lady Diana Jolliffe Belcher, stepdaughter of the *Bounty* survivor Peter Heywood and wife of one of Franklin's futile searchers, Sir Edward Belcher, unsuccessfully fought a legal battle to separate from him on grounds of abandonment. The Victorian court system forced Lady Belcher back into her marital home (Phillimore). For another Victorian explorer, Stanley, exploration offered an alternative to domestic life. His American fiancée Alice Pike, aware of his ambivalence about marriage, broke their engagement during his African expedition. He blamed her bitterly, but her decision may have saved them both from the Belchers' fate (Hyam 40; Orenstein 38).

<sup>6</sup>Royal Navy surveyor Edward Kendall, husband of Mary Ann Kay, daughter of Franklin's sister, escaped the fate of Franklin's crew by dying shortly before the expedition's embarkation. When another niece of Franklin, Sophia Cracroft, rejected the veteran Antarctic explorer Francis Crozier's marriage proposal, Crozier became despondent. Perhaps he feared that without becoming a member of the Flinders-Franklin family, coveted offices would remain out of his reach.

considers the “kinship coterie” of the women of the interrelated Wollstonecraft-Godwin-Shelley households. To be a kinship coterie, a group of writers must not only be “linked by familial bonds,” but must also “view each other as a chosen audience” and “share certain interests which then become translated into their individual literary enterprises” (Joffe x). More recently, Scott Krawczyk has analyzed the dynamics of several Romantic-era literary families, including the Aikin-Barbaulds, Edgeworths, and Lambs. Building upon the sociologist Naomi Tadmor’s study of the eighteenth-century “family” as household, lineage, or kinship group, Krawczyk persuasively argues that “the burgeoning influence of the family as both an affective unit and a source of economic production” facilitated “literary collaboration in the Romantic era” that was “characteristically familial,” both within and across generations (Krawczyk x-xi). Explorers and their families participated in these trends. For example, Franklin’s two wives, the poet Eleanor Porden Franklin (d. 1825) and Lady Jane Franklin, created his unwarranted reputation as a national hero, in part by copying, editing, and promoting his three memoirs (Hill 54, 69-82; Spufford 95, 113). Therefore, although the nineteenth-century explorer proved an extremely prominent type of author, exploration literature often emerged from the space of the British home and the institution of the family or kinship coterie.

My first three chapters present a case study of the Byron family’s involvement with exploration, exploration literature, and some of its most prominent imaginative transpositions. My first chapter, “Patagonian Giants and Frankenstein’s Creature,” concerns the figurative family temporarily established in 1816 Geneva by Lord

Byron, Percy Bysshe Shelley, and Mary Godwin after their alienation from their respective childhood and marital households in England. I argue that, inspired by a legend that Byron's grandfather, Commodore John Byron, encountered giants in Patagonia, *Frankenstein* gives voice to a giant, the Creature, who displaces his explorer-discoverer Walton from the narrative and replaces him as the narrator. By substituting a gigantic outsider-explorer for Captain Walton, Mary Shelley challenges the hegemony of the Admiralty elite that authorized the Commodore's voyage and his official narrative.

My second chapter, "Fletcher Christian, Byron's Pacific Jacobite" concerns Lord Byron's own response to his family history of navigation. Informed by Julia Wright's postcolonial study of Irish reactions to British colonization in India, I propose that Byron's verse epic *The Island, or Christian and his Comrades* (1823) triangulates Scotland, England, and the Pacific islands to create a counterfactual resolution to the fragmentary history of the vanished *Bounty* mutineer Fletcher Christian. While the British imperialist narrative about the aftermath of the mutiny, promoted by the Regency press, claimed that Christian founded a remote English colony in the Pacific and died a repentant Christian, Byron's Christian colonizes a Pacific island for a new Scottish nation, echoing the mid-eighteenth century Jacobite struggle. In the *Island*, Byron relates a voyage narrative, as his grandfather did, but replaces his grandfather's imperialism with a marginalized political agenda, as did Mary Shelley in *Frankenstein*. Byron warns that transoceanic imperialism can create opportunities for subaltern national self-determination, which can in turn give rise to

post-colonial imperialism, as in the republics of the Americas.

My third Byron-themed chapter, “Hawaii’s Voyager King,” shifts the focus from Lord Byron’s coteries to the Scottish Dundas-Graham family. Maria Graham, daughter and widow of two naval officers who died on colonial expeditions, wrote a prose nonfiction *Voyage of the HMS Blonde to the Sandwich Islands, 1824-6, Captain Lord Byron, Commander* (1826), which documents a voyage to Hawaii undertaken by Byron’s cousin. In this text, I argue, Graham challenges the dominant binary paradigm of the “English navigator” and the “savage” indigene of the contact zones; a paradigm that demonized the Hawaiians and excluded her deceased Scottish kinsmen. She reinvents Kaméhaméha II, King of Hawaii, as an honorary Briton who undertakes a voyage of exploration to Britain. Anomalously for an indigenous Pacific Islander in a British voyage narrative, Graham’s “Tamehameha” dictates the terms of Hawaiian-English contact. After he dies among (though not *of*) the (London) crowd, Graham insists that he maintains agency and influence exceeding that of her nominally Byronic titular captain.

While Roach investigated how communities in London and New Orleans have surrogated their losses, using selective memory to create culture, I identify several surrogations of absent Victorian voyagers performed by individuals. I argue that several fictional and historical women performed surrogations of the roles of explorer kinsmen who had vanished from Victorian Britain. The fourth chapter, “The Disappearing Explorer’s Female Surrogate,” concerns female surrogates of missing explorers in James Malcolm Rymer’s hugely influential but underappreciated novel

*The String of Pearls, or the Demon Barber* (serialized 1846-7, expanded 1850), which introduced the character of Sweeney Todd, and in the travel writings of Sophia Cracroft, niece of the Arctic explorer Sir John Franklin. While in *The String of Pearls*, the fiancée of a vanished British explorer surrogates him in London, playing an explorer and a man in order to rescue him, Cracroft's travel writing surrogates within the Franklin kinship coterie the explorer's role abandoned by her missing uncle. Both women derive newfound purpose, agency, and freedom from their surrogations: Johanna in order to save her fiancé and embody the ideal Victorian wife, and Cracroft in order to seize agency and purpose without marrying. Comparing these surrogations suggests that Victorian women could perform in the traditionally masculine role of the explorer in order to uphold patriarchal institutions or to live outside them.

My fifth and final chapter, "Mr. Wilde, I Presume?" documents a pair of twentieth-century writer-artists' surrogations of their self-fashioned voyager forebear, showing that they repurpose this figure overtly to contest Victorian ideologies and values. I argue that after the death of Oscar Wilde (1900), his nephew Arthur Cravan and niece Dolly Wilde remembered him as a traveler, associating him with a persona he had briefly adopted while traversing North America in 1882. Cravan and Dolly Wilde each surrogated this voyager persona in their own travel writing and performance art. Exaggerating Oscar Wilde's explorer credentials, Cravan imagined him as an explorer of Africa and repurposed his image to advance "modern art," which differs significantly from the artistic traditions that Oscar Wilde had promoted.

Dolly Wilde reinvented her uncle's traveler persona as a female traveler and travel writer in the context of her lesbian artistic coterie. In so doing, she recognized queer female subjects and communities as cultural authorities, a possibility that neither her uncle nor cousin had imagined.

These chapters will demonstrate that nineteenth-century coterie writers' reinventions of the disappearing explorer deserve scholarly attention for their pertinence to the discourses of exploration, family dynamics, literary kinship coteries, speculative writing, postcolonial historiography, nascent Modernism, gender and queer studies, and the performance of personal and cultural memory. Just as Commodore Byron, Christian, Kaméhaméha II, Franklin, and Oscar Wilde haunted their kinship coteries and surviving contemporaries, the vanishing voyager and his materializing outsider counterpart haunt nineteenth- and early twentieth-century literary culture.

## Chapter 1. Patagonian Giants, Frankenstein's Creature



“From my earliest remembrance,” the Creature tells Victor Frankenstein, “I had been as I then was in height and in proportion,” but “had never yet seen a being resembling me [. . .] . What was I?” His eight-foot-plus “stature far exceeds” that of others, and he suspects himself “not even of the same nature as man” (*Frankenstein* 90). In this chapter, I will historicize the longing experienced by a giant in a Regency novel by showing *Frankenstein’s* unmistakable allusions to the Patagonians, a “race of giants” associated with the circumnavigator Commodore John Byron, mentioned by his poet grandson and known to Mary Shelley and their shared Regency literary coterie. In the eighteenth century, the myth of the Patagonian giants significantly influenced the development of anthropology because European scientific networks enlisted the giants to define the human species and to classify its internal variations. The Creature echoes this historic controversy when he investigates his identity, genesis, and relation to “man.”

Mary Shelley introduces specific innovations into the received discourse of passive, speechless Patagonian giants described by intrepid European men. Her Creature displaces his British discoverer Robert Walton in the narrative and replaces him in the role of voyager-protagonist that, as we have seen, emerged in the early nineteenth century. The Creature surpasses Walton’s progress in that role and reproduces the violence of generations of European voyagers. By shifting the site of narrative power, Mary Shelley challenges the nascent literary figure of the benevolent

British voyager-hero, contributing a hitherto unrecognized component to the novel's well established critique of contemporaneous Arctic exploration policy.<sup>7</sup> The novel's conclusion literalizes this negation, when the abrupt termination of Walton's final letter marks his disappearance from the text and suggests his premature death in the Arctic, despite his protestations that he now recognizes the claim of domestic affections against imperialist aims.<sup>8</sup> Walton's disappearance implies that the British voyager cannot exist as described.

Early nineteenth-century Britain understood the indigenous people of Patagonia as giants, the study of which could define the human being and help to classify its component groups, including "races," "peoples," and "nations" (Duvernay-Bolens 226).<sup>9</sup> An 1803 London show featuring the 6'6" Venetian strongman Giovanni Belzoni advertised him as "the Patagonian Sampson" ("Town-Talk" 309). In 1819, *Blackwood's* welcomed a ship returning from Patagonia by celebrating the crew's discovery of "two chiefs or caciques who measured certainly eight feet in height" and "women [. . .] of the same proportion" ("*Patagonia*" 451-2). *Blackwood's* drew from the pseudoscience concerning the Patagonian giants dating from Ferdinand Magellan's 1520 discovery of Tierra del Fuego. There, Magellan "saw a giant [. . .] so tall that the tallest of us only came up to his waist." Magellan

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<sup>7</sup>In *Frankenstein*, Mary Shelley critiqued the Arctic exploration project of the Naval undersecretary Sir John Barrow, which involved the launch of a celebrated 1818 expedition (Craciun "Writing the Disaster," Spufford, Hill, Lew).

<sup>8</sup>Michelle Levy has argued that Mary Shelley and Coleridge presented domestic affection as "the primary tool for restraining" violence associated with exploration.

<sup>9</sup>Earlier Europeans had considered that multiple human species might also exist (Duvernay-Bolens 226, 271).

called this man's people "Pathagoni," from which term derives "Patagonia," apparently after the *Gran Patagón*, the giant from the 1512 Spanish romance *Primaleon de Grecia*, which Magellan read before his 1519 departure (Hulme 10; Peñaloza 2).<sup>10</sup> Magellan and his Italian chronicler Antonio Pigafetta considered the Patagonians "outsiders to humanity" and early modern cartographers agreed (Duvernay-Bolens 30).<sup>11</sup> Sebastian Münster (1544), Pieter Apian (1550) and Diego Gutiérrez (1562) designated the southernmost part of South America the *Regio Gigantum*, or "land of giants" (Suárez 83 plate 16, Conley 76, Peñaloza 5-6). For centuries thereafter, the image of these apocryphal creatures "haunted deliberations of the definition of the human and of the boundaries between humans and other beings." After the mid-eighteenth century Linnaean watershed, naturalists classified humans as animals and made the Patagonian giants a key to the rules of human variety, a role they maintained until the mid-nineteenth century. This role lent the Patagonians an urgent significance: knowledge of their nature could demystify human nature (Duvernay-Bolens 233, 30, 324).<sup>12</sup>

The enigmatic Patagonians made a celebrity of Commodore Byron who, several accounts insisted, encountered them on his 1764-66 circumnavigation and

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<sup>10</sup>Magellan's term was long considered a corruption of five-cubit ("penta"), or large, feet, but there are no references to that etymology in early Spanish sources. In the twentieth century, the Argentine philologist María Rosa Lida de Malkiel identified *Primaléon* as the more plausible source (Hulme 10; Peñaloza 2).

<sup>11</sup>"Etrangers à l'humanité" (Duvernay-Bolens 30). All translations from Duvernay-Bolens are mine, as there is no English edition.

<sup>12</sup>"De Pigafetta à d'Orbigny, les géants Patagons ont hanté les discussions de la définition de l'homme et les limités les séparant des autres creatures" (Duvernay-Bolens 324).

later dehumanized them in his recollections of the encounter. The unauthorized, anonymous *Voyage Round the World in His Majesty's Ship the Dolphin*, reportedly written by one of Byron's officers, purported to describe the "Gigantic People called Patagonians." This text having been unmasked as an unauthorized narrative, the Admiralty published an authorized version of the voyage, narrated in Commodore Byron's persona but compiled from his dictation by professional writer John Hawkesworth (Adams 40-41). Conceding disagreement among "ocular witnesses" who saw Patagonians, Hawkesworth's Commodore Byron recalls meeting a Patagonian "of a gigantic stature." This "frightful colossus" ruled "monsters in human shape [. . .] enormous hobgoblins." Standing "not much less than seven feet," male Patagonians are "giants," not "tall men" (Hawkesworth 1:33), just as Pigafetta theorized.<sup>13</sup> This description conforms to the paradigm identified by Mary Louise Pratt, wherein eighteenth-century European narratives render the indigenous people of South Africa "cultureless beings," ("*sans mœurs*") by making them "speechless, denuded, biologized bod[ies]" (Pratt 52). This depiction of the Patagonians contributed to Commodore Byron's fame (Adams 20).

Controversy concerning Commodore Byron's veracity kept the legend of the giants in public discourse. In the *Journal Encyclopédique* (1756-93), to which Rousseau and Voltaire contributed, the scientist and voyager Charles-Marie de la Condamine accused the Admiralty of perpetrating a hoax in order to rationalize their

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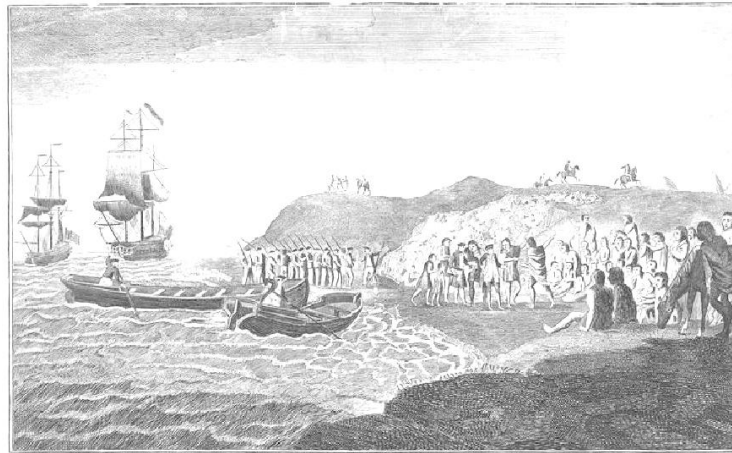
<sup>13</sup>Commodore Byron's lieutenant Samuel Wallis confirmed in his manuscript voyage notebook that "the Patigonians [sic]" stand "from 6 feet 4 to 7 feet in stature." Thus did Wallis caption a map of "Terra [sic] del Fuego" drawn by his crewmate George Pinnock (Wallis and Pinnock).

presence in South America. In fact, Condamine claims, the British discovered mineral wealth in Patagonia, and to hide this discovery, fabricated a story about giants (de la Condamine, trans. and qtd. in Adams 33). Another Frenchman, the voyager Louis-Antoine, Comte de Bougainville claimed that giant bones allegedly sighted in Patagonia were the bones of elephants (Rawson 345). According to the 1775 English translation of Georges Leclerc, Comte de Buffon's *Histoire Naturelle*, “at the extremity of Chili, it is pretended, there exists a race of men of gigantic size [. . .] nine to ten feet high [. . .] mentioned in the old narratives”; he himself doubts they exist (Buffon 1.274). The reference to “old narratives” suggests that Commodore Byron derived his report not from personal observation but from earlier voyagers of dubious credibility.



Fig. 2

"A Woman and Boy of Patagonia in South America, receiving Beads, &c., from Commodore (Now Admiral) Byron." Courtesy the New York Public Library.



"Representation of the Interview Between a COMMODORE, now ADMIRAL, BYRON and the PATAGONIANS."

Fig. 3

"A Representation of the Interview Between Commodore (now Admiral) Byron and the Patagonians." Courtesy the New York Public Library.

Lord Byron, who knew about the controversy concerning his grandfather and the Patagonians, may have contributed to Mary Shelley's knowledge of it. The poet joked in an 1819 letter to John Cam Hobhouse that the exploits of the Venezuelan revolutionary General José Antonio Páez have "proved my Grandfather spoke truth about the Patagonians—with his Gigantic country" (*BLJ* 217). In *Don Juan*, too, Byron satirizes belief in Patagonian racial giantism. He invokes the Greek mythological giant Briareus, him of many "hands and heads," and speculates that had this creature "all things multiplied / In such proportion" he could be an efficient polygamist. Then Byron abandons that tangent:

My Muse withstands  
The giant thought of being a Titan's bride,  
Or travelling in Patagonian lands;  
So let us back to Lilliput...  
(*CPW* 5:307, VI.28.217-22)

*Don Juan* also contains many appropriations from the exploits of John Byron as documented in his two published narratives (Asimov 227), including the shipwreck scene's reference to Lord Byron's "grand-Dad's narrative" (*CPW* 5:132, II.137.8). In the "Epistle to Augusta," Byron laments the legacy of "our grandsire's fate of yore; / He had no peace at sea, nor I on shore" (VI:300, ll. 17-8). Completed on July 26, 1816, a few weeks after Mary Shelley began *Frankenstein*, the "Epistle" suggests that Byron contemplated his grandfather's legacy that summer. The following October, so did Mary Shelley. In a letter to her husband, she called her step-niece Alba (later Allegra) Byron, the daughter of Lord Byron and therefore the Commodore's great-granddaughter, "the little bright-eyed Commodore" (*MWSL* 1:54). The legend of the Commodore shaped her understanding of the kinship coterie that she shared with her stepsister, step-niece, and Byron.

Mary Shelley's fascination with Lord Byron following their acquaintance in 1816 Geneva persuaded her to read about his grandfather's exploits, probably including those concerning the Patagonians. According to one biographer, she read the voyage narrative of George Anson, first commander of the young John Byron, "probably because of [Lord] Byron" (Sunstein 430). Several editions of Anson incorporate accounts of Commodore Byron's encounter with the Patagonians. These include George William Anderson's *Collection of Voyages around the World* (1790), which covers Anson's and Commodore Byron's voyages, also describing Patagonians of "Extraordinary Stature." Anderson finds "nothing about which travelers are more divided, than the height [of the] race of giants" (Anderson 3.794, 3.827). William



Portlock's *New, Complete, and Universal Collection of Authentic and Entertaining Voyages and Travels to All the Various Parts of the World* (1794) advertises contents including "Lord's Anson's Voyage Round the World," "Byron's Remarkable Voyage Round the World," and "That Gigantic Part of the Human Race the Patagonians" (Portlock title page). Having read Anson for his Byron connection, Mary Shelley's knowledge of the Commodore's famous discovery is highly probable.

Descriptions of Patagonian giants and deliberations about their relation to humanity inform Mary Shelley's 1815-16 reading, further suggesting that she knew of the myth. Her "voyages round the world" and "old voyages" (*MWSJ* 91, 142) probably include John Pinkerton's 1808-14 *General Collection of the Best and Most Interesting Voyages in All Parts of the World* (Piper 6), which contains Pigafetta's narrative of Magellan's "Patagonian giant" (Pinkerton 1.303-21). The Historiographer-Royal Sir William Robertson's *History of America* catalogues European observations from 1520 to 1775 of a Patagonian "gigantic race of men" (*NSW* 1:38n; Robertson, *America* 1.334-5). Mary Shelley's journals refer to "Buffon's gloomy geology" (*MWSJ* 117), and Victor Frankenstein "read[s] Pliny and Buffon with delight," finding these authors of great "interest and utility" (*NSW* 1:28). Logically, Frankenstein finds Buffon both interesting and useful, as Frankenstein aspires to engineer a giant. *Frankenstein's* citation of Buffon demonstrates Mary Shelley's familiarity with his work, and the thematic consistency of the citation suggests that she knew of his interest in the enigma of the giants.

Buffon's doubts about the existence of a "race" of giants echoes the received wisdom of the other naturalist cited by Victor Frankenstein in the same passage, Pliny the Elder (Gaius Plinius Secundus). In keeping with the classical myth of the Ages of Gold, Silver, Bronze, and Iron, Pliny asserts that over time, humanity has shrunk. Regarding "stature on the whole," Pliny states that "the entire human race is becoming smaller daily." Pliny supports this theory with archaeological and textual evidence. He reports the exhumation of a 10'6" tall corpse of the ancient hero Orestes and lists the tallest modern men: one 9'9" Gabbara of Arabia, contemporary of Claudius Caesar, and two 10'2" Romans, Pusio and Secundilla (Pliny 2.555, Book 7, Chapter 16). None belongs to a "race of giants," and Pliny individualizes them by recalling their names. Victor Frankenstein's simultaneous reading of Buffon and Pliny and the Creature's subsequent consultation of Victor's writing may have influenced the Creature's wonder about whether his "remarkable" stature indicates uniqueness or locates him in a gigantic "race."

