

## ABSTRACT

M. Todd Robinson. "SUBJECT TO THE POWER OF THE INFERNALL SPIRITT": PURITANS, PRIVATEERS, AND THE GENESIS OF BUCCANEERS. (Under the direction of Dr. Carl E. Swanson) Department of History, April 1998.

The purpose of this thesis is to examine the multinational origins of people who became buccaneers. The thesis demonstrates that buccaneers lived as hunters, farmers, and hide traders, not as pirates. In the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, buccaneers existed on the periphery of the Spanish West Indies. Most congregated on Tortuga Island, just northwest of Hispaniola. The buccaneer population consisted of French and Dutch hide traders and *rescatadores*, Spanish settlers who participated in illegal trade with northern European merchants. These people endured a difficult life in the West Indies. Contrary to popular and even scholarly view, buccaneers were not pirates. In less than sixty years, 1585-1642, Spanish forces drove buccaneers from Tortuga and northern Hispaniola. European colonists replaced them. Englishmen from the Providence Island Company, a Puritan, joint-stock company that practiced piracy and settlement, established a colony on Tortuga. Their leader on Tortuga turned the island into a base for plundering Spanish shipping. By 1642, few buccaneers remained where hundreds had dwelled a few years before. Those who remained neither hunted animals, nor sold hides, as buccaneers had. They lived by piracy. By pillaging the seas from the buccaneers' abandoned home, colonists and privateers who moved to Tortuga in the seventeenth century converted the term "buccaneer" into "pirate." This thesis reports that buccaneers have been misinterpreted both by their contemporaries and by generations of historians.

"SUBJECT TO  
THE POWER OF THE INFERNALL SPIRITT":  
PURITANS, PRIVATEERS, AND THE GENESIS OF BUCCANEERS

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## FOREWORD

Pirates fascinate everyone. The exploits of pirates upon the high seas have captured the imaginations of children and adults for generations. Thanks to novels and motion pictures, most imagine pirates spending nights on open seas searching for helpless, lonely vessels. After spotting their prize, pirates rush on deck, raise sails, and prime cannons and pistols. In an instant they catch a helpless vessel. They pound its stern with cannon balls and rake its decks with pistol fire. Amid the chaos, grappling hooks fill the air, and the pirates board their prey. They force their captives to walk the plank. The pirates then declare their hatred for "all those who will submit to be governed by Laws which rich Men have made for their own Security."<sup>1</sup> Later, in port, after selling their stolen wares, the pirates relax or cavort with whores, drinking rum in the warm Caribbean sunshine.

While these images fill the popular imagination, culled from the literature of Robert Louis Stevenson, J.M. Barrie, and Rafael Sabatini,<sup>2</sup> the truth about pirates is much more complicated. Only recently have scholars begun to wonder about those who took to the seas during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Charles Johnson [Daniel Defoe], *A General History of the Pyrates*, ed. Manuel Schonhorn (1724, 1728; reprint ed., Columbia S.C., 1972), 587.

<sup>2</sup> Robert Louis Stevenson, *Treasure Island* (London, 1883); J. M. Barrie, *Peter Pan, or The Boy Who Would Not Grow Up* (London, 1904); Rafael Sabatini, *Captain Blood: His Odyssey* (New York, 1922).

<sup>3</sup> Peter Earle, *The Sack of Panama: Sir Henry Morgan's Adventures on the Spanish Main* (New York, 1981); Robert C. Ritchie, *Captain Kidd and the War Against the Pirates* (Cambridge, Mass., 1986); Marcus Rediker, *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea: Merchant Seamen, Pirates, and the Anglo-American Maritime World, 1700-1750* (Cambridge, 1987); B. R. Burg, *Sodomy and the Perception of Evil:*

Histories of piracy conclude that people called "buccaneers" spawned piracy. This unsubstantiated allegation has damaged the history of piracy and the West Indies. The origins of piracy have been ignored because those who became pirates supposedly existed on the margins of colonial society. Their actions alarmed and baffled their contemporaries, who created the myth that buccaneers begot pirates. Buccaneers' isolation from the world and misinterpretation by those who cursorily knew them have further marginalized them in history. This is unfortunate. Ignoring those who existed on society's margins dangerously fragments historical understanding and leads to misinterpretations of the past. Historians must analyze marginal individuals to determine if they were actually marginal, or simply misinterpreted by their contemporaries who marginalized them in accounts historians accept.

The study of marginal people and their reflection of past society is a difficult and massive task. One can begin by examining the roots of the most celebrated and romanticized of marginal people--the pirates. An analysis of their origins demonstrates that they were far less marginal than has previously been believed, and that they have been vastly misinterpreted.

This thesis focuses on human beings, lost in the histories of conquest, colonization, and burgeoning capitalism. It evaluates a specific group of people, buccaneers, in a specific place, the island of Tortuga off the coast of Hispaniola. Buccaneers have been misidentified, misnamed, and misunderstood. Caught in one of the most pivotal times in human history, the European settlement of the West Indies, they have been ignored. Buccaneers must be examined. The complexities of colonial history, inadequate record keeping of the period, and four hundred years of deficient

*English Sea Rovers in the Seventeenth-Century Caribbean* (New York, 1983).

historiography, make this task difficult. But people who lived on the margins must be understood. History cannot focus solely on the politics, economics, and histories of individual nations. It must focus on those caught in tragedies and triumphs of the human past.

Confusion surrounds the study of piracy. Confusion exists over who the earliest pirates in the New World were and where they came from. These perplexities have made this task difficult. Over the centuries, the terms "privateer," "buccaneer," and "pirate" have been used interchangeably, resulting in even more confusion. These terms require careful explanation before we get underway. "Pirate" does not mean "privateer." The Spanish, who claimed all the West Indies and most of the New World, labeled all intruders into their territory as "pirates." In the nations from which privateers hailed, however, they were regarded quite differently. One student of privateering has explained, "the proper distinction between privateering and piracy is a legal one: the privateer had a commission from a recognized authority to take action against a designated enemy; the pirate had no commission and attacked anyone."<sup>4</sup> Another scholar of privateering has stated privateering resulted when "imperial governments...encouraged businessmen to man and equip their own private warships to intercept enemy commerce," thereby weakening the trade of other nations.<sup>5</sup> Thousands of French, Dutch, and English privateers poured into the Caribbean Sea

<sup>4</sup> Kenneth R. Andrews, *Elizabethan Privateering: English Privateering During the Spanish War, 1585-1603* (Cambridge, 1964), 5.

<sup>5</sup> Carl E. Swanson, *Predators and Prizes: American Privateering and Imperial Warfare, 1739-1748* (Columbia, S.C., 1991), 1-2.

during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. Each hoped to capture Spanish prizes.

The distinction between "pirate" and "buccaneer" is more difficult to explain. Buccaneers have often been dubbed the first pirates in the Caribbean. In reality, the rise of piracy in the West Indies cannot be explained so easily. Rather than pillage shipping as pirates, buccaneers never took to the seas. They lived on land along the periphery of the Spanish dominated Caribbean. They hunted and they farmed, providing hides for the European hide trade, and selling meat to passing ships.

One thing is certain, by mid-seventeenth century buccaneers no longer existed where they had lived fifty years before. They either died, moved away, or fundamentally changed their outlook and nature so dramatically that they became unrecognizable and unremarkable. In any case, their singularity is worth examining, for they stood on an island in foreign territory while the forces of greed and nationalism raged around them. Their reaction to those forces, and their story, give that period a human dimension.

Because of the confusion surrounding the identities of buccaneers and pirates, and the romantic nature of many histories that attempt to study these men, chapter one examines the differences between them and assesses the historiography of buccaneers. Chapter two describes the origins of the first buccaneers during the 1580s, and charts their history from the establishment of the hide and contraband trades on Cuba, Hispaniola, and Tortuga through Spanish attempts to destroy buccaneer settlements. The third chapter analyzes how buccaneers lived in the Caribbean and details the social and biological environment they experienced as European settlers. The information in this chapter greatly contradicts many myths that have grossly misinterpreted life in the



Caribbean during the colonial era. The final chapter describes European settlement of Tortuga, the growth of piracy in the West Indies, and the passing of the buccaneers.

This thesis is dedicated to reporting the multinational existence of buccaneers. It demonstrates that buccaneers have been misinterpreted both by their contemporaries and by generations of historians. It explores piracy's mysterious origins. This thesis illustrates that while armies and navies vied for power on all corners of the globe, while merchants and colonists fought and killed for wealth and property, some lived on the margins, divorced from their cultural heritage, on the periphery of the political and social world. This is their story.

