THE INVASION OF VIRGINIA

Indians, Colonialism, and the Conquest of Cant: A Review Essay on Anglo-Indian Relations in the Chesapeake

by J. FREDERICK FAUSZ*

> It frequently happens that the historian, though he professes more humanity than the trapper, mountain man, or gold-digger, who shoots [an Indian] as a wild beast, really exhibits and practices a similar inhumanity to him, wielding a pen instead of a rifle. —Henry David Thoreau, 1843

AT West Point, Virginia, modern motorists are overwhelmed by the sight and smell of a large papermaking plant as they cross the headwaters of the York River. Few of them realize that these lands at the confluence of the Pamunkey and Mattaponi Rivers contained one of the most significant Indian village complexes along the Atlantic coast when Euro-Americans first arrived in Tidewater Virginia. Here, where Opechancanough and his Pamunkey kinsmen once held sway with impressive powers and an extensive population, whole forests are now transformed into the paper that enables contemporary scholars to shape our historical consciousness—encouraging us to remember or allowing us to forget Opechancanough and his people as the national mood dictates.

Only a decade ago, Francis Jennings provoked the consciousness and pricked the conscience of historians when he reminded us that the Europeans' "invasion of America" in the colonial centuries was accompanied by a "cant of conquest"—the war of words with which the literate victors justified the demographic disasters and cultural catastrophes that had ravaged indigenous populations in the East. His often fierce attack on those who defeated, dispossessed, and demeaned the Indians in the process of defining and defending America's mainstream national char-

*J. Frederick Fausz is an associate professor of history and director of the Honors Program at St. Mary's College of Maryland, where he specializes in the ethnohistory of the seventeenth-century Chesapeake. The source of the epigraph is Bradford Torrey and Francis H. Allen, eds., *Journal of Henry David Thoreau* (Boston, 1949), pp. 437–38.

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acter helped redirect the emphasis of historical writing from the victories to the victims of the Euro-American juggernaut.[1]

In the decade since Jennings's *Invasion of America* appeared, a refreshing, revisionist historiography of Anglo-Indian relations has emerged to challenge old assumptions and to stimulate new perspectives on interethnic contacts, both past and present. The interdisciplinary, ethnohistorical research of recent years has successfully campaigned against the mythopoeic cant of conquest and encouraged a sensitive appreciation for the Indians' substantial contributions to the making of America.

Both the significance of these new interpretations and their unfamiliarity to general readers prompt this review of selected, representative works treating the major themes and chronological watersheds of the past four centuries. The focus throughout this essay is on intercultural relations, and I have generally excluded archaeological and ethnographical studies not concerned with the dynamics of contact, as well as intellectual histories concerned more with the image of "the Indian" than with actual relations between peoples. Throughout the essay, I have interpreted the new trends in Virginia ethnohistoriography within the context of a more broadly conceived Chesapeake region (including North Carolina and Maryland) and have related that literature to relevant recent scholarship in other areas.[2]

Ethnohistory: Mindset, Mood, and Methodology

In historiography as in life, Virginia's Indians have been inextricably bound to the Anglo-Americans who altered their existence. When colonial American history emerged as an influential field of study in the 1940s and 1950s, leading scholars soon recognized that Anglo-Indian relations constituted a central component of early English expansion that should not and could not be ignored. In 1952 Bernard DeVoto expressed

[1] Francis Jennings, *The Invasion of America: Indians, Colonialism, and the Cant of Conquest*, Institute of Early American History and Culture (Chapel Hill, 1975), especially pp. 3–174. The title of my review essay is an intentional take-off on Jennings's title.

[2] For more comprehensive bibliographies of recent literature, see Francis Paul Prucha, ed., *A Bibliographical Guide to the History of Indian-White Relations in the United States* (Chicago and London, 1977); Francis Paul Prucha, *Indian-White Relations in the United States: A Bibliography of Works Published, 1975–1980* (Lincoln, Nebr., 1982); W. R. Swagerty, ed., *Scholars and the Indian Experience: Critical Reviews of Recent Writing in the Social Sciences*, D'Arcy McNickle Center for the History of the American Indian Bibliographical Series (Bloomington, 1984); Frank W. Porter III, *Indians in Maryland and Delaware: A Critical Bibliography*, Newberry Library American Indian Bibliographical Series (Bloomington, 1979); James Howlett O'Donnell III, *Southeastern Frontiers: Europeans, Africans, and American Indians, 1513–1840*, Newberry Library American Indian Bibliographical Series (Bloomington, 1982).

dismay that "most American history has been written as if history were a function solely of white culture—in spite of the fact that till well into the nineteenth century the Indians were one of the principal determinants of historical events." In 1949 Wesley Frank Craven, who had already published an article on Virginia Indian policy early in his long and distinguished career, similarly bemoaned "the fact that few historians have managed to convey a feeling for the full extent to which the Indian problem absorbed the energies and thought of the colonists." In 1957 Lester Cappon went further, suggesting that scholars should focus on Indians not as a "problem," but as contributors to events in broader, less pejorative, and more intellectually rewarding contexts. He was one of the first traditionally trained historians to appreciate and advocate cross-fertilization between anthropological and historical research in order to "illuminate not merely the Indian in terms of white society or the Indian in terms of his own society, but each in his own terms *and* in terms of the other."[3]

Cappon's desire to see historians "encompass both self-knowledge and knowledge of others" by means of interdisciplinary approaches to interethnic relations was more easily expressed than realized, however. Historians lagged behind anthropologists—who founded the journal *Ethnohistory* in 1954 and often employed historical perspectives and data in their work—because they received little or no formal training in how to appreciate, assess, or analyze non-Western, preliterate, native cul-

[3] DeVoto quoted in Joseph Kinsey Howard, *Strange Empire: A Narrative of the Northwest* (New York, 1952), pp. 8–9; Wesley Frank Craven, *The Southern Colonies in the Seventeenth Century, 1607–1689*, in Wendell H. Stephenson and E. Merton Coulter, eds., *A History of the South*, I (Baton Rouge, 1949), p. 173n.; Lester J. Cappon, "Foreword," in William N. Fenton et al., *American Indian and White Relations to 1830: Needs and Opportunities for Study*, Institute of Early American History and Culture (Chapel Hill, 1957), p. vii. In a 1979 review essay on Chesapeake historiography, Thad W. Tate found only a handful of works on Anglo-Indian relations worth mentioning but noted that ongoing research was "beginning to exhibit less interest in questions of public policy toward the Indians than in the significance of intercultural contacts between Indians and whites" ("The Seventeenth-Century Chesapeake and Its Modern Historians," in Thad W. Tate and David L. Ammerman, eds., *The Chesapeake in the Seventeenth Century: Essays on Anglo-American Society*, Institute of Early American History and Culture [Chapel Hill, 1979], pp. 3–50, especially pp. 34, 38). Craven published his "Indian Policy in Early Virginia" in the first volume of the new *William and Mary Quarterly* (3d ser., I [1944], 65–82; hereafter cited as *WMQ*), establishing the preeminence of that journal in the field of colonial Anglo-Indian relations that it has held ever since. The Institute of Early American History and Culture, Williamsburg, which publishes the *WMQ*, has influenced Indian studies as well through its support of visiting scholars and young postdoctoral fellows. Among the earliest fellows there were Wilcomb E. Washburn—who has ably advanced ethnohistory through publications such as *Red Man's Land/White Man's Law: A Study of the Past and Present Status of the American Indian* (New York, 1971) and *The Indian in America*, New American Nation Series (New York, 1975)—and Lawrence Towner—who, as director of Chicago's Newberry Library, helped establish in 1972 the important D'Arcy McNickle Center for the History of the American Indian at that institution. In the past few years, colonial ethnohistorians such as James Axtell, Francis Jennings, James Merrell, Daniel Richter, Bernard W. Sheehan, and I have benefited immeasurably from close association with both the institute and the center.

tures. With the traditional cant of conquest still looming large in a postwar world, those few historians who emerged from Ph.D. programs in the late 1950s and early 1960s with an interest in and sensitivity to the "Indian side" of early cultural frontiers seem to have done so in spite of their graduate school mentors. Samuel Eliot Morison of Harvard University, who trained or otherwise influenced several current historians of Virginia's interethnic relations, in 1958 described a seventeenth-century Anglo-Indian war as a "clash of a relatively advanced race with savages"—similar to "the many instances today of backward peoples getting enlarged notions of nationalism and turning ferociously on Europeans who have attempted to civilize them."[4]

Despite, or because of, the persistent influence of the cant-of-conquest perspective that led to such blatant Eurocentrism, a new generation of historians altered its views of the past when confronted with the critical, challenging realities of a changing world in the 1960s and 1970s. The civil rights movement in the United States redirected the national attention to the racial and cultural diversity that had evolved from our earliest beginnings and encouraged historians to ask new questions about America's pluralistic origins with more sensitivity to minority concerns. Simultaneously, American military intervention in Southeast Asia provoked serious debate and searing dissent that produced fresh insights into age-old discriminatory relationships between European colonizers and exploited native peoples.

