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Primitivistic and Progressive Outlooks of the Sixteenth Century in Richard Hakluyt's "Principal Navigations"

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PRIMITIVISTIC AND PROGRESSIVE OUTLOOKS OF THE
SIXTEENTH CENTURY IN RICHARD HAKLUYT'S

"PRINCIPAL NAVIGATIONS"

BY

JEANNE MARIE PANARACE

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF ARTS

IN

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UNIVERSITY OF RHODE ISLAND

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MASTER OF ARTS THESIS

OF

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ABSTRACT

The ideas of primitivism and progress as they appear in philosophical, poetic and dramatic works have been discussed but no study has been made of their appearance in the voyage literature of the sixteenth century, specifically those accounts in Richard Hakluyt's Principal Navigations. The ideas and beliefs which influence the voyagers, the extent to which these outlooks are manifest in the accounts and the extent to which outlooks change over the century were studied. Description and analysis of both major and minor accounts in Hakluyt's Principal Navigations are here presented, in chronological order. It was found that the greatest influence on the voyagers' outlooks were those of classical philosophy, medieval travel literature, and contemporary religious and scientific ideas. Although both the primitivistic and progressivistic outlooks are present throughout the century a definite change in emphasis becomes evident. This can be seen most clearly in the way the voyagers regard distant lands and their peoples. We find for example, that early in the century native peoples and their existence are seen as subhuman. Later they are seen as human, and finally as ideal. Thus, there is a definite predominance of progressivism in the earlier voyage accounts, and a predominance of primitivism in the accounts written at the close of the century.

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voyagers' conception of the new lands and their native peoples. The voyagers reveal themselves to be either primitive or progressivists in their outlook on human development by the way in which they record and deal with their experiences in the literature. We now will offer a brief presentation of some of those beliefs and ideas that were part of the sixteenth-century consciousness, and which probably influenced the travelers' outlooks.

What first comes to mind are the classics, of particular importance during this era of renaissance. The prevalence of certain ideas can be traced to these writings, for the English often found the value of authority in the words of the ancients.

Among the ancient classic writings reflected some very definite outlook on human development was Aristotle, whose Politics and Metaphysics

I

BACKGROUND TO HAKLUYT'S VOYAGES

Influential Ideas and Beliefs

To read the voyage literature compiled by Richard Hakluyt is to experience the diversity of the sixteenth century in England. Those beliefs and ideas that influenced the English at home were carried overseas by the voyagers; in turn these influenced the voyagers' conception of the new lands and their native peoples. The voyagers reveal themselves to be either primitivistic or progressivistic in their outlook on human development by the way in which they record and deal with their experiences in the literature. Here we will offer a brief presentation of some of those beliefs and ideas that were part of the sixteenth century consciousness, and which probably influenced the travelers' outlooks.

What first comes to mind are the classics, of particular importance during this era of renaissance. The prevalence of certain ideas can be traced to these writings, for the English often heard the voice of authority in the words of the ancients.

Among the ancients whose writings reflected some very definite outlook on human development was Hesiod, whose Works and Days must

be emphasized.¹ Here Hesiod brings together the myths of the four ages and the age of heroes. Characteristic of Hesiod's account is the idea of the deterioration of the human race from the Golden Age through the ages of Silver, Bronze and Iron. The Golden race of men as Hesiod presents it is carefree, idle and peaceful. These men dwell in an earthly paradise in which nature spontaneously provides for all their needs. Only harmony exists between men and between men and nature. The several ages of less pure metals succeed one another following this first Golden Age, and man's nature declines. Between the Ages of Bronze and Iron there is a brief respite from this downward trend, the Age of Heroes. These heroes live a return to the Golden Age on the "Happy Isles." The Iron Age (which Hesiod sees as his own time) continues the pattern of deterioration which had been temporarily interrupted -- suffering, toil, violence and evil are its characteristics. Hesiod simply presents the degeneration of man in mythical form. He gives no logical explanations.²

Assumptions of the same type underlie a work like Homer's Iliad in which the men of the past (during the Age of Heroes) are recalled and glorified because of the ills of the present.³ Seneca,

¹ Arthur O. Lovejoy, in A Documentary History of Primitivism and Related Ideas (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1935), discusses the ideas of Hesiod and those of other classical writers and philosophers. See pp. 23-31.

² See Frederic C. Osenburg's The Ideas of the Golden Age and the Decay of the World (abstract of a Ph.D. dissertation, Urbana: University of Illinois, 1939), p. 4.

³ Lovejoy, Documentary History, p. 23.

too, shares much the same type of approach, as has been indicated by Louis Bredvold.⁴ The earliest men were happy, uncorrupted, but ignorant; they had no need of institutions, but simply followed the advice of the best man among them. It is only with the deterioration of human nature that institutions become necessary.

More generally, the stock of classical myth included stories of the existence of the Fortunate Isles, Elysian Fields, or Isles of the Blest, in which dwelt those mortals who had been blessed by the gods, particularly for some accomplishment.⁵ Such mythical material, especially when it includes the concept of the Golden Age, takes on particular importance in England late in the sixteenth century.⁶ Many poets and dramatists draw from this material for their own work.

Noteworthy among the classical sources used by English writers is Ovid's Metamorphoses. Here is described the Golden Age and the successive degeneration of the world and man in the ages that follow. The only explanation offered concerning the fall from the ages of Gold to Silver is mythical:

But when that into Lymbo once Saturnus being thrust,
The rule and charge of all the worlde was under Jove unjust,
And that the silver age came in...⁷

⁴ "The Naturalism of John Donne in Relation to Some Renaissance Traditions," JEGP, XXII (1923), 487. Bredvold refers to Seneca's Epistolae, XIV, 2.

⁵ Robert R. Cawley, Unpathed Waters (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1940), p. 3.

⁶ Osenburg, Golden Age and Decay, pp. 6-7.

⁷ Ovid, Metamorphoses, trans. in 1567 by Arthur Golding (New York: MacMillan, 1965), p. 7.

The degeneration of man is seen with regret, and the Golden Age is correspondingly idealized. Renaissance writers frequently include such ideas in their literature.

In the area of geography the ancients may also have contributed to Renaissance thought. The Greek concept of the world was the oikoumene, the area inhabited by Greeks or men of similar nature. Aristotle notes that there are no other "oikoumenes." The assumptions which underlie such ideas obviously involve a great nationalistic pride, and a scorn of the races beyond Greece and its environs, races which are often seen as not fully human.⁸ The Romans reiterate this idea, as well. Pliny gives it specific illustration. Conceptions of monstrous races of men are evident in his Natural History. This work, despite its title, proves quite imaginative; we encounter a dog-headed race, men with one enormous foot which is used as a shade, men with no mouths, pigmies, and men with eyes in their shoulders. Such colorful characters were bound to attract the eye of the medieval and Renaissance reader.⁹

An exaltation of foreign lands and people, on the other hand, is also evident among the writers of the past. The ancients generally saw the unknown west as the location for an island of peace and plenty.¹⁰ (The English voyagers were to adapt this idea to

⁸ Early geographical theory is discussed by Boies Penrose in Travel and Discovery in the Renaissance (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1963), pp. 2-3.

⁹ Cawley, Waters, p. 100.

¹⁰ Hoxie N. Fairchild, The Noble Savage (New York: Russell and Russell, 1961), p. 4.

their own use.¹¹⁾ Plato, in the Timaeus, speaks of a lost island (Atlantis). He describes it as an island located beyond the Pillars of Hercules in the west, which warred with Athens. As their frontiers expanded, the men of the Greco-Roman world saw the existence of an ideal state not in a past age, but in remoter areas (geographical primitivism).¹²

An increased interest in geography becomes evident during the Middle Ages. Such aberrations as Pliny describes take on reality as they adorn the outer edges of the "world" on medieval maps. These "mappae mundi" present the center of civilization as the Holy Land and the surrounding area. Beyond were dim unknown regions populated by savage peoples. This "Biblical" geography (which probably discouraged exploration) became obsolete once men began to venture into the unknown.¹³ (The underlying ideas take longer to disappear.) But until this happens we find a number of strange creatures on the mappae mundi -- salvage men, satyrs, apes, Skiapods. At times it became somewhat difficult for medieval men to classify certain peoples; were Moors, for example, human, or devilish monsters? Strangely enough, medieval explorers did not dissipate fears; they perpetuated them. A sampling of early voyage

¹¹ Cawley, Waters, p. 43.

¹² Richard Bernheimer, Wild Men in the Middle Ages (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1952), p. 103.

¹³ Penrose, Travel and Discovery, p. 7.

accounts¹⁴ shows that these travelers often "found" the strange lands and wild men they expected to find.

Belief, even ritual, was built up in the middle ages around the existence of wild men,¹⁵ who, in medieval theory, inhabited isolated locales of the native country or distant areas. It is interesting to observe the methods created by the men of a highly Christian era to avoid doctrinal conflict. To the Christian the ideal state was that in the Garden of Eden before the Fall. In order to gratify a desire to believe in some contemporary ideal state Christians transferred "wild men" to distant lands.¹⁶ In fact, a belief in a "terrestrial paradise" from as early as the sixth century until the sixteenth, is evident.¹⁷ People of the Middle Ages were forced to entertain almost contradictory views concerning wild men; they are considered part of an ideal existence, yet are to be feared for their uncivilized appearance and actions.

Perhaps one of the most significant features of the Middle

¹⁴ Richard Hakluyt, ed., The Principal Navigations, Voyages, Traffiques and Discoveries of the English Nation (12 vols.; Glasgow: James MacLehose and Sons, 1905). See I, 5; 11-12; 50-53. Hereafter, references to this work will be made by volume and page(s) only.

¹⁵ See Bernheimer, Wild Men, for a full account.

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 106.

¹⁷ Walter Raleigh, in "The English Voyages of the Sixteenth Century" in Hakluyt, Voyages, XII, notes that Cosmas, during the sixth century, encouraged men to seek Paradise in their travels. See p. 10.

Ages is John Mandeville, whose Travels,¹⁸ written during the fourteenth century, had an enormous influence on his own and subsequent centuries. From a twentieth century point of view his work is an often amusing attempt to create a "best-seller." He includes every idea or belief then popular about distant lands and people, and expands or distorts them.¹⁹ At the same time he assures the reader that his accounts are historical truth, a summary of his own experiences in untravelled lands. Some of the folk he describes fit the classic "wild man" description,²⁰ others fit the descriptions offered earlier by Pliny.²¹ Mandeville concludes his work with a hopeful thought, perhaps acknowledging the belief in an ideal existence. He notes that in spite of the strangeness of the peoples he has encountered, all possess some degree of reason and understanding, and exhibit some belief in the supernatural.²² Despite his fraud, Mandeville's influence extended well into the sixteenth century, until travel became commonplace.

