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Pirates? The Politics of Plunder, 1550–1650

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Sir Francis Drake's Ghost: Piracy, Cultural Memory, and Spectral Nationhood

Mark Netzloff

While 'nationalism', as Pheng Cheah observed, 'has almost become the exemplary figure for death', death itself has served as an abiding figure for the nation.¹ Embodied by such monuments as tombs and war memorials, the foundations of national identity are often commemorative, forged through a memorialization of loss and invocation of the memory of the dead. But national identity is spectral in other ways as well. Its protean, notoriously amorphous expressions are not only phantasmic, the atavistic conjurations of an imputed national past, but also fantastic, the projections of an imagined national future. As Benedict Anderson has famously argued, nations come into being through imagined affiliation, affective fantasies of shared identity and history.² Drawing on this observation, recent criticism has explored the analogous, and at times coeval, relation between national identity and historical memory.³

If nationalism is a figure for death, and vice versa, it is perhaps appropriate to begin this essay with a ghost story. At the end of World War I, during negotiations for the surrender of the German fleet at Scapa Flow, a mysterious drum beat was heard aboard the British ship *The Royal Oak*. A lengthy search failed to locate its source, however, and this phantom sound was said to have ceased once the surrender was finalized and the German flag lowered. This drum beat reemerged again at another time of crisis: during the Battle of Britain in 1940, a sentry heard this sound while patrolling the evacuated Hampshire coastline: as it was described at the time, 'a distinct call [...] a very incessant beat.'⁴ But, as before, no drum could be found. As with so many ghost stories, these incidents are enormously compelling, and like other such stories they have in common not only an underlying narrative structure but also a shared literary source: in his poem *Drake's*

Drum (1885), Henry Newbolt had first represented Sir Francis Drake as a kind of guardian spirit for England, one who would be conjured by a drum beat to reappear and protect the nation, an idea that assumed folkloric status with its retelling in Alfred Noyes' poem 'The Admiral's Ghost', as well as in newspaper accounts and radio broadcasts throughout the period.⁵ The ubiquitous nature of this narrative reveals how it offered English sailors and patrolmen a comforting frame of reference at moments of crisis and danger, one that they could attempt to bring to life through acts of imagination.

The ghost of Sir Francis Drake, the once and future pirate, offers a vivid example of the kind of 'invented tradition' that the Victorian period was so adept at constructing.⁶ In fact, Drake became an iconographic figure in the late nineteenth century, the subject of jingoistic verse, light opera, children's literature, and heroic paintings. Seymour Lucas' 'The Surrender', for example, depicts the chivalrous Drake, in a precedent for the Scapa Flow incident, accepting the surrender of the Spanish fleet, while the painter's 'Sir Francis Drake Bowling' helped popularize the canonical image of Drake, having just received news of the Armada's approach, completing his game of bowls before launching into action.⁷ Other canvases, such as Thomas Davidson's 'The Burial of Sir Francis Drake', evoke another tradition, however, and represent Drake not in terms of his personification of an English brand of *sprezzatura*, but instead as a memorialized absence, a corpse that disappears after its sea burial.⁸ In many ways, the English mariners and guardsmen of the World Wars invoked this image of Drake: after all, despite the mythic drum they heard to herald Drake's ghost, Sir Francis' spirit itself never actually appeared in their stories.

Although the Victorian era's fondness for conjuring the ghost of Drake is in keeping with the period's pervasive efforts to locate precedents for British imperialism, what is not at all expected is the degree to which Drake and other Elizabethan privateers remained spectral figures during their own lifetimes as well as in the decades immediately following their brief careers and early deaths. As W. T. Jewkes notes in a collection commemorating the quadricentennial of Drake's circumnavigation of the globe (1577–80), '[i]t is curious that Drake's voyages and exploits have made such a small impact on major English literature, particularly in his own age'.⁹ This is not to say that the period completely lacked any literary images or references to Drake and his compatriots.¹⁰ But, as attested to by the fact that Jewkes confines his remarks to *major* English literature, these representations were often

confined to ephemeral texts, including pamphlets written by admittedly 'minor' writers such as Charles Fitzgeffrey, Henry Robarts, and George Peele, as well as plays and poems by Thomas Heywood, Michael Drayton, and William Browne, figures who have retained a marginal position in the national literary canon.

Drawing on Jewkes' reference to the Elizabethan privateers' exclusion from 'major' English literature, this essay will explore the possibility of alternative varieties of national sentiment, 'minor' English nationalisms, and their figuration in 'minor' English literature.¹¹ The late Elizabethan and early Jacobean texts that invoked Sir Francis Drake did so for national causes far different from those of the Victorian age. In conjuring the spectral image of Drake, these texts often disjoined national affiliation from state power, constructing a populist affective bond with the nation that threatened to become distinct – if not even severed – from an 'official nationalism' meant to induce support for the monarchical state.¹² As David Lloyd has noted, national sentiment does not always cohere to a state entity, and it may instead provide a communal discourse through which to critique state authority.¹³ Similarly demonstrating the multidirectional and diffuse workings of national identification in early modern England, the efforts to revive Drake, and thereby resuscitate a model of English adventurism, used his image for competing political ends: at times, to embody a militant, aggressively interventionist foreign policy at odds with the positions of the Tudor and early Stuart state; at other moments, as a way to harness the potentially unruly energies of populist expressions of nationalism and channel them for the state's benefit.¹⁴ As Shakespeare's Henry IV keenly observed, 'action hence borne out', that is, removed to the distance of colonial settlement or military excursions abroad, may enable the state to 'waste the memory of the former days' (4.5.214–15).¹⁵