As America was thus tested and traumatized by national and global tremors of change, scholars reexamined and revised previously unchallenged assumptions about intercultural relations that had formed the cornerstone of the cant of conquest over several centuries. Although few historians consciously tried to remodel the tortured past in the image of the troubled present, interpretations of historical Anglo-Indian and white-black relations markedly corresponded to current trends in national politics. The early era of civil rights and antiwar protests called

[4] Samuel Eliot Morison, "Introduction," in Douglas Edward Leach, *Flintlock and Tomahawk: New England in King Philip's War* (1958; New York, 1966), p. ix. The huge methodological advantage that anthropologists had over historians is demonstrated by Nancy Oestreich Lurie's classic 1957 essay of enduring insightfulness, "Indian Cultural Adjustment to European Civilization," in James Morton Smith, ed., *Seventeenth-Century America: Essays in Colonial History*, Institute of Early American History and Culture (Chapel Hill, 1959), pp. 33–60. Even many years later, historians rarely match the brilliant succinctness of Lurie's anthropological perceptiveness. Even though Wesley Frank Craven was more receptive to new approaches in interethnic relations than most political historians of his generation, the essay on Indians in his *White, Red, and Black: The Seventeenth-Century Virginian* (1971; New York, 1977), pp. 39–72, was pedestrian and simplistic compared to Lurie's analysis. See J. Frederick Fausz, "The 'Barbarous Massacre' Reconsidered: The Powhatan Uprising of 1622 and the Historians," *Explorations in Ethnic Studies*, I (Jan. 1978), 16–36.

forth a "Wounded Knee" or "Uncle Tom" perspective of victimized minorities and evoked the sympathy and support of many in the dominant white society who were now suddenly outraged by their previous complacency with exploitation. When more vocal and violent protests dominated the media in the late 1960s and early 1970s, historians supplied precedents through the "Patriot Chiefs" or "Nat Turner" perspective of rebellious minorities that had aggressively sought social justice. Although portions of both perspectives continue to influence historical interpretations, more sophisticated and balanced treatments of interethnic relations have dominated in the less confrontational, less conflict-ridden period in national affairs since 1975.

Disavowing the capricious presentism that marred earlier accounts, scholars of the past decade, less concerned with politicization, have emphasized the complex process of multicultural interaction in order to demonstrate how minorities adjusted to contacts with intruding, dominant groups without assimilating and how these minorities reciprocally influenced the mainstream culture over time. In his illuminating and iconoclastic *Invasion of America*, Jennings in 1975 described the conceptual benefits of this ethnohistorical approach: "Instead of assuming an impassable chasm between [immigrant European and indigenous Indian] societies, the ethnohistorian postulates their capacity to exchange cultural traits in processes of cooperation as well as conflict, and he sets himself the task of describing those processes, to which he gives the inclusive neutral name of *acculturation*." Merging the interests and insights of anthropologists, with their traditional disciplinary commitment to fieldwork among nonliterate native peoples, and historians, with their experience in the written sources of Western cultures, ethnohistory has provided a methodological meeting ground for the comprehensive analysis of multicultural interaction and reciprocal change between colonizing and colonized peoples in early America.[5]

[5] Jennings, *Invasion of America*, p. 13; J. Frederick Fausz, "Anglo-Indian Relations in Colonial North America," in Swagerty, ed., *Scholars and the Indian Experience*, pp. 79–105. Ethnohistoriography has mushroomed in recent years. See especially James Axtell, "The Ethnohistory of Early America: A Review Essay," *WMQ*, 3d ser., XXXV (1978), 110–44 (cf. Bernard W. Sheehan, "Indian-White Relations in Early America: A Review Essay," in ibid., XXVI [1969], 267–86); James Axtell, "Ethnohistory: An Historian's Viewpoint," in *The European and the Indian: Essays in the Ethnohistory of Colonial North America* (Oxford and New York, 1981), pp. 3–15; Wilcomb E. Washburn, "Ethnohistory: History 'In the Round,'" *Ethnohistory*, VIII (1961), 31–48; William C. Sturtevant, "Anthropology, History, and Ethnohistory," *Ethnohistory*, XIII (1966), 1–51; Calvin Martin, "Ethnohistory: A Better Way to Write Indian History," *Western Historical Quarterly*, IX (1978), 41–56; William S. Simmons, "Anthropology, History, and the North American Indian: A Review Article," *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, XXVII (1985), 174–82. Important studies of the frontier include Jack D. Forbes, "Frontiers in American History and the Role of the Frontier Historian,"

In terms of the conquest of cant—discarding the distorted rhetoric of rigid (and mythical) "frontiers" between "civilized" and "savage" peoples in favor of more enlightening perspectives on mutual acculturation—the mid-1970s produced a breakthrough. Joining *The Invasion of America* in disseminating fresh approaches were five books on early Anglo-Indian relations published within a year either side of 1975. Three of them—Gary B. Nash's *Red, White, and Black: The Peoples of Early America* (1974), Edmund S. Morgan's *American Slavery, American Freedom: The Ordeal of Colonial Virginia* (1975), and anthropologist Charles Hudson's magnificent overview of *The Southeastern Indians* (1976)—are particularly noteworthy in the context of this review essay, because their focus encouraged renewed scholarly interest in analyzing complex cultural contacts and triracial relations that had their origins in the colonial Chesapeake. Although as yet there has been no book on Chesapeake ethnohistory to compare with the excellence of the new northern studies, such as Neal Salisbury's insightful *Manitou and Providence: Indians, Europeans, and the Making of New England, 1500–1643* (1982) or James Axtell's pathbreaking *Invasion Within: The Contest of Cultures in Colonial North America* (1985), the output of recent dissertations and journal articles has signaled an unprecedentedly strong interest in Anglo-Indian relations in the colonial South.[6]

Ethnohistory, XV (1968), 203–35, and Howard Lamar and Leonard Thompson, eds., *The Frontier in History: North America and Southern Africa Compared* (New Haven and London, 1981). Richard Drinnon, *Facing West: The Metaphysics of Indian-Hating and Empire-Building* (Minneapolis, 1980), which provocatively traced Euro-American expansionism and racism from the early Puritans in Massachusetts to the CIA in Vietnam, was most obviously influenced by trends in contemporary affairs. The growing influence of the Third World in recent years similarly encouraged Eric R. Wolf, *Europe and the People Without History* (Berkeley and London, 1982), to offer a fresh multidisciplinary interpretation of native peoples and the West over six centuries of global contacts. Michael Zuckerman pointed to a reactionary consequence of the present intruding upon the past when he recently observed, "The Indians ought to be crucial to our history, and especially to our early history, as exemplars of . . . alternative lifeways and of the incapacity of any single culture to command the continent. . . . But exactly on that account, the instance of the Indians must be disdained, or denied. In a nation obsessed with the Cold War and indifferent to irony, we can only apprehend the Indians as un-American" ("Comment on Neal Salisbury's 'Indians in Colonial History,'" D'Arcy McNickle Center for the History of the American Indian, *The Impact of Indian History on the Teaching of United States History*, Occasional Papers in Curriculum, No. 4 [Chicago, 1985], p. 28).