The material discussed above is a portion of what became part of sixteenth century thinking. Ideas were either accepted in toto or adapted by Renaissance thinkers and writers, for to speak with

¹⁸ New York: Dover, 1964.

¹⁹ Such distortions of classical descriptions were common. See Luis Weckmann, "The Middle Ages and the Conquest of America," Speculum, XXVI (1951), 132.

²⁰ Mandeville, Travels, pp. 180, 187.

²¹ Ibid., pp. 133-34.

²² Ibid., p. 206.

the voice of the past was to speak with authority. There are a number of ideas and beliefs, however, which are more a part of the Renaissance than of any previous age. These, because of their influence on the voyagers, must be considered here.

Two of the most widely accepted and conventionalized concepts are the degeneration of man from a happier state and his longing for a simple pastoral life.²³ During the sixteenth century Spenser seemed particularly attracted by these ideas; his own presentation of them probably grew out of both a familiarity with the classics and personal disappointments.²⁴ Such pessimistic regard of his own age was adopted by Renaissance man on a wide scale. He became acutely aware of faults in his own society, and even of deterioration in the environment. The idea of "decay" captured the minds of many; they saw evidence of it in phenomena such as eclipses, comets and earthquakes, and within the individual, in the loss of physical and mental abilities with the passing of time.²⁵ We have only to turn to the works of Sidney, Shakespeare and Spenser to discern this preoccupation, particularly as they consider the mortality of man. (It has been suggested that this pessimistic strain in Renaissance outlook arose as the result of the discovery

²³ Roy Harvey Pearce, "Primitivistic Ideas in the Faerie Queene," JEGP, XLIV (1945), 139-51.

²⁴ Don Cameron Allen, "The Degeneration of Man and Renaissance Pessimism," Studies in Philology, XXXV (1938), p. 212.

²⁵ Ibid., p. 202, and Osenburg, Golden Age and Decay, pp. 10-13.

²⁶ Allen, Degeneration of Man, p. 202.

of conflicting philosophies in the writings of the ancients.²⁶⁾

Religious belief during the century may also provide some background for the attitudes of the voyagers. The "matter" of Christianity remains much the same throughout the century. After the break with Rome different dogmas are emphasized, while ritual is simplified. This is an age in which reason is given an important role in religion, thus actions, not creed or ritual, become vital. Characteristic of the English Church in particular is a humanistic outlook. An Englishman of this century would see his life ruled by divine providence and his sins often punished in this world. Man's sins (which are irrational and upset the natural order) reap an appropriate punishment.²⁷ (This idea may have origins in classical sources.) A corresponding idea is that often external appearance is considered indicative of one's spiritual state. Aesthetic beauty was frequently regarded as a sign of goodness.²⁸ One of the justifications given for travel and colonization is the necessity of spreading the blessings of Christianity to the savages. In actuality few of the explorers were so nobly motivated.

²⁶ Allen, Degeneration of Man, p. 202.

²⁷ This approach explains in part why natural calamities and physical disabilities are often connected to moral transgression in literature (in Lear, for example). For a more detailed presentation of religious belief and philosophy at this time see Roy W. Battenhouse, 'Tamburlaine'; A Study in Renaissance Moral Philosophy (Nashville: Vanderbilt, 1941).

²⁸ Fairchild, The Noble Savage, p. 10.

In fact, their energies, if directed at anything even remotely religious, were directed toward finding the Garden of Eden in the new realms.²⁹

The sixteenth-century Englishman, particularly the Elizabethan, generally responded to foreigners in a way that reveals the many influences he felt. It is difficult to find any single-minded attitude toward foreigners.³⁰ In her letters to foreign courts Elizabeth always addressed rulers with the most courteous and honorable salutations. By this time visits from foreign rulers and ambassadors had become frequent. Despite this familiarity, however, the English were not yet totally enlightened: the Holy Land was regarded as the cradle and continuing center of true humanity; dark or black skin was seen as a mark of God's disfavor; the customs of other peoples were often seen as strange, amusing, or barbaric. The view of other lands was kept in strictly economic terms; merchandise, not culture, was all that was to be exchanged. (Or, the English would impose their own ideas of culture.) Those areas which were least known had a romantic appeal simply because of their strangeness. At home, the Englishman's idealized notions

²⁹ Raleigh sees this as one of the most important motives behind the voyages of the Renaissance: "Traditions and fantasies concerning the Golden Age and the Earthly Paradise are interwoven with all the practical designs of the early navigators." See Hakluyt, Voyages, XII, 10.

³⁰ G.K. Hunter, "Elizabethans and Foreigners," Shakespeare Survey, XVII (1964), 37-52, contains a detailed discussion of the concepts outlined below.

about the western realms and their natives were so widespread and appealing that travelers could not or would not destroy the illusion -- "And even the facts of American life could not wholly disabuse the imagination of the dream of an ideal natural civilization."³¹ As Cawley notes, the English were skilled in the art of rationalization. They either presupposed certain notions, or imposed their theories upon whatever they happened to find: "The voyagers must find what they went in search of or die."³²

Side by side with the rule of the imagination was that of reason. Certain views on human nature and the place of man reveal the importance of rationality and order in the outlook of this age. There is a unity of every level of being, but at the same time each level must remain distinct from the others. Man must come to understand his nature and destiny, then act according to this knowledge. When the English apply the concept of order to their regard of the savages, we see them viewing the savages' instinctive worship as a link with other levels of being, viewing instinctive actions as normal, not evil, because the savages are acting according to the nature they possess, and emphasizing the necessity of helping the savages realize their proper role in the universe, both in the social and spiritual spheres. To help the natives was to make them happier and more complete beings. Because he felt he possessed superior understanding, the civilized man saw this as his obligation.

³¹ Ibid., p. 41.

³² Cawley, Unpathed Waters, p. 53.

This was a burden which the English rarely believed themselves incapable of handling.

Such are the ideas and beliefs with which the English voyager had come in contact, perhaps adopted, before leaving the soil of Great Britain. Attitudes at this time must be seen as the product not only of the new and changing conditions of sixteenth century life in England, but as the product, also, of an intellectual tradition stretching back to the time of the ancients. It has been our purpose here to suggest in outline what were such ideas and beliefs.

Primitivism and Progress

The concepts of primitivism and progress (which will be treated in the ensuing chapters with particular reference to the sixteenth century voyage accounts) have been defined and discussed in a few key works.³³ Neither outlook can be restricted to any one point in man's history. It is evident from studies by Lovejoy and others, as well as from literature generally and the voyage literature specifically, that such outlooks simply reflect certain basic human impulses. Depending on man's society and environment, one or the other may dominate.

Essentially, primitivism and progressivism are ways of looking at the series of phenomena which we designate as history -- they are

³³ Of especial importance: Lovejoy's Documentary History and George Boas, Essays on Primitivism and Related Ideas in the Middle Ages (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1948).

man's attempts to impose an order (at least unconsciously) upon this series of phenomena involving human development. It may prove useful at this point to set up certain distinctions which exist between and within the two approaches. The first distinction is that within the concept of primitivism itself; is chronology or level of culture the criterion for the definition of "primitive?" On the one hand we have chronological primitivism, on the other, cultural primitivism. In either situation the present civilized state is the basis for comparison. The chronological primitivist looks over the range of the past and sees there no encouragement or instruction -- man's nature has not improved, but has declined from some earlier, better state. The cultural primitivist looks to contemporary tribes or foreign peoples which are not culturally advanced and sees them and their existence as ideals. Very often these groups are not well known, and are located in an unfamiliar area.³⁴ At times chronological and cultural primitivism fuse.

Underlying these approaches is a rather negative concept of human nature and civilization. The implications are that with the passing of time and/or with the growth of civilization man's original goodness and happiness has disappeared -- there has been a "fall" from the ideal state. As time passes, or as civilization becomes more sophisticated, man grows farther and farther away from this norm; he grows away from a state of nature toward a more

³⁴ The material above is presented in detail in Lovejoy, Documentary History, pp. 7-8.

civilized state. The ideal state, the state of nature, can be defined as including any or all of the following conditions: the original condition of things, man as he was first made by nature; freedom from the intrusion of "art;" communistic economic organization; sexual promiscuity; vegetarianism; lack of organized political government; control of one's actions by natural impulses. These are the conditions which a primitivist sees as good. Such an approach is an example of how men create beliefs or theories around the way they imagine the primitives live(d).³⁵

The man from a sophisticated society who considers the primitive state may choose either of two ways to look at such a life. A "hard" primitivist sees the savage life as one of constant struggles and difficulties arising from attempts to satisfy a few basic needs; he holds up this kind of life as an ideal to other civilized men because he sees the savages as having only basic, not selfish or excessive wants, and because he sees their struggles as examples of strength and self-discipline. The rise of humanity is seen as wholly natural and takes place under harsh conditions; this view of the first or primitive state of the world is seen through rationalistic, even materialistic eyes. The "soft" primitivist, on the other hand, sees the savage life as one of bliss and contentment, an Eden-like existence, in which every need is satisfied and no constraints are present or necessary. This approach is obviously in harmony with many religious.

³⁵ Thomas P. Harrison, Jr., "Aspects of Primitivism in Shakespeare and Spenser," Texas University Studies in English, XX (1940), 39.

interpretations of man's development. Such an ideal is primarily escapist.

Anti-primitivism often arises as a reaction to primitivistic approaches; it is very similar to, and often synonymous with, progressive outlooks. A fine distinction which is not always noted is that anti-primitivism is explicitly opposed to forms of primitivism, but that the idea of progress is not necessarily antithetical to chronological primitivism. Characteristic of the idea of progress (if we assume a natural law of augmentation in time), is that past eras in history will be encouraging and instructive--they will indicate man's progress.³⁶ We can see how closely allied are the ideas of progress and anti-primitivism from some of the illustrations and descriptions provided by Lovejoy.³⁷ He notes, for example, the anti-primitivism in Greece during the fourth and fifth centuries. The aristocratic or oligarchic parties had an unfavorable attitude toward the common man, and supported a strong government. (A primitivistic outlook would entail a favorable attitude toward the less advanced, and would emphasize that an ideal [primitive] state would have a "spontaneous" social order and peace, because men are still good.) And generally, whenever men rely on reason rather than instinct, and premeditation rather than natural impulse, they reflect an anti-primitivistic or progressivistic approach. Lovejoy makes a statement which brings together anti-primitivism and progress: "not

³⁶ Lovejoy, Documentary History, pp. 6-10.