In contrast to their frequent invocation in the Victorian age, the body of contemporary literature treating Elizabethan adventurers like Sir Francis Drake was relatively small. The failure to translate these figures to poetry or the stage was also recognized at the time as a slight: Henry Robarts, one of the few poets to celebrate Drake during the latter's lifetime, begins one of his panegyric poems, *A most friendly farewell* (1585), written to commemorate Drake's departure for the West Indies, by noting that the publication of his own, admittedly inferior text was necessitated by the silence that met this event: 'seeing none of the learned sort haue vndertaken to write according to custome'.¹⁶ Robarts views the exclusion of Drake's exploits from print

as a conscious choice on the part of a literary elite, and in his prefatory dedication to Drake charges that such writers 'haue sought to robbe you of your worthines' (sig. A2v). This accusation of theft is suitably ironic, for the published records of Drake's voyages often resemble a serial log of state-licensed maritime larceny.¹⁷ These voyages' aspirations for 'adventure' were further undermined due to the legal fiction through which Elizabethan privateering was legitimated. Such practices were sanctioned only if one could legally establish a seized ship as 'lawful prize.' In theory, this could be applied only in the context of war, as a justification for seizing enemy ships, or in cases of 'reprisal', so as to compensate the voyage's financial backers from previous losses suffered at the hands of ships from a given nation. Consequently, in accounts of Drake's voyages, his practices of piracy are cast as defensive measures used to protect English commerce.¹⁸

Still, far from disqualifying Drake from literary memorialization, the piratical context of his fame and wealth would seem to make him ideally suited for such a role, particularly in the context of a genre like the Elizabethan adventure play. In a poem prefacing his *A Farewell ... to ... Sir Iohn Norris & Syr Frauncis Drake* (1589), the playwright George Peele casts Drake as a model of action surpassing that represented on the public stage, offering to 'Bid Theaters and proude Tragedies, / ... mightie Tamburlaine, / ... Tom Stukeley and the rest / Adiewe' and instead embrace the embodiment of heroism presented by 'victorious Drake' and his call 'to Armes, to glorious Armes.'¹⁹ The popularity and visibility of the dramatic characters mentioned by Peele, Marlowe's Tamburlaine and Thomas Stukeley from his own play *The Battle of Alcazar* (1589), contrasts with Drake's relatively inconspicuous presence in published accounts. Peele's comment may also attempt to differentiate Tamburlaine's ambition, and Stukeley's status as a mercenary, from Drake's own position as a subject loyally deferential to the crown. This issue is implicitly raised in Henry Haslop's *Newes ovt of the Coast of Spaine* (1587), which reported Drake's recent raid on Cadiz. By placing Drake in a tradition not only of classical heroes (Scipio, Hannibal, Alexander) but also conquering English monarchs (William I, Edward III, Henry V, and Henry VIII), the text exposes the complicated position occupied by a subject like Drake.²⁰ Although his accomplishments are intended to mirror the greatness of England and its Queen, Drake's elevated status reflects uneasily on the inability of his female monarch to occupy this martial role, a complication exacerbated by Peele's invocation of a Virgilian model of epic, of arms and the *man*.

Testifying to the problems resulting from an epic account of Drake, Peele's text does not mention him after the opening poem, and instead moves abruptly to the domain of romance with its ensuing poem on the Fall of Troy. This transition from epic to romance is a strategic one. As David Quint has argued, these genres articulate the values of competing social forces, with epic aligned 'with aristocratic, martial values', and romance, albeit not exclusively, serving as a generic template through which a 'mercantile, bourgeois' form of adventure could be represented.²¹ Despite Peele's effort to cast Drake in an epic role, the narratives of his voyages often resemble less an epic quest than the kind of digressive narrative structure that Quint associates with the romance form. And 'the boat of romance', with 'no other destination then the adventure at hand', offers a form able to displace troubling questions – like those regarding Drake's deference to his monarch or his elevated social status – that would be raised by representing his voyages as more directed, epic quests.²² In this sense, if there are hints that Drake's wealth has an ignominious origin, this perception derives not from an objection to privateering itself as theft disguised, but rather from the association of privateering with the mercantile classes: the view, in other words, that this form of commercial piracy was a domain unsuitable for gentlemanly adventure. Appropriately, when commenting on the absence of printed accounts of Drake, Robarts remarks that 'I did expect some Ouids pen to paint his worthy praise' (sig. B1v), a selection of an author whose work has often been placed in opposition to the epic tradition.²³

In addition, the publication of panegyric texts written by such admittedly minor figures as Robarts would in itself undermine the epic possibilities of Drake's biography. On the title-page to his *A most friendly farewell*, Robarts represents himself as 'Henry Robarts of London Citizen [*sic*]', a nomination that foregrounds the ways that Drake was appropriated by the urban mercantile classes as a figure through which they could represent their own model of adventure. Michael Nerlich has noted that the early modern period witnessed a divergence of two models of adventure, as a 'bourgeois glorification of adventure' became increasingly distinct from a 'knightly ideology of adventure.'²⁴ In this former paradigm, adventure became synonymous with 'ventures,' a process that divested international commerce of its neo-feudal, aristocratic mantle. The adventurer, in this context, became not a knight on an epic quest but an 'order-loving entrepreneur.'²⁵ In contrast to Laura Stevenson's argument that non-aristocratic subjects were represented (and represented themselves) predominantly

through an appropriation of aristocratic models, I wish to foreground the ways that the image of the citizen adventurer offered an alternative framework through which a citizen subject was conceptualized.²⁶ Whereas earlier new historicist criticism tended to view the 'citizen' as a figure anachronistic to early modern England, this essay follows the precedent established by the very diverse recent work of Étienne Balibar, John Michael Archer, and Julia Reinhard Lupton in arguing that some features of citizenship emerged from within category of the monarchical subject in this period.²⁷