However, the depiction of the Patagonians and of the Commodore that seems most clearly to inform *Frankenstein* is Horace Walpole's epistolary satire *The Giants Lately Discover'd*, first published anonymously in 1766 but attributed to Walpole in a 1798 reprint. That Mary Shelley may have read this text is suggested by the organization of the 1798 anthology. It is located immediately before Walpole's *Historic Doubts on the Life and Reign of King Richard III*, an acknowledged source for her 1830 historical romance *The Fortunes of Perkin Warbeck* (Lynch 147). In the same 1798 volume, *The Giants* immediately follows *The Castle of Otranto*, the first

Gothic novel, which scholars consider a major influence on *Frankenstein* (Mellor 196-97, Hogle 176). Having read the texts before and after *The Giants Newly Discover'd* in the 1798 Walpole, Mary Shelley probably read that text too.

Strong internal evidence identifies *The Giants Newly Discover'd* as a source of *Frankenstein*. Walpole satirically proposes that once “properly civilized, that is, enslaved” and subjected to British jurisdiction, the Patagonian Giants might revolt, becoming “our masters instead of our slaves” (Walpole 2:94). The Creature resembles Walpole’s giants when he concedes that he might have accepted a master-slave relationship had Frankenstein avoided neglect and tyranny. The Creature tells Frankenstein he “will be even mild and docile to my natural lord and king,” if Frankenstein “wil[l] also perform [his] part” (NSW 1:74). In a possible allusion to the destruction of the indigenes of the contact zones by Europeans, Walpole recommends the “poor monsters” of Patagonia must be studied before they are “exterminate[d]” (Walpole 2:92). Precisely such extermination occurs in *Frankenstein*. By destroying the female Creature, Frankenstein commits genocide (Reese 53). Mary Shelley answers Walpole’s call for “an heroic poem written by a [Patagonian] giant” by giving the Patagonian-like Creature a first-person voice (Walpole 2:102). Like Walpole, she maintains that the giant’s perspective is missing from scientific discourse about giants. When the Creature first awoke, Frankenstein recalls, “[h]e might have spoken, but I did not hear” (NSW 1:40). In striving to recover that obscured Patagonian perspective, Mary Shelley supplies the British reading public with Walpole’s giant-authored poetry.

The influence of the rumors about Patagonian giants helps to explain key details of Mary Shelley's novel. It clarifies why Frankenstein makes his artificial man much larger than natural men. "As the minuteness of the parts formed a great hindrance to my speed," Frankenstein tells Walton, "I resolved [. . .] to make the being of a gigantic stature; that is to say, about eight feet in height, and proportionably large." On the glacier, the Creature's "stature [. . .] seemed to exceed that of man." Walton affirms that the Creature is "gigantic in stature." Frankenstein also classifies his Creature as "[a] new species" (Reese 7), like the Patagonians. The rumors of Patagonian giants also explain the Creature's wish to relocate to "the deserts of the New World," specifically, "the vast wilds of South America" (NSW 1:128, 109). In Patagonia, as a giant among giants, he would not be persecuted again. Nor would the children whom he plans to generate with the female Creature—not in the historic and definitive *Regio gigantum*. Moreover, it would seem that the Creature is different from the Patagonians because he is a synthetic being, but so were they. According to skeptics like Buffon, the European imagination produced the Patagonian giants. Victor Frankenstein, as a late-eighteenth-century Swiss, belongs to the Francophone scientific community as Buffon, and much of the novel's dialogue (between Frankenstein, Walton, and the Creature) is apparently conducted in French. Like Commodore Byron in Patagonia as seen by French eyes, Walton probably imagines the Creature when he claims to have seen a "gigantic savage" cross the ice "towards the North" (NSW 1:37, 73, 166, 109, 16-7). Walton probably sees an Inuit

man (Piper 63). This racist misprision echoes the Commodore's alleged discovery of giants.

The giant Creature, affiliated with the abject Patagonians of Commodore Byron's narrative, invests them with agency by taking over the role of the voyager. He acts as a voyager, displacing, replacing, and professionally surpassing Walton. Like established voyagers, the Creature reads preceding investigators' narratives, which he then critiques, exemplifying Walpole's Patagonian poet who breaks the literary monopoly of his European discoverers. While the British voyager Walton is schooled in voyage literature provided by his Uncle Thomas, the Creature likewise pores over his predecessor Victor Frankenstein's journal, to find out his elusive origin. Critiquing this text, the Creature reports that it "minutely described [. . .] every step [Frankenstein] took" and thereby clarified his own "accursed origin." Monopolizing the discourse and dehumanizing the Creature, the journal details "the minutest description of [his] odious and loathsome person." Foregrounding the voyager and denying agency to the Creature, the journal "painted your horrors, and rendered mine ineffaceable" (*NSW* 1:97). This is a valid critique of European ethnologies of foreign peoples, including the Patagonians. Identifying himself as a fellow voyager and inverting this paradigm, the Creature tells Victor Frankenstein about his own interrelated investigations of his personal origins and the mysterious foreign culture of humanity. By thus making himself a voyager, the Patagonian-like Creature complicates the binary paradigm of passive, dehumanized Patagonian and heroic British voyager, emphasizing historical voyagers' inhumanity.

The same sort of appropriation of the British voyager's role characterizes the Creature's treatment of Frankenstein's body. According to Tim Fulford, Peter J. Kitson, and Debbie Lee, in the Romantic period, voyagers collected forensic specimens of frontier indigenes and provided these specimens to their scientific colleagues. Powerful scientists such as the Royal Society President Sir Joseph Banks facilitated this circulation of specimens (Fulford, Kitson and Lee 14). Sometimes, these scientific networks collected European specimens as well. The famous "Irish Giant" Charles Byrne feared posthumous desecration by anatomists. Ultimately, the anatomist and royal obstetrician Dr. John Hunter displayed Byrne's skeleton, and gloated about his acquisition (Youngquist 3). Melinda Cooper contends that, informed by nineteenth-century anatomists' practices, Mary Shelley's depiction of Frankenstein's treatment of the Creature morally complicates "teratological science," or the specimen-informed study of the malformed or monstrous (Cooper 93, Asma 45), and scholars have documented the influence on *Frankenstein* of the debates of the "body-snatching era" of British vivisection (Marshall 12).<sup>14</sup> However, the Creature attempts teratology too, once he becomes a voyager of the Arctic. Having driven the exhausted Frankenstein to his death, the Creature appropriates a specimen of moral monstrosity in the form of Frankenstein's body, and removes it from Walton's ship. By absconding with a Swiss specimen, and, moreover, with a vivisectionist's remains, the Creature inverts the European teratologist's relationship

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<sup>14</sup>Teratology is either "a discourse or narrative concerning prodigies" or "the study of monstrosities or abnormal formations in animals or plants" (*OED*).

with frontier indigenes and other supposed monsters. Moreover, at the North Pole, the only observer of Frankenstein's body might be the initial Inuit man on the sledge whom Walton mistook for a giant. That man and the Creature may form a small network of observation of Frankenstein's body, one that excludes the European scientific community.

By heading north with Frankenstein's body, the Creature pursues Walton's stated goal and that of a historical "Lieutenant Walton" and the British voyager Constantine Phipps: the discovery of a northeast passage.<sup>15</sup> At the end of the novel, Walton abandons this grail of European exploration and turns back to England, while the Creature resolves to depart "on the ice-raft" to "seek the most northern extremity of the globe" (*NSW* 1:170). Therefore, the Creature attains the leading position in the northward race, and declares that he will win that race. The Creature seems likely to achieve his goal, having already demonstrated his ability to travel and survive in cold and icy places by hiding in the Swiss glaciers, by leading Victor Frankenstein into the Arctic, and by drifting on an "ice-raft" to Walton's ship. His resemblance to Patagonian giants attests to his endurance to extreme cold and ice, as they inhabit one of the southernmost extremes of the then-known world, *Tierra del Fuego*.<sup>16</sup> By recording the Creature's plan to reach the Pole, Walton stakes on the Creature's

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<sup>15</sup>Frankenstein searches for a northeast passage, not a northwest one, because he tries to reach the Pacific Ocean from the Russian Arctic by way of the North Pole (Harvey, qtd. in Lew, 257). Lew theorizes that Robert Walton is named after a Lieutenant Walton who accompanied a 1739 Russian expedition to Japan (260-1). Phipps's failed attempt to breach the ice to the northeast of Russia has been proposed as a source for *Frankenstein* (Hill 185).

<sup>16</sup>The Creature may allude to that location in his plan to cremate Frankenstein's body at the North Pole, which would create a literal *tierra del fuego* ('land of fire').

behalf a first-discoverer's claim to the polar zone. Walton's first and final statements about the Creature therefore transform that character from a Patagonian "savage," object of European exploration, into a rival voyager.

Recognizing the Creature as an imperialist voyager likens his violence to historical attacks on "the American hemisphere[']s] original inhabitants" (NSW 1:89), a likeness which undermines the heroism of the archetypal imperialist voyager. "Only through the guilty act of conquest (invasion) can the innocent act of the [scientific] anti-conquest (seeing)" be carried out," Pratt reads in the African exploration narrative of John Barrow (Pratt 65), the architect of the Admiralty-Murray "polar publishing nexus" that *Frankenstein* criticizes (Craciun, "What is an Explorer?" 32). Similarly, after Felix de Lacey's violent response to the Creature's apparent invasion of his home, an invasion that the Creature sees as a benign transcultural encounter following equally benign study of the de Lacey's culture, the Creature turns against the objects of his study. "Unable to injure any thing human," he burns down their home, replicating the European invasion of America about which they had educated him (NSW 1:103-4). He continues his violently imperialist self-justification with his plan to found a colony in South America, populated entirely by his own race. He refuses to consider Frankenstein's view that the colony might "make the very existence of the species of man a condition precarious and full of terror" (NSW 1:89, 1:128) or might pose a genocidal threat to the pre-existing population. By making the Creature a violent, self-justifying imperialist voyager and by making his victims



named, European, individuals, Mary Shelley calculates exploration's catastrophic costs in terms that her European reading audience could understand.

The novel's conclusion indicates that these costs negate the European voyager's supposed heroism. The abrupt termination of Walton's unsigned final letter suggests that at the conclusion of his interview with the Creature, when he reports the Creature "lost in the darkness and distance," Walton himself also disappears (*NSW* 187). The British voyager vanishes in the Arctic, vanishes from the text he had been composing, and loses the possibility of remembrance as a hero. Therefore, Mary Shelley's first-person voicing of a giant reminiscent of the Patagonians, her investiture of this figure with the authoritative role of the voyager and exploration narrator, and her implication of this outsider-voyager in imperial violence inverts the site of critique, just as Walpole insinuated Patagonian literature would.

Mary Shelley's inversion of the Patagonian Giant's visibility and vocalicity in relation to the establishment European voyager also provides a new perspective on the Byronic Hero, equating it more with the indigene than the voyager. Peter J. Thorslev's long-definitive characterization of the Byronic hero as "a wanderer not from curiosity, but [. . .] because he is an outcast" also describes the Patagonian giants as imagined by Europeans such as the Commodore Byron. The Patagonians' sometime association with Biblical outcast-giants makes them "accursed of God" like

the Byronic Hero (Thorslev 104).<sup>17</sup> Like Byron's Childe Harold, the prototypical Byronic Hero, such a Patagonian would:

Kn[o]w himself most unfit  
Of men to herd with man, with which he held  
Little in common.  
(CPW 2:81, 3.12.100-2)

Byron's choice of the word "herd" identifies "man" as a category of animals, and Harold as a zoological outlier, like the Patagonians. Manfred's congenital exclusion from humanity also echoes the Patagonians'. By equating the Byronic Hero with Commodore Byron's giants, Mary Shelley demands from the Byronic Hero's Regency fans sympathy for the supposedly "savage" Patagonians.

Mary Shelley's equation of the Byronic Hero with the Patagonian giants reinforces her critique of the ethics of exploration and the scientific networks that foster it. While alienation by "nature" from humanity drives Byron's Manfred to aim "not [to] make, / But find a desolation" (CPW 4:92, ll. 126-7), the Creature finds desolate landscapes in the Swiss Alps, the Orkneys, and the Arctic, to which, as an outsider to humanity, he has been driven. The Creature's propensity for violence promises that in South America he would have caused "a desolation," as he does in Europe. If classifying men as monsters catalyzes desolation, then European science threatens to make monsters of the Patagonians.

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<sup>17</sup>Before Thorslev, Ernest J. Lovell sought the influence of the Byronic hero in Mary Shelley's novels, but confuses the historical figure of Lord Byron as known personally to Mary Shelley with the Byronic literary archetype. Lovell aims "to identify Castruccio [*Valperga*] and Falkner directly with Byron," referencing "the circumstances of Byron's life as well as [. . .] his character" and thereby to analyze the "major Byronic heroes [of] Mary Shelley's novels" and say something about "Mary's [sic] attraction to Byron" (Lovell 159).

Thus Mary Shelley consolidates the Patagonian as received from Commodore Byron with the Commodore's grandson's Byronic hero, in whose synthetic, ephemeral domestic coterie she famously began her novel. In creating a Byronic giant, she responds to the absence of literature told from the Patagonians' point of view. Displacing his British discoverer, her giant interpolates his own narrative into his establishment discoverer's epistolary voyage memoir, questioning the ethics of British imperialist exploration, its literature, and its networks of dissemination.

## Chapter 2. Fletcher Christian, Byron's Jacobite Voyager

According to legend, some Pacific islands reminded James Cook of his father's native country, Scotland. In 1774, Cook reached the coast of La Australia del Espíritu Santo ("Southern Land of the Holy Spirit"), long thought a peninsula of an undiscovered, habitable Great Southern Continent.<sup>18</sup> Circumnavigating Espíritu Santo, Cook found it an island, part of the archipelago known as the Great Cyclades.<sup>19</sup> Deducing that the coveted Great Southern Continent could not exist, Cook commemorated his geographical breakthrough by renaming the archipelago "New Hebrides," after Scotland's most remote group of outlying islands. Subsequently encountering a large island near the New Hebrides, Cook gave it another Scottish name, New Caledonia (Collingridge 299-302).<sup>20</sup> Although Cook left no explanation of his superimposition of Scottish names upon Pacific islands and probably never visited Scotland (Shineberg 11), modern biographers, historians, geographers and even the Lonely Planet guidebooks claim that, in his eyes, New Caledonia and the New Hebrides looked like the Scottish Highlands (Dugard 202,

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<sup>18</sup>The sixteenth-century Portuguese navigator Pedro Fernandes de Queirós discovered Espíritu Santo (present-day Vanuatu) in 1606 and claimed it for Spain (Collingridge 300).

<sup>19</sup>In 1768, Cook's French rival Louis Antoine, Comte de Bougainville discovered the Great Cyclades (Collingridge 301).

<sup>20</sup>The ancient Roman name for Scotland, "Caledonia" also denotes the short-lived (1699-1700) colony established at Darién in Central America by the sovereign Kingdom of Scotland. Its catastrophic failure proved Scottish imperialism impractical, eliminated a quarter of Scotland's liquidity and necessitated a bailout from the Bank of England that modern historians have identified as a factor in the Scottish acceptance of the Union (Prebble).

Harewood 114, McKinnon 176, Woods and Woods 68). This modern myth casts Cook as the inventor of a Pacific colonial *doppelgänger* of Scotland.

Like Cook, Byron imagined Scotland transposed to the Pacific by a British voyager. The present chapter adapts Julia Wright's insight that nineteenth-century literature triangulated Ireland, India, and Britain, and applies it to Byron's verse epic *The Island, or Christian and his Comrades* (1823); I demonstrate that the poet triangulates Scotland, the Pacific, and Britain. In *The Island*, long-vanished *HMS Bounty* mutineer Fletcher Christian settles Toobonai, a fictional Pacific island, where he stages a brief war of independence. I argue that Byron's plotting of Fletcher Christian's war recalls Scotland's failed bid for sovereignty. Byron's treatment of Scotland under Pacific cover had two personal benefits: by it, he rejects the legacy of his grandfather, an established British imperialist voyager; and he claims a long-coveted place among traditional Scottish national bards. The poem confirms his Scottish identity and complicates the archetypal British voyager to encompass rebel navigators and Scottish imperialists. Importantly, *The Island* warns that transoceanic imperialism can create opportunities for subaltern national self-determination that are not possible at home, and that such self-determination is morally complex, as it can give birth to new colonies and empires.

To make this argument, I will first review recent critical literature concerning Byron's involvement in Scottish networks; the depiction of Scotland in his poetry; his intense fascination with Jacobite history, poetry, and ideology; and his knowledge of fellow Scots' actions on the frontiers of Europe's New World empires. I will then

establish that Jacobite imagery underlies Byron's depiction of Torquil, Christian's Scottish crewmate, who becomes the island's sole European colonist and founder of a dynasty. Finally, I will explain the pertinence of this ploy to Byron's abandonment of his Admiral grandfather's goals in favor of his maternal legacy of Highland political and literary traditions, and observe the implications of this shift for the British voyager and the rhetoric of anticolonialism. Byron refuses to see the British official voyager and the anticolonial rebel as discrete types, much less as rivals. Instead, in his poem, transoceanic imperialism enables the potential emergence of a new sovereign state, which possesses imperialist potential of its own.

Scholars have persuasively demonstrated Byron's consistent participation in Scottish social, intellectual, and political networks and his depiction of Scots and Scotland. Despite his periodic unwillingness to classify himself as a Scottish author or even as a Scot (Hammond 150, 164), he had numerous Scottish acquaintances, notably Douglas Kinnaird.<sup>21</sup> Byron's Scottish intellectual networks practiced "fratriotism," or empathy with the honorary Scottish other, especially the colonial other seeking independence (Pittock, *Byron's Networks* 6-11). Fratriotism includes "seeing oneself in the other," or critique of other nations' political situations; this critique implicitly addresses Scottish affairs. This attitude informs Irish empathy with Indian colonial subjects (Wright) and Byron's interventions in various liberation movements ranging geographically from the Andes to the Peloponnesus (Pittock,

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<sup>21</sup>Kinnaird was Byron's Cambridge classmate, confidant, *de facto* banker, and financial-mess-disentangler. Byron's other Scottish acquaintances include the South American liberator Sir Thomas Cochrane, Earl of Dundonald; the Philhellene diplomat Sir Charles James Napier; and the Hunter-Baillie family (Pittock, *Byron's Networks* 6-11).

*Scottish and Irish Romanticism* 29). His affinity for Scotland informs these character-defining interventions.

Contemporary critics observe Byron's involvements with other Scottish writers, including James Hogg, poet, novelist, and editor of *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* (Hughes); traveler-writer Maria Graham, Lady Callcott (Akel); playwright Joanna Baillie (Slagle); and fellow luminary Walter Scott. Particularly well-documented is the mutual influence between Byron and Scott.<sup>22</sup> Of these readings, Susan Oliver's is most pertinent to my own concerns, because her monograph examines Byron and Scott in relation to more southerly climates, for example comparing Scott's border poetry and romances with Byron's representations of European, Oriental, and Pacific border zones. By representing encounters in those contact zones, Byron intervened in his era's discourse about exploration of the Orient and the Pacific.

Byron treated Scottish material repeatedly. It appears in *Hours of Idleness*; *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*; *The Curse of Minerva*; *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*; an untitled verse address for a London orphanage for Scottish children, "Golice Macbane;" "Song (So We'll Go No More A-Roving)" translated from a Scottish ballad; *Don Juan*; and in the text with which we are now concerned, *The*

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<sup>22</sup>For instance, Susan Oliver, John Clubbe, P. H. Scott, J. Drummond Bone, Roderick Speer, and Andrew Nicholson. Despite Clubbe's 1973 contention that Scott's influence on Byron is unchartable, P. H. Scott documents Byron and Scott's personal and literary interactions. Bone parallels Byron and Scots' uses of nostalgia, specifically their association of the ephemerality of the past and of language (Bone 122). Speer finds homages to Scott in Byron. Nicholson finds Byron elaborating upon Scott and seeming to emulate him. Oliver emphasizes the influence of Scott's poetry on Byron's conceptions of "East-West" or feudal European-Islamic encounters and the two writers' divergent rhetorical uses of borderlands (Oliver, *Scott* 11).



*Island, or Christian and his Comrades*.<sup>23</sup> He composed *The Island*, his final completed major poem, in Italy in 1823, while continuing *Don Juan* and deliberating how he might contribute to the self-determination of Italy, South America, and Greece.<sup>24</sup> A verse epic in four cantos, *The Island* begins on the *HMS Bounty* during the well-documented 1789 mutiny, where Christian and his fellow mutineers deposed Captain William Bligh. Fiction then supplants history as the poem narrates Christian's voyage in the *Bounty* to the Pacific island of Toobonai, where Byron introduces Torquil, a young Hebridean Scottish mutineer, and Neuha, who is Torquil's lover and the Toobonaian princess. A British warship captures or kills all the mutineers except Torquil, whom Christian and Neuha save, and Christian, who commits suicide. When the British depart, Neuha's people unanimously accept Torquil as their prince, inaugurating a transcultural regime. In this poem, Byron recasts the outlaw voyage of Fletcher Christian as an act of rogue imperialism. This imperialism enfranchises a fugitive Scot.

Present-day scholars disagree about the symbolism of Torquil's ethnicity. Fulford, Kitson, and Lee assume that Torquil represents a unified Britain (Fulford, Kitson, and Lee 121-2), but other critics stress his Scottishness. Angus Calder proposes that Torquil personifies the "noble savage" stereotype thought to be

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<sup>23</sup>Cochrane traces this motif in Byron's oeuvre.

<sup>24</sup>Byron completed *The Island* in February 1823, and in June it was published in London by John Hunt, Leigh Hunt's brother. Byron's interest shifted from South American to Greek politics while he wrote *The Age of Bronze* (1823) and *The Island*. He considered emigrating to Venezuela and becoming a settler before joining the Philhellenes and going to Greece instead (Heinowitz 22-3, 159-74).

common among all islanders. This observation explains Torquil and Neuha's transcultural compatibility and suggests their connection, for Byron, to the Greek struggle for independence (Calder 143-4). Oliver compares Torquil to Scottish exiles (Oliver, "Dark Barriers" 29). All these critics note Byron's transplantation of Scotland to the Pacific and other transoceanic spaces.