CHAPTER ONE  
BUCCANEERS IN HISTORY AND MYTH

Buccaneers were not pirates. Yet, for centuries this claim has been maintained without an adequate explanation of who buccaneers were, where they came from, or how they survived. Buccaneers existed as French and Dutch hide traders, and as Spanish colonists living by contraband trade.

In the early seventeenth century, French, Dutch, and English sailors in the Caribbean, and Spanish residents of Cuba and Hispaniola, first noted the existence of "buccaneers." They identified them as colonists from disparate nations who prowled the island jungles of the Caribbean selling dried jerky to passing ships. The general consensus has suggested since that time that buccaneers deviated from the acceptable cultural norms of Europeans: they marginalized themselves from the prevailing social world, and sparked the flame of piracy that swept the Caribbean for almost one hundred years. Tortuga Island and northwestern Hispaniola served as their primary stronghold, and by 1606, buccaneers established a singular culture and vocation they practiced for the rest of the seventeenth century. Despite their alleged role in helping the French and English weaken Spain's hold on the West Indies through piracy, little has been written about their origins or the nature of their social and cultural existence. Often what has been written simply repeats earlier sources culled from hearsay and historical misinterpretations.

Buccaneers have fascinated the reading public since the seventeenth century. Despite this interest, conceptions regarding them have remained remarkably static. This reflects Alexander Exquemelin's profound influence on the historiography of this subject. Exquemelin provided the first history of the buccaneers in *De Americaensche*

*Zee-rovers*, published in Amsterdam in 1678.<sup>1</sup> Within a few years, the book had been printed in four different languages and had become an international bestseller. It first appeared in English in 1684 as *The Buccaneers of America*. Exquemelin provided a detailed account of his experience in the West Indies sailing with Henry Morgan, some sixty years after the genesis of the buccaneers. This portion of the book is still used as a primary source of Morgan's exploits.<sup>2</sup> Only two chapters cursorily describe the origin of buccaneers, and it is difficult to say how Exquemelin gathered his information regarding their early history. He was not present to experience the events he described, so his source might have originated from an oral tradition present upon Tortuga when he arrived there in 1666.<sup>3</sup> It is more likely, however, that Exquemelin

<sup>1</sup> I have used two versions of Exquemelin for examination, and both editions were identical concerning the origins and lifestyle of the first buccaneers: Alexander Exquemelin, *The Buccaneers of America* (London, 1969), a Penguin Classics edition translated from the original Dutch, and *The Buccaneers of America: a true account of the most remarkable assaults committed of late upon the coast of the West Indies by the buccaneers of Jamaica and Tortuga* (Amsterdam, 1678); reprint ed., with an introduction and notes by Robert C. Ritchie. Publication of Classics of Naval Literature, ed. Jack Sweetman (Annapolis, Md., 1993). The citations for this thesis came from the latter.

<sup>2</sup> E.A. Cruikshank, *The Life of Sir Henry Morgan* (Toronto, 1935), ch. 12; Robert C. Ritchie, introduction to *The Buccaneers of America*, by Alexander Exquemelin (Annapolis, Md., 1993); Peter Earle, *The Sack of Panama: Sir Henry Morgan's Adventures on the Spanish Main* (New York, 1981), 265-66. See also Hubert R. Allen, *Buccaneer Admiral Sir Henry Morgan* (London, 1976); Dudley Pope, *The Buccaneer King: The Biography of Sir Henry Morgan, 1635-1688* (New York, 1977); Rosita Forbes, *Sir Henry Morgan: Pirate and Pioneer* (London, 1948) and Philip Linsay, *The Great Buccaneer* (New York, 1951).

<sup>3</sup> Violet Barbour, review of *The Buccaneers on the West Indies in the XVII Century*, by C. H. Haring, *American Historical Review*, XVI (1911), 638.

had been exposed to and used sources about the West Indies that included accounts describing buccaneers.

Two works by Jean-Baptiste Dutertre, that detailed his experience living with (and ministering to) buccaneers, provide material similar to Exquemelin's descriptions. Four works in English that originated in the early seventeenth century by Henry Colt, Thomas Gage, Richard Blome, and Edward Hickeringill also included information about buccaneers.<sup>4</sup> A careful reading of Exquemelin demonstrates his reliance upon at least one other source. One incident of early buccaneer history came from "the Journal of a true and faithful author in the same words I read them."<sup>5</sup> Exquemelin's use of additional sources demonstrates that the *Buccaneers of America* is not solely a primary source. While English accounts predate Exquemelin, it is far more likely he used Dutertre since both authors were French. Exquemelin's account and Dutertre's do not correspond precisely, but much of their material on early buccaneers correlates. Exquemelin discussed the origin and rise of the early buccaneers for no more than twelve pages. The information he provided, according to C. H. Haring, author of the most quoted secondary source of buccaneer history, "forms the basis of all the popular modern accounts of Morgan and other buccaneer captains. Exquemelin, although he

<sup>4</sup> Jean-Baptiste Dutertre, *Histoire Générale des Isles de S. Christophe, de la Guadeloupe, de la Martinique et autres, dans l'Amérique* (Paris, 1654), and *Histoire Générale des Antilles habitées par les Français* (Paris, 1667-1671); Thomas Gage, *A New Survey of the West Indies, 1648*, in A.P. Newton, ed, *The English American* (New York, 1929); Sir Henry Colt, *The Voyage of Sir Henry Colt Knight to the Ilands of the Antilleas...*, in V.T. Harlow ed., *Colonising Expeditions to the West Indies and Guina, 1623-1667*, (Nendeln, Liechtenstein, 1967), 52-102 ; other early works with cursory information on buccaneers include Richard Blome, *Description of the Island of Jamaica* (London, 1672), and Edward Hickeringill, *Jamaica View'd* (London, 1661).

<sup>5</sup> Exquemelin, *Buccaneers of America*, 78.

sadly confuses his dates, seems to be a perfectly honest witness, and his accounts of such transactions as fell within his own experience are closely corroborated by the official narratives."<sup>6</sup> Other authors have shared this confidence in Exquemelin. After thoroughly analyzing the *Buccaneers of America* for his work on the sack of Panama City, Peter Earle concludes that Exquemelin "is almost never totally and utterly wrong and sometimes is remarkably right, repeating stories which one can find in Spanish evidence, but in no other English sources."<sup>7</sup> Exquemelin's thesis concerning the social organization of Tortuga is corroborated by other primary documents, but he often confuses his names and dates.

Exquemelin was especially brief in describing the origins, lifestyle, and rise of the early buccaneers. He believed Frenchmen "setting sail from St. Christopher, came within sight of the island of Hispaniola, where at length they arrived with abundance of joy. Having landed, they marched into the country, where they found huge quantities of cattle, such as cows, bulls, horses, and wild boars." Worried about the Spanish and the prospect of rounding up and fencing in the livestock, "they thought it convenient to enterprize upon and seize the island of Tortuga." Exquemelin explained that some Spaniards also lived on Tortuga, and while the French "began to plant the whole island" with settlers, the Spanish, "perceiving the French to increase their number daily, began at last to repine at their prosperity and grudged them the possession they had freely given." The Spaniards appealed to Santo Domingo, where the governor of Hispaniola resided, and he sent a force to destroy the intruders. According to

<sup>6</sup> C.H. Haring, *The Buccaneers in the West Indies in the XVII Century* (New York, 1910; reprint ed., Hamden, N.Y., 1966), 278.

<sup>7</sup> Earle, *Sack of Panama*, 265.

Exquemelin, the French "fled with all they had into the woods; and hence by night they wafted[sic] over with canoes unto the isle of Hispaniola. This they more easily performed as having no women or children with them, nor any great substance to carry away. Here they also retired into the woods."<sup>8</sup> When they felt safe again, the French returned to Tortuga, and petitioned the governor of St. Christopher for a governor for their island. He sent "Monsieur le Passeur," who arrived with more personnel and built a fort. Then, "each of them began to seek a living, some by the exercise of hunting, others by planting Tobacco, and others by cruising and robbing upon the coasts of the Spanish islands."<sup>9</sup>

Exquemelin did not provide any clues to the year of the events he described. They must have transpired after 1624, however, because the French did not settle St. Christopher until that year. Furthermore, a French governor, Le Vasseur, was sent to Tortuga as part of an expeditionary force that began the French colonizing effort of Saint Domingue.<sup>10</sup> Obviously, these events took place years after northern Europeans first began interloping in the West Indies, and it would have been impossible for these men to describe what they did not see.

In a later chapter Exquemelin was much more descriptive. He presented greater insight into the division of labor on the island, presumably from his own experience, by describing the "different callings or professions" on Tortuga. There were "but

<sup>8</sup> Exquemelin, *Buccaneers of America*, 31.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 32-33.