The casting of Drake and other Elizabethan privateers as citizen adventurers is reflected in the extent of their anonymity in narrative accounts.²⁸ In their Victorian incarnations, figures such as Drake and Sir Richard Grenville are immediately recognizable in their characteristic, often-unhistorical poses (Drake at bowls, Grenville manning the helm). In contemporary texts, by contrast, especially in the documents assembled in Hakluyt's *Principal Navigations* (1598–1600), the identity of these adventurers is subsumed within a larger corporate frame of reference. The representation of these figures as merely a component of a bureaucratic national project is a trait that derives from the context of an urban, citizen framework. As a result, Hakluyt does not bestow either authorship or authority to the Elizabethan adventurers: Drake, for instance, is not the author of any of the accounts of his voyages; moreover, Hakluyt's frequent juxtaposition of multiple accounts of voyages deprives any narrative of exclusive authority, thereby emphasizing the underlying perspectivism of any single account. The narratives themselves are not biographies but chronicles of voyages, and their insistently diachronic structure, which follows a log-like progress through the course of the voyage, displaces the subjectivity of any figure, whether that of the account's author (often a secretary or chaplain accompanying the voyage) or, especially, that of the voyages' commanders. In fact, in the account of Drake and Hawkins' last voyage (1595–96), Drake barely figures in the narrative. Consistently referring to him as 'the Generall', a highlighting of his corporate role, the text does not introduce any personal details about Drake that could distinguish him from Hawkins or any other commander. In addition, Drake's sickness, death, and burial are allotted relatively little textual space. Depriving him of a final heroic scene, the narrative only vaguely refers to 'some speeches' Drake offers shortly before his death, and in fact devotes more attention to the arrangement of his will.²⁹

By contrast, the 12-volume reprint of Hakluyt's *Principal Navigations*, published by J. M. Dent in 1904, intersperses each volume with

Victorian-era portraits of Elizabethan privateers such as Hawkins, Frobisher, and Drake. These images establish the authority of the adventurers over the collection of narratives, a move that effectively displaces the role of Hakluyt as editor. As Mary Fuller has shown, these changes were part of a broader effort to transform Hakluyt's text into 'the prose epic of the English nation' and thereby invent a historical tradition that could legitimate Britain's high imperialist practices of the late Victorian era.³⁰ Although Hakluyt's text, as Richard Helgerson concludes, bears witness to 'the emergence of an anti-imperialist and even anti-aristocratic logic of mercantile nationalism', an ascendancy, in other words, of a 'merchants' Hakluyt' over a 'gentlemen's Hakluyt',³¹ the Dent edition revives this latter tradition, restoring foreign trade's correlation with a quasi-feudal, military ethos of adventure, despite the fact that this model was already becoming anachronistic even in Hakluyt's own time.

When Hakluyt does emerge from the anonymity of his role in order to make a statement about his text, as he does in his preface to the 1598 edition of *Principal Navigations*, his tone and stated intentions are far more complex, ambivalent, and even haunted than has generally been recognized. In this preface, Hakluyt offers the purpose of his collection as an attempt to 'gather [...], and as it were to incorporate into one body the torne and scattered limmes of our ancient and late Navigations by Sea, our voyages by land, and traffiques of merchandize by both.'³² Even as he celebrates the compendiousness of his collection, Hakluyt represents his task as a compensatory one, gathering the limbs of a political body 'torn and scattered' through trade and cultural exchange. Hakluyt's difficulty in imagining the body politic reveals the ways that England's commercial and colonial expansion undermined any representation of the nation's integrity.³³ Contradicting the longstanding conceptualization of the nation in bodily, organismic terms, Hakluyt locates a more appropriate metaphor for the nation – not the body politic, but instead 'the haunted nation', to use Pheng Cheah's terminology.³⁴ Hakluyt's English nation is haunted by spectres, including the implicit memory of those subjects lost in overseas ventures as well as the proto-gothic spectrality of the mangled corpse of textual remains that he attempts to reassemble. The tone of mourning that pervades Hakluyt's preface is also attributable to the fact that many of the Elizabethan voyagers celebrated in his text were already dead, a recognition that transforms his text from encomium, as it is often interpreted, to a kind of memorial.

I am drawing attention to the forms of nostalgia and mourning inherent in Hakluyt's text in order to emphasize the ways that Elizabethan nostalgia began to be formulated even during the late Elizabethan period, and not only in the reign of James I.³⁵ As D. R. Woolf, Curtis Perry, and John Watkins have each noted, the conventional approach to the topic of Elizabethan nostalgia, which emphasizes the oppositional uses of such images in the early Stuart period, has tended to overlook the important continuities between Tudor and Stuart policies and self-representation.³⁶ Moreover, in texts such as Charles Fitzgeffrey's *Sir Francis Drake his Honorable lifes commendation, and his Tragical Deaths lamentation* (1596) and Gervase Markham's *Tragedy of Sir Richard Grinville* (1595), the decisive break from the past and loss of national promise occurs not with the death of Elizabeth, but rather with the premature deaths of Drake and other adventurers such as Hawkins and Grenville. For example, although Fitzgeffrey describes Drake as 'divine ELISA's champion' (sig. D4), Elizabeth is notably absent throughout much of his poem, and Fitzgeffrey opts instead to deify Drake, whose shrine, he claims with bombastic praise, 'emtombes a Deitie' (sig. B3v). Yet the undramatic nature of Drake's final illness from dysentery deprives his tragedy of its final catastrophe; as a result, Fitzgeffrey is forced to rationalize that at least 'no prowde Spaniard hath his life bereft' (sig. G4), an effort to reconstitute Drake postmortem as a model of English autonomy and resistance to Spanish imperialism. Extricating Drake's memory from the embarrassment of his ultimate physical depletion, Fitzgeffrey instead transforms Drake's fatal illness into a metaphor for the sacrifice of his body for his nation: while his raids on Spanish bullion fleets served to fill England 'with store and plentie', these efforts depleted his own physical being, 'And filling it, himselfe was almost emptie' (sig. F4v). As Mary Fuller notes in her discussion of voyage narratives, these texts succeed in mythologizing their subjects by 'constructing a self whose authenticity was asserted especially through defensive strategies, claims of suffering, self-denial, wounding, and evacuation.'³⁷

The somatic register of these strategies also serves to resituate English adventurers, and the 'scattered limmes' of their voyages, more securely within a national body politic headed by the monarch. Nonetheless, in the final section of his elegy, when Fitzgeffrey places Drake within a community of lost state agents, his memorialization of English adventurers represents their accomplishments as bearing only a tangential relation to Queen Elizabeth. When Fitzgeffrey contrasts the loss of these figures with the continuity provided by surviving national

leaders, the understated celebration of the monarch's preservation – 'ELISA lives' (sig. G7v) – is juxtaposed with a far more thorough praise of Essex, Cumberland, and Howard, who are depicted as the true bearers of future national prestige (sig. G7). As a means to offset the potential autonomy of these male state agents, figures embodying what Claire Jowitt has productively termed 'masculine unruliness', Jacobean texts tend to direct their nostalgic reverence more exclusively toward the figure of Elizabeth.³⁸ Nostalgia for the age of Elizabeth, in this sense, was not only a later response to Stuart absolutism, offering a veiled mode through which to express dissatisfaction with state policy; this nostalgia was also provoked by tensions inherent in the late Elizabethan period itself, anxieties deriving from the threatening power – as well as alternative models of representation – embodied by unruly male agents and citizen adventurers such as Drake.