What remains to be investigated is *The Island's* treatment of a key Scottish political theme: Jacobitism.<sup>25</sup> This eighteenth-century quest to restore the exiled Stuarts to the Scottish throne failed decisively when the British army defeated an invading force led by the Stuart pretender Charles Edward at the Battle of Culloden in 1745. In the half century after Culloden, Jacobitism ceased to be a political threat.<sup>26</sup> During the Regency, Jacobitism acquired new significances derived from Britain's component nations' self-images, interpretations of Britain, and intranational politics. In 1814, John Murray published Scott's anonymous bestseller *Waverley, or 'Tis Sixty Years Since*. Scott's denouement, a post-Culloden Anglo-Scottish marriage, shaped the Jacobite crisis to produce a stable Britain. After *Waverley*, pseudo-Jacobite

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<sup>25</sup>Jacobitism must be distinguished from Jacobinism, the late-eighteenth-century French political movement that emerged from the "Jacobin Club," based at the Dominican monastery of Saint-Jacques. Originally only associated with the Jacobin Club, "Jacobinism" came colloquially to mean any commitment to what the historians François Furet and Mona Ouzouf call a "dictatorship of public safety" (Furet and Ouzouf 708). Byron does not use the word "Jacobite," or any form thereof, in *The Island*; I have not investigated whether he intends to parallel the reactionary Jacobite and revolutionary Jacobin struggles. He may have done: James C. McKusick identifies Jacobite imagery in Byron's depiction of Bligh's arrest in *The Island* Canto I and "reenacts the return of the political repressed" (McKusick 842), a category that encompasses Jacobitism as well as Jacobinism.

<sup>26</sup>While some Jacobites were executed or exiled, and many Scots abandoned Jacobitism for mainly economic reasons (Colley 58), Charles Edward became a dysfunctional alcoholic and died without an heir (McLynn 513).

novels, poems, plays, songs, and material culture flooded British society. In 1818, Drury Lane premiered an adaptation of Scott's 1817 "Waverley novel" *Rob Roy*. This drama, like the novel set during the 1715 Jacobite rebellion, featured a chorus singing Jacobite anthems. At one performance, when the Prince Regent appeared in his box, the chorus segued into the British national anthem, reifying the transition from Stuart to Hanoverian rule (Rigney 66). Scott had rendered Jacobitism a visibly obsolete Scottish ideology and an integral British cultural motif.

Byron shared Scott's obsession with Jacobitism. Byron's lifelong sympathy for Jacobitism and search for its historical parallels dates from his earliest works. In "Lachin Y Gair" (*Hours of Idleness*, 1807), Byron recalls learning about the Jacobite heroics of his maternal ancestors. He writes that his "Fancy was cheer'd by traditional story" told by Highland "natives" about "the forms of my Fathers" who "dwell in the tempests" (CPW 1.103, ll. 14-15, 23-4). These storm-dwelling Jacobites fratriotically invoke Spanish American anticolonialist rebellion by echoing Robert Southey's "Song of the Araucans before a Thunder-Storm." In that poem, martyred indigenous Chileans inhabiting the sky posthumously resume their rebellion against the Spanish, creating thunderstorms. In 1807, when Britain had just failed to oust the Spanish Viceroy of Chile, Byron provocatively associated Spain's outraged colonial subjects' inspiring ancestors with the then-unmentionable Jacobites.<sup>27</sup>

After *Waverley*'s splash in 1814, Byron harnessed Jacobitism to political positions that counter Scott's rhetoric of reconciliation. The ballad "Golice Macbane"

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<sup>27</sup>The failed 1806-7 British attempt to colonize Montevideo and Buenos Aires influenced Robert Southey (Heinowitz 96, 105).

(1815) employs anti-British invective against a British military that had only recently finished the Long War. Byron eulogizes the Culloden martyr Gillies MacBane, and wishes that “thousands” more British soldiers had died at Culloden (*CPW* 3.313, line 5). Byron’s admiration for Macbane resembles his better-known admiration for Napoleon. By encouraging the readers of *Waverley* to admire Macbane, Byron makes them feel what he had felt for Napoleon, a controversial sentiment in 1815.

In the same year, Byron recycled the Scottish patriotism of “Golice Macbane” in an ancient context. In *Hebrew Melodies*, Byron invests the Jewish diaspora of the ancient “Babylonian Captivity” with the experiences of British Scots. In the *Hebrew Melodies* lyric “By the Waters of Babylon We Sat Down and Wept,” a paraphrase of Psalm 137, the ancient Jewish exile harpist swears never to give a command performance for “the stranger.” Byron could identify with this vow, as an expatriate Scottish poet famous in England. When the Babylonians “demand [. . .] a song,” the singer swears “May his right hand be withered for ever / Ere it string our high harp for the foe!” This, too, speaks to Scottish poets’ experiences. In *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*, Byron had accused Scott of exploiting the work of Scottish “minstrels [. . .] for hire” (*CPW* 3.308, ll. 9-12, 1:257, 1. 980). Scott and Byron both sold their songs to English readers, and each had one “withered” appendage, the right leg. Byron’s suggestion that the cursed singer anticipates himself and Scott seems not to have been coincidental, as the image of the withered limb is original to “By the Waters of Babylon.” In the King James translation, the traitor harpist’s right hand will

“lose its cunning” (musical training or its dexterity) but suffer no visual deformity (Psalms 137:4-5). Byron accuses Scott and himself of betraying Scotland.

Later in Byron’s career, he publicly attacked Scott’s Unionist rhetoric and privately conceded the impracticality of Scottish nationalism. In 1822, Scott stage-managed a royal visit to Edinburgh, the rhetorical purpose of which was to reconfirm the Union. Scott called the festivities a “voluntary and solemn interchange of vows betwixt the King and his assembled People” (Scott, qtd. in McCracken 75). Scott dressed George IV in Highland costume and declared him the legitimate heir of the extinct Stuarts, a bit of costuming intended to rid the Scots of the albatross of Jacobite guilt. In *Don Juan*, Byron calls this Royal Visit a “scene of royal itch and loyal scratching” (*Don Juan*, CPW 5.489, ll. 620-4), and he did his own research on historic Scottish reception of the Union. In May 1822, he asked Murray to send him the 1817 *Papers* of anti-Unionist Scottish M.P. and Jacobite secret agent George Lockhart, which contained correspondence with the “Old Pretender” James Francis and firsthand accounts of the conflict of 1745-6. Byron perhaps hoped to incite a Scottish liberation movement, as one critic glosses in default of any direct evidence (P. Scott 61). But Byron probably knew that a Scottish independence movement would likely fail, as had Glasgow’s 1820 “Radical War.”<sup>28</sup> In the 1820s, Scotland could neither liberate nor rule itself.

However, in the same decade, Byron saw some of his Scottish contemporaries liberate and rule other nations, outside Europe. His acquaintance Thomas Cochrane,

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<sup>28</sup>This uprising resulted in the execution of its three leaders, the transportation to Australia of nineteen of their followers, and no independence (Pentland).

Lord Dundonald, forced in 1814 to flee Britain when his fraudulent stock trading was exposed, redeemed himself in the New World as an aristocratic freedom fighter (Pittock, *Scottish and Irish Romanticism* 240, 29; Hayward and Caballero xx; Cochrane). Another Scottish adventurer, Sir Gregor Macgregor, emigrated to Venezuela, joined the revolutionary army of Francisco Miranda, married a kinswoman of the *Libertador* Simón Bolívar, participated in the Venezuelan revolutionary Congress of Cúcuta (1821), and briefly declared himself the personal ruler of no fewer than three New World states.<sup>29</sup> In 1823, reporting his coronation by the Central American independent nation of “Poyais,” Macgregor persuaded many Britons to invest in “Poyer” bonds, which portended British economic colonization of the indigenous Poyers. Instead, Macgregor’s investors learned that Poyais was a fiction. In 1825, the revelation of his fraud caused a massive stock market crash (Brown, Heinowitz 192). However, at the time that Byron completed *The Island*, Macgregor and Cochrane seemed to model successful postcolonial imperialism. Their commitment to the liberation of brother countries supports Pittock’s theory that in Scottish fratriotic fantasy “the other is the unachievable self,” but while “seeing oneself in the other,” they hijacked the other’s newly won-self-determination. This hijacking makes the fratriots imperialists, a complicated position for professed

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<sup>29</sup>At Cúcuta, Macgregor represented the island of Margarita, which in 1561 had witnessed the last stand of the sixteenth-century anti-Spanish rebel Lopé de Aguirre. Macgregor styled himself the ruler of the Republic of Florida (1817), the “Inca” of New Granada (1819), and the King of Poyais (1823-5).

anticolonial liberators of the New World and reluctant non-sovereign subjects of Britain.

Like Cochrane and Macgregor, Byron imagined a new nation overseas. The genre of *The Island*, the epic, alerts readers to this theme, because genre functions as an agreement that promises the reader to adhere to certain stylistic or thematic regulations (Dubrow 36) and, as Byron knew, the essentially imperialist genre of the Virgilian verse epic (Quint 7) traditionally concerns an exile's foundation of a new, geographically displaced incarnation of his lost realm.<sup>30</sup> *The Island*'s plot conforms to epic convention, beginning *in media res* (on the *Bounty*, after its embarkation from England, but before the mutiny), continuing with Torquil's exile from Scotland by Christian's transgression, and then building teleologically towards Christian, Torquil, and Neuha's founding of a free state and its ruling dynasty. This state, his genre suggests, will be a geographically displaced extension of Scotland, as the diasporic replication of the lost nation is an epic trope.<sup>31</sup> For the classically literate reader,

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<sup>30</sup>In Torquato Tasso's *Gerusalemme Liberata*, the emergent population is the Christian population of Palestine; Tasso urges Europe's Christians to "cleanse / Palestine" of its Muslims (Tasso 18, 1.5.2-4), "liberate Jerusalem cast down" (20, 1.5.16), and "set free the place where Christ was laid to rest" (413, 19144.4). In *Paradise Lost*, it is the world. In Robert Southey's *Madoc* (1805), a pseudohistorical twelfth-century Welsh prince founds a prototype of British America on Mobile Bay in present-day Alabama. In the "Connecticut Wit" Barlow's *Columbiad* (1807), Christopher Columbus, imprisoned by Ferdinand of Spain, dreams of the future American republics, including but not limited to the United States. In 1807, Byron noted in his journal that "an epic poet has already appeared in that [American] hemisphere, Barlow, author of the *Columbiad*" (Moore 49), and a decade later, he wrote his verse monodrama *The Lament of Tasso*. I cite this journal entry from Moore due to its omission from Marchand's *BLJ*.

<sup>31</sup>In the *Aeneid*, the Trojan refugee Aeneas's voyage gives rise to "Nova Troia" and in *Madoc*, Prince Madoc's displaces his lost Welsh kingdom to Alabama.

Byron signals that his theme will be the foundation of a new state, and possibly, in time, a new empire.

At the start of *The Island*, it seems as if this new state, the titular “Island,” will be a displaced, Pacific England. The subtitle *Christian and his Companions* commemorates an English mutineer and a crew consisting mainly of Englishmen, whom British society knew as the founders of an “English” colony on remote Pitcairn’s Island.<sup>32</sup> Despite anti-English activists in the family tree of the historical Christian’s ancestors, Regency writers uniformly called Pitcairn’s Island an “English colony” and considered its inhabitants “English” people (Dibdin 2, *Kaleidoscope* 111, *Monthly Review* 249, Shillibeer 86).<sup>33</sup> This English nationalist narrative of Pitcairn’s history informs Regency texts that depict the settlement and predate *The Island*. In Mary Russell Mitford’s verse epic *Christina, or the Maid of the South Seas*, Christian’s Pitcairn-born daughter returns to England and he himself grudgingly donates the island to the British Empire. So does the hyperbolically Anglophilic repentant Christian of Thomas John Dibdin’s 1816 *Pitcairn’s Island, A Melo-Dramatic Ballet of Action*. Having premiered at the Theatre at Drury Lane six days before Byron’s final departure from England, *Pitcairn’s Island* probably came to

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<sup>32</sup>By 1823, the British reading public knew that the historical Fletcher Christian had sailed the *Bounty* to the Tahitian island of Tubuai, dropped off some mutineers, picked up (probably kidnapped) several indigenous women and men, and founded a permanent settlement on Pitcairn’s Island, where he died in 1793 (Sturma 39-40).

<sup>33</sup>Christian’s ancestor Uliam Dhone (William Christian) led an unsuccessful Manx rebellion against English rule in 1651 (“The Christians of Milntown” 244-5). Regency law made Pitcairn an English colony. According to Blackstone’s *Commentaries*, “[i]n case of an uninhabited country newly found out by English subjects,” as was Pitcairn’s Island, all laws in force in England are in force there” (Blackstone, qtd. in Lewis 50; Lewis 41).



Byron's attention.<sup>34</sup> Both *Christina* and *Pitcairn's Island*'s play make Pitcairn's people "English," so in 1823, a poem about Christian, his comrades, and an "Island" would presumably concern the mutineers' establishment and relinquishment of an "English" colony. However, *The Island*'s final three cantos dispel this possibility, as the *Bounty* never reaches Pitcairn. Instead, it ends its voyage at the Toobouai-like island of Toobonai.<sup>35</sup> This dramatic plot shift has confused some critics, informing the assumption that in 1823 Byron had not learned of the 1810 discovery of the Pitcairn settlement (McKusick 854). Byron's deliberately counterfactual plot-swerve away from Pitcairn's Island indicates a change of course from the English imperialist narrative of the fate of Fletcher Christian and his comrades.<sup>36</sup>

Abandoning that narrative, Byron makes the *Bounty* mutineers establish a displaced Scotland on Toobonai. He introduces the character of Torquil, and claims that this young Scot intuitively superimposes his memory of the Scottish Highlands upon the Pacific. As Torquil looks at Toobonai and sees the Highlands, Byron shares his intuitively imperialist vision:

He who first meets the Highland's [sic] stately blue,  
Will love each peak that shares a kindred hue,  
Hail in each crag a familiar face,

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<sup>34</sup>In 1815-6, Byron and Kinnaird both belonged to Drury Lane's managerial board. Byron served as reader of the unsolicited scripts, and Dibdin as co-manager; Dibdin bragged about dining with Lord Byron at his Picadilly home (Dibdin, *Reminiscences* 57-9). David Worrall discusses *Pitcairn's Island* as an English imperialist drama of colonial expansion.

<sup>35</sup>In reality, the *Bounty* stopped in Tahiti, leaving off some British men and taking up Tahitian women and men, before its final voyage to Pitcairn. The Tahitian island they visited, Tubuai (Sturma 39-40), etymologically anticipates Byron's Toobonai.

<sup>36</sup>In 1823, the theatre at Sadler's Wells reinforced the English imperialist narrative of the *Bounty* in a pirate adaptation of *The Island* (Schmidt 21).

And clasp the mountain in his mind's embrace.  
(CPW 7.44, 2.12.281-3)

Just as the half-Scottish Cook apocryphally imported the Hebrides and Caledonia into his view of the Pacific, Torquil sees the "Highlands," and so does Byron. All their "imperial eyes" (Pratt 9) colonize the island for Scotland. Although eighteenth-century Scotland fails to win sovereignty, Byron's Scot creates a new Scotland with his imagination.

At this early point, Byron foreshadows the realization of Torquil's Scottish imperialist vision. Torquil's "mind's embrace" of Toobonai anticipates his and Neuha's corporeal embrace, which will generate the island's ancestrally Scottish future rulers. His uncommon name might destine him to govern a Scottish outlying island. He shares it with an Ossianic king of a Scandinavian island (McKusick 850) and, perhaps more pertinently, the Outer Hebridean rebel warrior Torquil Macleod of Lewes, self-declared "Lord of the Isles," who in 1505-6 unsuccessfully tried to liberate the Outer Hebrides from the domains of the Scottish King James IV (Oliver "Dark Barriers" 29, Barrell 221, Dawson 72-4). Byron's Torquil also recalls Scotland's Stuart dynasty, because the Orcadian *Bounty* mutineer George Stewart, who died in British custody at sea, informs his characterization.<sup>37</sup> All these associations make Torquil a noble Scot with an imperialist vision of Toobonai.

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<sup>37</sup>George Stuart, arrested in Tubuai on suspicion of mutiny, drowned in the shipwreck of the prison ship *Pandora* on its return voyage to England, and therefore could not comment on *The Island*. Scholars have observed that Stewart's Highland, island, background, ambiguous role in the mutiny, apocryphal romance with a Tubuaian woman and disappearance in the Pacific all anticipate Torquil (Calder 138-9). The Scottish nationalist emphasis of *The Island* may explain why Byron changed the mutineer Stewart's name to "Torquil" while not giving

Byron makes Christian realize Torquil's vision by liberating Toobonai from a British invasion and bequeathing it to Torquil, creating a Scottish kingdom. When a British warship locates Toobonai and its crew attempts to arrest the mutineers, Christian fights back, effectively staging a war of independence. As in the Americas, the independence declared by the European rebels does not necessarily apply to the indigenous population. Instead, Christian strives to make the island a refuge for the mutineers. His final martial gesture articulates his resistance to British imperialism: he fires one of his sailor suit buttons at the British gunners. Then he commits suicide by leaping from a cliff. In a footnote, Byron explains the anti-imperialist inspiration for this plot point: Prussian deserter's use of his uniform button as ammunition in "desperate resistance" to arrest, and insubordination of the Prussian regime (*The Island* 74-5).<sup>38</sup> Christian's genocidal sacrifice of all the English mutineers, himself included, makes Torquil the island's sole colonist, like Robinson Crusoe, who ruled his island with the permission of its indigenous population. Having rid Toobonai of British occupation and surveillance, Christian leaves it to a Scot.

This bequest opens the possibility that Torquil will found a new empire as oppressive as the one against which Christian rebelled. That possibility is never positively fulfilled, because *The Island*, in keeping with Byron's dramatic convention, "stop[s]" without "end[ing]" (Schmidt 21). That Torquil will become a tyrant appears plausible given Byron's ambivalent characterization of him. The young Scot, Byron

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Christian any pseudonym: a symbolic Stuart named Stewart might have offered too obvious a parallel.

<sup>38</sup>I cite Byron's note from the original edition, which *CPW* omits.

claims, might become “perhaps a Tamerlane,” or Timur Khan (CPW 7:41, 2.8.186). The notoriously ruthless conqueror of much of fourteenth-century Asia, Timur inspired several plays: Christopher Marlowe’s *Tamberlane the Great* 1 and 2, Nicholas Rowe’s *Tamerlane*, which survived in the nineteenth century dramatic repertory, and an 1811 equestrian play by Byron’s friend Matthew G. Lewis, which entertained Londoners in the summer of 1822 (Mabbott 24). This dramatic tradition makes Timur a rebel leader and scourge of empires, sometimes a liberator, and always, finally, a tyrant.<sup>39</sup> When Christian gives Torquil an island, Torquil perhaps obtains a base from which, like Tamerlane, to conquer more of the world.

Byron most clearly associates Christian’s championship of Torquil with Scottish nationalism by repeatedly paralleling Torquil with the historical Stuart prince who sought an independent Scotland, the Jacobite pretender Charles Edward. Christian’s encouragement of Torquil to have “strength” to flee, an action usually associated with cowardice and therefore weakness, invokes Charles Edward’s flight from Scotland. Neuha’s evacuation of Torquil during the British invasion likens her to the Hebridean noblewoman Flora Macdonald, who famously rescued Charles Edward from the Scottish mainland after his defeat at Culloden (Macleod 130). Like Macdonald, Neuha prevents Torquil’s capture by the British by “fix[ing] him in her own” boat” and departing “as fast their fierce pursuers chased.” While Macdonald and Charles outran the British Navy, Torquil and Neuha do the same. The fugitives’

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<sup>39</sup>In Roe’s *Tamerlane*, which allegorically criticizes the absolutism of Louis XIV, the “Asian world” naively “expects a lord” to end “all their woes / Of tyranny, of bondage, and oppression,” and so welcomes Tamerlane, but he continues the cycle of tyranny (Roe 1:537).

pursuers “gain upon them,” then “lose again, / Again make way and menace o’er the main,” and Byron cheers for Torquil and Neuha: “Fly, then, light ark! Fly!” (*CPW* 7:60, 3.10.225-40). Byron creates a Pacific analogue of the Skye boat journey, with Torquil as Charles Edward. However, Neuha’s “ark,” in recalling Noah’s, suggests its pilots will become the progenitors of a unique race in a new world. Neuha and Torquil fulfill this destiny by founding a new dynasty and ruling a sovereign state, unlike Macdonald and Charles Edward.

Byron further emphasizes the Jacobite parallels in his Pacific fantasy by giving Torquil the same effect on Christian that Charles Edward reputedly exerted upon his followers. In Hogg’s faux-Jacobite ballad “O’er the Water,” Charles Edward inspires chivalric love:

I swear by moon and starns sae bright,  
And sun that glances early,  
If I had twenty thousand lives,  
I’d gie them a’ for Charlie  
(Hogg 77)

In *Waverley*, Charles Edward charms Waverley into joining his army. Similarly, in *The Island*, Christian’s chivalry inspires sentimental scenes. Christian fears that the wounded Torquil that “thee too, *thee*—my madness must destroy.” Finding Torquil’s wound minor, “A moment’s brightness pass’d along his [Christian’s] brow,” despite the battle raging round them (*CPW* 7.57-8, 3.6.145-55). He exhibits no such feelings for his fellow mutineers, nor for himself. Though he has not “twenty thousand lives,” he gives his life and theirs for his Scottish prince.

Extending the Jacobite analogy through the entire poem, Byron draws his plot resolution from the Jacobites' disappointed hopes. After the British warship's departure, Neuha brings Torquil back to Toobonai. His removal from and return to his realm likens him to Charles Edward, whose return to Scotland the Jacobites awaited. While Hogg's Charles Edward attempts to "cross the sea and win his ain" (Hogg 76), Torquil crosses the sea first in the *Bounty* and then in Neuha's boat. While the historical Charles Edward's flight ended in dissipation in Europe, his Pacific analogue Torquil returns in triumph to his kingdom.<sup>40</sup> Neuha's relations' recognition of Torquil "as a son restored" suggests the Restoration of the Stuart King Charles II in 1660 and the eighteenth-century Jacobites' intended restoration of Charles Edward's father.<sup>41</sup> Byron celebrates this frustration of British imperialist ambition but refuses to endorse Torquil's leadership. Like Charles Edward, Torquil lacks proven political abilities. Byron imagines Torquil "Bred to a throne, perhaps unfit to reign" (*CPW* 7:41, 2.8.186).<sup>42</sup> This description fits Charles Edward in his inglorious decline.

