CHAPTER 1

Conquest Narratives

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In his *True and Exact History of the Island of Barbados* (1657), Richard Ligon speculates that, in the early seventeenth century, Indigenous peoples of the Leeward Islands – likely Kalinago peoples from the island of St Vincent – crossed the short distance across the sea to Barbados in order to hunt. He writes that they left behind 'certain tokens of their being there, which were, Pots, of severall sizes, in which they boyled their meat, made of clay, so finely tempered, and turned with such art, as I have not seen any like them, for finenesse of mettle, and curiosity of turning, in *England*'.[1] Ligon explains that he receives this information from planters who now claimed Indigenous lands, from which they extracted profit with enslaved Africans' labour. Ligon also discovers an alternate theory, circulated by an 'antient Captain, and one of those that first landed on the Iland'. The captain insists on Indigenous people's absence from the island and 'inform'd me for certain, that this was a grosse mistake in the Planters, and that no Indians ever came there'.[2] He claimed instead that the pots originated with enslaved Africans, saying that they brought the pots 'from *Angola,* and some other parts of *Africa;* and that he had seen them make of them at *Angola,* with the greatest art that may be'.[3] These competing theories illuminate the entanglements of Caribbean Indigenous peoples, histories, and lands with African transportation and enslavement, entanglements that define the conquest of the Caribbean and its narratives. In the captain's telling, enslaved Africans replace Indigenous people as the producers of the island's archaeological and historical materials. At the same time, the planters make claims for an Indigenous antiquity represented by archaeological materials, while effacing the African labour on which they depended to turn a profit from Indigenous lands. Ligon may have hoped that these representations of Indigenous and African people impressed metropolitan readers with accounts of the Caribbean, gleaned from firsthand observations and his experiences managing a plantation.

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The myth of Columbus's so-called discovery of the Caribbean – places already known for centuries by Indigenous people – spawned a companion myth, of Indigenous disappearance after colonization. Stories of disease, violence, and enslavement, documented by Spanish chroniclers Bernal Díaz del Castillo and Bartolomé de las Casas and recirculated by English colonial promoters eager to delegitimize Spanish colonization, depicted colonial violence against Indigenous people even as these narratives supported assumptions that colonial violence created an empty land, possessed only by the European conquerors who jockeyed for its imperial ownership. The colonization of the islands currently known as the Caribbean was indeed a violent, genocidal uprooting of Indigenous peoples, political systems, and ways of life. The enslavement of Indigenous peoples, brutal violence meted out on Indigenous bodies, and sexual violence against Indigenous women are legacies of European imperialism for the Americas and the globe.[4] In light of this history, myths of Indigenous dispossession are not merely colonial fantasies but engines of conquest.

A consequence of these colonial myths is ongoing literary, historical, and scholarly narratives of Indigenous absence that respond to colonial genocide by perpetuating the assumption that no Indigenous people remained in the Caribbean after the first few decades of Spanish occupation. From Las Casas's documentation of Spanish atrocities and genocide to Bryan Edwards's claim that Native people were extinct a few decades after Columbus's landing in the region, these arguments for extinction reverberate throughout subsequent histories of the Caribbean and contemporary scholarship.[5] They do so even as they are belied by colonial observations of enslaved Indigenous people, as in Ligon's comments that 'we make [Indians] slaves' and his story of the Indigenous woman, Yarico, sold into slavery by the Englishman she supposedly rescued.[6] Yet, as Lynne Guitar, Pedro Ferbel-Azcarate, and Jorge Estevez point out, the horror of hundreds of thousands of Indigenous people's deaths has obscured the fact of Indigenous survival.[7] Indigenous communities and political entities continue to exist in the Caribbean islands and mainland, as a result of Indigenous people's strategies of survival over hundreds of years, with Carib (Kalinago) communities in Cuba, Dominica, St Vincent, Trinidad and Tobago, and Suriname; Arawak (Lokono) communities in Barbados and Suriname; Taíno communities in Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Dominican Republic; the Garifuna communities along the Caribbean coast of Central America (including Honduras, Belize, and Guatemala), and many others.[8]

This chapter takes up these myths and legacies in British conquest narratives of the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries.