In Jacobean texts, one strategy that helped contain state agents within a monarchically-based body politic was a masculinization of the figure of Queen Elizabeth. As Susan Frye has noted, the canonical image of an armoured Elizabeth rallying her troops at Tilbury was largely an invention of the early seventeenth century.³⁹ The Armada scenes that conclude the Second Part of Thomas Heywood's *If You Know Not Me, You Know Nobody* (1605) contributed substantially to this process: Elizabeth is transformed into a martial, masculine, and active figure, with the Queen depicted as having 'put on a Masculine spirit' (l.2697) by appearing at Tilbury 'Completely arm'd' (l.2686).⁴⁰ By centring the scene's action on Elizabeth, the anonymous and corporate identity of her military commanders takes on a passive, deferential form: Lord Admiral Howard, for instance, is referred to only as 'your Admirall' (l.2756), and the description of the climatic sea fight enumerates English ships rather than the commanders who led them (ll.2898–904). Attesting to his increasing celebrity following his death, however, the text singles out Drake for his heroism, and a lengthy report of his actions is even added to the revised 1633 version of the scenes. Upon his entrance, bearing a captured Spanish standard, Elizabeth acknowledges that 'well I know thy name ... / Nor will I be vnmindfull of thy worth' (ll.2865–6). Yet the play reinforces Drake's secondary position by insisting on his passive obedience: his strategy of sending fire ships into the Spanish fleet, for example, is seen as having derived from 'counsell' with his monarch (l.2869).

Although England's overwhelming victory against the Armada would seemingly justify a portrayal of a divinely-ordained and bloodless conquest, Heywood's play insistently memorializes the anticipated loss of

England's commanders. For example, even though Drake, Hawkins, and Frobisher survive the battle, they are still eulogized as necessary sacrifices for the nation. Elizabeth, in fact, repeatedly reconciles herself to their deaths – 'If he die, / He liues an honour to his Nation' (ll.2585–7 [1606 ed.]); 'If he be dead, / Our selfe will see his funerall honoured' (ll.2832–3). At one point, she even speculates that God could be punishing *her* by allowing, or perhaps even demanding, her commanders' deaths (ll.2824–6). The ease with which Elizabeth adapts to this loss – 'His will be done' (l.2396) – entails an acceptance of higher authority that is correlated with the subject's resignation to the will of the monarch. As Ernest Renan commented in his essay 'What is a Nation?', in the forging of a national history, one must not only remember certain narratives, but also remember to forget others.⁴¹

Despite the fact that Heywood's play celebrates Drake to an extent unparalleled in his lifetime, the text nonetheless participates in an effort to contain him within the parameters of the monarchical state, to remember him, in other words, in order to forget him, along with those models of community with which he could potentially be associated. These forms of absence and spectrality were a prominent feature of late Elizabethan images of Drake and other Elizabethan privateers. Even during Drake's lifetime, as Henry Robarts remarks in *A most friendly farewell*, Drake reflected an absence, as 'Unthankfull Englishmen' allowed him 'to rest in oblivion, and his renowned deeds with unthankfulness, so soone to be forgotten' (sig. A3).⁴² As in Heywood's Armada scenes, the privateers are rendered as spectres even in their most characteristically active and heroic moments, let alone in the frequently invoked scenes of their deaths, as in Fitzgeffrey's and Markham's elegies of Drake and Grenville. Markham's description of Grenville's final stand, for instance, concludes with a final postscript noting the loss of the captured *Revenge* at sea, swept away in a storm along with much of the victorious Spanish fleet (sig. G8v). The ultimate erasure of the markers of Grenville's heroics – his ship, as well as his corpse itself – stands in for a more general effacement of his narrative from national history. Fitzgeffrey similarly remarks on the disappearance of Drake from national memory, noting how Drake and Hawkins – like Grenville – 'left your bodies far from home' (sig. F2).

In the early seventeenth century, the figure of Sir Francis Drake assumed a different form of spectrality: although at times his image was part of a broader cultural yearning to 'harken back to Elizabeth', his memory was also invoked as a way to intimate political oppositionality. The divergence of these expressions of nostalgia – for the

age of Elizabeth, or for Drake and other adventurers – reflected both the emergence of, as well as the inability to conceptualize, new models of political community, particularly in terms of definitions of citizenship. These nascent models of citizenship altered not only the relation of subjects to a monarchical head, but also the very ways that the body politic was constituted. Spectrality, a conjuring of the nation's ghosts, should not be equated with nostalgia, however. On the contrary, these expressions offer a register through which to articulate what Fredric Jameson has termed a 'more future-oriented and active' reimagining of the national community.⁴³ As Derrida comments in *Specters of Marx*, 'the specter is ... the becoming-body', one that refers not to the past but to the potentiality of the future.⁴⁴ Although such a ghostly image would seem to present itself as a desire to reanimate a lost past, 'only as that which could come or come back', as with the recurring image of Drake revived, '[a]t bottom', Derrida notes, 'the specter is the future, it is always to come.'⁴⁵ This future potentiality is, nonetheless, non-teleological, and Derrida emphasizes that a spectral 'becoming-body', such as that of the nation, remains beyond the limits of intelligibility at any present historical moment: unable to be named, fully conceptualized, or thereby rendered in bodily form.⁴⁶ In other words, if English nationhood assumes a spectral form in the early modern period, this is not due to a loss of preexisting national integrity, nor does it reflect an 'emergent' national body or 'proto-national' discourse that is in the process of being realized; rather, this spectrality derives from the ontological impossibility of the national community itself: as Claire McEachern has cogently remarked, 'the nation is an ideal of community that is, by definition, either proleptic or passing, ever just beyond reach.'⁴⁷