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<sup>40</sup>By 1776, Charles Edward habitually drank six bottles of wine daily, abused his wife Louise of Stoltenburg, and threatened to kill her, causing her to flee to a convent (McLynn 525). Byron may have known about this family trouble because Louise's flight was facilitated by her lover the playwright Vittorio Alfieri, whose secretary Gaetano Polidori's son John William Polidori accompanied Byron to Switzerland in 1816 (Ousby 813).

<sup>41</sup>Byron's imaginary nation's epic may also contain a cynical hint of Scott's 1822 propaganda. While Scott orchestrated the Scottish people's acceptance of George IV as their estranged son and heir, Byron makes the people of Toobonai accept Torquil as theirs.

<sup>42</sup>While Byron also considered his frequent critical target George IV unfit to reign, Torquil resembles him less well than Charles Edward. Torquil and Charles Edward both are young heroes, noted for their martial skills and beauty, while Byron considered George IV old and unattractive, and he never fought in any battle.

Conversely, Christian's Stoic heroism makes him a Pacific analogue of the Jacobite martyrs in the tales that Byron claimed to have heard at Lachin y Gair. However, Byron does not want his readers to rush off, like Edward Waverley, to fight the British. Instead, *The Island* performs a more important political function. Like the work of Scott, which theorized a range of narratives of Scottish history, identifying various "possible Scotlands" in the Atlantic world (McCracken 164), Byron's poem speculates upon what sort of Scotland could possibly emerge overseas from fratricidal imperialist projects such as Cochrane and Macgregor's, and how such a displaced Scotland might eventually mythologize its birth. The romance-plot legitimizes Torquil's dynasty by claiming that, though a settler colonist, he won the willing love of Toobonai's princess and people. This narrative echoes Scott's 1822 insistence that the people of Scotland lovingly recognize George IV as their adopted son and rightful heir. *The Island* dares to imagine a potential Scottish empire in the Pacific, and also dares to suggest how this empire might become as tyrannical as that against which its founders rebelled.

As for the personal significance of *The Island*, Byron's reinvention of Christian as an English neo-Jacobite martyr, unauthorized voyager, and rogue colonist alienates the poet from his grandfather's legacy of British imperialist exploration and writing. Commodore Byron's 1768 memoir had publicly condemned the Pacific mutiny that ended his first voyage, making him an opposite of the mutiny-

ringleader Christian.<sup>43</sup> While John Byron risked his life to maintain his allegiance to his captain and return to Britain, Christian risked and lost his life in his attempt to outrun British law. Byron's celebration of that attempt opposes the imperialism of his grandfather, who discovered a remote Pacific island, called it "Byron's Island," and claimed it as a British colony.<sup>44</sup> (Lord) Byron's *Island* instead aligns its author with his mother('s) country's Jacobite bardic tradition. In 1823, the last full year of his life, the poet fulfilled to some extent the childhood dream of joining those bards that he had expressed fifteen years earlier in *Hours of Idleness*.

Significantly, Byron's speculation on the fate of the long-vanished navigator Christian produces not only an alternate possible Scotland and an alternate possible Pacific, but an alternate possible British voyager. In *The Island*, the Royal Navy officer Christian forges a new relationship with empire. He becomes a rogue voyager and an anticolonial martyr, but his leadership of the anti-British revolt leaves Toobonai with a European occupation of questionable political legitimacy or skill in governance. This outcome suggests that the rebel voyager has the potential to counter imperialism's tyranny but also to establish new empires and in so doing to compromise his anticolonial ideals. In Byron's lifetime, anticolonial rebels of

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<sup>43</sup>After the HMS *Wager*'s 1741 wreck off the Pacific coast of Patagonia, casting John Byron and his surviving crewmates up on an icy desert island, Captain David Cheap fatally shot the drunk, possibly insubordinate midshipman Henry Cozens, sparking a mutiny. The mutineers marooned Byron, Cheap, and the surgeon Alexander Campbell on the island while they made their way home in a reconstructed boat. Byron improbably returned to Britain in 1746 after a grueling trek across the South American mainland (Gurney xii-iv, 18, 237).

<sup>44</sup>"Byron's Island," Nikunau, remained a British colony until the 1979 independence of its archipelago as the Republic of Kiribati. (U.S. Department of State).



European descent established new states and empires that disenfranchised indigenous populations in the United States and across North and South America.

By reading Byron's reinvention of Fletcher Christian as a Jacobite imperialist voyager, American readers (in the continental sense) might experience the opportunity to question our own nations' legitimating myths of origin. For example, Byron's depiction of Christian as a Jacobite rebel and the midwife of Torquil's colonial regime complicates the myth of Christopher Columbus as established by Barlow. While Barlow's Columbus is a rebel genius and a martyr to Old World autocracy, his historical inspiration facilitated the emergence of brutal colonial regimes in North and South America, as Byron recognized. Barlow and other American writers have idealized Columbus, and Scott idealized Charles Edward Stuart. Conversely, Byron's epic refuses to unconditionally endorse Torquil, Christian, or the Jacobite cause, in its historical European or speculative Pacific iterations.

### Chapter 3. Hawaii's Voyager King

In June, 1824, the London impresario J. Bishop advertised a new exhibition of curiosities. He promised to display exotic monsters, including a live Egyptian crocodile, an Irish dwarf, a “spotted negro boy,” the preserved corpse of an aristocratic French army officer who had been flayed for desertion, and a pair of sculptures depicting “Their Majesties [. . .] the King and Queen of the Sandwich Islands,” who were then visiting London (Bishop, qtd. in Forbes 400-1). Nor was Bishop the only Londoner to charge admission to see those monarchs, King Kaméhaméha II and Queen Kamamalu of Hawaii. King George IV lent them the Royal Box at Drury Lane for the night of Friday, June 4, so that they could experience Isaac Pocock’s *Rob Roy Macgregor* and a ballet about Zoroaster with a backdrop depicting the Pyramids, the Sphinx, and Colossus of Rhodes. The management at Drury Lane anticipated that the Hawaiian royalty would draw a larger crowd than Rob Roy, Zoroaster, the Pyramids, the Sphinx, and the Colossus combined. Consequently, the theater dispensed with its complimentary tickets list for the evening of the fourth (Drury Lane, qtd in Forbes 407). If Londoners wished to see the Hawaiians at the theater, they would need to pay. Like Bishop, Drury Lane transformed the Hawaiian delegation from powerful spectators into profitable spectacle.

Britons had long interpreted non-European foreign dignitaries as spectacle. In 1616-7, when Pocahontas and a nobleman from her Powhatan nation visited London,

the Jacobean court failed to recognize them as diplomats.<sup>45</sup> In 1775, James Cook's Tahitian guide Omai visited England. His official portrait relegates him to the righthand margin of the frame, while, at center, the scientist Sir Joseph Banks points at him, designating him a specimen.<sup>46</sup> The 1784 London epitaph of Prince Lee Boo of Palau makes him, too, a specimen. It reads "Stop, Reader, stop!—Let Nature claim a Tear / A Prince of Mine, Lee Boo, lies bury'd here" (Peacock 22), associating him with "nature" and denying that Palau has any human history.<sup>47</sup> Regency Londoners made an enslaved spectacle, then a preserved specimen of a woman kidnapped from South Africa, Saartjie Baartman. Not interred until 2002, Baartman came to symbolize the dehumanizing effects of European scientific racism (Crais and Scully).

In this chapter, I will argue that the underappreciated travel writer Maria Graham, later Lady Callcott, departed from this representational tradition in her characterization of Kaméhaméha II of Hawaii. In her *Voyage of the HMS Blonde to the Sandwich Islands, 1824-6, Capt. Lord Byron, Commander* (1826), occasioned by Kaméhaméha and Kamamalu's death from the measles in a London hotel on July 8

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<sup>45</sup>Pocahontas and the nobleman, Uttomakkin, came to Britain with Pocahontas's husband, tobacco entrepreneur John Rolfe. According to Karen Robertson, the Jacobean court's refusal to recognize Pocahontas and Uttomakkin as diplomats denied the sovereignty of the Powhatan nation, and therefore denied that in founding the Virginia Colony, England had invaded and annexed the territory of a sovereign nation (Robertson, "Pocahontas" 552-53).

<sup>46</sup>Tim Fulford, Peter J. Kitson and Debbie Lee discuss this painting, by Joseph Wright of Darby. The London *Times* similarly marginalized Omai in his own travel narrative. The *Times* theatre critic found the commemorative play *Omai, or a Trip Round the World* "a beautiful illustration of *Cook's Voyages*," not Omai's (Fulford, Kitson, and Lee, 54-59).

<sup>47</sup>The wreck of the *HMS Antelope* in Palau enabled the crew to befriend the Palauan king. The British sailors provided illegal military assistance to Palau in its war with a neighboring island. The king sent his son, Lee Boo, to London with the *Antelope's* crew (Peacock).

and 14, 1824, and the Admiralty expedition that repatriated their bodies, “King Tamehameha II” displays no savagery. She makes him neither a spectacle nor a specimen. Instead, she eulogizes him as the text’s protagonist, an honorary Briton, a progressive king, and an intrepid voyager hero. Challenging the stereotype of the “savage” Hawaiian and the dominance of the “English navigator” in British exploration lore, Graham’s *Voyage* supports my overall argument that nineteenth-century Royal Navy kinship coterie writers’ depictions of outsider voyagers often articulate vital perspectives on British imperialism that conventional examples of the exploration-narrative genre neglect, altering the balance of power between the representatives of imperial subjectivity and their usual objects of investigation. Graham alters that balance by inviting readers to acknowledge the subjectivity and agency of an indigenous Pacific explorer, whose voluntary voyage to London occasions, albeit indirectly, the discovery of European cannibals.

Since Europeans first learned of the existence of the Hawaiian Islands, they mythologized the Hawaiians as “savages” and as Cook’s murderers. In January 1778, during the reign of Kaméhaméha I, Cook encountered Hawaii for the first time, and claimed it as the “Sandwich Islands.” Initially, the Hawaiians received Cook and his men hospitably. The British narrative of the encounter has maintained that the Hawaiians recognized Cook as a prehistoric king or deity, known as Lono or Etuah, who had allegedly sailed away from Hawaii after promising someday to return.<sup>48</sup> But

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<sup>48</sup>Whether the Hawaiians in fact understood Cook as the historical Lono or an avatar of Lono remains the subject of intense debate. In the 1970s-1990s, the anthropologist Gananath Obeyesekere (*The Apotheosis of Captain Cook*) argued that the British invented the Cook-as-

apparently Cook soon quarreled with the Hawaiians. On Valentine's Day 1779, an argument over a boat escalated, and Cook attacked the Hawaiians with a rifle. They then killed Cook and four other Britons, confiscating Cook's body. Published reports of this incident introduced Hawaii to European readers, branding the archipelago as the home of "savages" who murdered Cook. In 1780, a *London Gazette* column on Admiralty business reported that Cook had died "in an Affray with a numerous and tumultuous Body of the Natives" (qtd. in Forbes 1). The first American variation on this report claimed that Cook was "killed by the savage inhabitants of a new-discovered island in the South Seas" (*Boston Gazette and Country Magazine*, qtd. in Forbes 2). One London paper questioned this demonization of the Hawaiians, speculating "Had we been born in an island in the South Seas, we should perhaps have called him [Cook] an invader, a pirate" (*Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser*, qtd. in Forbes 11). However, Anna Seward's ode on Cook's death, which judges Cook "ignobly slain [. . .] by savage fury" (qtd. in Forbes 16), summarized the prevailing European view.

Illustrating the historical narrative that I have described, British pictorial representations of Cook's "murder" dating from the late eighteenth century through the 1820s build a simplistic blood libel. An illustrative example appears in *The Voyages of Captain James Cook Round the World, with an Account of his*

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Lono narrative, deriving it from the European myth of the explorer received as a god best exemplified by the encounter between Hernán Cortez and Moctezuma. Marshall Sahlins countered that the Hawaiians indeed understood Cook as Lono, but did not understand Lono as a god in the Judeo-Christian sense, which had no place in Hawaiian culture. Robert Borofsky summarizes the controversy and its implications for anthropological methods.

*Unfortunate Death at Owhyhee, One of the Sandwich Islands* (1808). This work's frontispiece illustration shows a Hawaiian sneaking up behind an oblivious Cook to stab him in the back (repr. Forbes 277). Two decades after Cook's death, the Hawaiians stood accused not only of murder, but betrayal.

Furthermore, in the wake of Cook's death, Europeans considered the Hawaiians cannibals. No initial reports of Cook's death accused the Hawaiians of cannibalism, but the dismemberment of his body and confiscation of his bones later attracted European comment, while the unanimous characterization of the Hawaiians as "furious savages" placed them in the same category as other indigenous peoples whom Cook encountered in the Pacific, including the Maori of New Zealand, whom Cook's men did label cannibals, citing firsthand observation. Eighteenth-century British "discourse on [Maori] cannibalism tells us more about the British preoccupation with cannibalism than about Maori cannibalism" (Obeyesekere, *Apotheosis* 641). In New Zealand, one of Cook's sailors, Richard Pickersgill, buys "a man's head, apparently very lately severed from the body." Then, "some Indians of another party" ask for it "to eat." Pickersgill conducts a field experiment: he asks his interlocutor to "eat a piece there directly," which he does, after Pickersgill cooks it "upon the gridiron." Pickersgill then uses hyperbole to mitigate his own complicity in this act of cannibalism. He claims the man "caught [the head] in rapture, devoured it most ravenously, and licked his fingers" ten times (Pickersgill qtd. in Hough 229). Pickersgill then replicates the entire experiment on board Cook's ship (Hough 230). Cook discounts the possibility that the Maori had fearfully followed the strangers'

orders or played a trick on them. He deduces that the experiment proves that the Maori are habitual cannibals.<sup>49</sup> Seward uses the cannibal Maori to generalize about all savages: she claims that Cook strived to “unite the savage hearts and hostile hands” of the Pacific, including both groups, and adds that the Maori “scowl with savage thirst for human blood!” (Seward 5, 9). This “thirst” is “savage,” so Savage imputes it to the “savages” of other lands as well. Preoccupied with cannibalism, the British imagination found it among the Maori, transplanted it across the Pacific, and thereby reiterated the binary paradigm wherein the existence of cannibal “savages” makes the British, as non-cannibals, paragons of civilization. New editions of Seward’s poem appeared throughout the early nineteenth century, to at least 1821, demonstrating the endurance of the Pacific cannibal myth.

In the same decade, Kaméhaméha II’s sojourn in London seems to have done little to alter the stereotype. After his visit, Hawaiian cannibals still appeared in European print. In 1825, the Irish Society for Promoting the United and Scriptural Education of the Poor published the narrative of an imaginary voyage to Hawaii. In *A Voyage through the Islands of the Pacific Ocean*, the indigenous people “massacre” the crew of the fictional *HMS Boyd*. A frontispiece illustration of the massacre contributes to the libel’s effect. Cannibal Hawaiians also populate Jacques-Antoine Reveroni, Chévalier de Saint-Cyr’s novel *Taméha, Reine des Iles Sandwich, Morte a Londres en Juillet 1824, Ou Les Revers d’Un Fashionable, Roman Historique et Critique* (“Taméha, Queen of the Sandwich Islands, Died in London July 1824, or a

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<sup>49</sup>Obeyesekere proposes that the experiment might also be explained if “the Maori thought that the British were cannibals” (Obeyesekere, *Cannibal Talk* 35).



Fashionable Man's Downfall.") In the frontispiece illustration of the second volume, a bare-chested Hawaiian man in a kilt-like feather skirt hoists a European man in late-eighteenth-century dress above his head in a pose reminiscent of ballet. "The cannibal held him up like a feather, shouting that he was going to eat him," Reveroni explains (reproduced in Forbes 432).<sup>50</sup> For the French Catholic novelist, the Hawaiians' acceptance of Protestant missionaries and diplomacy with London did not undo their reputation for savagery. The myth of savage Hawaiians persisted in the European imagination a year after the diplomatic visit of the real Queen of Hawaii and her husband.<sup>51</sup>

Against this cultural backdrop, John Murray decided to publish an account of the 1824-26 Admiralty expedition that returned to Hawaii Kaméhaméha and Kamamalu's bodies and surviving entourage. Murray asked Maria Graham, a celebrated author who for years had read manuscripts for him and had dared to offer criticism of Lord Byron's poetic submissions (Akel 72). Like the sixth Lord Byron "half a Scot by birth, and bred / A whole one," Graham spent her intellectual adolescence among the Edinburgh literati at the salon of her paternal uncle Sir James Dundas, where she became known as "Philosophy in Muslin" (Akel viii). While Hawkesworth never traveled to the distant lands he described in his biographical subjects' voices, Graham had by 1824 travelled extensively in Africa, India, the

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<sup>50</sup>"Le cannibale l'enleve comme une plume, en crie, il va le devorer" (Forbes 432). I have not read Reveroni's novel. The sole extant copy is at the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris.

<sup>51</sup>In 2001, a Cook biographer made the unsubstantiated claim that "the four most powerful chiefs on the island ate Cook's heart" (Dugard 279).

Pacific, and South America on board several Royal Navy ships, first accompanying her Scottish father, Rear-Admiral George Dundas, and then, after his death in 1810 in Cape Town, her husband, Lieutenant Thomas Graham, R.N., whom she met on her father's final expedition. She described their travels together in India and Italy in two critically acclaimed memoirs. Lieutenant Graham's death in the Pacific Ocean in 1822 stranded her in Chile, where she refused the Admiralty's offer of immediate repatriation and instead traveled there and in Brazil, gathering information for two more memoirs. She knew how to describe voyages of imperialist exploration and diplomacy.

However, if Murray intended Graham to tell the story of the seventh Byron's voyage from his point of view, as Hawkesworth had told Commodore Byron's, she disobeyed. In the *Voyage of the Blonde*, Graham instead provides an account of "Tamehameha's" voyages that sympathetically foregrounds him. The *Voyage* consists of two parts: first, a lengthy introduction consisting of a history of Hawaii from the start of Tamehameha's dynasty to his death in London, and second, an account of the *Blonde's* voyage to Hawaii compiled from the diary of its chaplain Rev. Richard Rowland Bloxam and told from the point of view of the *Blonde's* crew, in the first person plural. In the first part, the history, Graham clears the Hawaiians of charges of murder and cannibalism. She concedes that at the time of first European contact in 1779, the Hawaiians were "savages," but had since "rapidly" joined "civilization." Even during their savage period, she claims, they never murdered Cook, much less cannibalized him, and in fact accepted Cook as the ancient voyager

Etuah. “spirit and founder of the people of Hawaii.”<sup>52</sup> She cites an elderly Hawaiian’s report that Cook’s 1779 death in a skirmish over a rowboat resulted from his “breach of hospitality” in demanding the rowboat back from his Hawaiian hosts. Received as a godlike ancestor, Cook repaid the Hawaiians with impoliteness. Not only did the Hawaiians not cannibalize his body, they honored it by cleaning and enshrining his bones, as they did the bones of their own kings (Graham, *Blonde* 19, 43). This conduct renders his death accidental, for they would not have so honored an enemy or a stranger. In short, Hawaii had not traduced Britain: Britain had betrayed and misjudged Hawaii.

Having exonerated Tamehameha I from the historic blood libel, Graham proves his heir Tamehameha II no savage in part by representing him as a Briton from birth: not a British colonial subject, but an honorary member of the British nation. She repeats the eighteenth-century British misapprehension that in 1794, during the reign of Kaméhaméha I, the voyager George Vancouver, a veteran of Cook’s last voyage, persuaded the nobility of Hawaii’s “Great Island” of Hilo willingly to annex their state to Britain.<sup>53</sup> Whereas Vancouver claimed that the Hawaiians gave up their sovereignty to Britain and so declared themselves a British colony, Graham depicts the cession of the Great Island as a joining of two equal kingdoms, like the Act of Union of 1707 that created the United Kingdom out of

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<sup>52</sup>Elsewhere Graham calls him O Rono Etooah or O Rono Akua (Graham *Blonde* 20). Citing an American missionary’s translation of a traditional song, this name more closely resembles the conventional modern title of the Akua (“Lord”) Lono.

<sup>53</sup>Today, historians agree that the Hawaiians had no such intention. They probably tried to barter with Vancouver for a battleship and diplomatic relations, and he willfully misunderstood them (Kuykendall 33-4).

England and Scotland. In Graham's depiction, the Hawaiian nobles met on Vancouver's ship and "each made a speech on the subject" of union with Britain, and afterwards ratified it, echoing the debate in the Scottish Parliament in March 25, 1707, in the Parliament House in Edinburgh, which resulted in the Act of Union. While that Act created Britons out of Scots, Graham's Hawaiian nobles formally declare themselves "no longer *Kanaka no Hawaii*, but *Kanaka no Brittanee*, i.e., no longer men of Hawaii, but men of Britain" (Graham, *Blonde* 35-6). This declaration of dependence means that Kaméhaméha's son Rihoriho, later styled Kaméhaméha II (b.1796 or 1797) belonged from birth to Hawaii's People of Britain. Born British but not English, Tamehameha proves as British as Graham's Scottish father and husband.

Making Tamehameha her protagonist, Graham foregrounds his reign (1819-24) in her history of Hawaii, despite its brevity. Her table of contents identifies "Tamehameha II" as the protagonist of the first section of her text, the history of Hawaii. Starting with his dynasty's foundation, she continues with "Death of Tamehameha I—Accession of his Son," Graham documents Tamehameha II's "Extirpation of Idolatry and Tabu," his reception of a "Mission from the United States," "The King Resolves to Visit England," "He Arrives at Portsmouth with Queen and suite," "Reception in London," "They Visit Mr. Canning" (the Prime Minister), "Are Taken Ill," "Queen Dies," and "King Dies" (Graham, *Blonde* ix). Most of these chapter titles articulate Tamehameha's desires and deeds, mostly in active verbs, making him the text's hero.