³⁷ Ibid., pp. 192-95.

in the naivete of a primeval age, not in the simple life of the savage or rustic, lay man's good, but in the improvement of techniques, the invention of new devices, and the consequent increase in the complexity of civilization."³⁸

The contrasting, at times conflicting, ideas outlined above are evident in the products of man's creativity. An artistic expression of such conflict -- expression carried on in literature as well -- is found in the work of Piero de Cosimo, Italian Renaissance painter; this is pointed out by Erwin Panofsky in his Studies in Iconology.³⁹ He discusses the painter's work with particular reference to the concepts of primitivistic and progressivistic development. At one point, for example, De Cosimo divided a landscape into two halves; one depicts the hardships of the wilderness, the other the happiness of a pastoral society. At times, too, the painter glorifies those mythical figures that signify progress, with perhaps, a tinge of regret that the uncomplicated existence must be abandoned. At one point in this discussion Panofsky generalizes about the Renaissance; he notes that one convention present in Cosimo's work and that of others is the forest and forest fire, symbols of "hard" primitivism.

The presence of assumptions of primitivism or progress can be seen in other creative products as well. Myths in India revolved around the idea of a Golden Age, as did Western classical myth. By

³⁸ Ibid., p. 195.

³⁹ New York: Harper and Row, 1939. See pp. 55-65.

the sixteenth century, English writers were conventionalizing the figures of the wild man, the noble savage, and the shepherd. Usually, each type of figure leads an idyllic and uncomplicated existence, free from the corruption of society.⁴⁰

The presentation of such ideas simply proclaims in artistic form the impulses which every man has. At times each man feels that an advanced level of culture and technology is a good thing. On the other hand, there are times when men wish to escape the pressures of life in society. Objectively, society may not really be complex, particularly when we consider future possibilities, but the desire to find a refuge seems to be a part of man's psychological makeup. St. Brendan, for example, did not live in what we would consider an advanced society. But, when he comes upon some strange islands in his travels he describes them in highly idealistic and imaginative terms -- to him they were a place of refuge.⁴¹ During different eras, one or the other impulse may dominate. In eras of nationalism men in a particular society are especially aware of their capabilities, or are made aware, and seek to expand and advertise them. In eras when society becomes too complex for man's mind and emotions to cope with, and seems to breed corruption because of this

⁴⁰ Bernheimer, Wild Men, pp. 112-15. It is supposed that man has degenerated. Harrison has noted that this assumption is often accompanied by the belief in the "decay of nature" which is particularly evident in much Renaissance literature.

⁴¹ Cawley, Waters, p. 5.

complexity, idealized "other worlds" become important:

These are familiar details to all of us, every one of them and they belong, not to some terrestrial location but to a land of the imagination which man conjures in order to make more endurable the world in which he must live.⁴²

THE VOYAGES TO LARMO

Hakluyt's collection of voyage accounts spans many hundreds of years, from the time the English first voyaged cautiously beyond their own coasts as early as the sixth century to the end of the sixteenth century. Richard Hakluyt's diligence in collecting and editing the many accounts was certainly due in large part to the nationalistic fervor which had taken hold of everyone during the later years of Elizabeth's reign; once published, the Voyages provided continued inspiration for the English. They are records of many failures as well as successes, records of tremendous losses of life and goods before lines of communication and trade were established.

Simply in terms of the bulk of its voyage material, the sixteenth century is outstanding; by this time travel is becoming more commonplace and men more interested in recording their experiences. Hakluyt obtained his material from interviews with travelers, from the maritime records kept by various members of the ships' crews, and from the extended accounts written by leaders of the various expeditions. The variety of his sources is striking. In the sixteenth century accounts, which will be dealt with here, we can see

⁴² Ibid., p. 11.

II

THE VOYAGES TO 1556

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a "literary" consciousness on the part of many shipmen. They are aware of an audience at home which is eager to hear of their travels. This spurs the voyagers to write detailed, interesting and at times, fictionalized accounts. This literature of travel is a colorful addition to English Renaissance prose, and reveals much about the attitudes of the time.

The accounts from the first half of the century are few and usually unsophisticated, but they reveal two general trends in the English approach to the primitives. The first important voyage of the sixteenth century is that of William Hawkins to Brazil in 1530.¹ Essentially, his interests in the primitives and their lands is economic; at Guinea he trades with the Negroes for ivory and other goods. At Brazil, Hawkins reveals an additional interest. The friendly attitude which Hawkins adopts to the natives there has concrete results -- one of the Brazilian chiefs consents to go back to England for a visit.

The tone of the account indicates that the English do not yet have strong leanings toward geographical primitivism. The existence led by the Indian is never held up as an ideal. The Indian chief is given kind and deferential treatment because the English regard him as a curiosity which they wish to study now that they have been given the opportunity. Furthermore, they have also left a crew member as pledge for the chief. At the court, for example,

¹ William Hawkins, father of the later famous Sir John Hawkins, set up trade routes to Brazil and Guinea. For William Hawkins' account see Hakluyt, Voyages, XI, 23-24.

the Indian leader is regarded by Henry VIII and the nobility as a marvel: "All his apparell, behaviour and gesture, were very strange to the beholders."² Despite whatever close dealings take place, the chief and the Indians are still looked upon as savages.

At one point in the account, the English are actually quite shocked at the civility and trust of the Brazilian Indians when Hawkins arrives to tell them their chief has died: "Nevertheless, the savages being fully persuaded of the honest dealing of our men with their Prince, restored againe the saide pledge, without any harm to him, or any man of the companie."³ At this point in history such encounters are new and unfamiliar; no clear-cut philosophy is yet evident. Hawkins and his crew do not idealize the Indians as would a primitivist, nor do they scorn the Indians' ways and attempt to inflict civilization upon them as would a progressivist. They regard the Indians as savages and objects of curiosity.

The same approach is evident in the description of Master Hore's voyage to Newfoundland in 1536, written by Oliver Dowbeny.⁴ Curiosity, with, perhaps, less respect for the natives, drives Hore and his men to pursue them and attempt to capture them to observe closely. The English spend much time pursuing the savages and retrieving some of the Indians' belongings, but the natives manage

² XI, 24.

³ Ibid.

⁴ VIII, 4-5.

to disappear. Here again the English have no particularly ideal view of the natives (the narrative reveals none); the first impulse of the British is to capture the primitive people because they are savage, much as one might try to capture an exotic bird.

Sebastian Cabot reveals characteristic attitudes toward the primitives, in his instructions for the voyage to Cathay in 1553. In items 30 and 31⁵ he discusses possible encounters with primitive peoples. His primary concern is for the safety of the crew in their attempts to trade with these people. He differentiates between two groups of primitives -- savages and cannibals, a distinction which is also made in other accounts. According to Cabot's statements, both are armed and wild, but the cannibals are particularly frightening because they often swim to ships to capture men for food. Cabot's instructions inspire fear of the primitives. They certainly do not encourage any idealization of them.

An interesting departure from the tone of most of the accounts of the 1550's is a short passage by Richard Eden on his trip to Africa in 1553.⁶ This passage clearly reflects a primitivistic outlook. It is, in fact, an example of geographical primitivism, which usually becomes more evident in times of exploration or expansion. The narrator passes on some comments about an inaccessible

⁵ II, 224.

⁶ VI, 145. Richard Eden has been noted as an important interpreter of foreign works on travel, particularly those of the Spanish and Portuguese. He appeals to the English to be more adventurous in their voyages. For background on Eden, see A.W. Ward and A.R. Waller, eds., The Cambridge History of English Literature (14 vols.; New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1910), IV, 81-82.

area in Ethiopia which is held to be the earthly paradise:

In this province are many exceeding high mountains, upon the which is said to be the earthly paradise: and some say that there are the trees of the Sunne and Moone, whereof the antiquitie maketh mention: yet that none can passe thither by reason of great deserts of an hundred daies journey.⁷

We can see that Richard Eden is familiar with the primitivistic tradition in ancient writings, and hopes to find some area reminiscent of paradise before the Fall. An area which is unfamiliar and inaccessible is thus invested with Edenic qualities.

In contrast to the above is another brief passage written during the same era; it is clearly progressivistic in outlook. Thomas Nicols describes the Canary Islanders as he finds them and how they existed when the Spanish conquered them.⁸ The tone and description indicate that Nicols believes that the blessings of civilization are superior to the primitive state. He contrasts the difficult existence led by the islanders earlier to the more advanced form of life they enjoy when he encounters them and he attributes this advance to the influence of civilized culture.

Two voyages to Guinea and the surrounding areas produce differing accounts. The first account is very strongly anti-primitivistic and indicates that the writer is well acquainted with traditional material, which he uses to advantage.⁹ Captain Lok takes five Negroes as slaves -- apparently the first attempt at

⁷ VI, 145.

⁸ VI, 126.

⁹ The first account is of Captain John Lok's second voyage to Guinea, VI, 167-76.

slavery by the English.¹⁰ His description of the Negroes is highly unflattering -- they lack precisely those advantages which progress brings; because of this lack he regards them as subhuman. The inhabitants of Guinea, Libya and Nubia as Lok presents them have no God, law, religion or organized commonwealth, and have been cursed by the sun with black skin. As he continues the account he becomes more harsh, and fanciful in describing these Negroes. Using the authority of Pliny to support his statements, Lok discusses the people of Troglodytica, who dwell in caves like animals, consume serpents, and do nothing but grin and chatter. He continues with the presentation of the headless people (Blemines, who have eyes and mouth in their breast), Strucophagi, the Ganphasantes, and the two cannibalistic peoples, the Rhapsii and Anthropophagi. All, of course, are creations of an overactive imagination, which is not in fact Lok's, but John Mandeville's.¹¹ Whenever the writer of a voyage account implicitly or explicitly calls on some authority to substantiate his descriptions (as Lok does) we can be fairly certain that he is being inaccurate, and is trying to popularize and rationalize a progressivistic outlook. Since most literate men would be familiar with the accounts by Pliny and Mandeville, the allusions would be effective.