[6] Gary B. Nash, *Red, White, and Black: The Peoples of Early America*, Prentice-Hall History of the American People Series (1974; 2d ed., Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1982); Edmund S. Morgan, *American Slavery, American Freedom: The Ordeal of Colonial Virginia* (New York, 1975); Charles Hudson, *The Southeastern Indians* (Knoxville, 1976). The other two works were Bruce G. Trigger, *The Children of Aataentsic: A History of the Huron People to 1660* (2 vols.; Montreal and London, 1976), a detailed, model ethnohistory written from the Indians' point of view; and Washburn, *Indian in America* (1975), an ambitious interdisciplinary overview, with six chapters devoted to the colonial period. Another noteworthy book of the mid-1970s, Alden T. Vaughan's *American Genesis: Captain John Smith and the Founding of Virginia* (Boston and Toronto, 1975), did not deal with Indians as prominently as the others. Both Neal Salisbury, *Manitou and Providence: Indians, Europeans, and the Making of New England, 1500–1643* (New York and Oxford, 1982) and James Axtell, *The Invasion Within: The Contest of Cultures in Colonial North America* (New York and Oxford, 1985) have admirably

Such ethnohistorical revisionism now has the potential to make significant contributions to the ongoing and more generalized revitalization of Chesapeake historiography that has in the past decade given a renewed prominence to colonial Virginia, but much remains to be done before Indians are fully and accurately portrayed as indispensable contributors to the history of the Old Dominion. Although both scholarly research and public awareness have been enhanced by commemorations of the colonial Chesapeake—the three hundred fiftieth anniversaries of Virginia and Maryland in 1957 and 1984, respectively, and North Carolina's celebration of the four hundredth anniversary of the Roanoke ventures (1984–90)—there is an attendant danger in popularizing the colonists' triumphs through expensive replicas of their ships while ignoring the negative realities of cultural subjugation and racial slavery that perpetuated the settlers' existence in this land.

Although state anniversaries and national bicentennials can be expected to celebrate distorted versions of the past, historical scholarship should be judged by stricter standards. Recent political and social histories of the colonial Chesapeake, although innovative and valuable in other ways, continue to be narrowly Anglocentric and woefully deficient in the quantity and quality of information they include on Indians. Despite championing a broader, holistic view of social processes to replace the filiopietistic obsession with the "Great White Fathers," some of the Chesapeake's most accomplished historians remain oblivious to the full potential of multiethnic perspectives. In fairness to past as well as future generations, researchers and readers of all persuasions should regard as equally fallacious both the exclusion of Indians from "mainstream history" and the segregation of "Indian history" as a discreet, detached, and somewhat whimsical footnote to the Anglo-American experience.[7]

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revised key areas of early American history by thoroughly integrating multiethnic perspectives from several disciplines. Of projected new works, see especially Peter H. Wood, Gregory Waselkov, and Tom Hatley, eds., *Powhatan's Mantle: Essays on Indians of the Southeast* (Lincoln, Nebr., forthcoming).

[7] Two recent surveys of Chesapeake colonies—Warren M. Billings, John E. Selby, and Thad W. Tate, *Colonial Virginia: A History* (White Plains, N.Y., 1986), and Aubrey C. Land, *Colonial Maryland: A History* (Millwood, N.Y., 1981), both in the KTO Press History of the American Colonies in Thirteen Volumes series, ed. Milton M. Klein and Jacob E. Cooke—remain as woefully inadequate on the subject of Indians as political histories published a generation ago. The new social histories of the region have been equally myopic, giving the impression that changes in colonial economics and demographics occurred in a land without a significant and influential Indian population. For the obvious omission, see Anita H. Rutman, "Still Planting the Seeds of Hope: The Recent Literature of the Early Chesapeake Region," *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, XCV (1987), 3–24. Both Nash in *Red, White, and Black* and T. H. Breen in "Creative Adaptations: Peoples and Cultures," in Jack P. Greene and J. R. Pole, eds., *Colonial British America: Essays in the New*

The Meeting of Two Worlds

The first half-century of English colonization along the mid-Atlantic coast produced a record of increasingly antagonistic relations with Indians as settlement advanced northward over time from Roanoke in the 1580s to Jamestown in the 1600s, until, with the founding of Maryland in 1634, a degree of intercultural accommodation and mutual toleration emerged in the northern Chesapeake. Each zone of Anglo-Algonquian contact exerted a powerful influence over the area that succeeded it. The initial optimism and ultimate disappointment surrounding the Roanoke enterprise bequeathed an ambiguous, ambivalent legacy to the Jamestown colonists, making them hopeful of Indian hospitality in theory but wary of Indian hostility in practice. The alternatingly promising and punishing relations between the colonists and the Powhatans in Tidewater Virginia before 1632 served as a catalyst for the cooperation that Marylanders enjoyed with their nearest native neighbors after 1634. In contrast to the impression imparted by textbook summaries, there was little indication that these struggling colonial outposts, so dependent on the Indians for their survival in their early years, would so quickly evolve into expansive, aggressive societies and displace the indigenous populations through a merger of Old World prejudice and New World prosperity.[8]

From the winter of 1585–86, when a contingent of Roanoke colonists lived with Indians along the James River and found the Chesapeake Bay to be an ideal settlement site, the histories of Roanoke and Jamestown, of lost colonies and missed opportunities, became forever intertwined. The all-too-brief period of cordial exchanges and hopeful expectations between Roanoke colonists and Carolina Algonquians was recorded in the memorable words of scientist Thomas Harriot and in the beautiful watercolors of artist John White. In 1984 Paul Hulton's *America 1585: The Complete Drawings of John White* brought these invaluable sources of mid-Atlantic contact history together for the first time in a widely available and affordable volume of accurately reproduced plates.[9]

History of the Early Modern Era (Baltimore and London, 1984), pp. 195–232, insightfully demonstrate the potential for integrating Indians into a true multicultural social history of early America.

[8] See J. Frederick Fausz, "Patterns of Anglo-Indian Aggression and Accommodation along the Mid-Atlantic Coast, 1584–1634," in William W. Fitzhugh, ed., *Cultures in Contact: The Impact of European Contacts on Native American Cultural Institutions, A.D. 1000–1800*, Anthropological Society of Washington Series (Washington, D.C., and London, 1985), pp. 225–68; J. Frederick Fausz, "Profits, Pelts, and Power: English Culture in the Early Chesapeake, 1620–1652," *Maryland Historian*, XIV (1983), 15–30; J. Frederick Fausz, "The Powhatan Uprising of 1622: A Historical Study of Ethnocentrism and Cultural Conflict" (Ph.D. diss., College of William and Mary, 1977).

[9] Paul Hulton, *America 1585: The Complete Drawings of John White* (Chapel Hill and London, 1984).

White's depictions and Harriot's descriptions of "the nature and manners of the naturall inhabitants" of the Carolina coast ("Ould Virginia") revealed the fashionable English fascination with environmental primitivism and cultural evolution, and the two Englishmen were anxious "to showe how . . . the [ancient tribal peoples] of the great Bretannie have bin in times past as sauvage as those of Virginia."[10] Ironically, the mutual curiosity between natives and newcomers at Roanoke proved to be literally and tragically infectious for the coastal Algonquians, because the very contacts that gave White and Harriot the opportunity to observe and appreciate their unique cultures destroyed the Indians' lives and altered their lifeways forever.

The calamitous mortality of immunologically defenseless Indians infected by the "invisible bullets" of European diseases has aroused the curiosity of Anglo-American scholars since Harriot's time and has culminated in many recent ethnohistorical interpretations of the "virgin soil" epidemics or pandemics that regularly ravaged Native American populations of each successive contact era. The magnitude of the demographic disaster that transformed the "Columbian exchange" of transatlantic peoples and products into a veritable holocaust continues to be a hotly debated issue with important ideological implications. The older, low estimates of the precontact Native American population—with as few as 900,000 being assigned to the continent north of the Rio Grande in 1492—supported the traditional view of America as the nearly empty "virgin land" and European colonization as the great and glorious enterprise that populated and tamed the "wilderness." More recently, however, such scholars as Jennings and Henry F. Dobyns have advanced convincing, and sobering, arguments that emphasize the huge precontact populations that thrived on the continent in 1492 and interpret European colonization as a demographic disaster that destroyed millions of Native Americans, primarily through the unwitting transfer of lethal diseases to this hemisphere.[11]

Twenty years ago Hulton joined with David Beers Quinn to edit *The American Drawings of John White, 1577–1590* (2 vols.; Chapel Hill and London, 1964), an expensive and hard-to-obtain edition. See also Christian F. Feest, "The Virginia Indian in Pictures, 1612–1624," *Smithsonian Journal of History*, II (Spring 1967), 1–30.