Graham admires Tamehameha's progressive leadership. Early in his reign, in 1819, he violates the *tabu* by "causing the women to eat, in the sight of the people, all the things looked on as prohibited" to women.<sup>54</sup> The priests interpret this violation as sacrilege, and some European commentators dismiss the transgression as a "frolic of the young king," like Byron's gratuitously irreverent reported violation of the English *tabus* against drinking from skulls or keeping bears at Cambridge University (Eisler 174, 135). However, Graham's argues that Tamehameha's taboo-breaking institutes vital social and moral reform. Daring the gods to punish him for his transgression, he provides ocular witness ("in the sight of the people") that those gods do not exist. Their failure to punish him persuades the Hawaiian people to reject those gods. Tamehameha's violation of the *tabu* creates a spiritual *tabula rasa* just before the 1820 arrival of the first American missionaries.<sup>55</sup> The rebel king prepares the way for the missionaries' spiritual reform, as John the Baptist paved the way for Christ. Graham's narrative of Tamehameha's historic transgression makes him a progressive, visionary ruler, who contributes to what she calls Hawaii's "very rapid progress towards civilization [. . .] since their discovery by Captain Cook" (Graham , *Blonde* 3). Like Scotland in the Unionist narrative accepted by Graham's Edinburgh *literati*

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<sup>54</sup>In October 1819, Kaméhaméha II performed this violation of *tabu* as the inauguration of a new spiritual regime, simultaneously commanding the destruction of all sculptures of the traditional gods (Van Dyke 22).

<sup>55</sup>Sent by the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, the American missionaries arrived in March 1820, by which time Kaméhaméha II's reforms had created a "spiritual vacuum" (Van Dyke 22).

coterie, Hawaii's "savage" past gives way through British union and Christian faith to a civilized present.

Graham reiterates Tamehameha's association with civilization and against savagery by making him conform to the British voyager hero type. In 1824, he planned "so distant an expedition as that into the civilized world" in order to earn "a reputation beyond any of his predecessors."<sup>56</sup> This statement likens him to intrepid, fame-seeking European voyagers. Like Robert Walton, Tamehameha becomes obsessed, unable to "rest" until he has obtained permission to "engage in the hazardous enterprize" of sailing to England (Graham, *Blonde* 53-4). Likewise, the Royal Society posthumously commemorated Cook as the "*Oceani Investigator Accerimus*, or 'Intrepid Investigator of Oceans' (Williams 14). To British readers, such zeal for firsthand trans-oceanic investigation befits an voyager more than a king. After George I's relocation to England, none of the Hanoverian kings saw any of their overseas imperial possessions firsthand. Instead, they satisfied their curiosity with secondhand accounts, pictorial representations, and the contents of cabinets of curiosities. But Tamehameha insists upon personal ocular witness, the epistemological gold-standard of European voyagers and their networks of patronage and dissemination. For Tamehameha, "[t]o see this nation [England] himself" and then import some of its great "institutions" to Hawaii "became a passion with him" (Graham, *Blonde* 54). Although he assumes England superior to Hawaii in many respects, and aspires to colonial mimicry, Tamehameha's openness to extreme

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<sup>56</sup>Tamehameha considers England part of "the civilized world," as Graham's indirect address indicates.

voyaging, dauntless ambition, valuation of eyewitness evidence and patriotism recalls historical British voyagers such as Cook and challenges the presumption that such voyagers must be English or European “men of Britain.”

Graham even suggests that Hawaiian dynastic history destined Tamehameha to become a British voyager. She gives him a British voyager-forebear by suggesting a figurative lineal bond between him and the most famous British voyager to have died overseas, Cook. According to an indigenous song, the apocryphal King Etuah, promised to return to Hawaii via a strange vehicle, an “island bearing coconut-trees, and swine, and dogs.” This moving island strongly resembles an eighteenth-century European tall ship, with its tree-like masts and cargo of men and animals (Graham, *Blonde* 27-8, 199, 21). James Cook’s cataclysmic arrival in Hawaii seemed to fulfill this prophecy. If Etuah’s prophecy gives Hawaii the conceptual model of a British ship, the prehistoric king anticipates Cook’s voyage in a physical ship. Therefore, when Tamehameha sails to England, he utilizes indigenous Hawaiian technology and thereby avoids colonialist mimicry. Moreover, if Etuah returned to Hawaii as Cook, then Tamehameha inherits Etuah-Cook’s Hawaiian domain and, in sailing the “foreign land” (England) in the island-with-trees and aiming to discovering that land’s qualities to Hawaii, he aspires to complete Etuah-Cook’s circumnavigation. Dying in the antipodean island-nation he has discovered, Tamehameha replicates the career of Etuah-Cook more closely than he had anticipated. The legend Etuah-Cook makes Tamehameha a younger son of the Cook exploration dynasty.

Graham affirms Tamehameha's civility in an extended, sentimentalized death scene.<sup>57</sup> On July 10, the doctors judge Kamamalu terminally ill. Consequently, Tamehameha, then "supposed to be recovering," suddenly loses his will to live. Graham depicts his grief sentimentally:

[He] embraced [Kamamalu] affectionately, and they both wept bitterly. He then dismissed his attendants, and they remained for some time together [. . .] it was understood that at this mournful interview, these young people had agreed that one should not survive the other.

Removed from the dying queen's presence, Tamehameha refuses to speak until after her death on July 10. Then, he demands to watch over her body. He "sat up looking at it" and "forbade its removal" for some time (Graham, *Blonde* 67). He then "follow[s] [. . .] his beloved wife to the grave," just as he had promised. His affection for his wife stands in marked contrast to George IV's acrimonious relationship with Queen Caroline, who had died a few months after his coronation in 1820. Tamehameha's capacity for sympathy exceeds Britain's king's.

In Graham's account, the dying king insists upon his identity as a member of civilization by forbidding England to reduce him or his wife to exotic specimens in the manner of Omai, Lee Boo, or the flayed Frenchman that Bishop had displayed in that same month. With "firmness of mind," Tamehameha insists upon seeing Kamamalu "disposed [. . .] after the manner of her country." He demands ocular

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<sup>57</sup>Graham may have been particularly sensitive to the bereavement of the Hawaiian people for an explorer-king who died in a foreign land because she experienced comparable bereavements, upon her father's death in Cape Town and her very much loved husband's in Chile. In Valparaiso, she claims, a large group of international officers, crew, and civilians paid their respects to her "indulgent friend, companion, and husband," including "all his own people [crew]." Musicians "played hymns fit for the burial of the pure of heart" (Graham, *Chile* 4).



proof of her body's completeness. He also assures the integrity of his own body by demanding both be returned to Hawaii. He decrees this in writing, in English letters, which he dictates to one of his Hawaiian attendants. Tamehameha autographs this "somewhat uncouth paper" by proxy "in the handwriting of one of the chiefs" who had accompanied him to England. Tamehameha's choices assure that his English hosts will comprehend his request, but do not have the opportunity to transcribe and possibly misinterpret it themselves. They may not keep either the Hawaiian dead or the living retinue whom Tamehameha had brought with him from Hawaii. Traditional feathered war-cloaks, including one presented to George III, found their way into "European cabinets of curiosities" (Graham, *Blonde* 67, 70, 193), but Tamehameha refuses those cabinets any human specimens from his archipelago. In death as in life, he resists treatment as a savage.

Tamehameha's written will emphasizes his voyager vocation. In it, he commands a final voyage, back to Hawaii, demonstrating more vision than the officer whom the Admiralty appoints to the practical command of that expedition, the seventh Lord Byron. In Graham's depiction, this individual does not appear as an intrepid, visionary, enthusiastic, authoritative British voyager, but Tamehameha does. Graham invests Tamehameha with independent curiosity, thirst for glory, indefatigable will and patriotism in the context of imminent death, and Byron's embarkation on Tamehameha's decreed expedition acknowledges Tamehameha's ability to command the Royal Navy. This detail makes Tamehameha an official British voyager.

Moreover, Tamehameha's well-established visionary thinking affirms his identity as an voyager, and makes him seem more like an voyager than does Captain Byron, the titular hero. Eighteenth- and nineteenth-century exploration literature tended to celebrate the commanders of expeditions as "navigators," that is, for their ideas about where to go more than their management of human resources. Joel Barlow's Columbus dreams of the New World before he reaches its shore, and navigates by his dream, not by any real landmarks. He also dreams after his voyage of the American Republics yet to be founded, as we have seen in Chapter 3. In 1828, Washington Irving would agree, making Columbus "decidedly a visionary, but a visionary of uncommon kind, and successful in his dreams," which his "ardent imagination" generated under the control of "a powerful judgement" and "acute sagacity" (Irving 309). The same must be said of Graham's Tamehameha. Already a visionary reformer of his Hawaii, he conceives of the idea of a voyage to England, which no Hawaiian since the equally visionary Etuah had done. He proves as revolutionary to the Hawaiians as Columbus did when he proposed to go east by sailing west. Tamehameha's insistence upon his posthumous return voyage contradicts the custom established by the English reception of Pocahontas and Lee Boo. Hawaii's voyager king therefore launches the voyage of the *Blonde* as a visionary voyager hero.

Tamehameha's repatriation, as planned, achieves his diplomatic aim: it supports Hawaiian self-determination, literally, as it returns control of his life story to his own people. By demanding his homecoming voyage, Tamehameha assures that

his bones will join those of his ancestors as memorial objects, remembered and described by his people in their terms. The English who repatriate him must answer to the Hawaiians, who would believe the accounts of those Hawaiian courtiers who had accompanied him to England. Graham claims that Tamehameha and Kamamalu's British mourners aimed "to convince the survivors that we respected their sovereigns and themselves." She also alludes to this responsibility when she claims that Captain Byron told the Hawaiians that "the chiefs themselves would best explain" the British reception of their king "to their countrymen." Aware of Britain's need to convince the Hawaiians that their late king had been hospitably received and appropriately mourned, the Admiralty treated the Hawaiian dead with the respect accorded to the deceased of the English elite, causing Graham to remark that the Hawaiians, seeing the velvet-draped coffins, deduced that "it would be a pleasure to die in England, to have their bodies so honoured." However, she concedes that the Hawaiians nevertheless removed the bodies from the coffins and honored them in traditional Hawaiian fashion (Graham, *Blonde* 71, 116). They reclaim their disappeared voyager king's narrative along with his bones.

In the *Voyage*'s concluding episode, the expedition commissioned by Tamehameha explodes the binary paradigm of the civilized European and savage Hawaiian by discovering British cannibals. On the return voyage, in the Pacific near South America, the *Blonde* encounters the floating wreck of the *HMS Frances Mary*, which had embarked from Canada on a voyage to England. The *Frances Mary* had by that point lost several souls to famine, thirst, and disease, leaving only four survivors.

One of the four survivors outlived her fiancé, the ship's steward. In a sentimental *mise-en-scène* that eerily doubles Tamehameha's vigil beside the body of his queen, the steward's fiancée experienced the

misery of reflecting, in after life, that the frenzied love of existence that extreme famine is known to excite, forced her, with her companions, to the horror of deriving life from his death.

In other words, the woman commits cannibalism, and assists the other three survivors in doing so. Graham luridly harps on the British quartet's transgression, showing the woman "portioning out their unnatural food," then abruptly censoring herself. "It is scarcely right, perhaps, to lay open such shocking tales of human misery as seem to degrade man," Graham claims. "We will, therefore, forbear to dwell on the further particulars of this sad story" (Graham, *Blonde* 238), perhaps because they destroy the illusion of a civilized British nation.

The particulars that she does provide suggest analogies between Hawaiian and *Frances Mary* survivor rituals, inviting the reader to compare the shipwreck survivors' savagery with Tamehameha's civility. While Tamehameha serves prohibited food to his wives and other women, the British widow serves prohibited food to the other survivors. Tamehameha loses the will to live when his wife dies, and stubbornly refuses to get well. The British woman also loses her spouse, but retains the will to live. Both the Hawaiians and the *Frances Mary* widow dismember the bodies of their dead. The Hawaiians do so with respectable piety, and so does the *Frances Mary* widow. Graham praises her for having "robbed their misery of half its horror, by her confidence in Providence, and her decency of conduct even in that

wretched time” (Graham, *Blonde* 238). John Murray I announced Cook’s discovery of the savages of Hawaii. Writing on commission for Murray’s son, Maria Graham depicts a British expedition’s discovery of British cannibals. Echoing Tamehameha’s historic *tabu*-breaking 1819 feast, Graham violates British literary *tabu* to reveal that just as Britain has no monopoly on civilization, it enjoys no immunity from savagery.

Graham’s juxtaposition of Tamehameha’s voyage of exploration with the horrors of the *Frances Mary* complicates Britain’s imperialist paradigm of the civilized and the savage as manifest in its administration of colonial India, specifically in relation to the controversial 1820s campaign to ban the Indian practice of *sati*, or widow-burning, as savagery.<sup>58</sup> As the *Frances Mary* widow commits cannibalism in order to live, and therefore, to outlive her fiancé, condemnation of her choice echoes the stereotypical Indian position that widows should not wish to outlive their husbands. Graham’s sympathetic depiction of Tamehameha’s refusal to outlive his deceased wife sets the reader up to approve of and even idealize marital self-sacrifice. Any horror Graham’s readers might experience at the *Frances Mary* widow’s survivalist cannibalism therefore parallels Indian horror at the British demand for the end of *sati*, making her British readers sympathize with the supposedly “savage” Indians whose expression of love Britain aimed to regulate in the name of civilization. Graham suggests that Britons should see themselves in Indians, blurring the boundaries between civilized and savage.

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<sup>58</sup>Britain banned *sati* in 1829.

As if to contain the transgression of concluding a voyage to exotic Hawaii with a discovery of British cannibalism, the Appendices of the *Voyage of the Blonde* turn Hawaii from a culture into a manifestation of nature with the imperialist “planetary consciousness” that Pratt has identified in Alexander von Humboldt’s impressions of South America (Pratt 15). In one Appendix, the *Blonde* naturalist Alexander Bloxam, the chaplain’s brother, provides notes on Hawaiian species, first in Linnaean Latin terminology that imposes British imperialist names upon these Hawaiian organisms (*Muscicapa Sandwichensis*; *Fringilla Sandwichensis*), and only after supplying the “native name.” Other appendices include a translation of a song about Etuah, presented as a national melody in the Regency tradition, without an individual author or historical context, and an “Extract from Lieutenant Malden’s Official Account of the Sandwich Islands” that includes many nautical measurements, meteorological observations, and discussion of “the fertility of the place” but no mention of indigenous inhabitants. These appendices make the Hawaiian voyager-king Tamehameha disappear from the *Voyage of the Blonde*, just as he disappeared from Hawaii into the distant, deadly urban wilderness of London. Their inclusion contradicts Tamehameha’s replacement of the seventh Lord Byron as the text’s voyager-hero, and his insistence from beyond the grave upon British recognition of his and his subjects’ humanity and civility.

The contradiction between Graham’s main text’s recovery of Tamehameha as a voyager hero and the appendices’ objectification of him and his nation characterizes the whole work in that, writing in Tamehameha’s absence and without any Hawaiian

input, Graham effaces Tamehameha as much as she recovers him. While animating Tamehameha's ghost, the *Voyage* leads the reader to speculate how he might have narrated his own voyage differently. Modern Hawaiian historians' discrediting of Vancouver's report of self-willed *Kanaka no Brittanee* suggests that Kaméhaméha might have contested Graham's conception of him as a British subject, and might also have taken issue with the idea that Hawaii had no "civilization" before its "discovery" by Cook. However, Graham's *Voyage of the Blonde* appears remarkable as a voyage narrative that, despite its genesis as an Admiralty-authorized, commissioned voyage narrative, rejects some of that genre's ideological conventions. The effect of that rejection is the emergence, in Graham's Tamehameha, of a British voyager and Byronic hero who is also a contact-zone indigene. Like the sixth Lord Byron, Graham reconceives the voyage narrative to centralize an outsider protagonist.

## Chapter 4. Lost Explorer, Female Surrogate



In Anna Laetitia Barbauld's anti-imperialist poem *Eighteen Hundred and Eleven* (1812), a British woman "with anxious eye explores" a "spread map" to find the place where her husband or kinsman died while expanding, maintaining, or defending Britain's global empire. Barbauld suggests that her heroine is a voyager by using the word "explores," showing her heroine crossing "boundaries" in search of knowledge and making her "learn [. . .] the name" of her kinsman's death-place "but to detest the sound" (Barbauld 162, ll. 35-8). By reinterpreting that fatal location, the British woman claims the death-place just as Cook claimed Espíritu Santo. The heroine's wartime loss catalyzes her self-fashioning as an imperialist voyager just like her missing man. By depicting this process of self-fashioning, Barbauld exchanges her exploring heroine's abjection for agency. Instead of waiting passively and in vain for her man's return, the heroine sets out to find him herself and to inscribe a tiny part of the world with unprecedented meaning.

Barbauld's heroine performs what Roach calls "surrogation," as she responds to a haunting disappearance by substituting a new entity for that which has vanished. Surrogation often inaugurates a new tradition that preserves vestigial echoes of old traditions, but also reinvents them, shaping culture (Roach 2-5). In this chapter, I will identify two Victorian depictions of female performers who surrogate the roles of vanishing voyagers by taking up their abandoned roles. These depictions are John

Malcolm Rymer's fiction bestseller *The String of Pearls, or the Barber of Fleet Street* (serialized 1846-47, expanded 1850) and the late nineteenth-century manuscript writings of Sophia Isabella Cracroft, niece of the explorer Sir John Franklin.<sup>59</sup>

By surrogating explorer kinsmen who have disappeared, Rymer's heroine and Cracroft expand the emergent figure of the British explorer to include women. In *The String of Pearls*, the fictional Johanna Oakley derives agency from her idealized role as a stereotypical Victorian "Angel in the House." She braves death to rescue her fiancé and ensure the establishment of their marital home. Conversely, the historical Sophia Cracroft rejects those same idealized feminine priorities, and so embarks upon her travels and travel writings with different, more complex motives, which produce different results. In short, while Johanna derives temporary agency from her act of surrogation, Cracroft employs surrogation to alter the gendering of power in her family circle and to sustain her self-determination. However, Rymer and Cracroft's shared imagination of the possibility of female exploration anticipates the more brazen female explorers of the century's final years, who eagerly saw their travel narratives into press.

Scholars recall Rymer's *The String of Pearls* as the story in which the mythological monster Sweeney Todd first appears (Mack 146-48, Smith, James 190-

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<sup>59</sup>All quotations from Rymer reflect the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill Rare Book Collection's copy of the 1850 one-volume edition. The only other known extant copy, in the British Library's Barry Ono Collection, begins with an alternate title page from a reprint of the first volume of the serial edition, which bears the revised title *The String of Pearls, or the Sailor's Gift*. Whether this title page was bound to the 1850 novel by the publisher Edward Lloyd, by the British library, or by a previous owner of the copy I cannot determine, and do not know whether the text of the *Sailor's Gift* edition matches the surviving serial installments from the *People's Periodical*.

91), and one scholar notes its representation of Britain as a maritime superpower (Mack 146). However, its sustained focus on British imperialist exploration has yet to receive critical attention. Set in 1785, Rymer's tale features an explorer hero, Mark Ingestrie, who, two years prior to the start of the action, embarked in the *HMS Star* for "one of the small islands near the Indian Seas" to speculate for gold and other riches. There, Ingestrie obtains the titular string of pearls, which he plans to sell in London to finance a marital home with his fiancée Johanna Oakley. When the *Star* catches fire on the return voyage, Ingestrie gives the pearls to his fellow adventurer Charles James Thornhill, with the request that Thornhill give them to Johanna. Thornhill survives the wreck, rescued by the Indiaman *HMS Neptune*.<sup>60</sup> His rescue proves fortunate for the *Neptune* passenger Colonel Jeffreys "of the Indian Army," whom Thornhill courageously saves from an ambush *en route* by "savages" in Madagascar. Upon Thornhill's return to London, he tells his backstory to his dog.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>60</sup>Thornhill's name anticipates Alfred Hitchcock's film *North by Northwest*, in which New York businessman Roger O. Thornhill tries to outrun criminals who claim that he is their enemy "George Kaplan" (1959). It is tempting to consider that Hitchcock knew *The String of Pearls*, for his Thornhill, too, is an explorer of sorts, crossing America towards the fabled Northwest Passage and ultimately scaling Mount Rushmore. However, Thornhill is redacted from most twentieth-century iterations of the Sweeney Todd legend, including the 1936 British film *Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street*.

<sup>61</sup>The large, shaggy dog further identifies Thornhill as a sailor, because it appears to be a Newfoundland, frequent companion of crews and rescuer of humans. Named "Hector" by Thornhill, the dog finds a new master who calls him "pison," perhaps suggesting a bison, which has the same shaggy brown hair as a Newfoundland, or else Mr. Rochester's dog Pilot. The breed is renowned for saving human lives, especially at sea, as Sir Edwin Landseer's Newfoundland paintings and Mrs. E. Burrows's *Neptune, or the Autobiography of a Newfoundland Dog* (1869) suggest. In *The String of Pearls*, Hector indirectly saves Ingestrie and all Londoners from Sweeney Todd by alerting Jeffreys to Thornhill's disappearance in the shop, barking at Todd's door, and at one point attacking Todd.

An obvious expositional device, Thornhill's recitation demonstrates his lack of discretion. Thornhill then goes to be shaved by Sweeney Todd, who has overheard the recitation and knows that Thornhill has the pearls on his person. Todd murders Thornhill in the shop. The dog alerts Jeffreys that he has lost his master, and Jeffreys informs Johanna of Thornhill's disappearance in the barber shop and Ingestrie's supposed death at sea. However, Johanna insists that "Thornhill" must be Ingestrie in disguise and that Todd may have imprisoned him. To rescue Ingestrie, Johanna undertakes an expedition of her own: to the barber shop, disguised as a young man, accompanied by her best friend Arabella Wilmot. Meanwhile, Ingestrie improbably returns to London, sees Johanna with Jeffreys, and, assuming her unfaithful, despairingly accepts inescapable slave labor in the underground "pie manufactory" of Todd's accomplice Mrs. Lovett. Ingestrie first unwittingly, then knowingly, bakes the remains of Todd's victims into pies until Johanna procures his rescue.<sup>62</sup> This plot, in which the hero makes his fortune at sea, then braves maritime and urban dangers to bring it home, foregrounds British exploration of exotic and metropolitan *terrae incognitae*.