<sup>10</sup> W. Adolphe Roberts, *The French in the West Indies* (New York, 1942; reprint ed., 1971), 44-45; Nellis M. Crouse, *French Pioneers in the West Indies, 1624-1664* (New York, 1940; reprint ed., New York, 1977), 84-88.

three: either to hunt, or plant, or else to rove on the sea in quality of pirates...The hunters are again subdivided into two several sorts. For some of these are given to hunt only wild-bulls and cows; others hunt only wild-boars. The first of these two sorts of hunters are called Buccaneers."<sup>11</sup> Exquemelin then reverted from personal experience to history, writing "the planters began to cultivate and plant the isle of Tortuga in the year 1598." He explained that the first settlers planted tobacco and sugar but abandoned farming and "betook themselves to the exercise of hunting, and the remaining part to that of piracy."<sup>12</sup>

As for the origins of piracy, Exquemelin wrote that a certain pirate, "Pierre le Grand," captured the Spanish treasure fleet with only one ship off Cape Tiburon on Hispaniola's western shore. "The planters and hunters of the isle of Tortuga had no sooner understood this happy event, and the rich prize those Pirates had obtained, but they resolved to follow their example. Hereupon many of them left their ordinary exercises and common employments, and used what means they could to get either boats or small vessels wherein to exercise piracy."<sup>13</sup> From this dubious story, the historiography of buccaneering began.

Apparently, Exquemelin's work satisfactorily explained the origins of buccaneers because nothing new or different was written about them for over two hundred years. Subsequent authors, like Exquemelin, focused on the exploits of pirates like Morgan and others who sailed after him. These books ignored the origin of the

11 Exquemelin, *Buccaneers of America*, 63.

12 *Ibid.*, 65.

13 *Ibid.*, 80.

buccaneers or quoted Exquemelin.<sup>14</sup> Intended for popular audiences, these books romanticized the lives of buccaneers. In 1906, John Masefield, deluded by glamorous tales of buccaneers, offered a fanciful picture of their existence. He perceived buccaneers as wealthy hunters who built factories and houses on Tortuga after 1638. He also believed they were cannibals.<sup>15</sup> His interpretation blended glorification and deprecation:

We may picture a squalid little cow town, with tropical vegetation growing up to the doors. A few rough bungalow houses, a few huts thatched with palm leaves, a few casks standing in the shade of pent roofs. To seaward a few ships of small tonnage lying at anchor. To landward hilly ground, broken into strips of tillage, where some wretches hoe tobacco under the lash. In the street, in the sunlight, lie a few savage dogs. At one of the houses, a buccaneer has just finished flogging his valet; he is now pouring lemon juice, mixed with salt and pepper, into the raw, red flesh. At another house, a gang of dirty men in dirty scarlet drawers are drinking turn about out of a pan of brandy. The reader may complete the sketch should he find it sufficiently attractive.<sup>16</sup>

C.H. Haring, a Harvard-trained Latin American historian, offered the first scholarly interpretation of buccaneers. After Exquemelin, most scholars quote Haring's analysis of buccaneers. Haring fought, often without success, the romantic interpretations of buccaneers that preceded him. While he examined Spanish and

<sup>14</sup> James Burney, *History of the Buccaneers of Jamaica* (London, 1816; reprint ed. New York, 1891); Richard Hill, *The Picaroons; Or, One Hundred and Fifty Years Ago* (Dublin, 1869; reprint ed., New York, 1971); Frank R. Stockton, *Buccaneers and Pirates of Our Coast* (New York, 1897); John Masefield, *On the Spanish Main, or some English forays on the Ithmus of Darien, With a Description of the Buccaneers and A Short Account of Old-Time Ships and Sailors* (London, 1906).

<sup>15</sup> Masefield, *On the Spanish Main*, 207.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 116.



English sources, he relied heavily upon Exquemelin, although he called it "a picturesque narrative." He closely emulated Exquemelin's account, and quoted him extensively.<sup>17</sup> Most of Haring's work focused on privateers after 1640, and he provided a thorough description of Henry Morgan's exploits. He wrote a good but narrow analysis of the rise of buccaneers, however. According to Haring, buccaneers originated from "deserters from ships, crews of wrecked vessels, or even chance marooners. In any case, the charm of their half savage, independent mode of life must soon have attracted others, and a fairly regular traffic sprang up between them and the ubiquitous Dutch traders, whom they supplied with hides, tallow, and cured meat."<sup>18</sup> He imagined the hunters probably ventured across to Tortuga before 1630, and through nefarious elements in their ranks, the first pirates were born. Pirates "had their source and nucleus in the hunters who infested the coasts of Hispaniola. Between the hunter and the pirate at first no impassable line was drawn. The same person combined in himself the occupations of cow-killing and cruising, varying the monotony of the one by occasionally trying his hand at the other. In either case he lived at constant enmity with the Spaniards. With the passing of time the sea attracted more and more away from their former pursuits. Even the planters who were beginning to filter into the new settlements found the attractions of coursing against the Spaniards to be irresistible."<sup>19</sup> The greatest weakness of his work, as was pointed out at the time, was that he did not draw the distinction among buccaneers, pirates, and privateers.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>17</sup> Haring, *Buccaneers in the West Indies*, 70.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 58.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 67.

<sup>20</sup> Barbour, review of *The Buccaneers in the West Indies in the XVII Century*,

Ultimately, Haring abandoned his quest for information about buccaneers and focused solely on privateers hired by English officials in the Caribbean. Moreover, his random method of citation in the chapters on buccaneers made his conclusions regarding them unreliable; he often failed to cite Exquemelin for information that plainly came from his book.

The works of Exquemelin and Haring form the keystone for both the modern academic and popular interpretations of buccaneers. Subsequent historians cite Exquemelin as their primary source and Haring as the best scholarly interpretation. Some historians deviate from Exquemelin's and Haring's conclusions, but often the assumptions and conclusions of these two works are recounted in subsequent studies. Historians who cite Exquemelin and Haring concerning buccaneers, pirates, or the West Indies have followed in their footsteps in confusing buccaneers with pirates and privateers.

Much of the confusion surrounding the identity of buccaneers lies in their title. The definition of "buccaneer" and its symbolic meaning have changed over the centuries. The early translation of the word to and from four different languages, and the evolution of political events in the West Indies, have further obfuscated its meaning. "Buccaneer" originated from *boucan*, a Brazilian term, later adopted by the French that described a wooden grill on which "meat was roasted or smoked over a fire."<sup>21</sup> According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, the word "boucan" originated in

*AHR*, XVI (1911), 637.

<sup>21</sup> *Oxford English Dictionary*, 2d ed., s.v. "buccaneer;" *Le Grand Robert de la Langue Française: Dictionnaire Alphabétique et Analogique de la Langue Française*, s.v. "bucanier."

1611, but Richard Hakluyt described boucan cooking as early as 1589.<sup>22</sup> Dutertre and Colt first described the French "cow-killers" and planters living on Hispaniola, Cuba, and Tortuga earning the title "bucanier" from their process of drying and smoking the meat of wild boars and oxen on wooden *boucans*.<sup>23</sup> Exquemelin said Europeans on Tortuga after 1666 earned their living in three ways, hunting, planting, "or else [they] rove on the sea in quality of pirates." He also maintained those who hunted "only wild-bulls and cows" were "Buccaneers."<sup>24</sup> These men supplied planters on the islands and foreign interlopers with meat and hides in return for goods or money. Exquemelin haphazardly used the term, specifying "buccaneers" as hunters in the early chapters of his book, but using "buccaneer" and "pirate" interchangeably in the later chapters. Thus, "buccaneer" grew to mean "pirate" over the course of his work making the two words synonymous. Even Haring noted in his book that "buccaneer" means pirate "and not the cattle and hog killers of Hispaniola and Tortuga."<sup>25</sup>

Those authors who know buccaneers originally were not pirates usually abandon this distinction and use the two terms interchangeably. "Buccaneers, according to some purists, were not pirates," argued pirate historian Patrick Pringle, but he believed it "better to assume that words mean what most people think they mean, not what they

<sup>22</sup> Richard Hakluyt, *The Principal Navigations, Voyages, Traffiques and Discoveries of the English Nation . . .* (London, 1589; reprint ed., London, 1947), VIII, 456.

<sup>23</sup> Colt, *Voyages of Sir Henrye Colt*, 92; Dutertre, *Histoire Générale des Antilles*, I, 415; Arthur Percival Newton, *European Nations in the West Indies, 1493-1688* (London, 1933), 169.