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Narratives of Indigenous absence and presence are prevalent across conquest narratives in multiple imperial contexts, and I focus in this essay on British contexts in order to trace these narratives across multiple centuries and British-claimed areas. Moreover, British conquest narratives developed by appropriating information from Spanish and French accounts, and I highlight these intertextual connections below. While showing how these narratives expanded accounts of Spanish cruelty that solidified into the Black Legend, this essay also offers an early chapter in a literary history of claims to indigeneity in the Caribbean. Assertions of Indigenous extinction are inseparable from the forms colonialism took in the Caribbean, in which European colonists imported an enslaved labour force to work an allegedly emptied land. Conflating indigeneity and race, Indigenous and African people was crucial to European colonists' claims to rightful possession. Yet even as colonists deployed the myth of Indigenous absence to conquer the Caribbean in rhetorical and political terms, that myth is belied by a strategic recognition of Indigenous people's ongoing presence. Ligon's fascinated speculation that Indigenous people might canoe from the Leeward Islands to Barbados alongside his inclusion of theories of Indigenous absence exemplifies these competing narratives. As he theorizes of Indigenous people in the Leeward Islands: 'And if we can see them, why may not they see us; and they will certainly venture to any place they see.'[9] This chapter considers the question that Ligon raises by asking when and why colonists saw Indigenous peoples, and takes up the question Ligon never answers, by calling for additional consideration of why and how Indigenous people saw colonists.

I first describe British conquest narratives published from the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries, focusing especially on how intertextuality described English conquests in the Caribbean within a global empire, making space – rhetorically and on the land – for British colonies amidst competing European empires dependent on enslaved labour and Indigenous nations. While intertextuality allowed colonial writers to frame the Caribbean through familiar literary and aesthetic descriptors, their texts nonetheless also respond to encounters with Indigenous people. I show how colonial writers engage in selective practices of seeing and disavowing Indigenous and African political formations in the Caribbean. Locating Indigenous presences in conquest narratives requires an analysis of moments when colonists chose to see Indigenous people, moments that are also inextricably linked to how and when colonists saw enslaved Africans. By way of offering an alternative to replicating these myths of absence, I then consider the other side of

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Ligon's question, how Indigenous peoples and nations 'saw' the English – that is, how they maintained their political sovereignty and sought to survive in a world transformed by colonization. I conclude by briefly considering how the pattern of absence and presence generated in conquest narratives is borne out in more recent debates about indigeneity, settler colonialism, and slavery in the Caribbean.

Conquest Narratives: Intertexuality and Global Empire

Intertextuality is fundamental to conquest narratives. Indeed, narratives produced by and about the conquest of the Americas have virtually always been intertextual, as writers struggled to describe unknown and unfamiliar worlds to audiences whose opinions of the Americas were shaped as much by textual traditions about non-European places as by travellers' firsthand accounts. Some of the first narratives of American conquest – by Christopher Columbus, Hernán Cortés, Álvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca, and Walter Ralegh, among others – turned to existing intellectual and literary frameworks to describe the Americas, relying on these traditions for language with which to make sense of the peoples and places they encountered and to elicit a sense of wonder, awe, and desire in their readers. Promoting the Caribbean as a paradisal place certain to fill state and individual coffers with myriad forms of wealth, these narratives envisioned a peaceful conquest in which friendly Indigenous people would gladly welcome European 'discoverers'.[10] By extension, colonial historians like Bryan Edwards recapitulated these first narratives to describe the 'ancient natives of Hispaniola, Jamaica, and Porto Rico'.[11] Edwards quotes and summarizes texts by Ralegh, Las Casas, Antonio de Herrera y Tordesillas, Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo y Valdés, and others to describe the Spanish conquest and ensuing rapid diminishment of Native people, from millions to thousands in a space of fifty years, he argues. Nearly a century later, James Anthony Froude turns to Spanish and French histories for a sense of the '[s]trange scenes' and 'drama' of the past, writing of 'the millions of innocent Indians who, according to Las Casas, were destroyed out of the islands, the Spanish grinding them to death in their gold mines; the black swarms who were poured in to take their place, and the frightful story of the slave trade'.[12]

Intertextuality can disguise moments of Indigenous action and presence as textual or historical scenes, as when Froude describes Kalinago people by paraphrasing the French priest and botanist Jean-Baptiste Labat's accounts from the eighteenth century. As he describes meeting Kalinago

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leaders on Dominica and political exchanges with them, Froude displaces these people to the past by incorporating Labat's description of their eating practices (including accounts of ceremonial cannibalism) and medicinal knowledge. He writes: 'The Caribs, according to Labat, only ate one another for ceremony and on state occasions; their common diet was as excellent as it was innocent; and they had ascertained by careful experience the culinary and medicinal virtues of every animal and plant around them.'[13] In these cases, intertextuality presents contemporary Indigenous peoples as textual presences rather than as people and sovereign entities who remained despite colonial genocide.[14]