[10] Hulton, *America 1585*, fig. 28, p. 130.

[11] Alfred W. Crosby, "Virgin Soil Epidemics as a Factor in the Aboriginal Depopulation in America," *WMQ*, 3d ser., XXXIII (1976), 289–99; Alfred W. Crosby, *The Columbian Exchange: Biological and Cultural Consequences of 1492* (Westport, Conn., 1972); Wilbur R. Jacobs, "The Tip of an Iceberg: Pre-Columbian Indian Demography and Some Implications for Revisionism," *WMQ*, 3d ser., XXXI (1974), 123–32; William M. Denevan, *The Native Population of the Americas in 1492* (Madison, Wis., 1976), especially pp. 1–12, 289–92; Henry F. Dobyns, "Estimating Aboriginal American Population: An Appraisal of Techniques with a

Dobyns (*Their Number Become Thinned* [1983]) projected a precontact population of eighteen million for America north of Mexico—two million of them horticulturalists living in the Atlantic coastal plain from Florida to Massachusetts. Christian F. Feest focused studies on the mid-Atlantic region from North Carolina to Maryland and estimated Tidewater Algonquian populations of 7,000 for North Carolina in 1585, some 14,000 to 22,000 for Virginia in 1607, and 12,000 for Maryland about 1634. The complex issue of Indian demography has stimulated Dobyns to reconstruct the early ecosystem of Florida's native maize farmers in order to demonstrate the rich subsistence capabilities that could have supported large populations in ancient America. This study, contained in *Their Number Become Thinned*, should stimulate extensive research on similar Indian farming-fishing-and-hunting environments such as coastal Virginia. In another approach to the problem, Douglas H. Ubelaker's archaeological analysis of Indian skeletons from Algonquian ossuaries along the Potomac River provided some rare hard data to the often baffling debate on conflicting estimates.[12]

In considering the size of native populations—either at the beginning of the Columbian exchange in 1492 or at the point when written records began for each contact zone—ethnohistorians have been forced to revise their ideas of what "precontact" implies. They now realize that an aboriginal America isolated from European contacts and influences—not necessarily settlements—ceased to exist earlier than traditionally thought. Indian oral accounts and scraps of documentary evidence reveal that sporadic European contacts significantly influenced Indians along the mid-Atlantic coast some years before the major English colonies were established at Roanoke Island and Jamestown. According to Dobyns, "aboriginal lifeways for the native peoples of North America clearly terminated with the large-scale depopulation caused by the initial

New Hemispheric Estimate," *Current Anthropology*, VII (1966), 395–416, 440–49; Henry F. Dobyns, *Their Number Become Thinned: Native American Population Dynamics in Eastern North America* (Knoxville, 1983); Jennings, "Widowed Land," *Invasion of America*, pp. 15–31.

[12] Dobyns, *Their Number Become Thinned*, pp. 41–42, 44n., and pp. 48–146, 214–35 on the subsistence cycle; Christian F. Feest, in Bruce G. Trigger, ed., *Handbook of North American Indians: Northeast*, XV (Washington, D.C., 1978): "Nanticoke and Neighboring Tribes," pp. 240–52, especially p. 242; "Virginia Algonquians," pp. 253–70, especially pp. 256–57, 267; "North Carolina Algonquians," pp. 271–81, especially p. 272; Christian F. Feest, "Seventeenth Century Virginia Algonquian Population Estimates," *Quarterly Bulletin of the Archeological Society of Virginia* (hereafter cited as *QB*), XXVIII (1973–74), 66–79; Douglas H. Ubelaker, *Reconstruction of Demographic Profiles from Ossuary Skeletal Samples: A Case Study from the Tidewater Potomac*, Smithsonian Contributions to Anthropology No. 18 (Washington, D.C., 1974). See also E. Randolph Turner III, "A Re-Examination of Powhatan Territorial Boundaries and Population, ca. A.D. 1607," *QB*, XXXVII (1982–83), 45–64.

smallpox pandemic [in Spanish Mexico] in 1520–1524," and, as a result, archaeological and ethnohistorical research has been extended further back in time to account for cultural change that occurred in a "protohistoric" period that was transitional between an Indian-only, aboriginal world and the historic era of English settlement.[13]

Despite the insight that study of the protohistoric era provides into the rapid alteration of stable native cultures that had matured over thousands of years, few researchers have yet to forego their preferences for ancient prehistory or the postcontact periods. The few who have remain undaunted by archaeologist Dean Snow's contention that "discussion of archeological evidence in terms of the antecedents of historic Indians [of the mid-Atlantic Coastal Plain] is . . . difficult at best." Recent work by David S. Phelps on the Carolina Algonquians, E. Randolph Turner III on the Powhatan chiefdom, Stephen R. Potter on the Chicacoan and other Potomac River Algonquians, and Wayne E. Clark on the Potomac Creek Complex in Maryland (ca. 1300–1700) has significantly advanced our knowledge and demonstrated the value of integrating archaeological fieldwork with the analysis of written records from later eras.[14]

Although a synthesis of research on the late protohistoric and early contact eras is still years away, Feest's brief overviews of the mid-Atlantic Algonquians in the *Handbook of North American Indians* (1978) and Turner's 1985 essay on sociopolitical organization within the Powhatan chiefdom brought together much of the relevant multidisciplinary literature. Their varying perspectives indicated that issues surrounding when and how the major tribes of the Contact Period first "arrived" in the Chesapeake region (as late invaders from other areas?); how and why they developed the complex institutions described by the English after 1607 (as adaptations to indigenous needs or as responses to European intrusions?); and how they were culturally and linguistically related to other Algonquians will be the important foci of future research into the protohistorical period.[15]

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[13] Dobyns, *Their Number Become Thinned*, p. 25.

[14] Dean Snow, "Late Prehistory of the East Coast," in Trigger, ed., *Handbook of North American Indians*, pp. 58–69, quotation on p. 61; David S. Phelps, *Archaeology of the Native Americans: Final Report*, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, East Carolina University (Greenville, N.C., 1984); E. Randolph Turner III, "An Archaeological and Ethnohistorical Study on the Evolution of Rank Societies in the Virginia Coastal Plain" (Ph.D. diss., Pennsylvania State University, 1976); Stephen R. Potter, "An Analysis of Chicacoan Settlement Patterns" (Ph.D. diss., University of North Carolina, 1982); Wayne E. Clark, "The Origins of the Piscataway and Related Indian Cultures," *Maryland Historical Magazine*, LXXV (1980), 8–22.

[15] Cf. E. Randolph Turner III, "Socio-Political Organization within the Powhatan Chiefdom and the Effects of European Contact, A.D. 1607–1646," in Fitzhugh, ed., *Cultures in Contact*, pp. 193–224, especially pp. 209–11, with Christian F. Feest, "Powhatan: A Study in Political Organization," *Wiener völkerkundliche*

If White and Harriot arrived too late to record a truly aboriginal coast unaffected by European contact or contagion, the "wylde menn of . . . [the English] nacione" who accompanied them on Ralegh's ships arrived much too soon to permit an easy adjustment by the Indians to the "invasion of America." English brutalities normally reserved for Spanish Catholics were directed against the "most gentle, loving, and faithfull" Algonquians of coastal Carolina, as the Roanoke colonists stole the Indians' food-tribute intended for their honored *werowances* and slaughtered tribesmen because of conspiracies, real or imagined.[16] Morgan's *American Slavery, American Freedom* and Nash's "Image of the Indian in the Southern Colonial Mind" (1972) demonstrated how the idealistic, wish-fulfilling preconceptions of "noble savage" and "godlike Englishman" quickly died amid the harsh realities of daily contacts between peoples of alien traditions and conflicting goals.[17]

Ironically, at the climax of bloody confrontations at Roanoke, Ralegh's "Lost Colony" may have given reality to all of the hopeful, accommodationist rhetoric after all. Although it would be one of the cruelest ironies if now, after four centuries of slaughtering, enslaving, and stereotyping Indians for various acts of suspected treachery, it could be conclusively demonstrated that the English and Indians assimilated culturally and biologically from the beginnings of the colonization of America, recent interpretations suggest that that was indeed the case.