<sup>24</sup> Exquemelin, *Buccaneers of America*, 63.

<sup>25</sup> Haring, *Buccaneers of the West Indies*, 66.

ought to mean or meant originally."<sup>26</sup> Most historians have adhered to Pringle's advice. Words reflect symbolic meanings, however, and to ignore the past significance of language is to abandon the past to presentism. Pirate historians have taken the change in terminology to mean that piracy grew from buccaneering, the interpretation that still prevails.

This is not to say that histories of piracy have not contributed to the historiography of buccaneers. Published in 1724 under the pseudonym Captain Charles Johnson, Daniel Defoe wrote the most comprehensive account of pirate voyages and captains in *A General History of the Pyrates*.<sup>27</sup> His work contains nothing about buccaneers, however. After Daniel Defoe, Violet Barbour provided the best early scholarly analysis of piracy in the New World. Following Defoe's precedent, Barbour had little to say about buccaneers, dealing only with the perceived buccaneer origin of piracy. She described the first pirates as "robbers" who were enemies of Spain. She believed "the buccaneer colony of Tortuga" eventually became a sort of "piratical fraternity," made up of mariners with "no national character" whose "ships had wrecked on unguessed shoals." From those beginnings, Elizabethan privateers, French religious dissidents, and Dutch traders contributed to the population.<sup>28</sup> Philip Gosse augmented Barbour's research with two excellent works on piracy, but both quote

<sup>26</sup> Patrick Pringle, *Jolly Roger: The Story of the Great Age of Piracy* (New York, 1953), 53.

<sup>27</sup> Captain Charles Johnson [Daniel Defoe], *A General History of the Pyrates*, ed. Manuel Schonhorn (London, 1724, 1728; reprint ed., Columbia, S.C., 1972).

<sup>28</sup> Violet Barbour, "Privateers and Pirates of the West Indies," *AHR*, XVI (1910), 530, 536, 538, 539.

Exquemelin and Haring on matters involving buccaneers.<sup>29</sup> Exquemelin's and Haring's overriding presence is notable in nearly every work on seventeenth-century piracy, particularly popular histories.<sup>30</sup> Hugh Rankin, James Lydon, and Douglas Botting created well researched histories of piracy during the 1960s and 1970s.<sup>31</sup> Robert Ritchie and Marcus Rediker have written the best recent works. Ritchie's analysis of the English effort to stamp out piracy and Rediker's insights into the social world of sailors during the first half of the eighteenth century have greatly added to the interpretations of pirates and piracy.<sup>32</sup> Each of these authors base their works upon the foundations set by Exquemelin and Haring.

<sup>29</sup> Philip Gosse, *The Pirates' Who's Who* (Boston, 1924) and *The History of Piracy* (New York, 1932).

<sup>30</sup> George Francis Dow and John Henry Edmonds, *Pirates of the New England Coast* (Salem, Mass., 1923); Don C. Seitz, *Under the Black Flag* (New York, 1925); and Edward Rowe Snow's *Pirates and Buccaneers of the Atlantic Coast* (Boston, 1944). See also George Woodbury, *Great Days of Piracy in the West Indies* (New York, 1951); Neville Williams, *Captains Outrageous: Seven Centuries of Piracy* (New York, 1961); Rayner Thrower, *The Pirate Picture* (London, 1980); Frank Sherry, *Raiders and Rebels: The Golden Age of Piracy* (New York, 1986).

<sup>31</sup> Hugh F. Rankin, *The Golden Age of Piracy*, (New York, 1969) and *The Pirates of Colonial North Carolina*, 2d ed. (Raleigh, N.C., 1975); James G. Lydon, *Pirates, Privateers, and Profits* (Upper Saddle River, N.J., 1970); Douglas Botting, *The Pirates* (Alexandria, Va., 1978).

<sup>32</sup> Robert C. Ritchie, *Captain Kidd and the War Against Piracy* (Cambridge, Mass., 1986); Marcus Rediker, *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea: Merchant Seamen, Pirates, and the Anglo-American Maritime World, 1700-1750* (Cambridge, 1987). Other admirable recent studies of piracy include Donald G. Shomette, *Pirates on the Chesapeake: Being a True History of Pirates, Picaroons, and Raiders on the Chesapeake Bay, 1610-1807* (Centreville, Va., 1985); Clinton V. Black, *Pirates of the West Indies* (Cambridge, 1989); Janice E. Thomson, *Mercenaries, Pirates, and Sovereigns: State-Building and Extraterritorial Violence in Early Modern Europe* (Princeton, 1994); and David Cordingly, *Under the Black Flag: The Romance and*

Because of the influence of Barbour and Haring in the early 1900s, historians have assumed piracy grew from buccaneering. It is important to evaluate how historians have described this evolution. Exquemelin first suggested the transition occurred when the Spanish attacked buccaneer villages.<sup>33</sup> The planters and hunters on Tortuga then retaliated by attacking Spanish shipping, turning "butchers of cattle into butchers of men."<sup>34</sup> In this line of thought, the Spanish provoked a response from the buccaneers, who retaliated through piracy. Exquemelin's arguments convinced Haring, who also believed this evolution occurred. Their combined interpretation stands throughout most works on the West Indies and piracy.<sup>35</sup> Some works provide other reasons for buccaneers' antipathy for the Spanish, however. In 1962, Michael Craton proposed that a decline of wild beasts also forced the hunters to live off Spanish

*Reality of Life Among the Pirates* (New York, 1995). Several articles also augmented this body of work including Anne Pérotin-Dumon, "The Pirate and the Emperor: Power and the Law on the Seas, 1450-1850," in James D. Tracy, ed., *The Political Economy of Merchant Empires* (Cambridge, 1991): 196-227; William J. Chambliss, "State Organized Crime," *Criminology*, XXVII (1989), 183-208; Alec Moncreith, "Besieged by Thieves," *Military History*, VIII (1991), 44-49.

33 Exquemelin, *Buccaneers of America*, 31-32.

34 Gosse, *History of Piracy*, 144.

35 Haring, *Buccaneers in the West Indies*, 69-70; Crouse, *French Pioneers in the West Indies*, 83; Sir Alan Burns, *History of British West Indies* (London, 1954; reprint ed., 1965), 294; J. H. Parry and Philip Sherlock, *A Short History of the West Indies*, 3rd ed. (New York, 1971), 82-83; Cyril Hamshere, *British in the Caribbean* (Cambridge, 1972), 77; Cornelis Goslinga, *The Dutch in the Caribbean and on the Wild Coast, 1580-1680* (Gainesville, Fla., 1971); Kenneth R. Andrews, "English in the Caribbean," in K.R. Andrews, N.P. Canny, and P.E.H. Hair, eds., *The Westward Enterprise: English Activities in Ireland, the Atlantic, and America 1480-1650* (Liverpool, 1978), 121; Jan Rogozinski, *A Brief History of the Caribbean: From Arawak and the Carib to the Present* (New York, 1992), 84.

commerce.<sup>36</sup> More recently, Raynard Thrower suggested that some buccaneers simply grew tired of hunting and took to the seas.<sup>37</sup>

Thus, as early as 1690 (and continuing through the twentieth century) the words "pirate" and "buccaneer" were used interchangeably. Even the *Oxford English Dictionary* has described buccaneers as transforming to pirates.<sup>38</sup> Yet Exquemelin has been misinterpreted on this point because of his ambiguous usage of the term buccaneer. His explanation of events before 1630 stated only that pirates shared Tortuga with buccaneers.<sup>39</sup> His description did not encompass the entire population of Tortuga, as historians have assumed, until later chapters.

According to traditional interpretations, privateers also added to the ranks of pirates. Again, this assertion began with Haring who wrote "privateering opened a channel by which the criminal disorderly spirits, impatient of the sober and laborious life of the planter, found employment agreeable to their tastes."<sup>40</sup> London merchants and French and English officials in the Caribbean offered hundreds of privateering commissions in their war against the Spanish even in peacetime, legally rendering them state sponsored pirates. In areas such as the Caribbean, where there was "no peace beyond the line," the distinction between pirate and privateer was a thin one. Henry Morgan and Exquemelin were privateers since English officials employed Morgan to

36 Michael Craton, *The History of the Bahamas* (London, 1962), 72.

37 Thrower, *Pirate Picture*, 133.

38 *Oxford English Dictionary*, 2d ed., s.v. "buccaneer."