Several hundred years after Spanish colonization, English colonists sought once more to evoke a sense of wonder among their readers. By the eighteenth century, conquest narratives sought to justify and celebrate the relatively recent English takeover of islands previously claimed by Spain and France, islands that changed hands at the end of the Seven Years War; by the nineteenth, travellers like Froude contemplated the future of British imperialism and conquest in islands radically altered by the Haitian Revolution and emancipation. British colonists did not write narratives of 'first' discovery that evoked wonder at the sight of a place previously unknown to Europeans. Instead, they attempted to reimagine places already known by defending English colonization and colonial administration, plantation slavery, and the African slave trade. These conquest narratives sought to transform the horrors of slavery into depictions of a wonderfully productive land overseen by benevolent plantation owners and worked by grateful, happy slaves or 'peasants', despite the fact that this conquest entailed not only the seizure of land in one place but also the seizure of bodies in another.[15]

Intertextual references enable rhetorical transformations of horror and conquest into beauty and rightful ownership. Maria Nugent (wife to George Nugent, Jamaica's colonial governor from 1801 to 1806) invokes Columbus's account of the Caribbean's lush green vegetation in her journal account of her first sight of Jamaica, exclaiming at the sight of 'such hills, such mountains, such verdure; every thing is so bright and gay, it is delightful!'.[16] Like Columbus, Nugent describes an 'enchanting' landscape, evoking the east to communicate its allure:

> Imagine an immense amphitheatre of mountains, irregular in their shape and various in their verdure; some steep and rugged, others sloping gently, and presenting the thickest foliage, and the most varied tints of green, interspersed with the gardens of little settlements, some of which are tottering on the very brinks of precipices, others just peep out from the

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> midst of cocoa-nut trees and bamboos, the latter looking really like large plumes of green feathers. The buildings are like little Chinese pavilions, and have a most picturesque effect.[17]

In addition to evoking past conquests to frame England's place in Jamaica, Nugent understands her travels to the Caribbean as part of Britain's global empire. This understanding emerged from her husband's role as colonial governor in Jamaica, and it extends to her own descriptions of the islands. She comments as their ship nears Barbados: 'The first appearance of the island was quite beautiful. It put me in mind of the scenes in Cook's Voyages.'[18] Nugent was likely referencing the popular 1773 compilation of James Cook's and Joseph Banks's journals by John Hawkesworth, titled *An Account of the Voyages undertaken by the order of his present Majesty for making discoveries in the Southern Hemisphere, and successively performed by Commodore Byron, Captain Wallis, Captain Carteret, and Captain Cook.* Cook's account, itself paralleling Columbus's early journals, described paradisaical islands and imagined Mā'ohi people (the Indigenous people of Tahiti) as opening their lands to scientific exploration and English colonization. Nugent's statement that Barbados 'put her in mind' of 'scenes' in the Pacific points to the ways that conquest narratives provided aesthetic frameworks for describing both Caribbean and Pacific islands. Just as Columbus placed the Caribbean in the East Indies in order to imagine that his voyages fulfilled European desires for eastern trade and global conquest, so several hundred years later, English travellers imagined the Caribbean through Tahiti in order to communicate its beauty and utility as an economic, scientific, and legal site of experimentation. Similarly, Froude invokes the Pacific in 1888 to imagine a peaceful, productive British Empire, stretching from England to Canada to Australia and New Zealand, united under loyalty to the queen.[19] Intertextuality produces conquest narratives that are global and trans-temporal in scope, collapsing time and place to manufacture a continued sense of wonder while also depicting a historically and geographically expansive sense of conquest and thus of empire.

Alongside the spatial and temporal compression that intertextuality seeks is a parallel expansion of the distance between the site of conquest and the place of consuming imperial bounty. Imagining a global empire, as Froude and Nugent do, allows British people to imagine they can separate visual delight from the violence of Indigenous and African genocide and displacement, and the chattel slavery on which the empire's productivity depends. But invoking Tahiti or China, travel to the Caribbean for Nugent and other colonists collapses that imagined distance,

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placing them at the site of conquest, slavery, and exploitation. This discomfort is registered throughout conquest narratives with accounts of the islands' environmental, animal, and human dangers. For example, Nugent's scenes of visual delight are tempered by the constant irritation of mosquitos that transform her 'face, neck, hands, and arms [into] martyrs',[20] the heat making the gentlemen who called on the governor and his wife 'drip [. . .] with perspiration',[21] and the scorpions, snakes, and spiders that regularly make their way into houses and terrify her. Late in her narrative, as word of the revolution in Haiti reaches Jamaica and Jamaica receives French prisoners from Haiti, the fear of slave rebellion hums just below the surface, as Nugent imagines every side look or indication of interest in the stories the colonists told of Saint Domingue from an enslaved person as evidence of insurgency.