William Towrson's account of his voyage to Guinea (in 1555)

¹⁰ Robert R. Cawley notes this in The Voyagers and Elizabethan Drama (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1940), p. 91.

¹¹ See Mandeville, Travels, pp. 133-34.

is far less colorful, but certainly more accurate, than Lok's.¹² Townson is by no means a primitivist, but he does have some leanings in that direction. Out of curiosity he makes an effort to learn about the customs, dress and economy of the natives of Guinea. Then, after some thought, provoked by the encounter with primitives, he comes to essentially the same conclusion as Lok. Townson opts for civilization, but he does so in an accurate rational presentation, which is far less unusual and probably less appealing to the English reader than many other presentations.

In the late 1550's travelers develop an interest in the Samoeds and their neighbors. Richard Johnson, perhaps under the influence of Protestant consciousness at home, seems particularly aware of the godlessness of the people; they have "devilish rites" and practice witchcraft.¹³ He describes their sacrifices in detail. Another nomadic people, the Scrickfinnes, are described as lacking any of the characteristics of civilized people; they too are godless and have no social order, at least from Johnson's point of view. Both groups eat raw flesh, including that of men. This cannibalism is pointed out emphatically by Pheodor Towtigin¹⁴ as well. He notes that the Samoeds will kill a child to entertain merchants who come to trade. If the merchant happens to die, they

¹² VI, 184-86.

¹³ See his notes written to Richard Chancelour, II, 345-49; II, 401.

¹⁴ II, 483.

will eat him, too. (With this account we must bear in mind that much of what is conveyed as factual is actually hearsay.)

When nationalism is growing, as it was at this time in England, we find the unique institutions of the "civilizing" country valued most by travelers, and an anti-primitivistic or progressivistic outlook encouraged.

The outlook of this early part of the century is essentially progressivistic. Only the account by Richard Eden bespeaks a primitivistic impulse. The longing for the simpler life in an untouched paradise is still on the subconscious level in the minds of most Englishmen concerned with exploration.

partook well known; at the same time they supplied a great deal of information to the English about primitive peoples and their customs. Out of nationalism and/or ambition Englishmen devoted much of their time and effort to obtaining economic advantages for the English. This values his approach to the primitive peoples.

James' 1781 voyage in 1782 was prompted solely by the desire to establish a profitable slave trade. In this century England had the eager financial support of every legislator. In the secondary and tone of the 18th century, however, the primitive peoples are no longer seen as a source of economic gain. At 1784

III

THE DECADES 1560-1580

In the decade of the sixties the figure of John Hawkins, son of William Hawkins, overshadows that of all other voyagers. During this decade he made three trips which are described in detail in the Voyages. He stopped at the West Indies, Guinea, Sierra Leone, Hispaniola and Florida. Historically, his chief distinction seems to be that he established a sizeable slave trade for England. His detailed accounts made a progressivistic outlook well known; at the same time they supplied a great deal of information to the English about primitive peoples and their cultures. Out of nationalism and/or ambition Hawkins devoted most of his time and effort to obtaining economic advantages for the English. This colors his approach to the primitive peoples.

Hawkins' first voyage in 1562 was prompted solely by the desire to establish a profitable slave trade. In this venture Hawkins had the eager financial support of many Englishmen. In the vocabulary and tone of the first voyage account the primitive Negroes are no better than commodities or merchandise.¹ At this

¹ X, 7-8.

time the Negroes are traded to the Spanish for additional merchandise rather than brought back to England, where they would have little economic value. Hawkins' second voyage also involves capturing Negroes for the slave trade.² Within this one account are contained several different approaches. John Sparke, the writer of the account, compares the degree of civility of the several tribes they encounter. He does not generalize about all primitives in equally negative terms. The English find the Sapiés, a people living on the island of La Formio, to be ignorant and childish, but amusing and perhaps even appealing because of these qualities:

Whereupon we discharged certain Harquebuzes to them againe, but the ignorant people wayed it not, because they knew not the danger thereof: but used a marvellous crying in their fight with leaping and turning their tayles, that it was most strange to see and gave us great pleasure to behold them.³

On the island of Sambula it is the people of this same tribe, the Sapiés, whom the English capture as slaves, burning down their towns in the process. The narrator then makes some revealing comparisons of the Sapiés with the Samboses. The Sapiés have been enslaved by the Samboses and now are enslaved by the English. The Sapiés are, according to Master Sparke, simpler, more civil and rarely cannibalistic. The Samboses, however, represent progress on this little island, and their accomplishments are

² 1564-65: X, 15-58.

³ X, 16.

described in favorable terms. Now that they have slaves to work for them they can cultivate much of the island. The English admire their economic advances and social organization but see elements of superstition in their religious beliefs and practices.⁴ Hawkins and his crew are briefly amused by the Sapiés but praise the Samboses for their movements toward a civilized state. The actions recorded, and the attitudes taken in the discussion of these two tribes reveal a progressivistic outlook.

The Negroes at Taggarin, where Hawkins later anchors, persist in defending themselves and in attacking the strangers. Such actions undoubtedly reinforce an unfavorable attitude toward the less civilized. The English see these Negroes as subhuman, as obstacles in their path.⁵ Such a progressivistic and anti-primitivistic approach comes to the surface in time of danger. Master Sparke not only regards the English as superior because civilized, but believes that God regards them with special favor. In discussing their difficulties he declares: "but God, who worketh all things for the best, would not have it so, and by him we escaped without danger, his name be praised for it," and "but the Almightye God, who never suffereth his elect to perish, sent us the 16th

⁴They have no organized religion. They place much emphasis on dreams and worship images which often resemble the devil. See X, 20.

⁵ We are told, for example, that the king of Sierra Leone wished to capture some English, both to revenge the death of some subjects and to study what the white man was like. Sparke and the rest of the crew see such plans as ridiculous and unjustified, probably because they do not regard the natives as fully human.

of February, the ordinary Brise, which is the Northwest winde, which never left us."⁶

Definite preconceptions of the primitives with which the crew left England come to light as Hawkins sails from port to port. At Dominica, for example, they expect to find cannibals. They have assumed that here they will be attacked by the fiercest, most bloodthirsty and violent natives of the Indies because these natives have been able to resist the Spanish. On the other hand the English are more favorably disposed toward the people at Santa Fe, who have accepted the "civilizers:"

The people be surely gentle and tractable, and such as desire to live peaceably, or els had it bene impossible for the Spanish to have conquered them as they did, and the more to live now peaceably, they being so many in number, and the Spanish so few.⁷

These descriptions are in keeping with a progressivistic outlook; if the natives resist the forces of civilization they are presented in negative terms; if they are submissive to these forces they are presented favorably.

Prompted by the submissiveness of these natives at Santa Fe, Hawkins spends some time inquiring about their life and customs. We learn from his account that these people have great ability in agriculture and archery. The English are not attracted to quaint or simple "primitive" characteristics of their existence, but to those that seem indicative of some advance toward civilization.

⁶ X, 24-25. ⁷ X, 29.

At Tortuga and Burburoata, claimed by the Spanish, the Caribes appear. One of the Captains first reacts by attempting to learn something about this tribe, and so he trades a few items. The English come to the conclusion that the Caribes are gentle and harmless, and want to continue trading, but the Captain has no wares. At Burburoata they discover that the Caribes had attacked and eaten some Spanish who wished to trade -- and the English instantly reverse their assessment of the natives. Sparke describes them as "...but more devilish a thousand parte and are eaters and devourers of any man they can catch, as it was afterwards declared unto us at Burburoata."⁸ He continues to describe them in like terms, as bloodsuckers who try to lure men with the gold they possess, and as devious fighters who attack whenever possible. Sparke's further description of the treatment given one of the Caribes -- the Spanish thrust a stake through him for leading several attacks -- bespeaks no understanding of the primitives; in the eyes of the English the punishment has been deserved.⁹ The English preoccupation with progress and civilization keeps them from favoring, or even understanding the natives, who must certainly fear such a sudden and cruel influx of "civilized" men.

Hawkins' landing at Florida and his encounters with the Indians there follow much the same pattern.¹⁰ And, in the account

⁸ X, 29.

⁹ The full discussion of the Caribes in in X, 29-36.

¹⁰ X, 50-57.

of his third voyage, 1567-68, we can detect no change in attitude. There is no effort to idealize the Indians in the descriptions of his experiences, and the English continue to see no wrong in capturing Negro slaves. In fact, at Cape Verde Hawkins and his men support the war of one Negro tribe against another in order to obtain more slaves.¹¹

An inability to accept less advanced people is reflected in two minor voyage accounts written in the same decade. Anthony Jenkinson, frequent voyager to the south and southeast, criticizes the religious and cultural narrow-mindedness of the Moslems, then refers to "their false filthie prophets, Mahomet and Murtegalli."¹² (Perhaps religious differences and pressures in England made the English excessively intolerant when they encountered non-Christian people.) Walter Wren's account of 1566 discusses a meeting of the English and a group of Negroes.¹³ Both groups are quite friendly toward one another. When difficulties occur, however, Wren simply declares that the Negroes are cruel; he has no understanding for their point of view, despite the fact that three of their tribesmen had been captured earlier.

It is evident from both the minor discussions and those

¹¹ X, 64.

¹² Jenkinson sailed to Persia in 1563. He sailed for the Society of Merchants Adventurers of London. See III, 15.

¹³ He describes the voyage of George Fenner to Cape Verde and Guinea. See VI, 270-73.

concerned with the Hawkins voyages that at this time the English are still leaving their own soil with a progressivistic outlook. Their actions toward the native peoples, as well as their subsequent discussions in the accounts, indicate, and probably help perpetuate, such an outlook.

The experiences of the voyagers during the decade of the seventies continue the trends of earlier years. Basic philosophies have not changed greatly, as several of the accounts reveal. But the very passing of time and increased knowledge of other lands has altered the level of approach of Englishmen toward the primitives. The few accounts of this decade reveal such an alteration. In particular, the discussion of Drake's circumnavigation is detailed and analytical and provides some insight into the variation of approach taking place at this time. The minor accounts of the seventies are essentially links with those of previous years.

Manifest in the account of Henry Hawks is an anti-primitivism.¹⁴ Beastliness in every aspect of their lives seems to be characteristic of the Indians, from the point of view of the English. This beastliness is evident in their nakedness, sodomy, drunkenness, evil nature, and particularly their cannibalism:

There remains some among the wild people, that unto this day eate one another. I have seene the bones of a Spaniard that have bene cleane burnished, as though it had bene done by men that had no other occupation. And many times people are carried away by them...¹⁵

¹⁴ Hawks travelled to Nova Hispania in 1572. A merchant, he lived there for five years.