39 Exquemelin, *Buccaneers of America*, 63-64.

40 Haring, *Buccaneers in the West Indies*, 127.

sack Spanish property. Throughout the seventeenth century, "buccaneer" and "privateer" grew synonymous like "buccaneer" and "pirate." Even the official correspondence of the seventeenth century referred to buccaneers as "privateers." In the late 1600s pirates often referred to themselves as privateers as well.<sup>41</sup>

Since Exquemelin and Haring portrayed the early buccaneers as victims of Spanish oppression backed into a corner of violence, some authors have viewed buccaneers as "social bandits," noble robbers who sailed for no nation who could be purchased as mercenaries.<sup>42</sup> These assumptions have derived from the writings of Eric Hobsbawm. His works, *Bandits* and *Primitive Rebels*, have attracted much scholarly attention, especially from Latin American and Marxist historians.<sup>43</sup> Hobsbawm described social banditry as "an endemic peasant protest against oppression and poverty: a cry for vengeance on the rich and the oppressors."<sup>44</sup> "Banditry

41 John J. McCusker and Russell R. Mennard, *The Economy of British America, 1607-1789* (Chapel Hill, N.C. 1985; reprint ed., 1991), 147; Hamshere, *British in the Caribbean*, 78; *The Oxford Companion to Ships and Sea*, edited by Peter Kemp (Oxford, 1976; reprint ed., 1988), 115.

42 Franklin Knight, *The Caribbean: The Genesis of a Fragmented Nationalism*, 2d ed. (New York, 1990), 97. Marcus Rediker has presented this thesis for pirates in the early eighteenth century in *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea*, 267, 269-73.

43 Eric Hobsbawm, *Bandits* (New York, 1981), and *Primitive Rebels: Studies in Archaic Forms of Social Movement in the 19th and 20th Centuries* (Manchester, 1959). Works stemming from Hobsbawm include Christian Archer, "Banditry and Revolution in New Spain, 1790-1821" *Bibliotheca Americana*, I (1982) 59-90; Anton Blok, "The Peasant and the Brigand: Social Banditry Reconsidered" *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, XIV (1972), 494-503; Pat O'Malley "Social Bandits, Modern Capitalism and the Traditional Peasantry: A Critique of Hobsbawm," *Journal of Peasant Studies*, XI (1979), 489-501.

44 Hobsbawm, *Primitive Rebels*, 5.



grows," according to Hobsbawm, "and becomes epidemic in times of social tension and upheaval. These are also the times when the conditions of cruelty are favorable." He also adds that bandits "are little more than symptoms of crisis and tension in their society - of famine, pestilence, war or anything else that disrupts it."<sup>45</sup> Buccaneer farmers could be viewed as peasants, perhaps, and if the farmers and planters of Tortuga attacked the Spanish as resistance to oppression, this interpretation could be valid. But buccaneers did not attack the Spanish, pirates did!

The best explanation, and the course this study takes, is that buccaneers who hunted and planted on Tortuga, Cuba, and Hispaniola before 1642, when France seized the island, were the actual buccaneers. In this study, all mention of "buccaneers" refers to those who only hunted and planted on the islands of the Caribbean; "pirates" applies only to those who robbed at sea. Privateers designates only those who had valid privateering commissions. If hunters became pirates, they ceased to be buccaneers, and became pirates.

Since buccaneers have not been easy to define, authors have often written history that romanticized their existence, both positively and negatively. Haring portrayed them as "half savage, independent" men who "found sustenance so easy and the natural bounty of the island" rich and varied."<sup>46</sup> Rankin called buccaneers "a surly, savage, and filthy lot," while George Woodbury posited that they lived "out on the islands on steaks and hams" enjoying "a good, gypsy kind of life" where the "pleasant climate, fruits, freedom, and the opportunities for a bit of agriculture were

45 Hobsbawm, *Bandits*, 67, 24.

46 Haring, *Buccaneers of America*, 57, 58.

attractive."<sup>47</sup> J.H. Parry and Philip Sherlock suspected buccaneer life to have been "rough but not unattractive" made up of people who "disliked organized society."<sup>48</sup> These opinions either preceded or ignored research that has illustrated the difficulties of life for everyone in the seventeenth-century Caribbean. Many pirate historians are guilty of this misconception; the beauty and lure of the modern Caribbean has obscured their perception of the hardships endured by the early settlers.

Other romantic interpretations of buccaneers exist. The most recent has come from B.R. Burg. He suggested that buccaneers lived a predominately homosexual lifestyle. According to Burg, "legal prohibitions, condemnations by organized religion, the dominance of heterosexual institutions, and opportunity to engage in heterosexual contacts with wives, prostitutes, female acquaintances, or Indian or slave women were all unavailable for pirates, sailors, hunters, servants, and other non-Spanish residents of the Caribbean." Yet, he admitted Spanish settlements housed "large numbers of females" and that "by 1600 there was hardly a Spanish settlement in the Western Hemisphere that had not been sacked once."<sup>49</sup> P.K. Kemp and Christopher Lloyd, "experts in nautical history" according to the jacket of their book, first formed this hypothesis. They believed that "homosexuality was common" because of the predominately male population of buccaneers and of all European colonists to the New World.<sup>50</sup> Substantial evidence exists to the contrary. Exquemelin wrote that

<sup>47</sup> Rankin, *Golden Age of Piracy*, 7; Woodbury, *Great Days of Piracy*, 43.

<sup>48</sup> Parry and Sherlock, *A Short History of the West Indies*, 82.

<sup>49</sup> B.R. Burg, *Sodomy and the Perception of Evil: English sea Rovers in the Seventeenth-Century Caribbean* (New York, 1983), 69, 70, 182.

<sup>50</sup> P.K. Kemp and Christopher Lloyd, *Brethren of the Coast: Buccaneers of the South Seas* (New York, 1960), 3.

buccaneers did not forget "the goddess Venus, for whose beastly delights they find more women than they can make use of."<sup>51</sup> English records also document the presence of women.<sup>52</sup> These primary sources clearly discredit Burg.

Romantic pirate histories do not contribute to an understanding of the social reality in the Caribbean for buccaneers or any one else. For this reason, during the past four decades, West Indian history has been the most compelling medium for analyzing Caribbean settlers. Many works on Caribbean history have described buccaneers, although few discuss them in great detail. Instead, West Indian histories describe buccaneers through historical, economic, and social paradigms that elucidate the world buccaneers lived in. Without such analysis, buccaneer history will continue to be written superficially and without a larger historical context, a weakness found in many works of maritime history.<sup>53</sup>

Nellis Crouse and Adolphe Roberts first combined the study of buccaneers with West Indian history.<sup>54</sup> Their works document French colonizing ventures and add context to the events surrounding the settlement of Tortuga. Roberts suggested buccaneers built their own ships and believed "they asked at first only to be left

51 Exquemelin, *Buccaneers of America*, 64.

52 Cecil Hedlam, ed., *Calender State Papers, Colonial Series, America and the West Indies, 1574-1660* (London, 1930-33), I, 137, 150, 187; Richard Ligon, *A True History and Exact History of Barbados, 1653* (London, 1657; reprint ed., 1970), 104, 105-07.

53 Daniel Vickers, "Beyond Jack Tar," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3d Ser., L (1993), 418-424.

54 Crouse, *French Pioneers in the West Indies*; Roberts, *French in the West Indies*.

alone."<sup>55</sup> Both works are vague, relying chiefly on Haring for information, and both authors portrayed buccaneers only as pirates. While each described the European development of Tortuga, they ignored buccaneer hunters and planters. The same applies to Alan Burns, who described English colonization rather than the French. Burns introduced the notion that buccaneers helped facilitate early English, French, and Dutch colonization by their unpredictable assaults against the Spanish. He wrote that buccaneers originated from French sailors tired of the sea, escaped servants, desperate criminals, and religious and political refugees.<sup>56</sup> Like Roberts and Crouse, Burns described buccaneers only as pirates, although each of these authors felt buccaneers were not real pirates because they only attacked the Spanish and never ships of their own nations. Burns called them "undisciplined," yet he depicted them uniting to attack the Spanish in retaliation for an assault on Tortuga.<sup>57</sup> Together, these authors helped explain the international political context of the islands buccaneers occupied. While these histories provided an interpretation for the transition from buccaneer to pirate, they often failed to cite their sources and their reasoning. For buccaneer hunters to hate the Spanish is one thing; for them to possess the means to build or steal ships in volume and *then* learn how to sail them is quite another. These political histories also failed to explain how buccaneers lived while they pillaged Spanish commerce.