David Beers Quinn, the most accomplished and prolific modern expert on England's age of discovery and early colonization, convincingly argued in *Set Fair for Roanoke* (1985) that Ralegh's refugees from Roanoke Island, abandoned by their countrymen, became subsumed by the Indian populations of the mid-Atlantic coast. Most significantly, though, he traced the final destination of their odyssey over several years to the friendly Chesapeaks, whose villages lay south of modern Portsmouth. Here, perhaps as late as the arrival of the Jamestown colonists in April 1607, Powhatan allegedly killed the English and their Indian hosts when he added the Chesapeak lands to his expanding chiefdom. Quinn's compelling argument, supported by his comprehensive, multidisciplinary research, has already been integrated into other recent histories of

Mitteilungen, XII (1966), 69–83. For reference to essays by Feest in the *Handbook of North American Indians*, see note 12.

[16] David Beers Quinn, ed., *The Roanoke Voyages, 1584–1590*, Works issued by the Hakluyt Society, 2d ser., CIV, CV (London, 1955), pp. 108, 204.

[17] Morgan, *American Slavery, American Freedom*, chap. 2, quotation on p. 38; Gary B. Nash, "The Image of the Indian in the Southern Colonial Mind," *WMQ*, 3d ser., XXIX (1972), 197–230.

Roanoke by David Stick (1983) and Karen Ordahl Kupperman (1984). Quinn's findings were most significant, for they reawakened historians to the close thematic, chronological, and now genetic and cultural, ties that connected the "New" Virginia of 1607 to Ralegh's "Ould Virginia."[18]

The James River Contact Zone

More than twenty years before the arrival of the Jamestown colonists, Englishmen had heard of a powerful and wealthy *werowance* along the James River who "would be loth to suffer any strangers to enter into his Countrey, and . . . [who] was able to make a great many of men into the fielde, which . . . would fight very well."[19] By conquest and cajolery, Wahunsonacock, or Powhatan, had by 1607 consolidated more than two dozen Tidewater Algonquian village complexes into one of the largest and most centralized chiefdoms along the eastern seaboard. What could have prompted colonists, in the aftermath of the Roanoke debacle, to settle there? Why did Powhatan and his people allow Jamestown to survive?

Historians and anthropologists alike have been endlessly fascinated by such questions, because the interaction of alien cultures along the James has had dramatic consequences for all subsequent American history. Christian Feest's "Powhatan: A Study in Political Organization" (1966), Nancy Oestreich Lurie's "Indian Cultural Adjustment to European Civilization" (1959), and E. Randolph Turner III's "Socio-Political Organization within the Powhatan Chiefdom" (1985) brought anthropological insights to bear on the Powhatans' weakness in political organization and their vulnerability to hostile tribes on their borders as factors contributing to their defeat. In "Fighting 'Fire' with Firearms" (1979), "Opechancanough: Indian Resistance Leader" (1981), and "Patterns of Anglo-Indian Aggression and Accommodation" (1985), I found that the Powhatans relied too much on their traditional military prowess to protect their culture from outside influences. Feeling supremely self-confident in 1607, they failed to see the threat in the English presence, but their vulnerability was demonstrated in their disastrous defeat in the First Anglo-Powhatan War (1609–14). Despite their revitalization under Nemattanew and Opechancanough and their brilliant adaptability to the

[18] David Beers Quinn, *Set Fair for Roanoke: Voyages and Colonies, 1584–1606*, America's Four Hundredth Anniversary Committee (Chapel Hill and London, 1985), especially chap. 19; Karen Ordahl Kupperman, *Roanoke: The Abandoned Colony* (Totowa, N.J., 1984), especially pp. 138–40; David Stick, *Roanoke Island: The Beginnings of English America*, America's Four Hundredth Anniversary Committee (Chapel Hill and London, 1983), especially chaps. 17–20.

[19] Quinn, ed., *Roanoke Voyages*, p. 261.

tactics and technology of European warfare, the proud Powhatans gambled on total defeat rather than face partial surrender in the ambitious uprisings of 1622 and 1644.[20]

Although novelists and popular historians have traditionally focused their attention on Pocahontas or her father, Powhatan, in their writings, scholars have recognized Opechancanough as a far more important and fascinating representative of his people. Carl Bridenbaugh recently maintained that the Virginia Indian "cacique," Don Luis de Velasco, raised by the Spanish and responsible for the destruction of the Jesuits' Virginia mission, was none other than Opechancanough. Bridenbaugh's two essays (1980, 1981) on this subject made an interesting case out of some dubious evidence, but the implications of his interpretation raise troubling issues among contemporary ethnohistorians. To contend that Don Luis/Opechancanough—a Catholic convert well-versed in Spanish culture—was the catalyst behind all four of Virginia's famous "massacres" (of the Jesuits in 1571, the Roanoke refugees in 1607, and the Jamestown colonists in 1622 and 1644) trivialized the many complex and justifiable reasons behind the Powhatans' uprisings and in so doing implied that Opechancanough's awesome domination of his people for seventy years was somehow owing to his "superior" European education.[21]

Much of the recent revival of interest in Virginia's earliest Anglo-Indian relations has been stimulated by the publication of essential primary sources. Philip L. Barbour's masterful three-volume edition of *The Complete Works of Captain John Smith* (1986), prepared under the auspices of the Institute of Early American History and Culture in Williamsburg, is a rare and timeless treasure. David Beers Quinn's collection of Virginia sources (1606–12) in the last volume of his *New American World* (1979) complemented the materials in Barbour's earlier *Jamestown Voyages* (1969); both works, however, lacked sufficiently detailed annotation on the complexities of intercultural contacts. More comprehensive than either is W. Stitt Robinson's *Virginia Treaties*, two volumes in the collection of *Early American Indian Documents: Treaties and*

[20] For Lurie, see note 4; for Feest and Turner, note 15; J. Frederick Fausz, "Fighting 'Fire' with Firearms: The Anglo-Powhatan Arms Race in Early Virginia," *American Indian Culture and Research Journal*, III (1980), 33–50, reprinted in Roger L. Nichols, ed., *The American Indian: Past and Present* (3d ed.; New York, 1986), pp. 61–72; J. Frederick Fausz, "Opechancanough: Indian Resistance Leader," in David Sweet and Gary B. Nash, *Struggle and Survival in Colonial America* (Berkeley and London, 1981), pp. 21–37.

[21] Carl Bridenbaugh, *Jamestown, 1544–1699* (New York and Oxford, 1980), chap. 2; Carl Bridenbaugh, *Early Americans* (New York and Oxford, 1981), chap. 1.

Laws, 1607–1789 (1983), under the general editorship of Alden T. Vaughan. Robinson's appropriately annotated volumes actually contain a fuller record of Anglo-Indian relations than the designation "treaties and laws" implies.[22]

Mining this rich body of Virginia sources, historians have recently analyzed early intercultural contacts in Virginia from three primary perspectives. One approach, represented by Morgan's *American Slavery, American Freedom* and H. C. Porter's *Inconstant Savage: England and the North American Indian, 1500–1660* (1979), found the alternative life-styles and world views of the Powhatans useful for achieving their ultimate objective—a thematic interpretation of colonial society with little concern for the complex process of mutual acculturation. Another approach, represented by Bernard W. Sheehan's *Savagism and Civility* (1980), equated the "Indian" with the idea of savagery and analyzed the intellectual evolution of that image more as a philosophical exercise than as a balanced treatment of relations between flesh-and-blood people. A third, ethnohistorical, approach, represented by J. Leitch Wright, Jr., in *The Only Land They Knew* (1981), analyzed the process of acculturation, in all its variety and complexity, from the Indians' perspective. Wright's treatment of the Powhatans and other Southern Indians as active protagonists engaged in modifying their traditional cultures to meet the challenges of colonization increased our understanding of native peoples far more than the other works.[23]

Although Morgan's ambitious and challenging synthesis of colonial Virginia substantially advanced the new social history of the Chesapeake,

[22] Philip L. Barbour, ed., *The Complete Works of Captain John Smith* (3 vols.; Chapel Hill and London, 1986); David Beers Quinn, ed., *New American World: A Documentary History of North America to 1612*, Vol. V: *The Extension of Settlement in Florida, Virginia, and the Spanish Southwest* (New York, 1979); Philip L. Barbour, ed., *The Jamestown Voyages Under the First Charter, 1606–1609*, Works issued by the Hakluyt Society, 2d ser., CXXXVI, CXXXVII (Cambridge, 1969); W. Stitt Robinson, ed., *Early American Indian Documents: Treaties and Laws, 1607–1789*, Vol. IV: *Virginia Treaties, 1607–1722*, Vol. V: *Virginia Treaties, 1723–1775* (Frederick, Md., 1983). See also J. Frederick Fausz, *At the Meeting Ground of Cultures: A Documentary History of Anglo-Indian Relations in the Seventeenth-Century Chesapeake*, Virginia Historical Society Documents (forthcoming).