Seeing Indigenous People: Absence and Presence in Claims to Conquest

Intertextuality's prevalence in conquest narratives does not mean that Indigenous peoples and their actions are confined within textual representation, as some new historicist literary scholars have argued.[22] Countering this position, anthropologists and other scholars argue that colonial descriptions of Indigenous people 'appear only as fictions while they are abstracted from the native practices from which they were derived'.[23] As Neil Whitehead has shown, Indigenous practices, material objects, and stories influenced colonial texts as much as European intellectual and literary traditions. Whitehead argues that, in the case of Guiana, Walter Ralegh combines European legends of gold with Indigenous stories about gold, such that Indigenous practices are made to confirm his expectations, and both traditions are present in his text in what Whitehead calls a 'symbolic convergence'.[24] Both European stories and Indigenous practices for thinking about and using gold are altered by encounter, while also serving as a '*mutually intelligible* political idiom'.[25] Tracing both the literary frameworks and the Indigenous practices that shaped colonial texts can expose the ways that conquest narratives' intertexuality intersects with and is shaped by Indigenous presences – at the same time that those narratives pursue the legal, rhetorical, and physical subjugation of Indigenous peoples.[26]

Visions of Indigenous absence, productive, lush lands, and cheerful African labourers are central to conquest narratives' legal and historical justification of English conquest. Such arguments are taken up in histories

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of the West Indies by Bryan Edwards and Edward Long, planters on Jamaica who sought to defend and historicize English Empire. Indigenous people are central to these justifications, even as they significantly challenge English claims to sovereignty in the Caribbean and pursue their own agendas. Long devotes the first volume of his *History of Jamaica* (1774) to rehearsing the English conquest of Jamaica from the Spanish, part of Cromwell's Western design to expand England's empire in the Caribbean.[27] While Long recounts the military history of this conquest, his primary focus is England's legal right to Caribbean territories, and he describes in great detail the bureaucratic and administrative structures that extend English rule to the region, enabling planters and other colonists to enjoy a status as English subjects, governed by English laws, despite their location in a 'remote climate' and distance from their 'mother city'.[28]

Long likewise devotes many pages to arguing for England's right to the island, one that rests, he claims, on a better foundation than Spain's ever did. He acknowledges – or sees – Indigenous peoples' rights to their lands precisely in order to undercut Spain's sovereignty, a move that then requires him to argue for Indigenous peoples' disappearance. He writes:

> As all these American lands, when discovered by Columbus, were well-peopled with the Indian Aborigines, the Spanish could not derive a legitimate right from this source. The crown of Spain, aware of this distinction, never alleged it as material in their favour, but chose rather to found their claim on the Pope's donation; who, as God's vicar on earth, asserted a right to dispose at pleasure of every acre of land on the globe.[29]

Mocking the idea that the Pope could grant lands to nations, Long argues that the English, 'unable to find any lawful foundation for the claim of exclusive sovereignty in America, and intending a war with Spain, or rather reprisals for various acts of hostility and rapine, determined to strike some blow in America, where the offences had been committed. The capture of Jamaica was really no other than a denunciation of war'.[30] Acting according to the laws of war, England had rightfully taken Jamaica from the Spanish. And, he argues, since Spain had eliminated Indigenous peoples from those lands, England did not have to concern itself with prior claims or Indigenous rights. While Spanish colonists were the 'first discoverers' in the Caribbean, they did not have the right to possess it because the islands were not 'found desert, or without inhabitants'.[31] By contrast, in conquering the islands from Spain (rather than from Indigenous peoples), England could claim a legal and moral right to empire and could proceed with extending English legal sovereignty over the region.[32]

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If, as Long argued, Native people's alleged absence was crucial to England's claims to Jamaica, their presence elsewhere was just as useful: Long details the ways that Miskito peoples on the coast of what is currently Nicaragua and Honduras ceded their legal rights and lands to the English, an act that, colonists argued, justified English trade and possession on those lands. Long writes that the Miskitos 'a great many years ago (some say a hundred), put themselves voluntarily under protection of the crown of Great Britain', and they continue to rely on the British to recognize their monarchs, refusing to acknowledge new kings until they are 'invested with a commission' by the royal governor on Jamaica.[33] Long tells a story of Indigenous resistance in which the Miskito people 'were never in any manner subject to the Spaniards; but have bravely maintained their independence, and keep alive an inveterate abhorrence of them' and in which they maintain an affection and respect for the English.[34] As he notes, this relationship is essential to England's legal title in the region:

> What is particularly important to us (because it prevents all the ill consequences attending disputed titles), we have here a vast tract of country freely devoted to our use by the Aborigines, the real and undoubted owners of it; a title which is superior to all others, as it excludes every other European claimant; which justifies, and indeed calls upon us to avow it openly, unless our dread of Spanish jealousy has so besotted our minds as to deprive us entirely of the spirit of Englishmen. To acknowledge the Indians publickly for British subjects, is but giving them a warranty for the confidence they have reposed in us.[35]