The social histories of the 1970s answered many questions unresolved by the previous generation of West Indian scholars and destroyed many myths surrounding

55 Roberts, *French in West Indies*, 38, 43.

56 Burns, *History of the British West Indies*, 293.

57 *Ibid.*, 290-91.

buccaneers' glorified lifestyle. Cornelis Goslinga's analysis of the Dutch settlement and economic enterprises in the Caribbean and studies of English West Indian colonization by Richard Dunn, Cyril Hamshere, and Carl and Roberta Bridenbaugh significantly enhanced the overall understanding of buccaneers in the Caribbean during the seventeenth century.<sup>58</sup> While Goslinga's study described how the Dutch illegally traded with European interlopers in the West Indies, he did not evaluate how this contributed to the rise of buccaneers. Hamshere offered the best dual analysis of Tortuga's settlement and growth and the rise of buccaneers. He ended his study at 1635, however.<sup>59</sup> Dunn's strength lay in his research of West Indian society, and his description of the biological and disease environments in the Caribbean. His characterization of West Indian society as the "Wild West" of the seventeenth century was the first and best of its kind.<sup>60</sup> Although he spent little time describing Tortuga, his illustrations of society on the other islands of the region allowed the extrapolation of life on Tortuga. Complete with explanations of insects, plant life, and the horrible effects of disease, Dunn's work destroyed romantic notions about life in the seventeenth-century Caribbean.

58 Goslinga, *Dutch in the Caribbean*; Richard S. Dunn, *Sugar and Slaves: The Rise of the Planter Class in the English West Indies, 1624-1713* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1972); Hamshere, *British in the Caribbean*; Carl and Roberta Bridenbaugh, *No Peace Beyond the Line: The English and the Caribbean, 1624-1690* (New York, 1972). For further discussion of these works see Jack P. Greene, "Society and Economy in the British Caribbean during the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries," *AHR*, LXXIX (1974): 1499-1517.

59 The numerous attacks on Tortuga and the relationships of those attacks concerning the rise of piracy will be further analyzed in chapter four.

60 Dunn, *Sugar and Slaves*, 9-10.

Four important studies by Kenneth Andrews also expanded judiciously the historiography of the West Indies and buccaneers.<sup>61</sup> Andrews elucidated politics and society in the sixteenth century. His works rarely described buccaneers, but his description of the nature of warfare, patterns of trade, and Caribbean settlement completed the picture of the fifty years when West Indian buccaneering originated.

These social and economic histories evince the true nature of political and social life in the Caribbean. Studies that examine the effects of foreign climates and a new disease environment also help to interpret colonists' fears, hopes, and frustrations. Helmut Blume and David Watts, with their detailed descriptions of the ecology and biology of the West Indies before and after European contact, also destroyed romantic notions that usually accompany buccaneer descriptions.<sup>62</sup> Rather than sitting on the beach sipping rum, West Indian settlers, buccaneers included, encountered deadly environmental conditions and confronted a new and frightening array of animals and insects. These environmental studies vividly illustrated the natural world of the Caribbean and the tremendous hardships colonists faced simply to survive.

In the most recent evaluations of the West Indies, Franklin Knight synthesized and expanded Caribbean historiography. Knight explained colonial settlement and

<sup>61</sup> Kenneth R. Andrews, *Elizabethan Privateering: English Privateering during the Spanish War, 1585-1603* (Cambridge, 1964); *The Spanish Caribbean: Trade and Plunder, 1530-1630* (New Haven, Conn., 1978); "The English in the Caribbean, 1560-1620," in Andrews, Canny and Hair, eds., *Westward Enterprise; Trade, Plunder and Settlement: Maritime Enterprise and the Genesis of the British Empire, 1480-1630* (Cambridge, 1984).

<sup>62</sup> Helmut Blume, *The Caribbean Islands*, trans., Johannes Maczewski and Ann Norton (London, 1974); David Watts, *The West Indies: Patterns of Development, Cultural and Environmental Change Since 1492* (Cambridge, 1987).

European development of the West Indies in one of the most coherent studies written to date. While he accepted the social bandit theory of buccaneers, he illustrated that buccaneers were not only pirates. He explained that some buccaneers remained farmers and planters after others turned to piracy. Of those who did become pirates, he wrote "the real international importance of the buccaneers undoubtedly increased because they had the capacity to perform freelance attacks on the Spanish possessions in and around the Caribbean at a time when neither the English nor the French--then riddled with civil conflicts of domestic political weakness--could undertake such action officially."<sup>63</sup> Knight described how an entire system of communal living on Tortuga operated, with planters, farmers, and pirates working together. His analysis was brief, however, and after arousing the reader's interest, Knight moved on to other subjects. Similarly, in another recent work, Jan Rogozinski hinted at a communal lifestyle on Tortuga, but like Knight's, his description was rather brief.<sup>64</sup>

Karen Ordahl Kupperman also contributed significantly to this study and to the historiography of buccaneers. Her analysis of the organization of the Providence Island Company, the colonizing venture that incorporated Tortuga in 1631, has been essential to this project. While she only cursorily described Tortuga, her descriptions of life on Providence Island and the details of its citizens have provided much needed material about life in the West Indies during the 1630s.<sup>65</sup>

<sup>63</sup> Knight, *The Caribbean*, 97-98.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, 97-105; Jan Rogozinski, *A Brief History of the Caribbean: From Arawak and the Carib to the Present* (New York, 1992), 90.

<sup>65</sup> Karen Ordahl Kupperman, *Providence Island, 1630-1641: The Other Puritan Colony* (Cambridge, 1993).

Despite the attention historians have devoted to Caribbean buccaneers and piracy, no author has yet attempted to uncover the mysteries and unravel the complications of their origins. They were called "an unorganized rabble of men from all countries," and "a mongrel sort of people of several bloods" by their contemporaries, and their students have understood them only slightly better.<sup>66</sup> Unfortunately, most historians who have studied piracy in the West Indies have spent little time attempting to understand the cultural origins of buccaneers. Many who have attempted have fallen victim to, what Burg has called, "the romantic notions of buccaneering."<sup>67</sup> Such history has had two effects: a fragmented understanding of the broader historical perspective of the West Indies, and for buccaneers especially, the historical neglect of a group that fell outside an easily identifiable nationality. Such historical methodologies have contributed to inaccurate conclusions about buccaneers. The misconceptions and lack of information about the early existence of buccaneers have led to a myth embodied in both the history of piracy and the history of West Indian development. If historians had tested the validity of the thesis that pirates came from buccaneers by examining the origins of these people, they would have found that the entire history of piracy, and much of the early history of the West Indies, has been built on mythical and inaccurate foundations.

<sup>66</sup> Dutertre, *Histoire Générale des Antilles*, I, 415; Exquemelin, *Buccaneers of America*, 41.

<sup>67</sup> B.R. Burg, "Legitimacy and Authority: A Case Study of Pirate Commanders in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries" *American Neptune*, XXXVII (1977), 41.



## CHAPTER TWO

### BUCCANEERS AND *RESCATADORES*

C.H. Haring did not know he was creating myth when he penned that pirates sprang from buccaneers. He believed pirates acted against the nations of the world in a form of social protest. Originating from "deserters of ships, crews of wrecked vessels, and chance marooners," pirates, in Haring's mind, "had their source and nucleus in the hunters who infested the coasts of Hispaniola."<sup>1</sup> Turning from hunter to pirate, they made war upon the world in an attempt to validate their lives in protest against a world that oppressed them. The classic image of robbing the rich to give to the poor makes Haring's interpretation appealing. Pirates' decision to divorce their social world articulates a powerful statement of rebellion. Writers and scholars embraced Haring's definition of the roots of piracy. His interpretation can be found in the latest pirate literature.<sup>2</sup> Unfortunately, Haring was wrong. The poor did not unite to take from the rich, nor did victims rise against their oppressors. Piracy had no noble origins. It illustrated the powerful effect of unmitigated greed. But before the true origins of piracy can be examined, its myths must be dismantled. The mysterious genesis of buccaneers must be unraveled.

In 1606, Spanish armies landed on Tortuga Island and northwest Hispaniola. Soldiers annihilated and scattered settlers they found there. Some of these settlers, men

<sup>1</sup> C.H. Haring, *Buccaneers in the West Indies in the XVII Century* (New York, 1910; reprint ed., Hamden, N.Y., 1966), 58, 67.