[23] For Morgan, see note 6; H. C. Porter, *The Inconstant Savage: England and the North American Indians, 1500–1660* (London, 1979); Bernard W. Sheehan, *Savagism and Civility: Indians and Englishmen in Colonial Virginia* (Cambridge, London, and New York, 1980); J. Leitch Wright, Jr., *The Only Land They Knew: The Tragic Story of the American Indians in the Old South* (New York, 1981). In order to provide some analytical depth on the more influential recent works in the early contact era, I have restricted my discussion to Morgan, Sheehan, and Wright. Porter's book should not be taken too seriously, because in both style and quality of analysis it is reminiscent of mediocre nineteenth-century antiquarianism. Karen Ordahl Kupperman's *Settling With the Indians: The Meeting of English and Indian Cultures in America, 1580–1640* (Totowa, N.J., 1980), is not so easily characterized in terms of the approaches I stress. Kupperman's ethnohistorical instincts and insights are good, but I feel that she overly emphasizes the English commentators on contact experiences in early New England and the Chesapeake.

he often mistook cultural prejudice for racism (his thematic "ordeal") in Anglo-Powhatan relations and was generally insensitive, and frequently inaccurate, in his appraisal of the Tidewater Algonquians. His portrayal of the "Indians' habitual idleness" (supposedly interrupted only by "gang wars," "chopping a few people to bits," or "hunting as sport") was a convenient vehicle for comparing English attitudes toward work in a colonial society that would later adopt black slavery, but such distortions and caricatures of the Powhatans served to damage the author's credibility. Moreover, Morgan cavalierly dismissed ethnographic evidence from reliable seventeenth-century witnesses—he denied, for example, that Powhatan collected a huge tribute in food and furs from his people—and instead cited eighteenth-century sources from outside Virginia to make a point about the Pamunkeys in the Early Contact Period (whom he misidentified as a Potomac River people).[24]

Given the intertwined, interdependent nature of early Anglo-Powhatan relations, the errors of interpretation that Morgan committed on one side of the intercultural frontier had unfortunate consequences for fully understanding the other. Thus, by erroneously assuming that "the Indians could afford to give up the land around Jamestown . . . [and] made no concerted effort to drive the English out," Morgan ignored the significant First Anglo-Powhatan War, in which Indians drove colonists from outposts at Nansemond and Nonesuch before they nearly starved the remaining English to death during the siege of Jamestown (November 1609 to March 1610). It was the emaciated, angry, and hungry English survivors of these ordeals who soon after sought revenge in Indian cornfields. By ignoring detail and context in earlier relations, Morgan understandably misinterpreted the clear meaning of the colonial raiders who "cutt downe" the Powhatans' ripe maize in order to eat, not destroy, it, and he could only condemn what he failed to understand: "It is not easy to make sense out of the behavior displayed. . . . How to explain the suicidal impulse that led the hungry English to destroy the corn that might have fed them and to commit atrocities upon the people who grew it?"[25]

If the colonists were more pragmatic than Morgan gave them credit

[24] Morgan, *American Slavery, American Freedom*, pp. 48–51, 57–59, 121.

[25] Ibid., pp. 74–75. Cf. "A Breife Declaration of the Plantation of Virginia duringe the first Twelve Yeares . . . by the Ancient Planters nowe remaining alive in Virginia" (1624), in H. R. McIlwaine, ed., *Journals of the House of Burgesses of Virginia, 1619–1658/59* (Richmond, 1915), pp. 28–33; Ralph Hamor, *A True Discourse of the Present Estate of Virginia* . . . (London, 1615), pp. 2, 8–10, 26–31. On the First Anglo-Powhatan War, see Fausz, "Powhatan Uprising," pp. 249–91.

for, Sheehan would have us believe that they were so intellectually preoccupied with the image of the Indian-as-savage that they forswore profits for philosophy. Convinced that the colonists were trapped by prejudicial preconceptions of savagism and therefore "could never grasp the reality of their dealings with the native inhabitants of America," Sheehan was himself snared by the actions of the English that contradicted his thesis. For him, the Powhatan Uprising of 22 March 1622—rather consistently, and correctly, interpreted as a significant watershed in the history of Anglo-Indian relations over the last three and a half centuries—represented "no decisive turning point," because the colonists' "decision to massacre the Indians . . . was . . . a continuation of the English determination to rid the world of savagism" that the colonists had arrived with in 1607. Although London intellectuals amused themselves with saccharine stereotypes of Indians that easily metamorphosed into punitive prejudices as their mood dictated, to say that the Jamestown colonists viewed their relations with the Powhatans as a "clash between cosmic forces" ignored a broad range of behavior between the cultures. Ironically, it was the colonists most threatened—those who had witnessed the deaths of a fourth of their comrades in the 1622 uprising—who pragmatically determined that their future survival depended upon new, cooperative relations with "savages." Launching limited, not lethal, raids (which they called "feedfights") on Powhatan cornfields, the colonists eschewed genocide and instead formed important military and trade alliances with friendly Eastern Shore and Potomac River tribes. By 1630 commercial opportunities, not Sheehan's "cosmic forces," had given birth to the Virginians' beaver trade with invaluable Indian partners, which permitted a profitable, pragmatic complacency with the perpetuation of "savagism," to no one's surprise but Sheehan's.[26]

In contrast to Morgan and Sheehan, Wright's appreciation of and sensitivity to the multidimensional contacts between the cultures allowed him to analyze the process of colonization from the inside out. Informed

[26] Sheehan, *Savagism and Civility*, pp. 175–77. Cf. Fausz, "Powhatan Uprising," pp. 404–583; J. Frederick Fausz, "Present at the 'Creation': The Chesapeake World That Greeted the Maryland Colonists," *Md. Hist. Mag.*, LXXIX (1984), 7–20; Fausz, "Anglo-Indian Aggression and Accommodation," pp. 246–52; and J. Frederick Fausz, "Fighting 'Fire' With Firearms," pp. 33–50. The colonists' decision to segregate themselves from the hostile Powhatans meant neither that they were adopting (or readopting) immutable racist attitudes with regard to all Indians nor that they were pursuing a retaliatory war of genocide. Historians often fail to differentiate the views of Londoners (who called for the extermination of the Powhatans) from those of the colonists, which varied considerably between 1622 and 1630. Cf. this appraisal with Alden T. Vaughan, "'Expulsion of the Salvages': English Policy and the Virginia Massacre of 1622," *WMQ*, 3d ser., XXXV (1978), 57–84.

by a generation of important interdisciplinary studies on Native Americans, he provided refreshing contexts for integrating the English intrusion with Powhatan cultural history and for evaluating Chesapeake Anglo-Indian relations in terms of a maturing, expanding, triracial South in the eighteenth century.[27]

On to New "Frontiers"

In 1631 new frontiers began to influence Virginia's interethnic relations, both chronologically and spatially. In that year, Captain John Smith, one of the last surviving of the first colonists and the best of their chroniclers, breathed his last and seemingly thrust Virginia history into its "dark ages." Without Smith to rely on, many historians, then and now, recoiled from the prospect of extracting the skimpy details of Anglo-Indian relations from the ravaged remnants of colonial records. Without a compiler as curious and an interpreter as insightful as Smith had been, knowledge of Virginia Indians languished in subsequent colonial decades, despite the brilliance of Robert Beverley's 1705 *History*.