Taken in these terms, it is understandable why Drake remained a spectral presence in texts of the Jacobean period. Nonetheless, when he was listed among 'Our British brave Sea-voyagers' in Michael Drayton's *Poly-Olbion* (1612; 1622), or featured prominently among Devon's 'Searuling men' in William Browne's *Britannia's Pastorals* (1613; 1616), his memorialization served as a mode of critique, as a way to intimate an underlying dissatisfaction with the Jacobean state.⁴⁸ Yet these texts could offer merely a phantom critique, one that was unable to take on anything more than a spectral form, or 'to produce other, as yet incoherent nationalist narratives', as Michelle O'Callaghan has insightfully phrased it.⁴⁹ As O'Callaghan comments in her analysis of Browne and other Jacobean Spenserians, in language reminiscent of Fitzgeffrey's and Markham's elegies of Drake and Grenville, '[i]t is the task of the

epic poet to commemorate the dead, but in *Britannia's Pastorals* bodies are missing or monuments are lost.⁵⁰

Offsetting the Jacobean period's correlation of Drake with forms of loss and mourning, Drake's nephew and namesake oversaw an effort to reestablish his cultural presence in the 1620s by publishing first-hand accounts of his uncle's voyages: Philip Nichols' evocatively titled *Sir Francis Drake Reuiued: Calling vpon this Dull or Effeminate Age, to folowe his Noble Steps for Gold & Silver* (1626) presented a narrative of Drake's *Nombre de Dios* voyage of 1572–73 based on the notes of members of his crew, while *The World Encompassed by Sir Francis Drake* (1628) derived from the notes of Francis Fletcher, Drake's chaplain on the circumnavigation of 1577–80. As the titles of these texts not so subtly indicate, this effort to revive Drake's reputation correlated a resuscitation of national honour with a revival of a martial paradigm of masculinity. This recuperation of masculine unruliness was part of an effort to drum up support for English military intervention on the continent in the early years of Charles I's rule, a policy the new monarch himself briefly embraced in the wake of his embarrassment following the thwarted Spanish Match.⁵¹

Opposition to a marriage alliance with Spain had earlier prompted the publication of a series of texts purporting to have been written by dead Elizabethan adventurers. In Thomas Scott's *Robert Earle of Essex His Ghost* (1624) and *Sir Walter Ravnleighs Ghost, or Englands Forewarner* (1626), as well as Thomas Reynolds' *Vox Caeli* (1624), figures associated with anti-Spanish policies, including Raleigh, Essex, Queen Elizabeth and Prince Henry, returned from the dead to encourage their nation to adopt a more interventionist stance against Spain and Catholic forces. Published illegally on the continent, and in open violation of James' proclamations against published discussions of state affairs, these texts – appropriately, pirated editions smuggled into England – also 'pirated' representations of English nationalism. Yet the oppositional potential of their arguments could only be expressed through the language of mourning. Their imputed places of publication ('Printed in Elesium [sic]'; 'Printed in Paradise') located political opposition in an otherworldly space, a nation nowhere. Countering critical assessments of the rise of a 'country opposition' in the 1620s, these texts reflect the relative formlessness of an oppositional discourse in the period. As David Norbrook has observed, 'it is misleading to speak of a formal "opposition" based on a coherent ideology' in this period.⁵² And although radical in their outspoken candour, the ghost pamphlets also critiqued the state from a position of abiding conservatism, one

whose nostalgia for lost figures like Raleigh, Drake, Essex, and Elizabeth constructed an invented tradition of English militarism that elided the deep political fissures separating these figures during their lifetimes.

In harnessing Drake's image so as to give bodily form to a particularly invidious nexus of militarism, masculinity, and foreign interventionism, these pamphlets offered an important precedent for Victorian, high imperial appropriations of Drake's legacy. However, this version of Drake was not the sole or dominant form that he assumed in the seventeenth century. In conclusion, I want to engage in a kind of critical piracy, commandeering the figure of Drake by dislodging it from these imperial moorings. Coinciding with 'patriot' images of the martial Drake revived, or those of the spectral Drake memorialized, was a recurring admission of Drake's status as a pirate. From Camden's *Annales* (1615), in which Drake is cast as a pirate captain distributing seized treasure among his men, to William Davenant's 'The History of Sir Francis Drake', the second act of his opera *The Play-House to Be Let* (1656), which features a chorus of Drake's men rhapsodizing on the joys of plunder, the figure of Sir Francis Drake offered a means for imagining England's emergence as an imperial power.⁵³ By revealing – if not celebrating – the piratical foundations for England's imperial aspirations, these texts conceded, and with remarkable candour, the underlying forms of extraction upon which the expansion of an English 'trading empire' was based. 'Commercial capital', as Marx notes, 'is thus in all cases a system of plunder.'⁵⁴ Whereas the circulation of capital necessitates a disembodied network of commodity and capital flows, one dependent upon an abstraction of labour, this acknowledgment of the piratical sources of England's wealth offered a critique by emphasizing the material process of capital's formation, including the debilitating toll of its expansion. Similarly, in *Britannia's Pastorals*, William Browne juxtaposes his praise of Drake with a lament for mariners' high mortality rate on East India Company voyages.⁵⁵ As these examples show, seventeenth-century nostalgia for the age of Drake entailed a yearning for an earlier model of adventure, one that was accurately perceived as being increasingly superceded by the monopolistic commercial ventures of joint-stock companies.