Long's vision of Indigenous nations 'freely devot[ing]' land for English 'use' parallels Ligon's fantasy, in his infamous story of Inkle and Yarico, of Indigenous hospitality and love for Englishmen, as manifested in the alleged availability of Native women's bodies for sex and enslavement, a fantasy that itself repeats narratives of Michele De Cuneo and the unnamed Indigenous woman he rapes, of La Malinche and Cortés, and of Matoaka (Pocahontas) and John Smith/John Rolfe. In these narratives, Native women welcome English colonists by making their bodies available, thereby enabling colonial claims to occupation, trade, and possession of Indigenous lands. Long's insistence on the Miskito's right to their lands and their voluntary cession to the English echoes these narratives of conquest as acts of possessing bodies and land. His recognition of Miskito land rights is less an English respect for Indigenous legal claims than a citation of Indigenous presence and alleged hospitality to support English legal title. The Miskito are useful as 'adopted subjects of the empire' who merit English 'encouragement, not only for their long and

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faithful attachment to us, but for their annual consumption of British manufactures, by no means inconsiderable; for which they pay us valuable productions of the Continent'.[36]

Even as they acknowledge Indigenous right to their lands, conquest narratives also undermine and diminish Indigenous sovereignty by making it into a joke. In 1804, Nugent hosted the Miskito king George Frederic, in her husband's absence. George Frederic visited Jamaica with his uncle; he also attended a school on the island during Nugent's governorship. She depicts 'his little savage Majesty' as a child claiming a political authority that England benevolently bestows, even though this authority is farcical.[37] She writes that '[t]he young King was dressed in a scarlet uniform, and wore a crown upon his head, of which he seemed very proud. The crown was of silver gilt, ornamented with mock stones, and was sent from England, some years ago, for his father. Both the little King and his uncle seemed to hold it in high estimation'.[38] She then categorizes the king and his uncle as of mixed race, questioning their status as Indigenous people and, by extension, their rights as 'undoubted owners' of their lands rather than insurgents and runaway slaves.[39] Nugent writes: 'His features are rather better than those of negroes, and his hair is so much straighter, that he is evidently of a mixed breed; but his uncle has the woolly hair of the negro, with flat features, and a very wide mouth.'[40] On top of this, the 'little savage majesty' behaves like a wild child at dinner: 'He cried, roared, and yelled horribly, and began to pull off all his clothes, in the most violent manner, and was nearly naked before we could have him carried out of the room.'[41] Even as the fact that Nugent hosted the Miskito leaders in her husband's absence speaks to the king's ongoing diplomatic importance and ability to command an audience with English colonial administrators, she diminishes his sovereignty by suggesting that indigeneity had all but vanished through intermarriage and by depicting an Indigenous political leader as a spoiled child.

As this dismissal of indigeneity suggests, conquest narratives regularly conflate Indigenous and African people, even while allowing for Indigenous legal rights when they serve English imperial aims. Elsewhere in her journal, Nugent recounts visiting Jamaica's maroon leaders, whose military exercises she represents as being 'so savage and frightful, that I could not help feeling a little panic, by merely looking at them'.[42] Her conflation of maroon communities with 'savagery' replicates Ligon's uncertainty over whether Indigenous people from the Leeward Islands or Africans from Angola made the pots he observed on Barbados. Both narratives conflate Indigenous and African cultural productions, ways of

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fighting and moving, and, ultimately, bodies. This conflation does not necessarily erase all differences between Indigenous and African peoples but makes it possible to place both within the legal category occupied by enslaved and free Africans – a category devoid of legal rights to lands and bodies alike. Indeed, Ligon notes: 'As for the *Indians,* we have but few, and those fetched from other Countries; some from the neighboring Islands, some from the Main, which we make slaves.'[43] Nugent's disparagement of the Miskito delegates likewise suggests they belong among enslaved or free Africans rather than at the dinner table with Jamaican officials. Such narratives obscure the ways in which Indigenous enslavement, in addition to dispossession, was part of English conquest as well as separate and interconnected African and Indigenous strategies for survival. At the same time, Nugent's and Ligon's narratives shift readers' focus from potential threats to English possession of the islands – independent political formations that Nugent finds difficult to look at – and reiterate the system of enforced labour of both Africans and Indigenous people.