Rymer makes Ingestrie an archetypal British maritime explorer. Ingestrie's "imagination [. . .] inflamed" by a "report" of "treasure" waiting on the obscure island "for the first adventurer who had the boldness to seek it" (Rymer 27), he rushes off to become its first discoverer. This zeal for discovery recalls Walton and the *conquistadors* as well as the Ancient Mariner and his crewmates, who discover an

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<sup>62</sup>The 1850 version expands the struggle between Sweeney Todd and the forces of law roused by Johanna.

Antarctic ocean. Like Robinson Crusoe, Ingestrie scorns the middle class into which he was born. He ventures beyond Britain to make a great fortune and return rich.<sup>63</sup> Ingestrie's crime also associates him with imperialist exploration. His initial naïve consumption of Thornhill's remains recalls the cannibalism in Dr. John Richardson's official story of the Franklin overland expedition, in which Richardson survives in the Arctic during the winter of 1820-1 (Fleming 147).<sup>64</sup> Ingestrie's later, deliberate, cannibalism recalls that of various stranded European voyagers, including the survivors of the *Medusa* and *Frances Mary* disasters, and possibly Franklin's men. Anticipating the antiheroes of later contributions to the Victorian "stolen-oriental-jewel topos," such as Wilkie Collins' *The Moonstone* and, less obviously, Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (Wright 188), Ingestrie's imperialist theft of the Indian pearls condemns him to hell, as symbolized by the fiery subterranean bakehouse. Rymer thus defines him as an intrepid explorer and haunted imperialist speculator.

Although Ingestrie spends most of the story's action trapped in Mrs. Lovett's London basement, Rymer suggests metaphorical entrapment abroad, in keeping with the Victorian convention of relocating exotic dangers to London (Mighall 30-1). Rymer makes Todd personify the dangers of the southern oceans, signifying the threat those oceans pose to the explorer Ingestrie. Rymer associates Todd with

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<sup>63</sup>Rymer's Scottish family background perhaps would have exposed him to Scots who had made the same choice, going to India during the Dundas Despotism.

<sup>64</sup>Richardson claimed that his French-Iroquois guide Michel Teroahauté had fed him "wolf meat" which was in fact the remains of one or more murdered comrades. In retribution, Richardson murdered Teroahauté (Houston 210-11). Richardson's story conveniently imputes knowing cannibalism to a Native American and only naïve cannibalism to the Englishman.

maritime dangers by basing the character upon the conventions of a well-known maritime initiation ritual suffered by British sailors crossing the equator for the first time, as Ingestrie does on his journey round the Cape of Good Hope to the unnamed Indian Ocean island. This equatorial initiation rite, the “Line Crossing Ceremony” or “Shaving at the Line,” prominently featured a demonic barber. In this ritual, when a ship has crossed the Equator, a veteran sailor who has crossed it before, called a “shellback,” plays Neptune, pagan god of the Sea. Neptune boards the ship and initiates first-time line-crossers, known as “pollywogs” or “greenhorns,” as denizens of his kingdom. His patronage, he claims, will protect the sailors from the maritime dangers they will encounter in the Southern Hemisphere. Neptune enlists his Royal Barber, another sailor, to shave the pollywogs with a razor, brush, and shaving cream made of wood, scrap metal, tar, or paint (Bronner 41, Richardson, Henningsen). This ritual makes Neptune’s Barber a demonic gatekeeper of the sub-equatorial seas.

Charles Darwin provides evidence of Neptune’s Barber’s portrayal during mid-Victorian line crossings. As the *HMS Beagle* approached the equator in 1832, Darwin wrote in his diary of “razors sharpened with a file & a lather made of paint & tar, to be used by the gentlest *valet de chambre*” (Darwin 1.34-5). In his shipmate Augustus Earle’s painting of the ceremony, shellbacks drag a pollywog toward Neptune’s Barber while Neptune himself, identifiable by his crown and trident, watches Neptune’s Barber shave another pollywog.<sup>65</sup> In 1867, *Notes and Quotes*

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<sup>65</sup>While Darwin and Earle only allude to the violence of Neptune’s Barber, other sources detail it explicitly. “Shave him and bash him / Duck him and splash him / Torture and smash him,” an English folk song about the ceremony commands (Anon, qtd. in Henningsen 82).

called “Shaving at the Line [. . .] both barberous and barbarous” (*N&Q* 177). Since at least the early nineteenth century, British sailors crossing the Equator expected to be shaved by a frightful monster.

Rymer reinvents Neptune’s Barber as Sweeney Todd. This choice explains seemingly incomprehensible details of character and plot, such as Todd’s physical description. He has:

A most terrific head of hair, [in which] he kept all his combs—some people said his scissors likewise [so that] when he put his head out of the shop-door to see what sort of weather it was, he might have been mistaken for an Indian warrior with a very remarkable head-dress.  
(Rymer 2)

This description recalls Earle’s tool-adorned barber of the *Beagle*. Unlike a metropolitan hairdresser, but like many sailors, Todd has “great hands” callused enough to serve as a razor strop (Rymer 2, 20). Moreover, he navigates exceptionally well, like a veteran sailor. “A skilful calculator of the time it ought to take to go to different places,” he tells his servant (Johanna in disguise) where to get food and water: “the half hour you will be allowed for dinner will be admirably consumed in your walk to the pie shop, and from thence to the pump, and then home here again.” Todd also navigates for his accomplice Mrs. Lovett: as “Mr. Black in Abchurch Lane, No. 3 [. . .] lives at Ballam Hill, and don’t get to business til [sic] ten,” they should set off at ten to see him, to be sure to arrive after he has fully opened his shop (Rymer 19, 311). He plots his course across the city as Hawkesworth’s great “English Navigators” plot the Empire’s across the globe.



Fig. 2

"Sweeney Todd, the Barber of Fleet Street."  
 James Malcolm Rymer, *The String of Pearls*, Plate 79.  
 Courtesy the Rare Books Collection, Wilson Library,  
 University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.  
 Photograph by Rebecca Nesvet

Sweeney Todd's criminal *modus operandi* re-enacts the line-crossing ceremony, transplanting the space of maritime exploration to London. The first murder victim shown, Thornhill, has crossed the actual equator twice, on his way to the Indian Ocean from Britain and on his return in the suggestively named *HMS Neptune*. Todd partly shaves him, then retreats to his back room and springs a trap door, through which Thornhill falls into the basement, an extension of the catacombs of St. Dunstan's church next door (Rymer 5). Architecturally, the shop floor recalls the Equator, transforming Thornhill (and any other victims) into line-crossers. The building consists of two hemispheres: the barber shop above and the crypt below. In the shop's lower hemisphere (or, rather, hemicube), the barber scourges those who have passed through his equatorial plane, like Neptune's Barber scourges sailors who



glide into the Southern Hemisphere. Sweeney Todd cryptically admits as much. A client in military uniform objects “Easy! Good gracious, do you want to skin me?” Todd equivocates: “Oh, dear no, sir. What an idea. To skin a military gentleman” (Rymer 12, 211). Here, he denies his actual practice of “skin[ning] military gentlemen” in the crypt below. By bringing a deadly version of equatorial maritime danger to the figuratively southern half of his shop, Sweeney Todd reproduces in London the dangers faced by the novel’s line-crossing British imperialist explorer hero Ingestrie.

Rymer makes Johanna surrogate the absent Ingestrie by becoming an explorer herself. She dresses as a young man in order to travel safely through the streets of Temple Bar, infiltrate the barber shop, and rescue her lover. “A dreadful kind of fascination draws me to that man’s shop,” she says of Todd’s establishment, echoing Ingestrie’s obsessive, magnetic attraction to the Equator and Orient. She also cites “the spirit of romantic adventure” in planning her quest to the shop (Rymer 107). Walton sailed from Archangelsk not only to open up a lucrative path to Asia, but to experience “romantic adventure.” Like Walton, Johanna encounters a monstrous murderer—Sweeney Todd. Johanna’s pursuit of “romantic adventure” in the zone of monsters makes her an explorer like her fiancé, cementing the first step of the process of surrogation.

However, Johanna updates the explorer role she has adopted. While Ingestrie exemplifies the eighteenth-century British explorer of Neptune’s kingdom, Johanna becomes a Victorian overland explorer of interior space. As the nineteenth century

progressed, overland exploration of the Arctic, Australia and, especially, Africa produced a new conception of the British explorer. The mid-to-late nineteenth century conducted a “race” to map Africa, and the Victorian press shared it with British readers in text and visualizations (Koivunen 2). In 1844-5, Sir Roderick Murchison, President of the Royal Society, spearheaded further attempts to map and colonize central Africa. He encouraged the interest of fortune-seekers like the fictional Ingestrie by claiming that they could find gold in Africa, and even proposed that the continent contained the biblical Mines of Ophir (Stafford 152-4). As the century continued, other explorers of Africa, most famously the missionary Dr. David Livingstone (1813-73), helped to reshape the British explorer figure to imply overland exploration of Africa. It is this new explorer that Johanna Ingestrie exemplifies when she surrogates her lost lover. Rymer stresses this exemplification by making her urban frontier resemble his culture’s idea of Africa. Crossing Fleet Street, she and her best friend Arabella Wilmot, who wears women’s clothes, encounter an obnoxious native of the area. He harasses Arabella, demanding “a kiss,” which antagonizes Johanna. “Did you never hear of a gent talking to a pretty girl in the street,” he asks Johanna. “Often,” she imprudently replies, “but I never heard of a gentleman doing so.” Johanna’s resulting fight with the enraged “gent” echoes Jeffreys’ ambush in Madagascar. Whereas Thornhill rescues Jeffreys by attacking the “savages,” Johanna’s father’s cousin Big Ben Oakley, a Beefeater and lion-tamer at the Tower of London, steps into the fray to save her (whom he does not recognize)

from the urban savage.<sup>66</sup> Ben soaks the man with water from a nearby pump, allowing Johanna and Arabella to flee. Previously, Big Ben had restrained Johanna's violently abusive mother as "the way [. . .] we manage wild beastesses" in the Tower "when they shuts [sic] their ears to all sorts of argument" (Rymer, 168, 46). Furthermore, Ben's vocation combines control of African wildlife (the Tower menagerie) with protecting London, the Tower's historic purpose. On Johanna's Fleet Street journey, when she sees Big Ben tussle with an honorary lion, she experiences a metropolitan safari, making her an explorer of a displaced, metropolitan Africa.

Johanna continues her surrogation of the Victorian explorer of continental interiors by exploring Todd's shop. Entering in male disguise, she crosses physical and social thresholds. Ensconced in the shop as Todd's servant boy, "Charley Green," Johanna discovers a bloody sailor suit; this evidence persuades law enforcement personnel to investigate the shop, arrest Todd and Mrs. Lovett, and rescue Ingestrie. She facilitates Ingestrie's return to the above-ground world and his recovery of the pearls that Todd had stolen from Thornhill, which the police return to them. Just as Ingestrie obtains the string of pearls for Johanna on his expedition, on her own expedition, she obtains them for him. These parallels emphasize Johanna's surrogation of her equatorial explorer fiancé's vocation, not to supersede him in his ambitions, but to complete his interrupted quest and make possible the domestic future for which he ventured into unmapped seas.

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<sup>66</sup>Rymer apparently did not name Big Ben after the Westminster clock tower. Designed in the late 1840s, the Great Clock at Westminster was completed only in 1858, and the hour bell (not the tower) was named "Big Ben" after the then Commissioner of Works, Sir Benjamin Hall (Hibbert et al 67).

Johanna's expedition looks bold, independent, and intrepid, but it paradoxically conforms to a Victorian patriarchal ideal of womanhood. Emphasizing selflessness, dependence, lack of agency, and life without incident, this ideal now is perhaps best known now from Coventry Patmore's notoriously misogynist poetic sequence *The Angel in the House* (1854-6) as analyzed by Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar. During the first two years of Ingestrie's absence, before Jeffreys brings Johanna the news of his disappearance in the barber shop, she patiently awaits his return, and resists her mother's attempts to betroth her to a minor villain, the hypocritical Reverend Lupin, as well as the advances of her father's boorish, criminal apprentice Sam Bolt.<sup>67</sup> She lives up to her last name, Oakley, which suggests the Royal Oak, a symbol of patriotic constancy.<sup>68</sup> She dresses in men's clothes and promenades with Arabella in Fleet Street for the sole purpose, she insists, of saving Mark. When Ben realizes that Johanna was the young man whose female companion he rescued from the Fleet Street "gent," she confesses in a scene that swiftly moves from subversive comedy to sentimental bathos:

"There were reasons why I put on such garments. Surely it was better to do so than—than—to—"

"Than to go without any?" said Ben.

"No--no, I did not say that—I mean it was better for me to forget a little of that maiden delicacy which—which—than to let him—"

She burst into tears.

(Rymer 231)

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<sup>67</sup>A Gothic villain of the Radcliffe and Lewis tradition, the outwardly zealous Lupin courts Johanna, murders his wife, and lusts after the wealth and person of Sweeney Todd's beautiful accomplice Mrs. Lovett. He helps Sweeney Todd to escape from prison, and Todd murders him.

<sup>68</sup>The tree in which Charles II avoided capture during the Civil War.

Johanna normally observes “maiden delicacy,” except when doing so would “let” her fiancé die. She stages her selfless masquerade only to save her unnamed “him” from detention and murder. She surrogates a man’s role in order to be an ideal wife.

While surrogating Ingestrie’s explorer role, Johanna consistently conforms to the Victorian patriarchal ideal of womanhood, containing her subversive potential. She demonstrates dependence, obedience, and selflessness, spying on the barber shop from the inside as Todd shaves the magistrate and his men, alerting him to the arrival of customers so that plainclothes officers can follow them in, and thereby denying Todd the opportunity to commit murder (Rymer 326). The angel in the demon’s house performs a vigil that preserves the nation’s men. Because she obeys the magistrate, he rescues his domestic counterpart, her husband. Her reliance upon the patriarchal magistrate makes her rescue mission successful, which justifies her surrogation.

Rymer commends Johanna’s conformity to patriarchal ideals by making that conformity enable her to survive her encounter with Sweeney Todd. As the owner of the barber shop, he is the master of the house in which she is employed, and therefore her symbolic husband. Rymer establishes her wifely obedience to him during her initial interview. “Master Charley, if you go and gossip about me or my affairs,” Todd warns her, “I’ll cut your throat!” She replies: “You may rely upon me. I will be quite discreet. I am a fortunate lad to get so soon into the employment of such an exemplary master.” In conversation with Johanna, Todd uses marriage imagery himself in describing his relations with his former apprentice, Tobias, claiming to

have “provided him with an independant [sic] home [. . .] A large house, and a garden.” When Johanna asks if Tobias is “happy,” Todd once again equivocates:

Quite, in a manner of speaking, notwithstanding human nature is prone to be discontented, and there are persons, who would sigh, if in Paradise, for some change, even if it were to a region supposed to be its opposite zone [. . .] reap the fruits of your service with me [and] no one will hear you complain.

Tobias’s situation—provided for, at “home,” not happy, but not complaining—sounds like a Gothic nightmare of Victorian wifehood. In fact, as Rymer explains in an earlier chapter, Tobias’s “home” is the prison of disobedient wives in Victorian fiction: a madhouse. Todd has incarcerated him there, for discovering his crimes, like a male Bluebeard’s Wife (Rymer 317, 326, 103). As Johanna proves less visibly disobedient than Tobias, Todd considers her a good honorary wife. Playing the wholly abject apprentice, Johanna agrees to the rules of marriage as delineated by Patmore. She simultaneously plays the roles of ideal wife and surrogate explorer, demonstrating that they are not incompatible.

Further demonstrating that a female who surrogates a disappearing explorer may prove an ideal patriarchal wife, Rymer contrasts Johanna’s wifely obedience with the disobedience of another of Todd’s symbolic wives, Mrs. Lovett. She demands that Todd give her the salary he has been holding in trust for her, threatens him with physical violence, turns him in to the authorities, and then, unable to extricate herself morally from his guilt, commits suicide, recalling the original transgressive wife, Lady Macbeth (Rymer 356, 361-2, 541-4). While Mrs. Lovett proves a monster of female independence and entrepreneurship, Johanna’s

dependence upon the absent Ingestrie and consequent obedience to her husband-like master preserve her life. Thus does Rymer contain the potential subversiveness of his heroine's surrogation of her fiancé.

Rymer also contains his plot's subversive potential by making Johanna abandon her self-fashioning as an explorer as soon as she has rescued Ingestrie. As his wife, confined to their house, she invents a narrative of her marriage plot that omits her expedition. In the novel's final sentence, she tells the family history to her children, explaining only what "their father had done, and suffered, to procure for them THE STRING OF PEARLS" (Rymer 783). What their mother has done and suffered to rescue their father, she does not disclose. Like Patmore's Honoria, who "surrenders her self" when she marries, and afterwards "has no story except a sort of anti-story of selfless innocence" (Gilbert and Gubar 25), Johanna excises herself from exploration history. In her retelling of the pearls' global and metropolitan circulation, she leaves herself out, giving herself "no story" except the traditional tale of the male voyager's passive, patient lady-in-waiting. Therefore, although *The String of Pearls* raises the tantalizing possibility that kinship ties to an explorer could inspire a Victorian woman to become an explorer herself, Rymer's idealization of his heroine prevents any realistic exploration of the appeal of exploration to a Victorian woman or its possible effects on her life, family, and culture.

Fortunately, some such motives surface in the life writing of Sophia Cracroft. Like Johanna Oakley, Cracroft sought to determine what had become of a much-loved male explorer who had disappeared. In May 1845, her uncle Sir John Franklin,

veteran of two previous Arctic expeditions, sailed into the North Atlantic Ocean with two ships, the *HMS Erebus* and *Terror*, and one hundred twenty-nine men. They never returned. For decades, Cracroft assisted Lady Franklin's campaigns to rescue the expedition, to recover its remains, and to canonize Sir John Franklin as a national hero. Lady Franklin goaded the Admiralty to action and privately commissioned several recovery expeditions. For this constant crusade, she earned from an approving press the nickname "England's Penelope," an archetypal counterpart of the equally persistent masculine British explorer (Spufford 98-100).

Cracroft shared this fortitude, but has largely been dismissed as a functionary lacking creativity and autonomy. She "ran [Lady Franklin's] office" (Lambert 270), in an anachronistic depiction of her as a twentieth-century secretary, which devalues her work and makes her the paradigmatic opposite of an author.<sup>69</sup> She passively "accompanied" Lady Franklin on her global travels (Birkett 67). She served as "assistant-in-chief at [Sir John] Franklin's shrine" (Spufford 106) and as Lady Franklin's "confidante" (Cavell 22-3, 210), a literary term that denotes a "minor or secondary character [. . .] in whom the protagonist confides, revealing his or her state of mind" (Baldick 68). This term makes Cracroft seem to have existed only to reflect Lady Franklin's thoughts and struggles.

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<sup>69</sup>The female "office assistant" or secretary postdates Cracroft's lifetime. As Leah Price and Pamela Thurschwell show, in the mid-nineteenth century, the male "copy clerk" performed functions taken over in the *fin-de-siecle* by women operating the newly-invented typewriter, as depicted in Grant Allen's *The Type-writer Girl* (1897). Considered the opposite of the imaginative author throughout the twentieth century, the male author's female secretary's "office" context "distanced [her] from literature" despite her integral role in its production (Price and Thurschwell 2-9).



However, Cracroft produced a vast corpus of insightful, self-conscious, critically aware travel writing, most of which remains unpublished today.<sup>70</sup> The 1897 editor of her nephew's posthumous poems eulogized her as an intellectual and a family inspiration. "The clever and devoted companion of Lady Franklin" possessed "mental energy," inspiring Lefroy to "elevate and improve the minds of others" (Lefroy 4).<sup>71</sup> At least twenty-two of Cracroft's travel journals and over eight hundred pages of correspondence survive in the collections of the Scott Polar Research Institute at Cambridge University and the British Library. These manuscripts include many fair copies of journal-letters to her mother and sisters, describing her travels to remote places including Australia, St. Helena, Shetland, the Orkney Islands, Hawaii, Alaska, Algeria, Egypt, Tunisia, Utah, Japan and India.

Writing up her global travels for a private family audience, Cracroft emulated several generations of her explorer kinsmen. The tradition began before her birth, with the career of Matthew Flinders, husband of the sister of Sir John Franklin's stepmother.<sup>72</sup> In 1789, Flinders defied paternal advice by going to sea. His father, a physician, secured him a commission in the Royal Navy, instructed him to keep a

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<sup>70</sup>Two edited collections of small fractions of Cracroft's travel writing have been published, with editorial matter that denies her authorship or subjecthood: *Lady Franklin Visits Sitka, Alaska: The Journal of Sophia Cracroft* (1981) and *The Victorian visitors: an account of the Hawaiian Kingdom, 1861-1866* (1958), which includes "journal letters of Sophia Cracroft" and writings by Lady Franklin and Queen Emma of Hawaii.

<sup>71</sup>An Oxford "Uranian" like Lefroy, Gill alludes to Lefroy's sexuality by prefacing the edited volume with a photograph of Lefroy autographed, presumably to Gill, "Yours always, Edward C. Lefroy."

<sup>72</sup>Flinders married Ann Chapelle, sister of Mary Chapelle, who married Franklin's father Willingham Franklin.

diary, and vowed to help him prepare and publish it. In 1798-1803, Flinders, now a captain, explored Australia. He was the first explorer to circumnavigate the continent and to identify Tasmania as an island rather than an Australian peninsula.

Shipwrecked in the Indian Ocean on his way home from his last voyage, Flinders survived imprisonment in French-controlled Île-de-France (1803-10) during the Long War, returned home after Britain captured Île-de-France, and, fulfilling his father's directive, wrote his memoir *A Voyage to Terra Australis* (1814), the first widely circulated text to call the continent "Australia."<sup>73</sup> Flinders's family may have collaborated on his *Voyage*, as he felt chronically unwell and died on the day he received his author's copies. His relations placed the copies at his bedside before his death (Brown 53). Returning his words to him and affirming their dissemination to the public, his family mediated between him, his publishers, and his public, identifying the Flinders household as a literary coterie committed to the theme of imperialist exploration. Kinship coterie defined his literary career from start to finish.