Thomas Fuller noted this transition in his biography of Drake that appeared in *The Holy State* (1642), a text that presents one of the period's most remarkable accounts of this figure. In his discussion of the causes of Drake's death, Fuller continues the tradition inaugurated by Robarts, Heywood, and others, and through his memorialization of

Drake articulates a populist, potentially oppositional expression of English identity. But Fuller also expanded his critique as a way to mark the transition from privateering to the joint-stock company, from a model of adventure to that of commercial ventures, and the resulting containment of potentially unruly state agents within the framework of monopolistic international commerce that such changes effected. In Fuller's account, what kills Drake is, ultimately, capital: the demand for ever greater returns on investment in his voyages, 'an interest and return of honour and profit' expected to exceed 'his former achievements', triggers the self-consuming 'apprehensions' that produce Drake's final illness.⁵⁶ The profits of Drake's voyages are, of course, legendary: in addition to yielding Queen Elizabeth a return of 47 times her investment, these profits were even seen as contributing to the capital that enabled the founding of the East India Company in 1600, four years after Drake's death.⁵⁷ Fuller's account reveals how the unprecedented riches yielded by early modern English piracy created a cultural battle over surplus value, exacerbating social tensions that Robert Brenner locates as a key impetus for the revolutionary conflicts of the mid-seventeenth century.⁵⁸ In contrast to the Victorian image of Drake as a point of origin for England's trading empire, in Fuller's text Drake's spectral presence haunts aspirations for national unity and commercial expansion. As amorphous and protean in its shape as nationalism itself, the ghost of Sir Francis Drake provides a spectral figuration for nascent, alternative models of community, social relations formed – in appropriately piratical fashion – by seizing the mechanisms of capital.

9 Scaffold Performances: The Politics of Pirate Execution

Claire Jowitt

This essay explores the politics of pirate executions. Focusing on the pirate scaffold speeches of Thomas Walton and Clinton Atkinson contained in the anonymous pamphlet *Clinton, Purser and Arnold, to their countreyemen wheresoever* (1583), in Thomas Heywood's and William Rowley's tragic-comedy *Fortune by Land and Sea* (1607–09), and the execution of the 'pirate' Walter Raleigh in 1618, it seeks to read depictions of the manner of pirates' deaths and their scaffold behaviour in political terms.¹ The essay examines the various ways pirates were able, sometimes in surprising and resourceful ways, to use their scaffolds as a pulpit from which to express their antagonism to the state that condemns them. The figures of Purser, Clinton, and Raleigh, may not initially seem to have much in common, since Raleigh was executed in 1618 for treason not piracy. Yet 'piracy' against Spanish settlements in Guiana in 1617 was also part of the case against him. Furthermore, the pirates and Raleigh are also explicitly linked in terms of theatrical representation, since, as this essay shall establish, one of the subtexts for Heywood's and Rowley's representation of their play's privateer hero, Young Forrest, (whose fate is contrasted with that of the pirates Purser and Clinton), is the career of Raleigh. Using the work of Michel Foucault, J. A. Sharpe and Peter Lake concerning the subversive politics of scaffold speeches more generally, this essay explores the conventions specific to pirate scaffolds. Similar to Mark Netzloff's exploration of the ways in which Francis Drake's memory 'was invoked as a way to intimate political oppositionality' (see Chapter 8), I shall discuss the ways in which these representations of pirate executions are sympathetic to the pirates themselves and offer a critique of contemporary institutions of statecraft.

- 14 For texts see *The Elder Seneca: Declamations*, trans. M. Winterbottom, Loeb Classical Library, 2 vols (London: William Heinemann, 1974), 1: pp.135–51 ('The Pirate Chief's Daughter'); 2: pp.317–45 ('The Woman who was Tortured by the Tyrant for her Husband's Sake').
- 15 See 3.3.248–55.
- 16 Martia's sexual preoccupation is clear in her plea to Violeto, 'Receive me to your love, sir, and instruct me; | Receive me to your bed, and marry me' (2.4.152–3).
- 17 The phrase 'hal'd the Barke' may indicate that Martia hoisted the boat's sails, but 'hal'd' may also pun on hail (to call), often used in nautical contexts. If so, Fletcher and Massinger are suggesting her unruly speech: she is not only physically active, but also disruptively noisy.
- 18 A comparison can be drawn with *Love's Cure*, in which the excessively feminine and housewifely Lucio is told by Bobadilla 'you have a better needle, I know, and might make better work, if you had grace to use it' (1.2.17–18).
- 19 *The Old Arcadia*, ed. Katherine Duncan Jones (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), pp.24–5. As Lisa Jardine notes, the reworking of this passage in *The New Arcadia* is even more provocatively sexual; see *Still Harping on Daughters: Women and Drama in the Age of Shakespeare* (Hemel Hempstead: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1983), p.36.
- 20 Jardine, *Still Harping on Daughters*, p.29.
- 21 Kathryn Schwartz, *Tough Love: Amazon Encounters in the English Renaissance* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2000), p.5.
- 22 See Jacques Heers, *The Barbary Corsairs: Warfare in the Mediterranean, 1480–1580*, trans. Jonathan North (London: Greenhill, 2003), 232–6.
- 23 This moment also strongly recalls the Jacobean masque. See Gossett, *Influence*, who notes that 'Martia is presenting herself, and the role she has chosen is that of the scornful conqueress' (p.261).
- 24 See D'Orsay W. Pearson, '"Unkinde" Theseus: A Study in Renaissance Mythography', *English Literary Renaissance*, 4 (1974), 276–98.
- 25 Like most of the Fletcher/Massinger collaborations, *The Double Marriage* was first published in the 'Beaumont and Fletcher' folio collections of 1647 and 1679.
- 26 See Anthony Parr (ed.) *Three Renaissance Travel Plays* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995), p.22; McMullan, *Politics of Unease*, pp.197–256. Like *The Tempest*, *The Unnatural Combat* is preoccupied with the problematic relationship between father and daughter, acting out *The Tempest's* latent sexual tensions in its portrayal of Malefort's lust for his daughter Theocrine, and Theocrine's rape by a man who was once a suitor to her own mother.
- 27 On parallels between *The Double Marriage* and *The Tempest* see David Norbrook '"What cares these roarers for the name of King": Language and Utopia in *The Tempest*', in *The Politics of Tragicomedies: Shakespeare and After*, ed. Gordon McMullan and Jonathan Hope (London: Routledge, 1992), pp.21–54 (p.35); McMullan, *Politics of Unease*, p.183; Kevin Pask, 'Caliban's Masque', *English Literary History*, 70 (2003), 739–56 (p.741).
- 28 Stephen Orgel (ed.) *The Tempest* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), 1.2.152–3.
- 29 Erasmus, *Apophthegmes* [...] *Now Translated into Englyshe by Nicolas Udall* (London: Richard Grafton, 1542), 2C1r.