Colonists' descriptions of Indigenous sovereignty (or lack thereof) and Indigenous-African alliances envision antagonistic relations between Indigenous and African peoples. They align Africans with labour and Indigenous people with land, configurations that ultimately serve imperial ends in these narratives. Conquest posed African and Indigenous peoples against one another – rhetorically and materially. As Jodi A. Byrd explains, 'colonial discourses [are] not only [. . .] vertical impositions between colonizer and colonized but also [. . .] horizontal interrelations between different colonized peoples within the same geopolitical space'.[44] Conquest narratives also foreshadow the layered claims to indigeneity made by multiple constituencies in the Caribbean today, claims that often invoke an ancient Indigenous past without attending to Indigenous presence in the present, or that claim Afro-Caribbean belonging through complex claims to indigeneity. British conquest narratives remind us of the ways that colonial structures established a relation between Indigenous absence and African belonging to the land, colonial structures that continue to shape representations of the Caribbean. Moreover, as conquest narratives like Nugent's collapse indigeneity into race, by identifying Indigenous peoples as African descended, they establish logics that are still at work in current scholarly conversations that debate the primacy of indigeneity or slavery as the originary colonial condition.[45]

With this in mind, how might scholars resist narratives of Indigenous absence without discounting the legacies of African slavery and importance of Afro-Caribbean futures? How might settler colonial studies – which has

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focused on the elimination and dispossession of Indigenous peoples in Australia and North America – more carefully attend to the uprooting of African peoples from their homelands, and how might postcolonial studies – which has examined the creation of Afro-Caribbean nations after conquest – account for the survival of Indigenous peoples in the Caribbean? In the case of the early Caribbean, how might scholars resist narratives of Indigenous absence and examine relations between texts produced before the twentieth century and contemporary Indigenous 'resurgence'?[46] I conclude by offering two short readings that pose alternate narratives of conquest in the Caribbean, to offer a few of many examples of Indigenous presence and to suggest trans-Indigenous and hemispheric modes of reading Indigenous narratives of presence in the Caribbean.[47]

'Why may not they see us?': Indigenous Presence and the Red Atlantic

Despite narratives rendering Indigenous peoples invisible as part of the Caribbean's racial landscape, Miskito people survive as a political entity into the present, due in no small part to the diplomacy of Miskito leaders in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. At the time that Long and Nugent were writing, the Miskito perceived themselves as a 'nation among nations', a coequal among the powers in the western Caribbean.[48] George Frederic's visit to Nugent was one of regular diplomatic visits to Jamaica, in which Miskito leaders renewed their relationship with English colonial administrators; some of them also travelled to England. They interacted with the English colonists in ways that served Miskito interests, both the desire to resist Spanish colonists – which they accomplished by pitting European rivals against one another – and their desire for increased control of what colonists called the Miskito coast, which they solidified by attacking and enslaving members of other Indigenous nations in the region. Their self-perception as rulers is borne out in English and Spanish maps of the region, which carefully delineate Miskito territories. Building on Whitehead's argument about Ralegh's text as ethnographic, geographer Karl Offen has argued, Miskito people's actions influenced these European representations, as their presence, attacks, and diplomacy motivated Europeans to map their territory carefully, resulting in an acknowledgement of their territorial boundaries.[49] Recognizing Europeans' obsession with symbols of power, such as flags, crowns, sceptres, canes, dress, and ceremony, the Miskito selectively adopted these symbols and the language of kingdoms, nations, and kings, a set of practices that affirmed their legal

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right to their lands and their political sovereignty. And though Nugent cites the Miskito's racial diversity to delegitimize the king, Miskito communities were indeed formed out of alliances among Indigenous and African peoples. These strategic alliances attest to the ways in which the Miskito people saw colonists, observed their desires for natural resources and land, and used these observations to negotiate in ways that preserved their people and their sovereignty. If colonists – and, following them, many scholars – perceived Indigenous people as absent or as weak 'middle men' – Native people saw these perceptions and used them to survive.[50] Miskito people shaped what Jace Weaver has called the 'Red Atlantic', a geographic space and historical reality that precedes Columbus and involves the circulation of people, material objects, food, and knowledge throughout the Atlantic.[51] Shifting our geographic, temporal, and literary frameworks to account for the Red Atlantic calls scholars to resist taking conquest narratives as definitive statements of Indigenous absence and more as strategic narratives of seeing and not seeing that often served colonial interests. While the Black Atlantic is by now a familiar scholarly and geographic framework, and oceanic frameworks are central to Indigenous studies from and about Pacific contexts, Red Atlantic frameworks are taken up with far less regularity by scholars working on North and South American and Caribbean contexts.