¹⁵ IX, 397.

The Indians are thus seen as wild and subhuman. The same attitude is reinforced by the experience of John Oxnam of Plymouth who travels to the West Indies in 1575. There, the English are betrayed to the Spanish by the Negroes at Nombre de Dios.¹⁶

From 1576 to 1578 Martin Frobisher undertakes three voyages to the New World and with each voyage becomes increasingly involved with the primitives. The English are attracted by the unusual customs and languages of the peoples of the New World. On the first voyage they see groups of Eskimos, who remind them of the Tartars.¹⁷ The narrator then spends some time presenting the language of the people of Meta incognita. Within the second voyage account attitudes toward the natives are more explicit.¹⁸

As the English reach Jackman's Sound and claim the surrounding territory they offer a prayer, that

...by our Christian studie and endeavour, those barbarous people trained up in Paganisme and infidelitie, might be reduced to the knowledge of true religion, and to the hope of salvation in Christ our Redeemer.¹⁹

¹⁶ A short departure from this widespread attitude is present in the episode of the English landing at Nombre de Dios, related by Andrew Barker in 1576. Here the native Simerons are seen as "valiant Negroes" because they are fleeing from the cruelty of the Spanish. The English attitude toward the Spanish is clearly involved in this judgment. See XI, 85.

¹⁷ The account of Frobisher's first voyage to the northwest was written by Christopher Hall, master of the Gabriel. Frobisher was known for his efforts to find a passage to Cathay by a northwest route. See VII, 204-11.

¹⁸ This account was recorded by Master Dionise Settle, VII, 211-30.

¹⁹ VII, 217.

There is little room for idealization here.

The English judgment of the Indians later becomes more unfavorable, even harsh. They see the primitives as lacking in humanity because they do not possess the ability to make certain judgments which are common to civilized men. For example, as the English are about to capture a number of the Indians, the natives drown themselves. The conclusion to which the narrator comes is that the Indians are "voyd of humanitie" because they prefer suicide to captivity, and because they have no understanding of the meaning of mercy, which the English declared they would offer to those captured.²⁰ This becomes highly ironic in view of the treatment they afford one of the captured Indian women:

Two women not being so apt to escape as the men were, the one for her age, and the other being incombred with a yong child, we tooke. The old wretch, whom divers of our saylers supposed to be eyther a devill, or a witch, has her buskins plucked off, to see if she were cloven footed, and for her ougly hew and deformity we let her goe: the yong woman and the child we brought away.²¹

The English come to the conclusion that kindness is wasted on such barbarous people; they proceed to destroy some of the Indian property. Master Settle, the narrator, then devotes a few pages to the description of the Indians' homes, clothing and living habits, and concludes on the following note:

What knowledge they have of God, or what Idoll they adore, we have no perfect intelligence, I thinke them rather Anthropophagi or devourers of mans flesh then

²⁰ VII, 219. ²¹ Ibid.

otherwise: for that there is no flesh or fish which they find dead (smell it never so filthily) but they will eat it, as they find it without any other dressing. A loathsome thing, either to the beholders or hearers.²²

With this conclusion, and with the material quoted above, there are echoes of Mandeville and the already prevalent progressivist outlook. Despite the contact they have made with American primitives, Frobisher and his men still scorn the Indians' way of life. Because the Indians lack the same values and the institutions of civilization they are judged to be subhuman, perhaps diabolical, in nature.

Most of the reflections on the primitives in this decade are recorded in the accounts of Sir Francis Drake's circumnavigation in the Golden Hind.²³ In contrast to many other explorers, Drake possesses a greater humanity and breadth of vision. His attitude evidently influenced the crew, and through his voyage accounts, very likely many Englishmen at home. During the three years of the voyage Drake and his men have their share of unpleasant encounters with primitives -- at Moagador on the Barbary Coast, at Port S. Julian, at Ternate, at Mocha.²⁴ In spite of serious

²² VII, 227.

²³ The voyage lasted from 1577-1579. One account was recorded by Drake himself. (See XI, 102-31). An independent account is also rendered by Nuno da Silva, a Spaniard who was picked up by Drake, and included by Hakluyt. (See XI, 135-47.)

²⁴ At Mogador an Englishman who becomes too friendly with the inhabitants is carried off (XI, 102); at Port S. Julian the natives prepare for battle (XI, 109); at Ternate the English become suspicious of the natives' intentions when the king breaks a pledge to them (XI, 127); at Mocha, Drake himself and a landing party are attacked and wounded (XI, 138).

difficulties with the natives, Drake and his crew maintain a generosity of spirit in dealing with them.²⁵ The primitives become human. Drake is neither a primitivist nor a progressivist; he does not idealize the natives and their way of life, nor does he exalt civilized man. He sympathetically sees the natives as different, but human.

The first commentaries on primitive peoples in Drake's account praise the beauty and prowess of the natives at the Cape of Joy and the River of Plate. In amused tones the Englishman describes an innocent theft by one of the Indians. As one of the officers turns away, an Indian snatches his ornamented hat, while the rest of the crew looks on.²⁶

At Nova Albion Drake becomes quite friendly with the natives, and brings many goods for trade that capture their interest.²⁷ Drake attempts to persuade them of the necessity of clothing themselves. Thereupon the Indians come to the conclusion that he is a god. Outstanding throughout Drake's dealings with the people of Nova Albion is the respect he has for them. He deals with their ruler in most honorable fashion. When the king and his attendants appear, the English admire their ceremony and appearance. After a number of requests by the natives, Drake consents to be their "ruler,"

²⁵ This is indicated by Nuno da Silva as well. At the Isle of Mocha he sees Drake and his men attacked and wounded, "whereby they were constrained to turne back againe, without once hurting any of the Indians, and yet they came so neere the boate, that they tooke foure of their oares from them." (XI, 138.)

²⁶ See XI, 155-56. ²⁷ XI, 119-24.

with a view to establishing an advantage for England in this area. He discourages the Indians from offering sacrifices to him and his men, and tries to persuade them to direct their efforts toward the Christian God:

But wee used signes to them of disliking this, and stayed their hands from force, and directed them upwards to the living God, whom onely they ought to worship.²⁸

Out of genuine concern for the natives the English then proceed to provide what cures they have for wounds which the Indians show them, and offer prayers for them as well.

Much the same humanity is clear in Drake's encounters with the natives of Ternate, Barateve, and Java. There is no disparagement or mockery of native customs or appearance, but interest and respect. Of the natives of Barateve it is said:

The people of this Island are comely in body and stature, and of a civill behaviour, just in dealing, and courteous to strangers, whereof we had the experience sundry wayes, they being most glad of our presence, and very ready to releve our wants in those things which their Countrey did yeelde.²⁹

Of the Javanese custom of taking common meals the narrator says "that every person sitting at the table may eat, one rejoycing in the company of another."³⁰ Although passages in the accounts imply the value of progress and civilization, none include harsh or scornful criticism of the primitives' way of life. They are seen as beings whose existence is proper to the level of development of their human nature.

²⁸ XI, 122. ²⁹ XI, 129-30. ³⁰ XI, 131.

The Drake accounts represent an enlightened point of view among the voyage literature of this decade. The voyage account of John Winter, who travelled to the South Seas with Drake, 1577-1579, related by Master Edward Cliffe, does not display the same understanding or regard for the primitives. Cliffe is prone to generalize critically about the natives they encounter. He sees the people of the Cape of Good Hope as unusually apparelled, "of mean stature," sly, thievish, and cannibalistic.³¹ The Moors of Mogador are described in such negative terms as well. To Cliffe they are crafty and deceitful primitives who seek to capture any unwary Englishman. Likewise, "The Ruttier for the River Plate" is anti-primitivistic, for the author cautions voyagers against contact with native peoples, "naughty people, which eate those which they kill," particularly the Carios, who are mortal enemies of any traveller.³²

Finally, in 1578, we have again, as we did in the sixties man's longing for a refuge. At this time George Best constructs an argument to prove that all areas of the earth can be inhabited. In the course of what is otherwise a fairly logical proof, Best states than men generally hold that under or near the equator is the earthly paradise.³³

Drake's actions and the account of his circumnavigation indicate a change in attitude which had not really taken hold yet.

³¹ XI, 149. ³² XI, 96-101. ³³ VII, 255.

It is, however, a cautious step away from the almost totally progressivistic path of earlier years. The importance of the circumnavigation may very well have made Drake's approach to the natives of the New World more familiar to the English at home and other travellers in the years that followed.

The early years of the eighteenth century, dominated by the voyage of discovery, are characterized by an unsettled spirit. With the appearance of Sir Walter Raleigh, however, a trend begins to crystallize, one that will continue through the closing years of the century.

To the English native peoples whom they encounter at this time, are to be considered savage if they cannot judge the worth of material goods -- if they do not place the same value upon a thing as do the English. Thomas Griggs tells us that "these savages of Peru have store of gold and silver, but they know not the use of it."¹ The natives described in the account of "The Western Planting"² desire only trinkets for the goods they trade; George Peckham notes this with understanding:

For such be the things, though to us of small value, yet accounted by them of high price and estimation: and sooner will induce their barbarous natures to a liking and a mutual society with us.³

¹ Thomas Griggs is partner of the *Minica*, which sails in Brazil in 1581. See XI, 38.

² VIII, 97-119. Sir George Peckham, who recorded this account, was known for his efforts for Gilbert's voyage to Newfoundland.

³ VIII, 98.

IV

THE DECADES 1580-1600

The early years of the eighties, dominated by no single voyager, are characterized by an unsettled attitude. Differences appear within the accounts as well as among them. With the appearance of Sir Walter Raleigh, however, a trend begins to crystallize, one that will continue through the closing years of the century.

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¹ Thomas Grigs is purser of the Minion, which sails to Brazil in 1581. See XI, 38.

² VIII, 97-119. Sir George Peckham, who recorded this account, was known for his efforts for Gilbert's voyage to Newfoundland.

³ VIII, 98.

Peckham also encourages the English to make use of the available land "considering the great abundance they have of land, and how small account they make thereof."⁴ There are societies such as that in Java which have social customs indicating little appreciation of the value of life.⁵ When the king of Java dies, for example, it is customary for each of his many wives to kill herself. The English usually see such differences in values as an indication of savagery and/or subhuman nature.