To some extent, it languishes still. There is no substantial scholarly interpretation of Anglo-Indian relations covering the critical period between 1644 and 1700, although the research of Stephen R. Potter on the Algonquians of the Northern Neck (1976) and Douglas W. Boyce on the Iroquoians of the coastal plain (1978) have suggested the combined archaeological and archival routes to follow. Despite the important start made in *The Governor and the Rebel* (1957) by Wilcomb E. Washburn and the recent insights of Stephen Saunders Webb's *1676: The End of American Independence* (1984) and Francis Jennings's *Ambiguous Iroquois Empire* (1984), the ethnohistorical significance of Bacon's Rebellion for the lives of all Virginians still requires extensive and intensive examination.[28]

What we currently lack in depth with regard to Virginia historiography is being compensated for in the breadth of new works that focus on the wider Chesapeake region. In the same year that Smith died, William

[27] Wright, *Only Land They Knew*, especially pp. 94–97, and chaps. 7, 10.

[28] Stephen R. Potter, "The Dissolution of the Machoatick, Cekacawon and Wighcocomoco Indians" [1648–1719], Northumberland County Historical Society *Bulletin*, XIII (1976), 5–33; Douglas W. Boyce, "Iroquoian Tribes of the Virginia–North Carolina Coastal Plain," in Trigger, ed., *Handbook of North American Indians*, pp. 282–89; Wilcomb E. Washburn, *The Governor and the Rebel: A History of Bacon's Rebellion in Virginia*, Institute of Early American History and Culture (Chapel Hill, 1957); Stephen Saunders Webb, *1676: The End of American Independence* (New York, 1984); Francis Jennings, *The Ambiguous Iroquois Empire: The Covenant Chain Confederation of Indian Tribes with English Colonies . . .* (New York, 1984). See also Lewis R. Binford's "Ethnohistory of the Nottoway, Meherrin and Weanock Indians of Southeastern Virginia," *Ethnohistory*, XIV (1967), 103–218.

Claiborne established his ambitious Kent Island fur-trading enterprise in the northern Chesapeake, which in effect brought the influential Susquehannocks into Virginia's multicultural history and provided the thematic link for Virginia's intercolonial relations with Maryland.

In "Present at the 'Creation': The Chesapeake World That Greeted the Maryland Colonists" (1984), I analyzed the critical role that the Virginia beaver traders played in transmitting the valuable lessons of aboriginal and colonial adaptations to the new Maryland settlers. The Anglo-Indian interest group alliances that exploited the fur trade and minimized conflicts between interethnic neighbors were also studied in James H. Merrell's "Cultural Continuity among the Piscataway Indians of Colonial Maryland" (1979). This influential essay demonstrated the important distinctions between Anglo-Indian relations in Virginia and Maryland and found that "accommodation was possible for many [native groups] who were neither powerful nor shattered" by colonial contacts. Barry Kent's archaeological and ethnohistorical overview of *Susquehanna's Indians* (1984) imparted a wealth of information and interpretive sensitivity that should serve as a model for other researchers. Francis Jennings, the dean of Susquehannock studies, compressed years of research into his succinct and informative entry on that people in the *Handbook of North American Indians* (1978) and in the suggestive essay "Indians and Frontiers in Seventeenth Century Maryland" (1982). The pivotal role that the Susquehannock played in Anglo-Indian affairs of the later seventeenth century was analyzed in 1984 by both Webb and Jennings. The latter's *Ambiguous Iroquois Empire* addressed the complex interweavings of Anglo-Indian and multicolonial relationships across eastern North America into the mid-eighteenth century and revealed how the imperial diplomacy of the "Covenant Chain" emerged as "the primary instrument for opening the trans-Appalachian West to British colonization."[29]

With the recent recognition of the extent to which Virginia influenced, and was influenced by, a variety of chronological and spatial frontiers as colonial America matured, it is appropriate that local ethnohistorians

[29] Fausz, cited in note 26; James H. Merrell, "Cultural Continuity among the Piscataway Indians of Colonial Maryland," *WMQ*, 3d ser., XXXVI (1979), 548–70, quotation on p. 570; Barry C. Kent, *Susquehanna's Indians*, Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission Anthropological Series No. 6 (Harrisburg, 1984); Francis Jennings, "Susquehannock," in Trigger, ed., *Handbook of North American Indians*, pp. 362–67; Francis Jennings, "Indians and Frontiers in Seventeenth Century Maryland," in David Beers Quinn, ed., *Early Maryland and the Wider World* (Detroit, 1982), pp. 216–41; Jennings, *Ambiguous Iroquois Empire*, p. 368.

must look beyond the traditional borders of the Old Dominion for interpretive inspiration. Almost everything remains to be done in eighteenth-century Virginia Indian studies, but fortunately, there are many insightful interpretations of other contact zones to serve as excellent examples. Anthony F. C. Wallace's stimulating classic, *The Death and Rebirth of the Seneca* (1969), brilliantly analyzed the challenges and changes that transformed that important Iroquois tribe, while William Cronon's soon-to-be-classic *Changes in the Land* (1983) masterfully interpreted the environmental effect of interethnic contact and acculturation. In "The Indians' New World: The Catawba Experience" (1984), James H. Merrell focused attention on the migrations and adaptations through which Indians coped with contact worlds that were as new to them as they were to European immigrants. In *The European and the Indian* (1981), James Axtell also insightfully investigated the adaptations of America's indigenous residents as they became a minority population in the eighteenth century, while Francis Jennings's "Indians' Revolution" (1976) reflected on the loss of native independence as the colonists were winning theirs.[30]

The colonists' victory in the American Revolution eliminated the diplomatic leverage that some tribes had exercised when the French held Canada and absentee London policymakers dominated the affairs of the Covenant Chain. Many Indians faced bleak futures of reservations and relocations, as white politicians on both local and national levels increasingly came to regard them as anachronistic impediments to the "progressive" and popular exploitation of America's rich resources. Indians who had fought with, as well as those who had fought against, the Americans in their war with the British, and Indians who tried to assimilate as well as those who resisted absorption, were equally victimized by the emergence of a race-based Manifest Destiny in the post-Revolution decades.

Recent scholarship has contributed little to our knowledge of what Virginia Indians, either as individuals or groups, were doing in the period from the American Revolution to the era of Indian removal in the first half of the nineteenth century. The attentions of whites, then as now, generally focused on native peoples whose threatening power or coveted possessions placed them at the center of conflict and controversy.

[30] Anthony F. C. Wallace, *The Death and Rebirth of the Seneca* (New York, 1969); William Cronon, *Changes in the Land: Indians, Colonists, and the Ecology of New England* (New York, 1983); James H. Merrell, "The Indians' New World: The Catawba Experience," *WMQ*, 3d ser., XLI (1984), 537–65; Axtell, cited in note 6; Francis Jennings, "The Indians' Revolution," in Alfred F. Young, ed., *The American Revolution: Explorations in the History of American Radicalism* (DeKalb, Ill., 1976), pp. 319–48.

Although Powhatan's descendants were spared the tragedy of these later wars and land grabbing, they nevertheless suffered as all Indians did from the growth of racial prejudice. Supplementing the pervasive ethnocentrism of the first colonists, racism became a driving force in the new nation almost from the founding of the United States to the celebration of its bicentennial, so that an appreciation of ethnic stereotypes is essential for understanding how Virginia's Indians were treated.