- 30 'A Pyrate', in *Sir Thomas Overbury his Wife* [...] *As Also New Newes, and Divers More Characters* (London: Edward Griffin for Laurence L'Isle, 1616), H7r.
- 31 In this respect, *The Double Marriage* can again be compared with *The Unnatural Combat*, which in its early scenes creates unnerving parallels between Malefort, an admiral who boasts of the spoil he has taken through privateering, and his pirate son, Malefort Junior, who is eventually killed by Malefort. See Jowitt, 'Piracy and Court Scandal', 33–41.
- 32 Thomas Adams, 'The Spirituall Navigator, Bound for the Holy Land', in *The Blacke Devil or the Apostate Together with The Wolfe Worrying The Lambes and The Spiritual Navigator, Bound For The Holy Land* (London: William Jaggard, 1615), D2v.
- 33 See Verna A. Foster, 'Sex Averted or Converted: Sexuality and Tragicomic Genre in the Plays of John Fletcher', *Studies in English Literature* 32 (1992), 311–22.

8 Sir Francis Drake's Ghost: Piracy, Cultural Memory, and Spectral Nationhood

- 1 Cheah, *Spectral Nationality: Passages of Freedom from Kant to Postcolonial Literatures of Liberation* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003), p.1.
- 2 Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (1983; London: Verso, 1991).
- 3 For discussion, see my chapter 'Forgetting the Ulster Plantation' in *England's Internal Colonies: Class, Capital, and the Literature of Early Modern English Colonialism* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), pp.171–99, as well as Philip Schwyzer, *Literature, Nationalism, and Memory in Early Modern England and Wales* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2004). On theories of memory, see especially Kerwin Lee Klein, 'On the Emergence of Memory in Historical Discourse,' *Representations*, 69 (Winter 2000) 127–50, Pierre Nora (ed.) *Realms of Memory: Rethinking the French Past*, 3 vols, trans. Arthur Goldhammer (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), and Paul Ricoeur, *Memory, History, Forgetting*, trans. Kathleen Blamey and David Pellauer (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2004).
- 4 Quoted in W. T. Jewkes, 'Sir Francis Drake Revived: From Letters to Legend,' in Norman J. W. Thrower (ed.) *Sir Francis Drake and the Famous Voyage, 1577–1580: Essays Commemorating the Quadricentennial of Drake's Circumnavigation of the Earth* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), p.119.
- 5 The BBC had aired a program called 'Drake's Drum' in August 1940, which might explain the guardsmen's subsequent collective hallucination; see John Sugden, *Sir Francis Drake* (London: Barrie & Jenkins, 1990), p.323.
- 6 See Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (eds) *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983).
- 7 The story of Drake at bowls has a long history, first appearing in Thomas Scott's *Second Part of Vox Populi* (London: William Jones, 1624); see Harry Kelsey, *Sir Francis Drake: The Queen's Pirate* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), p.321.
- 8 On posthumous images of Drake, see Jewkes, 'Sir Francis Drake Revived'; John Cummins, '"That Golden Knight": Drake and his Reputation,' *History*

- Today, 46 (January 1996) 14–21; Christopher Hodgkins, 'Stooping to Conquer: Heathen Idolatry and Protestant Humility in the Imperial Legend of Sir Francis Drake', *Studies in Philology*, 94 (1997) 428–64.
- 9 Jewkes, 'Sir Francis Drake Revived', p.112.
 - 10 See Benjamin P. Draper, 'A Collection of Drake Bibliographic Items, 1569–1659' in Thrower, *Sir Francis Drake and the Famous Voyage*, pp.173–206.
 - 11 My point is influenced by Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari's discussion of 'minor literature' in *Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature*, trans. Dana Polan (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986), esp. 16–27.
 - 12 On 'official nationalism' see Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, pp.83–111.
 - 13 David Lloyd, 'Nationalisms Against the State', in Lisa Lowe and David Lloyd (eds) *The Politics of Culture in the Shadow of Capital* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1997), pp.173–97.
 - 14 For a related discussion, see my chapter 'A Nation of Pirates' in *England's Internal Colonies*, esp. pp.51–73.
 - 15 William Shakespeare, *2 Henry IV*, ed. A.R. Humphreys, Arden Shakespeare (London and New York: Routledge, 1989).
 - 16 Henry Robarts, *A most friendly farewell, Giuen by a welwiller to the right worshipful Sir Frauncis Drake knight* (London: Walter Mantell and Thomas Lawe, 1585), sig. A2v.
 - 17 The Elizabethan state also had an interest in barring published accounts of Drake's voyages, which Spanish merchants could use as evidence in claiming remuneration. On efforts to prevent a literal 'accounting' of Drake's profits, see Kelsey, pp.214–17.
 - 18 See, for example, Hakluyt, *The Principal Navigations Voyages Traffiques & Discoveries of the English Nation* (1598–1600; London: J. M. Dent, 1927), 10 vols, pp.7:77–97.
 - 19 Peele, *A Farewell. Entitled to the famous and fortunate Generalls of our English forces: Sir Iohn Norris & Syr Frauncis Drake* (London: I. C, 1589), sig. A3.
 - 20 Haslop, *Newes ovt of the Coast of Spaine* (London: W. How, 1587), sigs. B2–B2v.
 - 21 Quint, *Epic and Empire: Politics and Generic Form from Virgil to Milton* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), p.248.
 - 22 Quint, *Epic and Empire*, p.249.
 - 23 Quint, *Epic and Empire*, pp.76–83, 139–47. Other texts, by contrast, placed Drake in the framework of epic: see, for instance, William Goodyear's translation of Jean de Cartigny's *The voyage of the wandering Knight* (London: Thomas East, 1581), a text dedicated to Drake.
 - 24 Nerlich, *Ideology of Adventure: Studies in Modern Consciousness, 1100–1750, Volume 1*, trans. Ruth Crowley (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), p.116.
 - 25 Nerlich, *Ideology of Adventure*, p.112.
 - 26 Stevenson, *Praise and Paradox: Merchants and Craftsmen in Elizabethan Popular Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984).
 - 27 Étienne Balibar, 'Citizen Subject', in *Who Comes After the Subject*, ed. Eduardo Cadava et al. (New York: Routledge, 1991), pp.33–57; John Michael Archer, *Citizen Shakespeare: Freeman and Aliens in the Language of the Plays* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005); Julia Reinhard Lupton, *Citizen-Saints: Shakespeare and Political Theology* (Chicago and London: University of