An official statement of policy is issued in 1582.⁶ The Lords of Parliament emphasize that every effort should be made to establish ties of friendship with the different native peoples encountered. Accordingly, these peoples should be treated as equals worthy of a certain respect -- the voyagers are instructed to keep any promises which they make, and to be courteous.⁷ Yet surprisingly, almost within the same breath, the Lords instruct deception -- should an exchange of pledges take place, the English are to give only the least important men to the Indians whenever possible.⁸ Now that the question of a policy has arisen, because dealings with primitives have become more frequent and widespread, the English government formulates one with a view to expediency.

⁴ VIII, 100.

⁵ See the account by Francis Petty of Candish's circumnavigation in 1586, XI, 293-391.

⁶ The Lords of the Counsell issued instructions on April 9, 1582, to Edward Fenton, who sailed to the East Indies and Cathay. See XI, 166-71.

⁷ Item 13, XI, 168. ⁸ Item 14, XI, 168.

Occasionally misconceptions and distortions about little-known peoples or areas recur. Master Ralph Fitch, a merchant of London, takes a trip to the area of the East Indies and spends there the years 1583 to 1591. In most respects Master Fitch is probably a down-to-earth middle-class merchant of London, but when he mentions the country of Bottanter near China, his literary imagination begins to surface. The steepest mountain in Bottanter, Fitch would have the reader believe, is inhabited by people having ears a span long. And Laurence Aldersey, who travels to Alexandria and Cairo in 1586, informs the reader that the women on the Island of Paris are witches -- but he gives no source for such information. In such cases it is very likely some fear of a little-known area or people that leads to such statements. For the most part, however, judgments are based on some actual encounter.

Within the account of a voyage taken by the Earl of Cumberland in 1586, recorded by Master J. Saracoll, a merchant, rather confused attitudes are manifested: anti-primitivistic, if we are to label them.⁹ The stop at Sierra Leone leads to violence. As the English come upon a African town rather suddenly the natives attack. The English return the attack so fiercely that the inhabitants of the town flee. At their leisure the English then stop to admire the clean, carefully constructed town -- "it was an admiration to us all."¹⁰ We learn from Saracoll a few sentences later that "Our

⁹ XI, 206-23. ¹⁰ XI, 206.

men at their departure set the town of fire, and it was burnt (for the most part of it) in a quarter of an houre, the houses being covered with reed and straw."¹¹ The English then proceed to steal stores of rice. Evidently the anti-primitivism of this group of voyagers characteristically manifests itself in violence, for near the River Plate in South American the party kills Indians whom they suspect to be in league with the Portuguese.

Hakluyt devotes much space to the description of the "Western Planting" recorded by Sir George Peckham. This voyage was begun in 1583 by Sir Humfrey Gilbert. Most of the account is actually an attempt to justify colonization of the New World and extended dealings with its inhabitants. It is based upon the personal experiences of Peckham and Gilbert. They differentiate between savages and cannibals, who are often at war with one another. Peckham encourages Christians to aid the savages because they are more human than the cannibals and obviously easier to work with. Although battle against the cannibals may be necessary, only defensive battles should be undertaken against the savages. In fact, Peckham declares that "doubtlesse the Christians shall no whit at all transgresse the bonds of equitie or civilitie."¹² In Chapter VI of his account Peckham notes the many advantages that settlement will provide for the savages, and thereby reveals a progressivistic outlook.¹³ It is not, however, an outlook which

¹¹ Ibid. ¹² VIII, 101. ¹³ VIII, 119.

scorns these primitive people. Their customs may be "unseemly" and their laws "disordered," but they are seen as human, and potential converts to Christianity. They will, it is concluded, benefit from the religious, social and economic advances of civilization. Peckham seems sincere in his desire to bring such advances to the natives. He is convinced of the mission of the Christian coming from a more progressive society.

There is confusion evident in the account of Candish' (Cavendish') circumnavigation, 1586-1588, related by Francis Petty.¹⁴

Several times the appearance of primitives provokes Candish and his men into taking some kind of action. At Elizabeth Bay they kill many natives who, it is said, are cannibals. These natives had attacked Spaniards; when they attempt to lure the English upstream, Candish and his men attack. Again at the Ladrones (a group of islands) he encounters natives of unusual appearance.¹⁵ They attempt to follow the English in canoes, whereupon Candish has his men shoot.

In his description of the people of Copul, Petty notes further weaknesses of the primitive peoples -- he specifically mentions their former practice of sodomy and the devil worship

¹⁴ XI, 293-341.

¹⁵ They are:

"much like unto their images which we saw them have carved in wood, and standing in the head of their boates like unto the images of the devill." XI, 328.

which still occurs.¹⁶ The crew with which he travels seems to be particularly superstitious. We also find the narrator implicitly valuing the white man, civilized and Christian, over the colored races, as he describes the Javanese:

Moreover, although the men be tawny of colour and go continually naked, yet their women be faire of complexion and go more apparelled.¹⁷

With the prospect of trade Candish and his men temporarily abandon the antiprimitivistic attitude of earlier episodes, as the Javanese king appears:

Our Generall used him singularly well, banquetted him most royally with the choice of many and sundry conserves, wines both sweete and other and called his Musitans to make him musicke.¹⁸

Here again is an example of the influence of expediency upon the Englishman's approach to primitive peoples.

Remaining among the accounts are that of Drake's 1586 trip to the West Indies as related by Thomas Cates,¹⁹ that of John Chidley's voyage to Port Famine (1589-90) as related by W. Magoths,²⁰ and a series of accounts on Virginia. In Cates' discussion we see that Drake and his men essentially retain the sympathy and openness evident in the previous decade. In Magoth's account there is a particularly unfavorable attitude toward the primitives. It stems from fear after the English ship was attacked by natives at Port

¹⁶ "These people wholly worship the devill, and often times have conference with him, which appeareth unto them in most ugly and monstrous shape." XI, 332.

¹⁷ XI, 341. ¹⁸ XI, 338. ¹⁹ X, 76-113. ²⁰ XI, 383-87.

Famine. So fearful is the crew, at one point on the brink of starvation, that they petition Chidley in February of 1589 "that wee may (by God's helpe) returne back into England, rather than die her among wilde and savage people."²¹

The discussions of trips to Virginia, which make up most of Volume VIII of the Voyages, are a significant unit in the travel material published by Hakluyt, and seem to have a particular interest for him. Cawley notes that writers of travel accounts both praise and criticize, depending upon the tribes with which they are dealing, and the circumstances in which they find themselves; this seems particularly true of the several Virginia accounts in the first years after its discovery.²²

Although several times during the exploration and early colonization of Virginia²³ the English experience difficulties with the Indians, certain favorable qualities of the natives and their country stand out to them. The friendliness of the Indians and the ideal physical conditions of the land become clear as the English are able to build colonies, with the aid of friendly neighboring tribes.²⁴ Virginia itself seems to be the earthly

²¹ XI, 387. ²² Cawley, Voyagers, p. 347.

²³ After Sir Walter Raleigh was granted a patent in 1584 by Queen Elizabeth, he organized several voyages.

²⁴ One group of Englishmen is left in Virginia for a year by Richard Greenevill, under the charge of Master Ralph Lane. Lane records their experiences, VIII, 320-45. A second colony is sent over in 1587 under the charge of Master John White. See VIII, 386-402.

paradise: "it is the goodliest and most pleasing Territorie"²⁵ ("...this paradise of the world..."²⁶). Each of the writers in turn dwells upon its beauty and fruitfulness, to encourage further settlement.²⁷

Of the Indians themselves there are many favorable statements. The progressivistic tendencies of Thomas Heriot seem to be moderated by a real regard for the naturalness, sincerity and simplicity of the Indians:

In respect of us they are a people poore, and for want of skill and judgement in the knowledge and use of our things, doe esteeme our trifles before things of greater value: Notwithstanding, in their proper maner (considering the want of such meanes as we have), they seeme very ingenious. For although they have no such tooles, nor any such crafts, Sciences and Artes as wee, yet in those things they doe, they show excellence of wit.²⁸

Another narrator presents them in even more glowing terms. The Indians are "very handsome and goodly people, and in their behaviour as mannerly and civill as any of Europe."²⁹ And,

"We were entertained with all love and kindnesse, and with as much bountie (after their manner) as they could possibly devise. We found the people most gentle, loving, and

²⁵ VIII, 319, from Master Ralph Lane's letter to Richard Hakluyt.

²⁶ VIII, 347.

²⁷ The land is praised on many occasions. See VIII, 298-99; 304; 319-20; 353-74, etc.

²⁸ VIII, 375-76. His complete discussion of the people appears on 374-83.

²⁹ VIII, 300. The narrator's name is not provided.

faithfull, voide of all guile and treason, and such as live after the maner of the golden age.³⁰

....

...for a more kinde and loving people there can not be found in the worlde, as farre as we have hitherto had triall.³¹

In such a light do these savages appear to the people at home. The impressions of Virginia and its inhabitants has been well summarized by Walter Raleigh, a twentieth century critic, in his essay on the voyage accounts:

Their description of the country, fertile and luxuriant to the water's edge, and of their joyous reception by the Indians, makes the dreams of pastoral poets seem true...Who does not recognize, in this description of native humanity and delicate courtesy, the beginnings of an oft-repeated drama?³²

In view of the trend of the next decade, especially evident in Raleigh's accounts of Guiana, this seems a fitting conclusion to the decade of the eighties. Primitivistic impulses have become conscious, and are emphasized further in the next ten years.

The most significant of the voyage accounts of the decade of the nineties and probably of the sixteenth century, are those recording the events of three voyages to South America (Guiana, specifically), undertaken by Sir Walter Raleigh, who wrote most of the material. The accounts are valuable records not only of actual events, but of a definite outlook which doubtless was influential in Elizabethan England. A few additional accounts are also part of the travel literature of this decade, but none has the same detail or the same persistence in attitude. The minor accounts also display

³⁰ VIII, 305. ³¹ VIII, 306.

³² "The English Voyages of the Sixteenth Century," XII, 39.

less literary consciousness.