We might also see how Indigenous people created their own stories about conquest. In 1897, the Potawatomi leader and writer Simon Pokagon told one such narrative, published in the magazine the *Forum*. A prolific writer of articles and a novel criticizing US settler colonialism, Pokagon imagines Indigenous people from the Caribbean travelling to continental North America to warn people farther north of colonists. He writes:

> Certain it is that in those days, which tried the souls of the Carib race, some fled from the lust and lash of their oppressors by sea to the coast of Florida, and reported to the natives there that Wau-be-au'-ne-ne-og' (white men), who fought with Awsh-kon-tay' Au-ne-me-kee' (thunder and lightning), who were cruel, vindictive, and without love, except a thirsty greed for gold, have come from the other side of Kons-ke-tchi-saw-me' (the ocean) and made slaves of Mis-ko-au-ne-ne-og' (the red man) of the islands, which was reported from tribe to tribe across the continent.[52]

Applying Indigenous intertextual practices to condense multiple moments and spaces of conquest, Pokagon continues by telling of Ponce de León's demise at the hands of Indigenous people who attack his men as they attempt to 'colonize the coast of Florida'.[53] Ponce de León 'now begins to

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realize that among the savage hosts are Caribs who have escaped from slavery and death'.[54] Imagining the hemispheric transmission of information warning Indigenous people of colonists, Pokagon also depicts Indigenous people in the Caribbean not as vanished and disappearing or as people who were solely the victims of Spanish colonization. Instead, he imagines a 'future' for the Indigenous peoples of the Caribbean that involves trans-Indigenous alliances and collaborations against colonialism, actions that recognize colonists' actions as cruel, vindictive, and greedy, and that take strategic action to try to limit their influence and destruction of Indigenous lands and people.

Notes

1 Richard Ligon, *A True and Exact History of the Island of Barbados*, ed. Karen Ordahl Kupperman (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 2011), 68.
2 Ligon, *History*, 68.
3 Ligon, *History*, 68.
4 For contemporary Indigenous collaborations, see the Caribbean Organization of Indigenous Peoples (http://coipnews.blogspot.com).
5 Bryan Edwards, *The History, Civil and Commercial, of the British Colonies in the West Indies*, 2 vols. (London: John Stockdale, 1793), 1:27–28. On contemporary echoes of Edwards's claim, see Jodi A. Byrd, *The Transit of Empire: Indigenous Critiques of Colonialism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2011); Maximilian C. Forte, 'Introduction: The Dual Absences of Extinction and Marginality—What Difference Does an Indigenous Presence Make?', in *Indigenous Resurgence in the Contemporary Caribbean: Amerindian Survival and Revival*, ed. Maximilian Forte, 1–18 (New York: Peter Lang, 2006), 3; and Melanie Newton, 'Returns to a Native Land: Indigeneity and Decolonization in the Anglophone Caribbean', *Small Axe*, 17 (2013), 108–22, see 112–15 and footnote 15.
6 Ligon, *History*, 106.
7 Lynne Guitar, Pedro Ferbel-Azcarate, and Jorge Estevez, 'Ocama-Daca Taíno (*Hear Me, I Am Taíno*): Taíno Survival on Hispaniola, Focusing on the Dominican Republic', in *Indigenous Resurgence in the Contemporary Caribbean: Amerindian Survival and Revival*, ed. Maximilian Forte, 41–68 (New York: Peter Lang, 2006).
8 It is important to note that names such as Carib and Taíno are simplified, in some cases imposed by outsiders, and encompass complex Indigenous heritage and practices. Contemporary Indigenous people tracing their heritage back to peoples called Carib or Arawak do not necessarily continue to use those designations, such as the Lokono people in Suriname and Barbados. For contemporary Indigenous collaborations, see the Caribbean Organization of

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Indigenous Peoples (http://coipnews.blogspot.com) and the International Indian Treaty Council (www.iitc.org).

9 Ligon, *History*, 69.

10 As Mimi Sheller has shown, such visions continue to shape representations of the Caribbean as a tourist site for consumption. See Mimi Sheller, *Consuming the Caribbean: From Arawaks to Zombies* (London: Routledge, 2003).

11 Edwards, *History, Civil and Commercial*, 1:55.

12 James Anthony Froude, *The English in the West Indies, or, The Bow of Ulysses* (London: Longmans, Green, 1888), 27.

13 Froude, *English in the West Indies,* 120–21.

14 Froude, *English in the West Indies*, chapter 10.

15 Froude, *English in the West Indies*, 77–78.

16 Maria Nugent, *Lady Nugent's Journal of Her Residence in Jamaica from 1801 to 1805*, ed. Philip Wright (Kingston: University of the West Indies Press, 2000), 10.