<sup>2</sup> David Cordingly, *Under the Black Flag: The Romance and Reality of Life among the Pirates* (New York, 1995).

and women from disparate nations, had survived as farmers. Many lived as buccaneers, hunting wild pigs and cattle in the island jungles, roasting the meat "Indian fashion," and selling dried jerky to passing Dutch, French, and English ships. Buccaneers comprised only a portion of the total population living in the outlying districts of Hispaniola and Cuba. All who lived there took part in *rescate* trade. Spanish colonists who traded with northern Europeans came to be known as *los rescatadores*. This word originated from the root *rescate*, that meant goods delivered in barter or as ransom. Over the course of Spanish influence upon America, the term mainly came to mean the former: goods traded with foreign interlopers.<sup>3</sup>

The origins of buccaneers cannot be separated from the origins of *rescatadores*. Buccaneers made up only a part of the entire *rescate* community. They were extremely valuable *rescatadores*, however. Buccaneers provided meat and hides that constituted most of the illegal exports of *rescate* trade. Buccaneers and *rescatadores* existed during a pivotal point of world history, the conquest and colonization of the New World; yet the origins of their presence during those tumultuous years has been largely ignored.

In the sixteenth century, two predominant groups converged on the West Indies. Franklin Knight has called them "communities or colonies of settlers, and the communities and colonies of economic exploiters." The two settlements did not conflict, however. These groups, Knight argued, engendered "colonies which moved from one form to another, usually from colonies of settlement to colonies operating almost exclusively for the maximum production of profit."<sup>4</sup> This fluctuating

<sup>3</sup> Irene Wright, "Rescates: With Special Reference to Cuba, 1599-1610," *Hispanic American Historical Review*, III (1920), 335.

<sup>4</sup> Franklin W. Knight *The Caribbean: The Genesis of a Fragmented Nationalism*,

environment established two economic interpretations. Adam Smith argued in *Wealth of Nations* that one of the principal effects of settlement in the West Indies "has been to raise the mercantile system to a degree of splendor and glory which it could never otherwise have attained."<sup>5</sup> Latin American historian Eduardo Galeano has asserted that settlers accumulated "capital for English, French, and Dutch while mutilating the Caribbean islands."<sup>6</sup>

In less philosophical and in more human terms the West Indies had room for both splendor and mutilation. Poor, unsuccessful colonists were driven from the mercantile colonial structure. Their more fortunate companions established an economic hierarchy based upon Native American and African slave labor. While both arrived in the West Indies with the intent to make a profit, as almost all Europeans did, the people who became buccaneers ultimately expanded the mercantilist system. They did not possess the resources, capital, or connections to succeed and relied instead on their own ingenuity. Wealth proved illusive in the seventeenth-century West Indies and difficult to attain unless on board a Dutch merchant ship, an English or French privateer, or on a successful tobacco or sugar plantation.<sup>7</sup>

2d ed. (New York, 1990), 68.

<sup>5</sup> Adam Smith, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* (New York, 1939 [orig. publ. London, 1776]), 591.

<sup>6</sup> Eduardo Galeano, *Open Veins of Latin America: Five Centuries of the Pillage of A Continent*, trans., Cedric Belfrage (New York, 1973), 91; Knight, *The Caribbean*, 68. Nicholas Foster provided one of the best contemporary accounts of the conflict within colonial economic structure. See Nicholas Foster, *A Briefe relation of the late Horrid Rebellion acted in the Island of Barbados...* (London, 1650).

<sup>7</sup> The most helpful sources about seventeenth-century West Indian history are Kenneth R. Andrews's works *The Spanish Caribbean: Trade and Plunder, 1530-1630*

After Spaniards "discovered" the New World, settlers from Spain populated the islands of the Caribbean Sea. The onslaught of Spanish forces, both physical and biological, contaminated wide spaces in the Americas and West Indies. Spaniards and their animals filled that space. Spanish settlers introduced familiar plants and animals. In a few years after discovery cats, chickens, goats, pigs, and cattle multiplied in the West Indian and American interiors. When Santo Domingo was settled in 1496, many settlers lived by horse and cattle-breeding. These animals from Hispaniola gained the reputation of being the best in Spanish America.<sup>8</sup>

The arrival of Spanish settlers also prompted trade between America and the commercial center of Seville. Spain could not supply all of its vast empire, however, and settlements on the periphery relied upon clandestine trade with Spain's enemies.

(New Haven, Conn., 1978) and *Trade, Plunder and Settlement: Maritime Enterprise and the Genesis of the British Empire, 1480-1630* (Cambridge, 1984); Carl and Roberta Bridenbaugh's *No Peace Beyond the Line: The English in the Caribbean, 1624-1690* (New York, 1972); Sir Alan Burns's, *History of the British West Indies* (London, 1954); Alfred W. Crosby's *Ecological Imperialism: The Biological Expansion of Europe, 900-1900* (Cambridge, 1986); Nellis M. Crouse's *French Pioneers in the West Indies* (New York, 1940; reprint ed. 1977); Richard S. Dunn's *Sugar and Slaves: The Rise of the Planter Class in the English West Indies, 1624-1713* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1972); Cornelis Goslinga's *The Dutch in the Caribbean or on the Wild Coast, 1580-1680* (Gainesville, Fla., 1971); Cyril Hamshere's *The British in the Caribbean* (Cambridge, 1972), Arthur Percival Newton's *The European Nations in the West Indies, 1493-1688* (London, 1933); J. H. Parry's *The Spanish Seaborne Empire* (New York, 1966); W. Adolphe Roberts's *The French in the West Indies* (New York, 1942; reprint ed. 1971); Jan Rogozinski's *A Brief History of the Caribbean, From the Arawak and the Caribe to the Present* (New York, 1992); and David Watts's *The West Indies: Patterns of Development, Cultural and Environmental Change Since 1492* (Cambridge, 1987).

<sup>8</sup> Rogozinski, *Brief History of the Caribbean*, 49; Parry, *Spanish Seaborne Empire*, 48; Philip Ainsworth Means, *The Spanish Main: Focus of Envy, 1492-1700* (New York, 1935), 29.

Areas such as the north and west of Hispaniola and eastern Cuba, thinly populated to begin with, had only a few settlers after 1520. Colonists in these regions cultivated the land with tobacco, maize, beans, cassava, and small plots of sugar. Others fished from the coasts. These Spanish colonists paid other Europeans to trade with them in sugar, hides, and precious metals.<sup>9</sup>

After gold and silver discoveries caused Spanish settlement to focus on the Main, Spanish imports became even more difficult to obtain in the periphery and in major ports. Trade decreased to one ship sent to Hispaniola from Spain every two or three years. Because of its proximity to the Spanish Main, and auspicious trade winds, Havana replaced Santo Domingo as the Spanish capital of the Caribbean. Many colonists who did not move to Central America migrated instead from Santo Domingo to Hispaniola's countryside and to regions where they could obtain provisions from foreign traders. Weeds took over cultivated areas of Cuba and Hispaniola. Many foreign interlopers, joined by itinerant Spanish colonists, explored and populated the interior of those islands.<sup>10</sup>

Most illicit traders in Spanish America were French, bringing cheap textiles from Normandy and Brittany. By the middle of the sixteenth century, French interlopers visited Puerto Plata, Bayahá, Guanahibes, and La Yaguana, *rescate* outposts on Hispaniola. Portuguese ships also traded there. Foreign traders arrived with

<sup>9</sup> Helmut Blume, *The Caribbean Islands*, trans. Johannes Maczewski and Ann Norton (London, 1974), 220; Lyle N. McAllister, *Spain and Portugal in the New World, 1492-1700* (Minneapolis, 1984), 236; Parry, *Spanish Seaborne Empire*, 55-56.

<sup>10</sup> Blume, *Caribbean Islands*, 219-220; Woodbury Lowery, *The Spanish Settlements Within the Present Limits of the United States: Florida, 1562-1574* (New York, 1959), 9.

slaves, wine, silks, spices, and hardware. Prices were often quoted in hides, but colonists also paid with sugar. Spanish settlers used Indian and African slaves to bring cattle down from pens in the mountains. Near the coast, colonists slaughtered the animals and sold the hides and meat to the French.<sup>11</sup>

French merchants first profited from the success of illegal Caribbean trade. By 1550, French vessels contributed a large presence in the West Indies. Their forces attacked larger and better organized Spanish settlements driving colonists to the countryside or to the ends of the islands. There they added to the ranks of *rescatadores*. While the French added to their clientele through the attacks, they simultaneously weakened their Catholic enemies. Around 1545, Huguenot seamen from La Rochelle, the main port of French Protestant privateers, began sacking towns along the Spanish Main and on the islands. These same forces attacked Kingston harbor in 1555, Port Royal in 1565, and Negril in 1588. Meanwhile, trading vessels continued to supply *rescatadores* in northwest Hispaniola and southeast Cuba, regions far away from Spanish centers of authority. Spanish *rescatadores* kept their northern European trading partners happy with hides.<sup>12</sup>

11 "Relación sobre cosas de la isla Española," in E. Rodríguez Demorizi, ed., *Relaciones Históricas de Santo Domingo* (Ciudad Trujillo, Dominican Republic, 1945), 128-43; Wright, "Rescates," *HAHR*, III (1920), 343; McAllister, *Spain and Portugal in the New World*, 236; D. H. Pennington, *Europe in the Seventeenth Century*, 2d ed. (London, 1970), 70; Blume, *Caribbean Islands*, 219-220.