Like his uncle Flinders, John Franklin composed his voyages of discovery in the context of a kinship coterie. His first wife Eleanor Anne Porden's jingoistic poem *The Arctic Expeditions* (1818) reportedly "led to her union with Captain Franklin" ("Mrs. Franklin" 285), and he later engaged her as a copy-editor of his first exploration memoir. In 1824, she wrote to Isabella Cracroft of "correcting the sheets" for a third edition, despite her terminal tuberculosis. The Franklin coterie's

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<sup>73</sup>Île-de-France is present-day Île-Maurice (Mauritius).

conversations about exploration and the Arctic continued in epistolary form when Franklin was away on his second, overland expedition in the 1820s. From Upper Canada, he wrote to his niece Mary Anne Kay, Sophia Cracroft's cousin, who was later to marry the expedition's First Mate and assistant surveyor Edward Nicholas Kendall. Franklin's letter details the natural geography of the Arctic. On November 8, 1825, Franklin wrote to Kay from "Fort Franklin," his encampment on Great Bear Lake in Upper Canada. "I dare say you are most anxious to have a description of our mansion and of other points connected with our present residence," he covers the expedition's "subsistence [. . .] on the fish which the lake supplies in abundance" and the migration patterns of reindeer, but also scientific subjects such as rock "formations" defined in a "book of geology" (*FL* fol. 8). On February 6, 1825, he wrote to Kay and her siblings William Porden Kay and Emily Kay about Arctic ethnology. He aims "to introduce you to some of the natives in the [Great Bear Lake] vicinity as well as to some of the [Coppermine] River [. . .] On quitting the Great Bear Lake you come to the Dog Rib tribes, whose country extends on both sides of the River, as far as Bear Lake" (*FL* fol. 9). Here, Franklin figuratively brings the Kay siblings ("you") to the Arctic and gives them a tour, rehearsing the role he would play for the British public in his 1828 narrative of this expedition. He also rehearses a fictional narrative that he would retell in that memoir, as he conceals the expedition's failures from the Kays—as well as the horrors of his company's disintegration into starvation, madness, cannibalism and murder. The 1828 memoir similarly omits these catastrophes. By convincing his family that the expedition had remained civilized and

contributed to British knowledge of the Arctic, he prepared himself to persuade the public.

His niece Sophia Cracroft continued the family tradition of helping her uncle to burnish his increasingly tarnished public image. In 1836, when he became Lieutenant Governor of Van Diemen's Land, Australia, Cracroft traveled with him, his daughter Eleanor, and his second wife Lady Franklin, whom he had married in 1828, the first Lady Franklin having died in 1825. When he lost his governorship and the household embarked for home in disgrace, Cracroft contributed silently to her uncle's self-vindicating final published memoir, *Passages in the History of Van Diemen's Land During the Administration of Sir John Franklin*. Composed largely on board the ship back to England in 1843-44, the *Passages* was privately published by Lady Franklin in 1845 and disseminated to a select audience in England and Van Diemen's Land, with the endorsement of Franklin and Flinders' 1798 crewmate, the Royal Society botanist Robert Brown (Smith 189). Cracroft believed her contributions to this work made her an author: "I have promised him [Sir John] sketches in V.D.L. to be copied & I will write descriptions or explanations," she writes in her voyage diary (Cracroft VDL 117). As the ship moves up the Atlantic coast of Africa, she prays for "patience" to "make an Index to my Great Book," taking authorial credit ("my Great Book," emphasis mine). In another diary entry, she describes herself as a *male* historian. "I am revising," she writes, "the St. George's church case," she wrote of one of her uncle's gubernatorial débâcles, "& making myself *master* of the entire subject – after all of wh[ich] is finished – I shall if there

be time – commence copying” it “into the large Book” (*VDL* 125, emphasis mine).<sup>74</sup> *Passages* utilizes Sir John Franklin’s point of view in the first person, but Cracroft nevertheless considers it her masterpiece—a sign of her absorption in the process of surrogation.

In the same diary, Cracroft depicts herself as an intrepid, knowledgeable explorer like her uncle. In St. Helena, echoing his citation of his geology book in his letter to her cousin, Cracroft remarks that “the hills are as Volcanic as any Geologist could desire.” Like a sailor, she “climb[s] the mainsail.” Approaching dangerous exotic fauna, she finds a Portuguese man-of-war jellyfish “larger than my whole hand & beautifully coloured.” In St. Helena, Cracroft likened herself to her ancestor William Cracroft, calling his signature in the guestbook, inscribed during a voyage back from India, “my [her] own name.” Making the last leg of the return journey, a rail trip from the English coast to London, in a train by herself, she celebrates her autonomy, proudly declaring herself “an independent creature” (*VDL* 91, 117, 124, 88, 140). While the kinship coterie allows Eleanor Porden Franklin and Mary Anne Kay Kendall to participate as hagiographers, copyists, and preliminary addressees of John Franklin’s adventures, Cracroft wrests from this complex family situation a self-identification as an intrepid traveler.

Cracroft’s diary nonetheless reveals anxieties about her place in the Franklin family and in Victorian society, showing that in the final years of her uncle’s life, her own life lacked purpose. She remained unmarried and childless, in contrast with

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<sup>74</sup>Montague used convict labor to improve Hobart Town’s church, St. George’s, contrary to the more humanitarian Lt. Gov. Franklin’s instructions.

Franklin's daughter.<sup>75</sup> On the return voyage, Cracroft considered marrying her father's fellow explorer Captain Francis Rawdon Moira Crozier, who was soon to sail to the Arctic as his second-in-command. She claimed in her diary that fellow passengers mockingly pressured her to marry him, and insinuated that she was "not actually fit for aught else" (Cracroft *VDL* 129).<sup>76</sup> In England, relatives pressured her to marry him (Cracroft, *NLS* fols. 1-3).<sup>77</sup> However, she rejected him. Then, neither engaged, married, employed, nor any longer ghostwriting for her absent uncle, she had no discernible role in her coterie or world.

She found new purpose by surrogating her uncle after his disappearance. Surrogating him in her aunt's life, she traveled with Lady Franklin, chaperoning her, the two women said, until Sir John could return (Birkett 62). Cracroft also surrogated him in the wider community of their shared kinship coterie. Like her uncle, she sent her homebound kinswomen unpublished travel writing intended to educate and entertain. "I have written at some length in my journal wh. I hope will amuse you,"

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<sup>75</sup>Sir John Franklin's daughter Eleanor Isabella Franklin Gell (1824-60) shared a middle name with Cracroft, making them seem uncanny doubles.

<sup>76</sup>When Lady Franklin gossiped about the young Queen Victoria's resistance to her ministers' counsel, and Cracroft claimed "if I were Queen I would certainly enjoy tormenting my ministers," a male passenger "bowed & said he had no doubt whatever of *that*," and added that "Miss C. was fit for only two positions, to be Queen or a Bp.'s wife [. . .] if not actually fit for aught else" (Cracroft *VDL* 129). A bishop carries a crozier, so the passenger suggests that she is unfit to marry anyone except Crozier, and will be unfit for any occupation should she not marry him, so she had better.

<sup>77</sup>In a letter of August 1, 1844 to her cousin Henry Kay, she suggests that the prospect of marrying Crozier upsets her. "Capt. C's business. I write in depression," and adds that his sister Mary Anne Kendall has been "very kind to me & sincere wants me to marry" (Cracroft, *NLS* fols. 1-3).

Cracroft wrote to her mother and sisters on August 4, 1849 from the Orkney Island of Kirkwell. In her next letter, dated three days later, Cracroft describes the geography of Lerwick in terms reminiscent of her uncle's descriptions of the Arctic in his letters to her cousin Kay. Lerwick "lies in a small bay, under a steep hill, wh. Rises abruptly behind" (Cracroft, *Orkney* 5).<sup>78</sup> Once entertained by Sir John's despatches from the Arctic, the Franklin-Cracrofts continue the ritual of missing, waiting, and communally reading their celebrated explorer relation, but with Cracroft in the explorer role. Cracroft sustains and alters the ritual by assuming the vacant office of the absent, adventurous, and authoritative exploration narrator.

Cracroft more closely likens herself to her uncle by fashioning her 1849 journey to Scotland as a quest to reach and possess the extreme north, his lifelong ambition. On August 29, 1849, she writes from "Ultima Thule [. . .] the most northern point of the British Isles – literally the Ultima Thule of the Romans [. . .] the extreme north of all." Having reached the extreme north, she surrogates the absent Sir John's Arctic quests. Like Arctic explorers *par excellence*, Cracroft and Lady Franklin triumphantly claim the northern extremity, in a battle with hostile nature. "We pushed the boat's nose up against the rocks and plucked off a bit of the seaweed which covered them, thousands of birds flying around and screaming at us." They take possession of the seaweed, like explorers claiming a colony for their empire. Mimicking the language of ethnography that her uncle used in his letters and voyage narratives, Cracroft claims to have obtained for her sister Emma "one little specimen"

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<sup>78</sup>Three years later, in Rome, her "journal letter has been most imperfectly kept, but [. . .] many things in it will interest" (Cracroft, *British Library Letters* 137).

of the human culture of the north, a pair of mittens which “could not have come from any place *farther* north” (Cracroft *Orkney* 5). Presenting herself as an Arctic voyager and specimen-collector, Cracroft replaces Franklin in Emma’s life. His four-year-long, increasingly ominous absence makes her mimicry an act of surrogation.

In her accounts of her travels, Cracroft cements her surrogation of her uncle by giving herself the temperament of an archetypal explorer. She claims to have endured hardship and braved danger in order to experience and describe remote but belatedly discovered places. In Scotland in 1851, she writes in her journal of a dangerous ascent of a landscape marked by sublime terror:

We kept a little distance from the edge of the cliffs, so as to pass the [. . .] chasms in which the sea has forced itself a passage, & into which when the wind is westerly, it rushes with tremendous fury. The rocks were perpendicularly on each side, & are clothed at the top to the very edge with short thick turf so that some degree of caution must be observed in approaching them [. . .] the surface line is not seen to be open until you are almost upon the chasm.

In this passage, Cracroft and Lady Franklin brave the “fury” of nature, dodge the sharp edges of perpendicular rocks, and try to avoid slipping and falling off the turf and into the abyss (Cracroft, 2VS 13).<sup>79</sup> She risked her life again in Japan in 1862, where she and Lady Franklin experienced “a chock [sic] of earthquake—*my first!* – a sound as if a gust of wind shook the door, and then

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<sup>79</sup>Preceding travelers, men in ships, have met that fate, Cracroft indicates, observing “two whitened masses of wood, wh. had formed part of the timbers of a large vessel.” Shipwreck often occurs in this locality, as the local Sheriff auctions off wrecks “on the spot where they have been cast up.” Though Cracroft describes this danger nonchalantly, she concedes that having climbed a hill “the face of which shelves precipitously into the sea,” she was “unable to look down either way” and “suffered most severely from [. . .] getting down” (Cracroft, 2VS 13).



trembling beneath us which lasted a few seconds [. . .] a slight shock, but enough to satisfy me” (Cracroft, *Japan* 32). Like an explorer, she endures difficulty and danger, seeks thrills abroad, and describes her experiences in writing for a home audience’s consumption, thus surrogating her explorer uncle.

In her Japanese adventure, Cracroft also surrogates her uncle by describing experiences of first contact reminiscent of European “discoveries” of inhabited New World and Pacific territories. When Cracroft and Lady Franklin travel in Japan, Lady Franklin in a sedan chair but Cracroft riding a horse, she amazes the Japanese public:

I shall never forget the face of one man [. . .] as he caught sight of a woman on horseback [. . .] He looked at me as if I had been a supernatural being [. . .] gazing up and down as if fascinated with horror.  
(Cracroft, *Japan* 45)

Cortès and his men, riding sixteen horses, appeared gods or monsters to the native Americans, and the Hawaiians supposedly welcomed Cook as Lono. Therefore, Cracroft’s claim that the Japanese passerby sees her as a godlike monster likens her to a European imperialist explorer, confirming her as her explorer uncle’s surrogate.

Cracroft’s surrogation of a vanished explorer demonstrates the agency that Johanna Oakley lacks. Refusing Crozier’s suit liberated Cracroft from Victorian ideals of wifhood and widowhood. She adapted her remaining male kinship bond, her tie with her uncle, to undertake adventures and fulfill familial and societal functions without appearing to resist patriarchy. Cracroft’s canny self-fashioning as an explorer anticipates renowned later female travelers who represented themselves as explorers. In the 1890s, the rise of the “New Woman” made several female

extreme travelers, including Isabella Bird Bishop, Lady Florence Douglas Dixie, and Mary H. Kingsley, controversially fashionable (Stevenson 3). The celebrated traveler Isabella Bird Bishop (1831-1904) authorized her explorations in spite of her gender by identifying herself in a racist paradigm rather than a gendered one. In Korea, she appropriated a masculine position by characterizing herself as a white traveler in contrast to racially othered Asians, as had Lord Curzon in Japan (Park). By shifting the terms of the discourse of exploration away from gender, Bishop authorized herself as an explorer.

Other Victorian female travelers postdating Cracroft's heyday portrayed themselves as explorers by appropriating tropes of men's exploration writing to describe their acts and experiences. Lady Florence Douglas Dixie's travel memoir *Across Patagonia* (1880) employs phallic cliché, which had by then become institutionalized in exploration discourse. Lady Dixie "penetrate[s] into vast wilds, virgin as yet to the foot of man," to find "beauty and grandeur" in the "silent solitude of the mountains [. . .] into whose mysterious recesses no one as yet had ever ventured." She identifies herself as the expedition's leader and a first discoverer, "the first to behold" some Patagonian landscapes, which, though "an egotistical pleasure [. . .] had a great charm for me, as it has had for many others" (Dixie 3). Thus does she inscribe herself in an ambiguously gendered ("others") pantheon of first discoverers. Likewise, Mary Kingsley (1862-1900), traveler of the African interior and mountain-climber, called herself "a woman of masculine race" authorizing herself as an explorer in spite of the perception that exploration requires masculinity (Kingsley,

qtd. in Kearns 452).<sup>80</sup> Like Kingsley, Cracroft represented performance in a masculine role as a prerequisite of female exploration.

A generation after the publication of *The String of Pearls*, in which Johanna crosses a threshold into her marital home and stays there, Cracroft “crossed the line” in the other direction by refusing marriage and abandoning for several decades the hope of a permanent, land-based English home. Although Cracroft apparently did not directly inspire Bird Bishop, Lady Dixie, and Kingsley, she ventured out first upon the kind of expeditions that they subsequently undertook. The scholarly community ought to recognize her for that pioneering achievement.

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<sup>80</sup>For example, Curzon declared women unqualified to join the Royal Geographical Society because they had no capacity for exploration’s hardships (Curzon, qtd. in Kearns 457).

## Chapter 5. Mr. Wilde, I Presume?

In the early twentieth century, Arthur Cravan (1887-1918?) and Dorothy Ierne “Dolly” Wilde (1895-41) surrogated a famous uncle, Oscar Wilde, whom they both understood primarily as a traveler of exotic frontiers. Their kinship with their uncle shaped their self-expression. In this matter, the Wilde cousins resemble Sophia Cracroft. However, their examples break new ground in my analysis of explorers’ surrogates because they demonstrate the reinvention of the nineteenth-century explorer figure by the twentieth-century imagination. I argue that, inspired by Oscar Wilde’s self-fashioning as a variation on the British imperialist explorer, the *avant-garde* performance artist Cravan’s surrogated him as a stereotypically Victorian explorer of Africa and Asia, suggestive of David Livingstone but carrying a Modernist message. Dolly Wilde, I contend, devised a more complex and radical surrogation. Conjuring her contemporaries’ memory of her uncle without denying her gender or sexuality, she recreated her uncle’s Victorian explorer persona as a lesbian traveler, travel-writer, and storyteller. Her surrogation overtly challenges patriarchy, by insisting that such a voyager figure need not be man, nor, to quote Mary H. Kingsley, a self-declared “masculine” woman. In Dolly Wilde’s interpretation, the voyager-storyteller-hero can be not only female, but “feminine.”

If understanding Oscar Wilde as an imperialist explorer seems a stretch now, it would not have to his contemporaries and immediate successors. Beginning in the 1870s, the British press characterized him as a traveler of exotic realms, a fact not yet

sufficiently observed by the scholarly community.<sup>81</sup> In 1877, he traveled to Italy.<sup>82</sup> There, he met Julia Constance Fletcher, a novelist who published under the pseudonym “George Fleming,” living in Naples with her father, an American missionary. Fletcher’s subsequent novel *Mirage* (1877) represents Oscar Wilde as “Claude Davenant,” a European adventurer in Syria and Palestine who accompanies the New Woman explorer “Constance Varley” (Fletcher) on her travels. An intrepid, dauntless traveler Byronically at home in the Near East, Davenant makes his first appearance in an “Arab cloak” and unaffected by what appears to be a fire (Fletcher, *Mirage* 152). After *Mirage*, Fletcher continued to write novels about tourists, naming the hero of *Kismet* (1884) “Livingston” to suggest comparison with the missionary and explorer. She also continued to imagine Oscar Wilde an exotic traveler. When he dedicated his unreadable pseudo-Byronic poem *Ravenna*, inspired by his Italian travel, to “George Fleming,” Fletcher thanked him in a letter signed “Dudu [sic] Fletcher” (Kingston 17-18).<sup>83</sup> Fletcher’s allusion to Byron’s harem

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<sup>81</sup>Bruce Bashford has claimed that 1990s scholarship on Oscar Wilde has produced three thematic motifs, which he calls “Gay Wilde,” postcolonialist criticism’s “Irish Wilde,” and the “Materialist Wilde” of studies on commercial and material culture, such as Regenia Gagnier’s (Bashford 613). Traveler Wilde receives no mention.

<sup>82</sup>Oscar Wilde went to Italy in the company of John Pentland Mahaffy, his former Classics professor and mentor at Trinity, Dublin. The trip continued a family tradition, as his father, the ocular surgeon and archaeologist Dr. William Wilde, had visited Egypt, Palestine, and Turkey, climbed a pyramid, slept in a tomb, and published a *Narrative of a Voyage to Madeira, Teneriffe, and along the Shores of the Mediterranean* (1840), which a modern critic terms “a huge success” in the antiquarian community (Ryan 74-5).

<sup>83</sup>This work, *Ravenna*, won the 1878 Newdigate Prize for undergraduate poetry at Oxford University.

dweller Dudú likens *Ravenna*'s author to the traveler Juan.<sup>84</sup> It makes Oscar Wilde an intrepid voyager.

In 1882, he appeared to the transatlantic public as a traveler and evangelist. When Sir Robert d'Oyly Carte's opera company's production of William S. Gilbert and Arthur Sullivan's opera *Patience, or Bunthorne's Bride* toured the United States and Canada, D'Oyly Carte engaged Oscar Wilde to tour with the company, lecturing in Aesthetic dress on the Aesthetic movement, which the opera satirized. During the tour, his North American interviewers characterized him as a traveling evangelist by calling him "the apostle of aestheticism," "the Aesthetic Apostle" and "the Apostle of Art" (Lewis and Smith 47). These terms liken him to the twelve Apostles commissioned by Jesus, as well as St. Paul, Apostle of the Gentiles.<sup>85</sup> However, in the late Victorian era, the term "apostle" also denoted a promoter of secular messages or institutions. Examples include "apostle of science" and "apostles of hospital nursing" (*OED*).<sup>86</sup> Conforming to this convention, Oscar Wilde claimed to disseminate the ideology of Aestheticism in America. In the *Omaha Weekly Herald*

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<sup>84</sup>Later, Oscar Wilde serialized Fletcher's fiction in *Woman's World* (1888) and attended one of her plays (Kingston 22).

<sup>85</sup>Jesus commissioned twelve disciples as Apostles to disseminate Christianity, including Judas Iscariot, who failed to fulfill the commission. The Synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark, and Luke) each acknowledge eleven Apostles—the original twelve, minus Judas. The Book of Acts acknowledges twelve: the Synoptic eleven plus St. Paul (Mennie 75).

<sup>86</sup>In nineteenth-century Britain, a secret society at Cambridge University called the "Cambridge Apostles" (officially, the Cambridge Conversazione Society) included many famous writers, including, briefly, the Victorian Poet Laureate Alfred Tennyson. However, the public largely did not learn of its existence until the early twentieth century, so it would not likely have been known to the North American journalists of the 1880s (Lubenow 136, 45, 35-6).

of March 24, 1882, he claimed: “I want to make this artistic movement [Aestheticism] the basis of a new civilization” (qtd. in Hofer and Scharnhorst 29, 99). His intention to preach Aestheticism to the uncontacted multitudes of North America makes him a secular apostle.

As a traveling promoter of “civilization,” Oscar Wilde recalled Livingstone, whom his famous “discoverer” Henry Morton Stanley called the “apostle of Africa.” The most famous Victorian explorer after Franklin, Livingstone has been mythologized since the 1870s as a selfless, dignified missionary bringing spiritual and intellectual wealth to impoverished Africa (Jeal, *Stanley* 111, 124).<sup>87</sup> Likewise, although Oscar Wilde rejected a Canadian journalist’s suggestion that his journey was “an aesthetic mission to a barbarous clime,” he told the *Philadelphia Press* of January 17, 1882 that he has “no politics” but “two terms, civilization and barbarism” and is “on the side of civilization” (Hofer and Scharnhorst 26, 29). This paternalistic statement makes his stated mission resembles Livingstone’s.