- Chicago Press, 2005). Among earlier studies, see Patrick Collinson, 'De Republica Anglorum: Or History with the Politics Put Back' and 'The Monarchical Republic of Queen Elizabeth I', in *Elizabethan Essays* (London: Hambledon, 1994), pp.1–30, 31–57 and J. G. A. Pocock, *The Machiavellian Moment: Florentine Political Thought and the Atlantic Republican Tradition* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975).
- 28 On a related note, Deleuze and Guattari argue that a 'collective' value and function is a key characteristic of 'minor literature', *Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature*, p.17.
 - 29 Hakluyt, *Principal Navigations*, 8: p.194.
 - 30 Mary Fuller, *Voyages in Print: English Travel to America, 1576–1624* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp.141–74.
 - 31 Richard Helgerson, *Forms of Nationhood: The Elizabethan Writing of England* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), pp.187, 175.
 - 32 Hakluyt, *Principal Navigations*, 1: p.19.
 - 33 For an expanded discussion of this issue, see my *England's Internal Colonies*, esp. pp.91–134.
 - 34 Cheah, *Spectral Nationality*, p.12.
 - 35 Among other sources on this topic, see Anne Barton, 'Harking Back to Elizabeth: Ben Jonson and Caroline Nostalgia', *ELH*, 48 (1981) 706–31.
 - 36 D. R. Woolf, 'Two Elizabeths? James I and the Late Queen's Famous Memory', *Canadian Journal of History* 20 (1985) 167–91; Curtis Perry, 'The Citizen Politics of Nostalgia: Queen Elizabeth in Early Jacobean London', *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies*, 23 (1993) 89–111, republished in *The Making of Jacobean Culture: James I and the Renegotiation of Elizabethan Literary Practice* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1997), pp.153–87; John Watkins, *Representing Elizabeth in Stuart England: Literature, History, Sovereignty* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2002).
 - 37 Fuller, *Voyages in Print*, p.15.
 - 38 Claire Jowitt, *Voyage Drama and Gender Politics 1589–1642* (Manchester: Manchester UP, 2003), pp.61–103, 140–90.
 - 39 Elizabeth Frye, 'The Myth of Elizabeth I at Tilbury', *Sixteenth Century Journal*, 23 (1992) 95–114.
 - 40 Thomas Heywood, *If You Know Not Me You Know Nobody Part II*, ed. Madeleine Doran (Oxford: Malone Society Reprints, 1935). Unless otherwise noted, I have cited the expanded 1633 version of the Armada scenes throughout. On the differences between this edition and the 1606 quarto, see Doran's introduction as well as Teresa Grant, 'Drama Queen: Staging Elizabeth in *If You Know Not Me You Know Nobody*', in *The Myth of Elizabeth*, ed. Susan Doran and Thomas S. Freeman (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), pp.120–42.
 - 41 Ernest Renan, 'What is a Nation?' in Homi K. Bhabha (ed.) *Nation and Narration* (London and New York: Routledge, 1990), pp.8–22. Cf. Anderson's discussion of Renan in *Imagined Communities*, pp.199–201.
 - 42 On the forgetting of Drake during his own lifetime, see also Haslop, sigs. A3–A3v.
 - 43 Fredric Jameson, 'Marx's Purloined Letter', in Michael Sprinker (ed.) *Ghostly Demarcations: A Symposium on Jacques Derrida's Specters of Marx* (London and New York: Routledge, 1999), p.60.

- 44 Jaques Derrida, *Specters of Marx: The State of the Debt, the Work of Mourning, and the New International*, trans. Peggy Kamuf (New York and London: Routledge, 1994), p.6.
- 45 Derrida, *Specters of Marx*, p.39.
- 46 Derrida, *Specters of Marx*, p.6.
- 47 Claire McEachern, *The Poetics of English Nationhood, 1590–1612* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p.6.
- 48 Among references to Drake, see Michael Drayton, *Poly-Olbion*, 19:308–22 and William Browne, *Britannia's Pastorals*, Book 2, Song 3, p.43; Book II, Song 4, p.69; Book III, Song 1, p.139; Book III, Song 1, p.152, in *The Whole Works*, ed. W. Carew Hazlitt (New York and Hildesheim: Georg Olms Verlag, 1970).
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- 50 O'Callaghan, *The 'Shepherds Nation'*, p.112.
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- 54 Karl Marx, *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy*, trans. David Fernbach (London: Penguin/New Left Review, 1981), p.3:448. For a relevant discussion, see Barbara Fuchs, 'Faithless Empires: Pirates, Renagadoes, and the English Nation', *ELH*, 67 (2000) 45–69.
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- 56 Fuller, *The Holy State*, p.140.
- 57 Joan Pong Linton, *The Romance of the New World: Gender and the Literary Formations of English Colonialism* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1998), p.45. William Camden was the first to posit a connection between Drake and the founding of the East India Company (*History*, p.301).
- 58 Brenner, *Merchants and Revolution: Commercial Change, Political Conflict, and London's Overseas Traders, 1550–1653* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993).

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- 2 Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: the Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan (London: Penguin, 1977), p.34.
- 3 Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, p.49.
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- 12 Venetian breeches were well fitting and finished below the knee with points, the material was covered with panes (diamond-shaped openings) which made the lining visible.
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