The less significant accounts reflect the anti-primitivism and progressivism which have persisted throughout the century. Involvement with the aborigines is often limited to infrequent meetings for exploration and trade. The English are still well aware that the savages do not understand the value place upon certain commodities by the civilized world, and take advantage of this ignorance. The Indians of Florida, for example, give Captain Newport and his men gold and silver for old weapons.³³ To the English the Indians do not seem as fully human as civilized man because their thought processes do not seem as highly developed. Despite this weakness, the friendliness and civility of the tribe appeal to the English:

These Savages were farre more civill than those of Diminica: for besides their courtesie, they covered their privities with a platted mat of greene straw, about three handfuls deepe, which came round about their waste, with the bush hanging down behind.³⁴

During the same year George Raymond travels to islands near Africa, and to the East Indies.³⁵ Twice Raymond and his men see natives and pursue them, either out of curiosity or a hope for some economic gain. At Agoada de Saldanba the English come upon Negroes

³³ See the account of Captain Newport's voyage to the West Indies (1591) written by Master John Twitt, X, 184-89. Newport was general of a fleet of three ships and a pinnesse, and Captain of the Golden Dragon. Master John Twitt of Harewich was corporal in the Dragon.

³⁴ X, 189.

³⁵ This is recorded by Richard Hakluyt, VI, 387-407.

whom they assume are brutish. They capture one and force him to lead them to cattle; Raymond and his men take advantage of the natives' simplicity by buying the cattle for less than they are worth. Raymond pursues some Indians who appear briefly at Malacca to become acquainted with them and learn more about the area.³⁶

Another traveller to the East Indies is Henry May, who left England in 1591.³⁷ He and his men stayed at the isle of Comaro during November. They conclude that the people here, though black, are comely (they no longer equate blackness with cursedness), but terribly cruel and full of treachery. On shore these Negroes kill thirty Englishmen. The people of Nicubar, near Sumatra, whom they encounter a year later, evidently possess a characteristic which has become more and more noticeable when trade takes place -- the natives do not understand the values of material goods established by the civilized world. The natives trade things of great value for trinkets, a practice which becomes common.

The last voyage of Candish in 1592 involves a bit of the fantastic which we would tend to associate with earlier decades. At "Salvage Coove" Candish and his men come upon savages who are naked in spite of the cold, and who seem very much like satyrs to them.

³⁶ VI, 405.

³⁷ Recorded by Henry May, X, 195-202.

At Penguin Isle the natives either have faces that look like dogs' or actually are dog-faced. In both instances there is no attempt at becoming acquainted with these peoples.³⁸

The attitudes revealed in Sir Robert Dudley's account seem to vary with each new situation.³⁹ The Moors of Cape Blanco in Africa are seen as wild, shouting savages, while the Indians of Trinidad seem finely shaped, gentle and friendly, particularly because they are so willing to trade. The simplicity of the Indians, even in their attempts to deceive the English, seem appealing as well.⁴⁰ These friendlier tribes are differentiated from the Caribes, whom both the English and Indians fear for their cannibalism. Generally the English are motivated to become involved with several different tribes, such as the Paracao Indians near Trinidad, and the Verotans near the Cabota River of South America, out of a desire to obtain gold. The willingness of the natives to trade gold and to lead the English to other sources of it probably colors some of the portraits of primitives at this time.⁴¹ The natives also inform the English of the people of El Dorado, whose wealth is so great

³⁸ XI, 401-10.

³⁹ He travelled to the West Indies, 1594-95. See X, 205-9.

⁴⁰ The English find a mine of fool's gold, which the Indians try to convince them is real.

⁴¹ Dudley and his men meet the Tivitivas, a tribe near the Mana River of South America. These Indians are very generous in bestowing their gold and silver upon the English, for hatchets, knives and trinkets. See X, 208.

that they sprinkle gold powder on their bodies. Such stories of Indians enjoying a life of wealth and ease were bound to appeal to the longings of civilized men. Difficulties, however, force Dudley to abandon any search and return to English soil. He and his men are still fearful of being outnumbered and surrounded by savages.

The final voyage of Drake and Hawkins takes place in 1595, a last effort of men whose glory is now behind them. Compared with the material of the circumnavigation account, attitudes and activities at this time seem almost petty. At Santa Martha and Nombre de Dios, for example, Drake and his crew have skirmishes with the natives. They seem far less sympathetic toward, or impressed with, the primitives. The same type of disregard for the natives appears in other voyage discussions.⁴²

Of all writers discussed up to this point, Sir Walter Raleigh emerges as the most favorably disposed toward the primitive peoples. Oftentimes he idealizes them and their simpler existence much as many poets do at this time. His descriptions often call to mind the noble savage of later years. Indeed, the fact that Raleigh himself was a poet of eminence among the Elizabethans explains much of his approach, its departure from earlier approaches and its persistence. His outlook

⁴² In 1595 James Lancaster sails to Brazil where the English take the port of Olinda. The Indians there join forces with the Portuguese and attack. (See XI, 43-64.) In Cuba during the same year Amias Preston and George Sommers are involved with conflicts with the Spanish, and destroy a number of Indian towns. (See X, 222-23.) Finally, Sir Anthony Sherley at the Isle of Maio has several skirmishes with the "barbarous Negros." (See X, 267.)

may also be explained in part by certain historical factors, for example the opposition of the English and Spanish at this time. Raleigh consistently defends the Indians' actions and points of view against those of the Spanish whenever possible. And in his effort to justify his own and later voyages of exploration and colonization Raleigh feels disposed to present a favorable picture to the Queen. His trips to Guiana testify to his attempts at such justification.

Because Raleigh spends nearly three years in Guiana he comes to know a number of the natives quite well. He portrays several of them, their way of life, and feelings about the white man with care and sympathy. He, too, like other explorers before him, hears many stories about the realm of El Dorado, which captures his imagination. In fact, when he sails, he does so with the assumption that Guiana and El Dorado are the same. He commits himself to finding this realm and its gold for the Queen.⁴³

Raleigh and his men are often confronted with Indians fearful of the treachery of the Spanish, who often capture the Indian casiques (chiefs or rulers), enslave and torment them.⁴⁴ Raleigh wins the support of the Indians for the English by aiding and organizing the several tribes in their opposition to the Spanish. Although his aim is clearly practical, Raleigh conveys a sympathetic awareness of the Indians' apparent simplicity as he offers them an

⁴³ See Raleigh, "The English Voyages," XII, 72-3.

⁴⁴ X, 352.

explanation of the English presence in Guiana. They are won to admiration of the English and their Queen. Raleigh and his crew return this admiration.⁴⁵

Although Raleigh has been counselled by a Spanish explorer not to venture inland because of the hostility of the inhabitants, he disregards this advice, understandably, and has many peaceful and profitable encounters with the Indians.⁴⁶ The Indians provide guides and offer him much information about geography, customs, surrounding tribes and the Spanish efforts at settlement in the area. His idealization of these people who are so willing to be friendly becomes evident. When speaking of the Tivitivas near the Orinoco River, he notes their valor, manliness, and beauty of speech, despite their lack of economic advancement.⁴⁷ Raleigh does, in fact, exalt them.⁴⁸ The Indians probably seem ideal figures because they respond with friendliness to the respectful treatment given them by the English. Up to this point the Indians have been

⁴⁵ Raleigh is creative in his explanation to the Indians, and uses metaphor which would appeal to their imagination:

"I made them understand that I was the servant of a Queene, who was the great Casique of the North, and a virgine, and had more Casiqui under her then there were trees in that yland: that shee was anemie to the Catellani in respect of their tyrannie and oppression, and that shee delivered all such nations about her, as were by them oppressed, and having freed all the coast of the Northren world from their servitude, had sent mee to free them also, and withall to defend the country of Guiana from their invasion and conquest. I shewed them her Majesties picture which they so admired and honoured, as it had bene easie to have brought them idolatrous thereof." X, 353.

⁴⁶ X, 377. ⁴⁷ X, 382-83. ⁴⁸ X, 383.

fearful of the white man, whom they identify with the Spanish. They have seen the Spanish torture friends and capture their wives and daughters.⁴⁹ The English treat the natives as human beings,⁵⁰ the Indians respond with trust and friendliness,⁵¹ and Raleigh is then inspired to portray them rather ideally.

The most memorable portions of Raleigh's accounts are those describing individual Indians. That there should be such description is unusual; rarely have earlier voyagers attempted to get to know the Indians well enough. Again, idealization, which will develop further in later years, is evident. Of Topiawari, 110-year-old king of the Aromaaia, Raleigh comments:

I made him know the cause of my coming thither...all which being with great admiration attentively heard, and marvelously admired...

...he answered with a great sigh (as a man which had inward feeling of the losse of his Countrey and libertie, especially for that his eldest sonne was slaine in battell on that side of the mountaines, whom he most entirely loved) that hee remembred in his fathers life time...those that had slaine and rooted out so many of the ancient people...

After he had answered thus farre, he desired leave to depart, saying that hee had far to goe, that hee was olde,

⁴⁹ X, 391. The Indians even fear at first that the English are cannibals, as they do the Spanish. (See also, X, 388.)

⁵⁰ He never permits any of his men to touch the Indian women, and whenever his men destroy or damage Indian property, he repays the tribe. (See X, 391.) This policy may be one of expedience, but English attitudes have been mellowing over the years as well.

⁵¹ They trust the English enough to reveal to them a secret cure for the poison they use in their arrows. See X, 396.

and weake, and was every day called for by death, which was also his owne phrase: I desired him to rest with us that night, but I could not intreate him but hee told me that at my returne from the countrey above, hee would againe come to us, and in the meane time provide for us the best he could, of all that his countrey yeelded; the same night hee returned to Orocotova his owne towne, so as hee went that day eight and twenety miles, the weather being very hot, the countrey being situate between foure and five degrees of the Equinoctiall.

This Topiawari is held for the prowdest, and wisest of all the Orinoqueponi, and so he behaved himselfe towards mee in all his answeres at my returne, as I marveled to finde a man of that gravitie and judgement, and of so good discourse that had no helpe of learning nor breede.⁵²

Here is a clear expression of a primitivistic outlook.⁵³ The natural man, the primitive away from the influence of civilization, possesses generosity, wisdom and nobility. Such portraits were to become commonplace as the concept of the "noble savage" grew in popularity.⁵⁴

Raleigh returns to Queen Elizabeth with an illustration -- one of Topiawari's sons.⁵⁵

What makes Raleigh's material particularly literary is his inclusion of strange customs and legendary people and locations. He speaks of the unusual mourning customs of certain Indians, who, after

⁵² X, 399-401.