However, his self-fashioning exceeded mimicry of Livingstone. In collaboration with his North American interviewers, he reinvented himself as a variation on the archetypal British imperialist explorer. Sometimes he emphasized a desire to travel for travel’s sake, without any plan intention to enlighten foreign people. According to a Toronto journalist, “his intentions for the future [we]re to

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<sup>87</sup>A Livingstone biography published in several American cities in 1878 claims that before Livingstone, “all explorations in Africa in former years were made [. . .] simply to gratify curiosity or from a desire to penetrate beyond lines reached by other men,” but beginning with Livingstone, “all the explorations have tended to one end—the civilization and Christianization of the vast population” of Africa (Headley iv). Much of “the myth of Livingstone” is exaggerated or false (Jeal *Stanley* 16, 124, 143, 153).



lecture in Australia and New Zealand, and, above all, to visit Japan, and remain for two months at least in that wonderful country, contemplating its artistic treasures.” The lecturer promised to set off for Japan on August 15<sup>th</sup>, 1883, and claimed that, “a wanderer by nature,” he “hardly know when [he] will next be in Europe” (Hofer and Scharnhorn 140, 160, 166).<sup>88</sup> He further likened himself to explorers by improbably claiming authoritative knowledge of the indigenous cultures of Africa and Asia. “One must go to Asia and Africa for picturesqueness in human costume and habits,” he told a journalist in Louisiana, although he himself had never been to Africa or Asia.

Oscar Wilde also played the imperialist explorer by making ethnographic statements about Americans that suggest earlier British imperialist explorers’ observations of the indigenes of the contact zones. With imperialist eyes, he objectified America’s racial minorities. “In America I have found it [picturesqueness] only in the Indians and the Negro, and I am surprised that painters and poets have paid so little attention to them, particularly to the Negro, as a subject of art” (qtd. in Lewis and Smith 362). He expresses neither amazement nor regret at the obscurity of Native American and African-American “painters and poets,” only at the European-Americans’ failure to exploit these Americans as artistic “subjects.”<sup>89</sup> He shares this objectification with European imperialist explorers, especially those whose expeditions included illustrators.

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<sup>88</sup>He never in fact visited Japan, and, after returning to England in late 1882, left Europe only once more, in 1895, when he visited Blidah, Algeria (Bristow 16).

<sup>89</sup>Employing Eurocentric planetary consciousness, he alternately objectifies and erases the indigenous and non-European-American citizens of the United States and Canada.

He associated his lecture tour persona with versions of the imperialist explorer spanning the history of transatlantic contact. Like Sir Walter Raleigh, Sir Francis Drake, and the *conquistadors*, he openly coveted America's material wealth. "I want to see Leadville immensely," he said of the mining town, then famous for its \$4 million per year silver boom, which he ultimately did visit on the tour (Oscar Wilde, qtd. in Hofer and Scharnhorn 63). Therefore, he traveled postcolonial North America playing the European imperialist. He even likened himself to the celebrated transatlantic explorer, Christopher Columbus. In the *Halifax Morning Herald* of 8 October 1882, he declared he "would rather have discovered [the *Patience* actress] Mrs. Langtry than have discovered America," because "Troy [. . .] well [. . .] might be destroyed for such a woman" (qtd. in Lewis and Smith 404). Here, he recognizes a parallel between himself and Columbus, but claims that his ambition exceeds Columbus's, because while Columbus sought empire, he claims to seek only "beauty." In 1936, recognizing Oscar Wilde's Columbian pose, the scholars William Lewis and Henry Justin Smith titled their monograph on the 1882 lecture tour *Oscar Wilde Discovers America*. This title equates Oscar Wilde with Columbus, the definitive explorer.

Not merely a self-professed explorer, Oscar Wilde in 1882 suggested that he risked disappearing in the frontier zone, and thereby joining the pantheon of tragically vanished explorers. "If I survive, I shall remain [in North America] until June," he

claimed (Hofer and Scharnhorst 133).<sup>90</sup> The speculative nature of this statement likens him to Livingstone, Stanley, Franklin, Cook and other explorers, whose episodic narrations of their travels represent their continued survival as conditional.

Back in Britain, Oscar Wilde continued to represent himself as an explorer of North America. He quickly abandoned his Aesthetic pretensions: never again seen in Aesthetic dress by a reliable witness, he publicly condemned it.<sup>91</sup> However, he retained the idea that he had explored America. He fulfilled the British imperialist explorer figure's authorial function by publishing his satirical exploration narrative *Impressions of America* (1883). This text begins by announcing its generic classification as an exploration narrative, and its inadequacy as one, with a pronouncement that its author does not know America's latitude and longitude, nor any facts of its geography (Oscar Wilde, "Impressions," in Hofer and Scharnhorst 177). Great "English navigators," the nominal authors of classics of the genre, invariably knew the coordinates of their discoveries, so he apologizes for his

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<sup>90</sup>Likewise, an unattributed satirical poem claimed that Oscar Wilde, "seen no more" in London, has been "banished" and has "vanished" in a "horrid place," Omaha Nebraska (qtd. in Millward 9). While his banishment from London suggests a convict transported to Australia, many renowned explorers also vanished in places that Europeans found horrid. These explorers include Livingstone (temporarily), Franklin, Park, Cook, Cabot and Magellan.

<sup>91</sup>In "More Ideas on Radical Dress Reform" (1884), Oscar Wilde condemned the "Aesthetic dress" he had worn to lecture. The "knee-breeches" being "not really comfortable" and the entirety of the costume "not founded on any real principles [. . .] an ideal dress of course it is not" (CWOW 14:54). The only contemporary acquaintance to claim that Oscar Wilde had worn Aesthetic dress in public outside of the tour, his biographer Frank Harris, only said so after Oscar Wilde's death and modern critics have discredited his biography for its numerous fabrications (Guy 4:xli, Kohl 2, Shaw qtd. in Pearson 350). Offering a different view, Merlin Holland, Oscar Wilde's grandson and a significant influence upon the heritage industry, calls Harris's biography more "embellishment than outright fabrication" (Holland 9).

ignorance. In the Leadville episode of *Impressions of America*, he reprises the role of gold prospecting explorer that he had portrayed on his travels. The Leadville miners invite him to a subterranean banquet where the dishes glittered with silver dust. The preposterous claim likens him to Raleigh and other mendacious explorers who promoted the myth of the Golden City of El Dorado or Manoa. As a first-person travel narrative, the *Impressions* likens him to those navigators who published their voyages of discovery. It characterizes its author as an imperialist explorer.

After Oscar Wilde's death, his nephew and niece surrogated his 1882 performance, immortalizing him as an intrepid professional traveler.<sup>92</sup> In 1914, his nephew Cravan represented himself going to America on precisely the same terms as his uncle. Approached by a "man who would meet all the expenses of a six-month tour," as d'Oyly-Carte met Oscar Wilde's American expenses, Cravan claims to have "folded my silk hosiery," reminiscent of Oscar Wilde's Aesthetic silk stockings, and sailed for New York, Oscar Wilde's point of arrival (Cravan, "Poet and Boxer," qtd. in Conover 62). In New York, Cravan continued to surrogate his uncle's 1882 performance. In a performance-art intervention devised by Marcel Duchamp and Francis Picabia, Cravan lectured on modern art to a group of "Fifth Avenue hostesses." While in 1882 in New York Oscar Wilde had explained "art" with the help of bizarre Aesthetic dress and overly stylized, apparently scripted pronouncements, in 1917 New York Cravan gave modern art appropriately new and shocking styles of dress and performance. He shouted obscenities and disrobed. The

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<sup>92</sup>Cravan (born Fabian Avenarius Lloyd) was the son of Otho Lloyd, brother of Constance Mary Lloyd, who married Oscar Wilde in 1883.

event ended (like Oscar Wilde's entire career) with the lecturer's arrest, but Duchamp judged it "a great lecture" (Buffet-Picabia 55-6). This description emphasizes that Cravan reinvented his uncle's iconic performance as a traveling lecturer.

Cravan's subsequent resurrection of Oscar Wilde made the late *poseur* an explorer of India, Asia, or Africa, the dominant late-Victorian versions of the British imperialist explorer. In Cravan's 1916 short story "Oscar Wilde est vivant!" ('Oscar Wilde is Alive!'), in Cravan's New York-based *avant-garde* magazine *Maintenon* ('Now'), a "M. Fabian Lloyd" (Cravan's birth name) receives a visit from Oscar Wilde in Paris in 1913—thirteen years after his historical death. The story opens in 1913, with Lloyd hearing a persistent knocking on the door of his Paris home. He finds a prematurely aged, "diseased," white-haired, bearded man, who identifies himself as "Sebastian Melmoth," the alias that Oscar Wilde used in his final, post-prison years in continental exile. Lloyd declares his visitor Oscar Wilde, returned not from the dead but from some exotic frontier of the Empire: "either from the East Indies or Sumatra, or from elsewhere." Cravan makes his Oscar Wilde desire an African death like Livingstone's:

Very certainly, he had wished to die in the sun—perhaps in Obock [present-day Djibouti, East Africa]—and it is somewhere in those parts that I poetically figured him, among the riotous greenery of Africa, amid the music of flies, living like a brute.  
(Cravan, "Oscar Wilde Lives" 55)

"Lloyd" further associates him with Livingstone by calling him a missionary (admittedly, to Europe), asking him "did you not come here on a mission?" (Cravan,

“Oscar Wilde Lives” 61). Cravan describes himself imagining his uncle as an archetypal late-Victorian explorer.

Cravan’s plot reiterates his identification of Oscar Wilde as an explorer by recalling Stanley’s memoir *How I Found Livingstone: Travels, Adventures, and Discoveries in Central Africa: Including an Account of Four Months’ Residence with Dr. Livingstone*. Cravan’s story might have accurately been titled “How I Found Oscar Wilde: Travels, Adventures, and Discoveries in Paris.” While Stanley found Livingstone in the continent into which he had disappeared, Lloyd finds Oscar Wilde in Paris, the urban wilderness where he had vanished after his 1897 release from prison. The end of Lloyd’s encounter with “the new Oscar Wilde” also echoes Stanley’s tale of his interaction with Livingstone. Stanley lost Livingstone, within a year of finding him, when Livingstone died. Likewise, Lloyd loses Oscar Wilde by getting drunk and ejecting him into Paris’s labyrinthine nighttime streets. Realizing that Oscar Wilde has no coat, and will freeze outside (Cravan, “Oscar Wilde” 195-6), Lloyd confronts Wilde’s imminent death, just as Stanley had to confront Livingstone’s. In this denouement, Oscar Wilde dies in October 1913 in Paris, the foreign place he had adopted as Livingstone had adopted Africa. His death there after being “discovered” by Cravan makes Cravan an explorer in his own right, as Stanley’s “discovery” of Livingstone made Stanley.

Cravan’s reinvention of the mythical discovery of Livingstone by Stanley also explains another key plot element of “Oscar Wilde est vivant.” In this story, Lloyd claims that Wilde claims him as his secret illegitimate son. Likewise, Stanley, an

illegitimate child raised by first by his grandfather and later in a workhouse, sought surrogate father figures. Born John Rowlands, he re-named himself Henry Morton Stanley after the American businessman Henry Hope Stanley, whom he claimed had adopted him, and found his most effective surrogate father in Livingstone (Jeal, *Stanley* 131). Lloyd's discovery of his missing father in Wilde and subsequent, immediate return to fatherlessness upon his death mimics Stanley's brief, intense relationship with Livingstone. Reminiscent of Stanley and Livingstone, Cravan's Lloyd and Wilde suggest an intergenerational pair of explorers.

Cravan's exaggeration of Oscar Wilde's explorer credentials reinvents the Stanley-Livingstone encounter as a Modernist performance. When Lloyd asks Oscar Wilde if he has returned to Europe on a mission, Oscar Wilde denies this, and delivers no message, to Lloyd's frustration. His silence is itself a modernist variation on the exploration memoir, as modernism, in a seminal scholar's definition, tended to "modify [or] overturn existing modes and subjects of representation," privileging abstraction, introspection, and nihilism (Childs 4). While Stanley apocryphally greeted Livingstone with polite deference ('Dr. Livingstone, I presume?'), and then learned of his experiences, Lloyd's drunken abuse drives him away, leaving Lloyd without a message from him or an account of his experiences during his disappearance from British society.<sup>93</sup> Lloyd's rudeness also destroys the possibility of any subsequent, more illuminating discovery of Oscar Wilde, because eviction

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<sup>93</sup>Stanley almost certainly did not in fact greet Livingstone with the famous catchphrase (Jeal, *Stanley* 119).

from Lloyd's house kills him. This plot points contributes to the text's Modernism, as that movement attacked nineteenth-century bourgeois values.

In a final act of performance art, Cravan surrogated Oscar Wilde's transatlantic voyager role, reinvented it as a disappearing explorer, and staged the disappearance as a Modernist statement. In 1918, fearing conscription into the First World War, Cravan rented a sailboat to leave Mexico for Argentina, and vanished. Cravan's disappearance invokes his idea of Oscar Wilde from *Maintenon* and re-enacts that character's disappearance from European civilization. Whereas late-Victorian mores with regards to sexuality and class drove Oscar Wilde into exile in Paris and (so Cravan said) Africa, the wartime draft banished Cravan permanently from Europe. Cravan's theatrical disappearance articulated rejection of the bourgeois values that informed the war.

Cravan's cousin Dolly Wilde surrogated her uncle's intrepid traveler persona and repurposed it to articulate feminist meaning.<sup>94</sup> In her letters, she supernaturally channels his voice: "I *couldn't* resist the 'bon mot' which sprang to my lips— (Oscar's lips after all)" (qtd. in Schenkar 239). Like a spirit medium, she resurrects and repurposes him. As a woman, she might be discouraged from uttering caustic

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<sup>94</sup>Dolly Wilde probably knew about Cravan's surrogation of their uncle. On May 6, 1927, Cravan's widow, the poet Mina Loy, attended Natalie Clifford Barney's literary salon. Loy gave a rehearsed reading of a poem about her marriage, her husband's disappearance, and her widowhood (Parmar); Dolly joined the coterie a month later, in June, as Barney's lover (Schenkar 25). Another coterie member, Djuna Barnes, alludes in her satire *The Ladies' Almanack* (1928) to Loy's relationship with Cravan by caricaturing Loy as "Patience Scalpel" (Wells-Lynn 78), who presumably earns her first name by waiting patiently for a solution to the mystery of her husband's disappearance (and perhaps for marrying the self-appointed heir of the lecturer-double of Bunthorne, suitor of an ingénue named *Patience*).



criticisms reminiscent of her uncle's—but their alleged apparitional origin both absolves her and draws attention to her audacity.

While surrogating her uncle, she also traveled, wrote about her travels, and, according to biographer Joan Schenkar, described herself as a habitual traveler, associating them both with his 1882 persona. In 1924, she crossed Morocco by motorcar with her friend Ava Bodley and documented the trip in a twenty-seven page journal, now her only extant travel memoir (Schenkar 236). Crossing Western Europe, Poland and Russia with another friend, Pamela “Honey” Harris, Dolly Wilde wrote to an unidentified correspondent: “Once more, dearest Emily, I take up my pen in a foreign country to write to you.” Relishing the dangers confronted by overland explorers, she is “a little disappointed not to have seen any bears or wolves” and, combining the traveler’s authorial function with her comic playwright uncle’s legacy, boasts “I have a thousand stories to tell you when I return to make you laugh.” Referencing two of the themes of her uncle’s North American pontifications, John Keats and bourgeois home improvement, Dolly Wilde calls herself “the only person who has travelled to Brussels reading Keats with their nose buried in [books about] gardening!” (Dolly Wilde, qtd. in Barney 87, 88, 104). The qualifier “to Brussels” suggests that she knows that her uncle had traveled that way to New York, San Francisco, and many points in between. However, she reinvents his persona by writing as herself—a woman traveling with other women, without a male chaperone. This adds feminist meaning lacking in her uncle’s 1882 persona, which he fashioned

in conversations with male journalists about art and civilization as defined by European men.

Reinforcing her lesbian feminist surrogation of Oscar Wilde's "Aesthetic Apostle" persona, Dolly Wilde masqueraded in his interpretation of Aesthetic Dress without disguising her gender. While Oscar Wilde only wore Aesthetic dress on the American lecture circuit, Dolly Wilde dressed in it in order to dress up as him. She meticulously copied the photographs of him taken in New York at the start of the tour and widely disseminated ever since. Her wide, floppy, silk cravat (tied like a shoelace), white Cavalier collar, fur lapels, knee breeches and stockings identify her as the Aesthetic Apostle of 1882. Her contemporaries recalled her wearing this costume to a ball in 1930 (Barney 70-1, Gubar 491). However, her version was undoubtedly female. In her acquaintance's interpretation, she surrogated her uncle as a woman: when she met H. G. Wells at the Paris Pen Club, he called her "a female Wilde" (Wells, qtd. in Barney 15).<sup>95</sup> Her surrogation suggests that a woman might wield the kind of elite knowledge and cultural authority that Oscar Wilde had claimed while on the lecture tour circuit. She raised the possibility that the Paris lesbian coterie to which she belonged might join the community of the aesthetically informed to which Oscar Wilde had invited his 1882 audiences.<sup>96</sup> While he had dreamed of

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<sup>95</sup>This ghostliness identifies her surrogate persona with the Apparitional Lesbian trope that Terry Castle has located in eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth-century literature (Castle 28-33).

<sup>96</sup>Amy Wells-Lynn discusses the coterie writers Natalie Clifford Barney, Djuna Barnes, and Radclyffe Hall's construction of Barney's Paris house as an "alternate, creative female space" and a "safe space" for lesbians and their art. In other words, they form a household, which

discovering Lily Langtry, Dolly Wilde appropriates his iconic image to posit that women can travel, write, and make discoveries with and for each other. Ever since Dolly Wilde's masquerade, for a woman "to play Oscar" is to surrogate her (DeGuzmán). In other words, when a woman wears his Aesthetic costume, she conjures Dolly Wilde, displacing Oscar Wilde from the Aesthetic Apostle role and altering its meaning to commemorate lesbian visibility and creativity.

Members of Dolly Wilde's Paris coterie of the 1920s understood her performance as a reinvention of her uncle in lesbian feminist terms. The *New Yorker* columnist Janet Flanner theorized that Dolly Wilde used her Oscar Wilde-in-Aesthetic Dress costume to declare herself a significant lesbian: in it, she "look[ed] both important and earnest" (Flanner, *Paris Was Yesterday*, 69). In 1930, it would have been radical to claim "importance" for a lesbian subject, as for most of history, lesbians had been invisible or marginalized in mainstream culture. In another coterie member, Djuna Barnes's, experimental *roman-a-clef* *The Ladies' Almanack* (1928), Dolly Wilde appears as "Doll Furious," a modern, female *doppelgänger* of Oscar Wilde (Souhami 164). In an episode titled "The Fourth Great Moment of History," Doll Furious walks with "Dame Musset" (her lover Natalie Clifford Barney) in a Parisian public park, while telling her a revisionist life of Jezebel and the Queen of Sheba. As a revisionist history of the Biblical *femme fatale*, "The Fourth Great Moment of History" recalls Oscar Wilde's play *Salomé, Princesse de Judaea* (1892),

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fulfills Scott Krawczyk and Sharon L. Joffe's models of the literary family or kinship coterie (Wells 78, 87-9).

but with lesbian heroines who lack Salômé's abjection.<sup>97</sup> Doll Furious also surrogates Oscar Wilde's profane evangelism and peripatetic American lecturing of 1882, as she talks while walking, addresses her lecture to the fictional double of Barney, an American, and appears to evangelize for lesbian feminism. By surrogating her uncle's theatrical persona, Dolly Wilde claims significance and agency for the lesbian feminist storyteller. She responds to her uncle's peripatetic evangelism for implicitly man-made art with an allusive endorsement of a predominantly female, predominantly lesbian artistic community which, despite its radicalism, acknowledges debts to comparatively mainstream artists such as Oscar Wilde.

The lesbian feminist subtext of Dolly Wilde's surrogation of her uncle's 1882 traveler persona reverberates today in the queer performance art collective SPIR's imaginative response to the Wilde kinship coterie (fig. 1). In 1994, outraged by the premature deaths of Dolly Wilde and Oscar Wilde, the HIV-AIDS and suicide in the queer community, and "the persistent representation of [. . .] homosexuality [as] a death sentence" SPIR members Jill Casid and María DeGuzmán, collaborating with the poet Camille Norton and Jane Picard, created the photographic series *Oscaria/Oscar*. This series depicts six anachronistic encounters between a pair of doubles: Oscar Wilde and his niece, or perhaps between Dolly Wilde dressed as Oscar Wilde and not. As ghosts, time travelers, or performer (Dolly Wilde) and

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<sup>97</sup>Karla Jay finds Barnes's portrayal of Barney (as "Evangeline Musset") and "Doll Furious" more sinister, with Musset as a "mindless Dona Juana" libertine figure (Jay 25).

personae (Oscar Wilde), the two encounter each other.<sup>98</sup> *Oscaria/Oscar* echoes Dolly Wilde's surrogation by casting a woman as an Aesthetically costumed Oscar, demonstrating that "to play Oscar as a woman" is to play Dolly Wilde. The title of *Oscaria/Oscar*, in which the female version of the name precedes the male, shows that by reinventing her uncle's 1882 explorer personae, Dolly Wilde simultaneously mourned him and, defying the marginalization of lesbian artists, made herself visible to the public.

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<sup>98</sup>It is unclear where and when the meetings take place. The color photos suggest a late-twentieth-century setting, making the nineteenth- and early-twentieth century subjects forward-moving time travelers. The scenography complicates the dating: a very few objects look vaguely antique but do not positively identify or exclude any decade. The scene could even take place in the present, with both Wildes traveling forward in time to visit 1994.



Fig. 1

Oscaria / Oscar

Photo: # 3 in a sequence of 6

with the collaboration of Camille Norton and Jane Picard

Copyright © 1994 by Jill Casid and Maria DeGuzmán

SPiR: Conceptual Photography

*Oscaria/Oscar's* doubling of a disappearing Oscar Wilde and materializing Dolly Wilde resembles the doubling of the disappearing British male imperialist explorer and his outsider counterpart in the nineteenth-century texts I have analyzed. We have seen that Mary Shelley marginalizes Commodore Byron in relation to the apocryphal Patagonian Giants. The sixth Lord Byron rejects the values of the Commodore and Bligh, foregrounding Christian instead, Graham's Tamehameha foregrounds the seventh Lord Byron, captain of the *Blonde*, and Johanna, Cracroft, Cravan, and Dolly Wilde assume the roles of their lost explorer kinsmen. Their narratives urgently claim authority, autonomy, and visibility for demographics excluded from the category of the British explorer as defined by the Admiralty in the nineteenth century and largely accepted ever since.

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