17 Nugent, *Journal*, 25.

18 Nugent, *Journal*, 8.

19 Froude, *English in the West Indies*, 1.

20 Nugent, *Journal*, 22.

21 Nugent, *Journal*, 12.

22 For example, see Stephen Greenblatt, *Marvelous Possessions: The Wonder of the New World* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991) and Peter Hulme, *Colonial Encounters: Europe and the Native Caribbean, 1492–1797* (London: Methuen, 1986).

23 Neil L. Whitehead, 'The *Discoverie* as Ethnological Text', in *The Discoverie of the Large, Rich, and Bewtiful Empyre of Guiana*, by Walter Ralegh, ed. Neil L. Whitehead, 60–116 (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1997), 98.

24 Whitehead, '*Discoverie* as Ethnological Text', 77.

25 Whitehead, '*Discoverie* as Ethnological Text', 99, emphasis in original.

26 For a similar argument about representations of Africans, see Cassander L. Smith, *Black Africans in the British Imagination: English Narratives of the Early Atlantic World* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2016).

27 See Carla Gardina Pestana, *The English Conquest of Jamaica: Oliver Cromwell's Bid for Empire* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2017).

28 Edward Long, *The History of Jamaica, or, General Survey of the Antient and Modern State of that Island: with Reflections on Its Situation*, 3 vols. (London: T. Lowndes, 1774), 1:9, 1:23.

29 Long, *History of Jamaica*, 1:289.

30 Long, *History of Jamaica*, 1:290.

31 Long, *History of Jamaica*, 1:289.

32 The United States used the same logic a century later to claim Indigenous lands in the southeast (what are currently the states of Georgia, Alabama, Florida, Tennessee) and southwest (Texas and California).

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33 Long, *History of Jamaica*, 1:316.
34 Long, *History of Jamaica*, 1:317.
35 Long, *History of Jamaica*, 1:322.
36 Long, *History of Jamaica*, 1:26.
37 Nugent, *Journal*, 211.
38 Nugent, *Journal*, 211.
39 Long, *History of Jamaica*, 1:322.
40 Nugent, *Journal*, 211.
41 Nugent, *Journal*, 211.
42 Nugent, *Journal*, 75.
43 Ligon, *History*, 106.
44 Byrd, *Transit of Empire*, 105.
45 On Indigeneity in the Caribbean and its intersection with the region's postcolonial nations, see Shona Jackson, *Creole Indigeneity: Between Myth and Nation in the Caribbean* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2012), especially the introduction and chapters 1–2. For scholarship bringing Black and Indigenous Studies together, see Newton, 'Returns'; Byrd, *Transit of Empire*; Elizabeth M. DeLoughrey, *Routes and Roots: Navigating Caribbean and Pacific Island Literatures* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2007); Justin Leroy, 'Black History in Occupied Territory: On the Entanglements of Slavery and Settler Colonialism', *Theory and Event*, 19 (2016). Tiffany King, *The Black Shoals: Offshore Formations of Black and Native Studies* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2019); Tiya Miles, 'His Kingdom for a Kiss: Indians and Intimacy in the Narrative of John Marrant', in *Haunted by Empire: Race and Colonial Intimacies in North American History*, ed. Ann Laura Stoler (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006), 164–88; and Nitasha Tamar Sharma, 'Over Two Centuries: Black People in Nineteenth-Century Hawai'i', *American Nineteenth-Century History*, 20 (2019), 115–40.
46 On resurgence, see Forte, *Indigenous Resurgence*.
47 With 'trans-Indigenous', I reference Chadwick Allen's definition of the term to refer to a 'global Indigenous literary studies' that sees Indigenous peoples 'together (yet) *distinct*'. See Chadwick Allen, *Trans-Indigenous: Methodologies for Global Native Literary Studies* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2012), xiii. Collaboration among Indigenous peoples on the Paris Climate Accords offers another contemporary example of Indigenous survival and collaboration. See http://coipnews.blogspot.com/2015/12/the-paris-agreement-incremental-advance.html.
48 Karl H. Offen, 'Creating Mosquitia: Mapping Amerindian Spatial Practices in Eastern Central America, 1629–1779', *Journal of Historical Geography*, 33 (2007), 254–82, see 262.
49 Offen, 'Creating Mosquitia', 254–82.
50 Philip A. Dennis and Michael D. Olien, 'Kingship among the Miskito', *American Ethnologist*, 11 (1984), 718–37.

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51 Jace Weaver, *The Red Atlantic: American Indigenes and the Making of the Modern World, 1000-1927* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2014), 15. See also Allen, *Trans-Indigenous*.
52 Simon Pokagon, 'The Future of the Red Man', *Forum* (1897), 700.
53 Pokagon, 'Future', 700.
54 Pokagon, 'Future', 700.

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