In this context, Alden T. Vaughan's "From White Man to Redskin" (1982) examined changing perceptions of pigmentation that ensured that the Indians' "separate and unequal status [would] become firmly fixed in the American mind." Bernard W. Sheehan's *Seeds of Extinction* (1973) and Reginald Horsman's *Race and Manifest Destiny* (1981) explored the linkages between prejudice and policy that helped mold a variety of negative images of Indians in the nineteenth century. Richard Drinnon's often angry and polemical *Facing West* (1980) warned of the "Indian-hating" that is still evident in American attitudes and actions at home and abroad, while Raymond William Stedman's *Shadows of the Indian* (1982) surveyed the pervasive ethnic stereotypes that insidiously continue to plague us.[31]

Discovering the "Survivors"

In analyzing Virginia Indians of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, scholars have had to work as excavators in order to rescue the native survivors of earlier contacts and conflicts from a historical death-by-obscurity after their burial under the rubble of racism. Recognizing that local Indians suffered under the out-of-sight, out-of-mind syndrome and were officially classified as "coloreds" under slavery and Jim Crowism, modern ethnohistorians have performed two vital functions: first, convincing the contemporary majority population that Indians did not vanish in or after the colonial period, and second, interpreting the centuries of seemingly lost identity between then and now. These are tasks usually performed best by anthropologists, because the fieldwork skills of interviewing surviving descendants and writing accounts sensitive to ethnic

[31] Alden T. Vaughan, "From White Man to Redskin: Changing Anglo-American Perceptions of the American Indian," *American Historical Review*, LXXXVII (1982), 917–53, quotation on p. 919; Bernard W. Sheehan, *Seeds of Extinction: Jeffersonian Philanthropy and the American Indian* (Chapel Hill, 1973); Reginald Horsman, *Race and Manifest Destiny: The Origins of Racial Anglo-Saxonism* (Cambridge, Mass., 1981); Drinnon, cited in note 5; Raymond William Stedman, *Shadows of the Indian: Stereotypes in American Culture* (Norman, Okla., 1982).

sensibilities have more traditionally been components of their professional training than of historians' training.

Although many historians believe that associating or identifying too closely with present-day Indians threatens their own objectivity, scholars' decisions to concentrate on past white policies and policymakers while avoiding any involvement with current controversial ethnic issues raise problems of another kind. There is a tendency among historians today to be more interested in process than people and more congratulatory about the Indians who acculturated or assimilated than condemnatory of the self-serving white policies and prejudices that forced such choices upon them. Weighing his or her personal disposition and political philosophy as well as data, each ethnohistorian must evaluate the ramifications of scholarly "neutrality."

Regardless of such dilemmas, the ethnohistorical scholarship on Chesapeake Indians from the mid-nineteenth century to the present is rich and rewarding, and the interpretations of the modern era rival those for the Early Contact Period both in terms of quantity and quality. In a broader regional context, C. A. Weslager's *Nanticoke Indians—Past and Present* (1983) surveyed that scattered but unshattered tribe of Maryland's Eastern Shore from colonial contacts to the 1980s. Frank W. Porter III's 1978 Ph.D. dissertation on the Nanticokes likewise examined their "quest for identity," while his essay "Behind the Frontier: Indian Survivals in Maryland" (1980) provided a convenient and succinct overview of other Native American groups. Abraham Makofsky's "Tradition and Change in the Lumbee Indian Community of Baltimore" (1980) explored one Indian city subculture and typified the growing field of urban ethnohistory. Adolph Dial and David Eliades's *Only Land I Know: A History of the Lumbee Indians* (1975), W. McKee Evans's "North Carolina Lumbees" (1979), and Karen I. Blu's *Lumbee Problem: The Making of an American Indian People* (1980) analyzed the complex issues of race, culture, and class confronting that controversial "marginal group" of the mid-Atlantic states. Feest's entries on the native peoples of Virginia, Maryland, and North Carolina in the *Handbook of North American Indians* (1978) were brief but informative on the twentieth century, while Brewton Berry's "Marginal Groups" in the same volume discussed a particularly important issue in contemporary Native American affairs. Donald L. Fixico's "Twentieth Century Federal Indian Policy," Russell Thornton's "Contemporary American Indians," and Peter Iverson's "Indian Tribal Histories"—all in *Scholars and the Indian*

Experience (1984)—provided interpretive summaries and bibliographical surveys of topics of concern to Indians and Indian historians everywhere.[32]

In recent years, Helen C. Rountree, an anthropologist at Old Dominion University, has made particularly valuable contributions to ethnohistorical scholarship and the vital Indian communities in Virginia. Through her dissertation, "Indian Land Loss in Virginia" (1973), and influential essays, such as "Powhatan's Descendants in the Modern World" (1972), "Change Came Slowly: The Case of the Powhatan Indians of Virginia" (1975), and "The Indians of Virginia: A Third Race in a Biracial State" (1979), she has related national issues and trends in both contemporary policies and scholarly interpretations to local conditions. Rountree's personal contacts with Pamunkeys, Mattaponis, Chickahominys, and other Native Americans in the state through extensive fieldwork have given her the knowledge as well as the sensitivity to interpret Opechancanough's descendants over many centuries and in all situations.[33]

Building upon the rich legacy of multicultural relations and the recent scholarship that has rediscovered it, the essays that follow in this special issue of the *Virginia Magazine* illustrate the value of ethnohistorical inquiry from a variety of perspectives. Historian David D. Smits examines the ethnocentric barriers and special circumstances that restrained the English colonists from sharing the most intimate of human experiences with local Indians. From that threshold of potential assimilability three centuries distant, sociologist Paul T. Murray's essay focuses our

[32] C. A. Weslager, *The Nanticoke Indians—Past and Present* (Newark, Del., and London, 1983); Frank W. Porter III, "Quest for Identity: The Formation of the Nanticoke Indian Community at Indian River Inlet, Sussex County, Delaware" (Ph.D. diss., University of Maryland, 1978); Frank W. Porter III, "Behind the Frontier: Indian Survivals in Maryland," *Md. Hist. Mag.*, LXXV (1980), 42–54; Abraham Makofsky, "Tradition and Change in the Lumbee Indian Community of Baltimore," in ibid., pp. 55–71; Adolph Dial and David Eliades, *The Only Land I Know: A History of the Lumbee Indians* (San Francisco, 1975); W. McKee Evans, "The North Carolina Lumbees: From Assimilation to Revitalization," in Walter L. Williams, ed., *Southeastern Indians Since the Removal Era* (Athens, Ga., 1979), pp. 49–71; Karen I. Blu, *The Lumbee Problem: The Making of an American Indian People* (Cambridge and New York, 1980); Brewton Berry, "Marginal Groups," in Trigger, ed., *Handbook of North American Indians*, pp. 290–95; Donald L. Fixico, "Twentieth Century Federal Indian Policy," in Swagerty, ed., *Scholars and the Indian Experience*, pp. 123–61; Russell Thornton, "Contemporary American Indians," in ibid., pp. 162–78; Peter Iverson, "Indian Tribal Histories," in ibid., pp. 205–22.

[33] Helen C. Rountree, "Indian Land Loss in Virginia: A Prototype of Federal Indian Policy" (Ph.D. diss., University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee, 1973); Helen C. Rountree, "Powhatan's Descendants in the Modern World: Community Studies of the Two Virginia Indian Reservations, with Notes on Five Non-Reservation Enclaves," *The Chesopiean: A Journal of North American Archeology*, X (1972), 62–96; Helen C. Rountree, "Change Came Slowly: The Case of the Powhatan Indians of Virginia," *Journal of Ethnic Studies*, III (1975), 1–19; Helen C. Rountree, "The Indians of Virginia: A Third Race in a Biracial State," in Williams, ed., *Southeastern Indians Since Removal*, pp. 27–48.

attention on those Indians who, in the 1940s, pressed for their special, separate identity against a color-conscious society determined to view people and most issues as either black or white. In her essay, anthropologist Helen C. Rountree investigates the chronological middle ground between those earliest contacts and more recent controversies and rescues the Nottoway from the interpretive obscurity of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

This survey of recent literature on Anglo-Indian relations has, it is hoped, shed new light on both scholars and their subjects. The conquest of cant now allows us, indeed requires us, as researchers and citizens to appreciate Indians for what they were and are in all their individual uniqueness and cultural diversity. For despite the countless alternatives in lifeways and world views that Indians have encountered, individually and collectively, since Europeans and Africans joined them in the Chesapeake, Indians' defiant loyalty to a distinctive identity as Indians—irrespective of appearance or life-style—has remained their most consistent and valuable contribution in an ancient and ongoing legacy to American history. The studies cited here have made progress in understanding Indian identity and its effect over the centuries, but only time will tell how future generations of scholars will make use of that paper produced so near where the Pamunkeys lived in 1607—and where many of them still live today.