⁵³ Pearce has noted the primitivism evident in Raleigh's accounts. See "Primitivistic Ideas," p. 142.

⁵⁴ Of Raleigh's portrait, Fairchild has stated: This sketch of the old Cacique is executed with a significant relish. Quite plainly the savage has become literary material; his type is becoming fixed; he already begins to collect the accretions of tradition. Just as he is Topiawari is ready to step into an exotic tale.

⁵⁵ Raleigh also sketches the lord Carapana in ideal terms, much as he had Topiawari. See X, 419.

one of their lords has died, hang his skeleton in the family's home and decorate it. Often the bones are beaten into a powder and put into a drink for the wives and family.⁵⁶ Raleigh hears that all the Indians of surrounding and distant areas possess gold which has been wrought in Guiana. Particularly wealthy are the Indians of El Dorado who lead a life of pleasure and material comfort.⁵⁷ Strangely enough, what is often seen by civilized men as a refuge from their world is another complex civilization in its own right. Existence there is not as primitive and uncomplicated as might be assumed at first glance. The Indians dwell in an isolated and fortified city complex, complete with the trappings of court and nobility.⁵⁸

Also unusual, and probably of particular interest to readers in England, are the discussions of the Amazons and the headless people. The Amazons as Raleigh describes them have all those qualities which made them legendary.⁵⁹ Raleigh also hears and passes on the story of the headless men of Caora who have eyes in their shoulders, mouths in their breasts and hair growing from their backs. Raleigh conveniently calls on Mandeville as supporting authority for

⁵⁶ See X, 384.

⁵⁷ It is, according to a Spaniard to whom Raleigh speaks, a place of abounding wealth and constant festivities, where the natives coat themselves with gold powder. See S, 360-61.

⁵⁸ X, 357-61.

⁵⁹ He describes these qualities on X, 367. The information was provided by a Guianian cacique.

his comments.⁶⁰ Such evidence of the strange and unknown in this new land might well have appealed to the more adventurous souls among the English.

Raleigh's final voyage to Guiana is undertaken in 1596. Its events are recorded by Thomas Masham, a gentleman of the company, not by Raleigh himself. Their several encounters with the natives, including the cannibalistic Caribes, continue to be friendly. The Caribes come to the English ships "shewing themselves very kinde and loving and [they] came all from their townes, and dwelt on shoore by us until Ritimo came."⁶¹ These Caribes are especially anxious to have the English join them in opposing the Spanish. Masham discusses their customs and dispositions; he notes that

The people in all the lower parts of the countrey goe naked, both men and women, being of severall languages, very tractable, and ingenious, and very loving and kinde to Englishmen generally; as by experience we found, and upon our owne knowledge doe report. In the upper countreys they goe apparelled, being, as it seemeth, of a more civill disposition.⁶²

Masham can see that there are some Indians who lack even the basic characteristics of the civilized, yet in spite of this, or perhaps because of it, they possess kind and gentle natures.

The primitive man has persisted in his appearance in the voyage literature throughout the century, and appears in much poetic

⁶⁰ See X, 406 and Mandeville, Travels, p. 134.

⁶¹ XI, 6. Note that earlier the Caribes had been feared as bloodthirsty cannibals -- See X, 29.

⁶² XI, 13.

literature of these and later years. With the voyages of Raleigh to the New World, the primitivistic outlook becomes most evident. The unknown areas have the appeal of the exotic and mysterious -- they are no longer a cause for extreme fear. The people who inhabit these areas become an ideal for all civilized men, and bring Raleigh to say:

...in all my life, either in the Indies or in Europe, did I never behold a more goodly or better favored people or a more manly.⁶³

¹ Fournier, *Travel and Discovery*, p. 170.

² George B. Foster, *Richard Hakluyt and the English Voyages* (New York: Frederick Ungar, 1904), p. 3.

³ See Fournier, *Travel and Discovery*, p. 167, and Raleigh, "The English Voyages," in Hakluyt, III, 43.

⁶³ X, 383. He is speaking of the people who dwell along the Orinoco. See Raleigh, *Works*, III, 383.

CONCLUSIONS

The vitality and change of the 1500's is particularly evident in the increasing number of overseas voyages which took place over the century, and in the accompanying change in attitudes which is recorded in the voyage accounts discussed above. This literature inspired and helped perpetuate much of this and the next century's travel activity; it was in fact designed to do so.¹ With this literature Englishmen were meant to hear "the voice of the new nationalism."² A search for an earthly paradise, a hoped-for return to a golden age, captured the imagination of the earliest travellers, especially those before the sixteenth century.³ This motive, a quiet but persistent undercurrent, runs beneath all the materialistic and nationalistic motives which are explicit in the accounts. From time to time throughout the earlier years, an individual account appears which expresses the primitivistic impulse, a longing for some Edenic refuge.⁴

¹ Penrose, Travel and Discovery, p. 170.

² George B. Parks, Richard Hakluyt and the English Voyages (New York: Frederick Ungar, 1961), p. 3.

³ See Bernheimer, Wild Men, p. 107, and Raleigh, "The English Voyages," in Hakluyt XII, 13.

⁴ Examples are accounts by Richard Eden (VI, 145), George Best (VII, 255), and Ralph Lane (VIII, 319).

The English were faced with the necessity of dealing with the natives whom they encountered with more and more frequency through the years. They did, in fact, formulate specific policies.⁵ Early reactions were understandably fearful, even hostile toward, the primitives. As knowledge of these people increased, however, there was a corresponding change in outlook. As evidenced in several major accounts at different points in the century, attitudes became increasingly "enlightened." The savage, first seen as a sub-human creature by the voyagers (and the Englishmen at home), became a human being, then an ideal being. Fear was dissipated as those people and their way of life became well known, and, as English society grew more complex, men searched for escape. Early in the century the emphasis was upon progress and anti-primitivism; as the century closes, with the Raleigh accounts in particular, primitivism has become more important.

In looking back over the century we must emphasize the major voyagers, who, because of their national importance, had the greatest influence on attitudes. Such men were less inclined to follow already established points of view, more inclined to express favorable opinions of the primitives after personal dealings with them; such personal dealings were most frequent at the end of the century. Although it is not our purpose to trace social and historical changes

⁵ See, for example, XI, 166-71, instructions issued by the Lords of the Counsell to Edward Fenton.

which influenced outlook, some may be inferred from the accounts themselves.

Englishmen were, during this century, perhaps a bit more conscious of religion because of the break with Rome and the establishment of the English church. They equated the natives' worship of images with the diabolical, in much the same way they criticized the "papists" at home. To win the natives away from such sub-human idol worship by conversion to the Church of England and a more progressive existence was to acknowledge their human potentialities, and help them develop these. However, religion as such was not emphasized as much as it was by the Spanish or French. The English had become a national church. As such, it was emphasized as one among several "civilizing" forces. Religion was employed to help the savages realize their proper role in the universe.

Friction, then conflict, with the Spanish on the political level did, at times, influence the English view of the primitive people. The English felt, for example, that any Indians who attempted to escape the tyrannical Spanish by fleeing to English ships or outposts were certainly more human than those who do not. Those natives who were allied with the Spanish were seen as fierce and inhuman. So, to a certain extent, attitudes fluctuated with the political situation.

Queen Elizabeth might well have had an influence on attitudes toward the native peoples. Expediency forced her to be much more

favorably disposed toward the people of other nations generally. It was to her advantage to adopt such an attitude, since this would encourage commerce, possible alliances. We can safely conclude that her influence was greatest on Raleigh, who, through his accounts, was attempting to justify his own voyages and further English exploration and colonization.

The rather scattered accounts of the earlier part of the century reflect the progressivistic, usually anti-primitivist, outlook. Natives were seen as savages or cannibals to be feared, or at best, regarded as curiosities. Before 1560, William Hawkins, Sebastian Cabot and John Lok were inclined in this direction. Fearfulness and lack of knowledge often caused these men to emphasize or exaggerate what the natives lack; the unspoken assumption was that the civilized (progressive) state is the best. But even when accounts were accurate, and evidenced a sincere interest in the primitives at this time, as does Towrson's account, the value of the civilized state of existence was still foremost.

With the advent of the sixties Henry Hawkins came into the English national consciousness. His chief historical distinction is characteristic of the anti-primitivistic attitude in his accounts: Hawkins was the first to establish a slave trade for England. Civilization and its agents especially the English, was of primary importance. The primitives were assumed to be godless, inhuman, bloodthirsty; they appeared in a favorable light when submissive to the forces of progress and civilization. Much the same approach was

taken by Anthony Jenkinson, and was continued into the seventies by Frobisher and Hawks and the minor voyagers.

Despite the currents of progressivism evident throughout the seventies a significant beginning was made in the opposite direction. Sir Francis Drake's circumnavigation was of such historical and national importance that his accounts cannot but be regarded as highly influential. Certainly, his steps away from the progressivistic trend marks a change in emphasis. With Drake's accounts a more human native began to appear before the eyes of the Elizabethan audience. In the years following, the Virginia explorers and colonizers, and Sir Walter Raleigh carried this a step further.

During the eighties minor writers were, at times, stubbornly anti-primitivist or progressivist. We find, however, that Drake continued to maintain his former openness toward the primitives, and that the most significant accounts -- those on Virginia -- emphasized primitivistic impulses. Up to this time outright primitivism was manifest only in occasional discussions of different realms thought to be the earthly paradise.

The highlight of the primitivistic trend was Raleigh's Guiana accounts of the nineties, the most accomplished of all the works in Hakluyt's Voyages. Raleigh's facility, often beauty, of expression must have had much appeal to the Elizabethans. Such accomplishment, in addition to making primitivism a more widespread contemporary outlook, also established the beginning of the "noble savage" tradition.

The comely, wise, guileless natural man was given reality; he was the old cacique, Topiawari. In Raleigh's description of Topiawari and Guiana, the primitive state was glorified, while the civilized state, by implication, was criticized.

At any one time the voyage accounts can never be restricted to a single category. Both primitivism and progress are present; both are impulses which are part of the human psyche. We do find, however, that during the sixteenth century there is a change in emphasis, one that appears most clearly in the major discussions -- those by Hawkins, Frobisher and Hawks, Drake, the Virginia writers, and Raleigh. In the highly progressivistic mood of the earlier part of the century primitives appear subhuman to the voyagers. As the years pass they become human, and finally, ideal. In this as in other areas, the sixteenth century has proven a time of change in man's attitudes.