12 Andrews, *Trade, Plunder and Settlement*, 128; Violet Barbour, "Privateers and Pirates of the West Indies," *American Historical Review*, XVI (1910), 532; Engel Sluiter, "Dutch-Spanish Rivalry in the Caribbean Area, 1594-1609," *HAHR*, XXVIII (1948), 183.

French interlopers relied solely upon the hide trade by the 1570s. Hides at this time were used for footwear, saddles, belts, clothing, and tallow for candles and for coating ship's hulls. According to Spanish law, all New World products had to be sent to Seville, Spain's leading port. From there, European ships sailed to their respective countries laden with American supplies. The Spanish often charged high prices for hides from the New World, however. Castillian herders produced most hides required for Spanish economic consumption. The demand for leather was greatest in northern Europe. The French supplied northern Europe from their Norman leather market, that relied upon West Indian hides. This market remained continually at Spain's whim. The French knew that most Spanish hides came from Hispaniola. They also realized that profit could be made by-passing Seville and obtaining the hides themselves. Trading firms owned by merchant captains Balthasar and Gaspar Caymans, Jehan le Caron, sieur de Maupas, Guillaume le Héricy, sieur de Pontpierre, among others, led the ventures. They sent ships and men to obtain hides from *rescatadores*. Eventually, they sent men to hunt and kill the animals while living with the *rescatadores*. This trade flourished from the 1570s through the 1590s. Ship-owning merchants borrowed at high rates of interests and sold goods to tanners and curriers in Dieppe, Le Havre, Cherbourg, St. Malo, La Rochelle, and Rouen. The presence of foreign interlopers greatly annoyed the Spanish. While interlopers visited the hide communities of southeastern Cuba and northwestern Hispaniola, they also attacked Spanish shipping and ports.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>13</sup> C. et P. Bréard, *Documents relatifs à la Marine Normande* (Rouen, 1889), 145-78; L. A. Clarkson, "The Organization of the English Leather Industry in the Late Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries," *Economic History Review*, 2d Ser., XIII (1940), 245; Andrews, *Trade, Plunder and Settlement*, 284; Parry, *Spanish Seaborne Empire*, 56, 242; Jonathan I. Israel, *Dutch Primacy in World Trade, 1585-1740* (Oxford, 1989),

Northern European nations continually harassed Spanish trade. English and Dutch privateers attacked Spanish shipping in the Caribbean whenever possible. As Spain's territory in the New World grew, the Spanish could not prevent foreign trade or colonization in areas scarcely patrolled. English privateers played little part in the contraband trade. English vessels traded with local people but they could not compete with the French and the Dutch. The English did not come to the Caribbean to trade, however. They came to plunder. There were brief but violent episodes of conflict between Spain and England throughout the 1570s and 1580s. The opening of the Anglo-Spanish war prompted English privateers to turn out in force to capture treasure and raid Caribbean settlements. English "sea dogs" like Sir Francis Drake, Sir John Hawkins, and Sir Walter Raleigh captured and appropriated precious metals and American goods that the Spanish attempted to transport across the Atlantic Ocean. This was big business, financed by major London merchants and country gentlemen. During the twenty years of warfare, £100,000 to £200,000 in prizes were brought back to England. Meanwhile in England, widespread social unrest, occasioned by poor harvests, plagues, enclosures, and conversion of arable fields into pasture for sheep made life miserable for most people. Thousands chose to fight against Spain aboard privateers for nothing but food, lodging, and the opportunity to take rich prizes.<sup>14</sup>

65; Andrews, *Spanish Caribbean*, 181-82, 195.

<sup>14</sup> Kenneth R. Andrews, *Elizabethan Privateering: English Privateering during the Spanish War, 1585-1603* (Cambridge, 1964), 184; John J. McCusker and Russel R. Menard, *The Economy of Colonial British America, 1607-1789* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1985), 147; Richard B. Sheridan, *Sugar and Slavery: An Economic History of the British West Indies, 1623-1775* (Baltimore, 1973), 75; Andrews, *Trade, Plunder and Settlement*, 26.



Many English sailors had gained their sea legs in North Sea fisheries. English fish played a considerable part in West Indian trade around the turn of the seventeenth century. Sailors delivered fish to *rescatadores* and took back hides to England. The price of leather in England did not rise during the last quarter of the sixteenth century because of the importation of hides by returning privateers.<sup>15</sup> Privateers also returned with spoils of war. Apart from Drake's two fleets, seventy-four ventures with 183 ships pillaged the Caribbean between 1585 and 1603. Certainly many more were never identified. Privateers hunted the West Indies and bottled up Santo Domingo and Havana for months on end. Drake's attacks on Santo Domingo forced many of the city's residents to flee and join the *rescatadores* on the northwestern part of Hispaniola. In harbors such as La Yaguana and Guanahibes, where hides were loaded onto French ships, English privateers took on supplies for their next voyage. Vessels exchanged crew members and goods. The Anglo-Spanish war became the main contributor to *rescate* trade. By the end of the conflict, Spanish officials could not even stop their colonists in Havana from contributing to the contraband trade.<sup>16</sup>

Dutch traffic to the New World did not begin until 1593, and the majority of Dutch ships arrived in the West Indies after 1595. Ships from the Netherlands carried trade for most of the nations in Europe, and Dutch sailors plied their wares in the Old World and New. Dutch ships delivered European goods, mainly cloth and hardware,

<sup>15</sup> Ralph Davis, *The Rise of the English Shipping Industry in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (London, 1962; reprint ed., Newton Abbot, England, 1972), 3; Andrews, *Spanish Caribbean*, 187, 188.

<sup>16</sup> Andrews, *Trade, Plunder and Settlement*, 118, 120, 281, 282-83; Andrews, *Spanish Caribbean*, 188, 194-95; Hugh F. Rankin, *The Golden Age of Piracy* (New York, 1969), 6; Burns, *History of the British West Indies*, 131.

and returned home with salt. The Dutch ignored laws set by the Spanish crown forbidding trade with non-Spanish vessels and brought supplies to Spanish settlements. Dutch interlopers also bartered their wares at numerous, smaller colonies set up by northern Europeans who attacked Spanish commerce. While Dutch traders sought mainly salt, they also traded hides, wood, tobacco, sugar, cacao, and indigo. Like its French counterpart in Rouen, the Amsterdam leather trade demanded hides. By 1597, a small fleet of twenty ships began annual expeditions to Hispaniola and Cuba to satisfy leather merchants' needs. Dutch traders visited Araya, Venezuela, for salt. They also set up trading posts at Curaçao and Tortuga. At Manzanilla, Cuba, and Guanahibes, Hispaniola, they brought artillery ashore.<sup>17</sup>

As much as Spain hated this intrusion into its territory, Spaniards no longer dominated the Caribbean Sea by the seventeenth century. Epidemics ravaged Seville and Spain's country-side from 1599 to 1601. Spain's failure to absorb colonial exports contributed to production deficits in the New World. The Anglo-Spanish war from 1585 to 1603 had decimated the Spanish fleet, and the Spanish were powerless to stop Dutch, French, and English encroachments. On many Caribbean islands, Spain's enemies set up temporary camps where they based privateers. Shipwrecked crews, *rescatadores*, and hide traders, both Spanish and northern European, founded these camps. They set up road houses for stray ships and trading convoys. Dutch settlers fleeing the Spanish invasion of the Netherlands and the Inquisition joined them, as well

<sup>17</sup> J.H. Parry and P.M. Sherlock, *A Short History of the West Indies* (London, 1956), 46-47, 82; Goslinga, *Dutch in the Caribbean*, 53, 55, 107; Israel, *Dutch Primacy and World Trade*, 62; Sluiter, "Dutch-Spanish Rivalry," *HAHR*, XXVIII (1948), 174; Andrews, *Elizabethan Privateering*, 183; Bridenbaugh, *No Peace Beyond the Line*, 177; Newton, *European Nations in the West Indies*, 168; Andrews, *Spanish Caribbean*, 175.

as French Huguenot refugees escaping their Catholic countrymen. Scottish and Irish also migrated there fleeing English persecution. England dumped its criminals from Newgate and debtors prisons onto the scattered islands. All those who ended up on the fringes of Cuba or Hispaniola joined the *rescate* communities as farmers or buccaneers.<sup>18</sup>

When Alexander Exquemelin arrived on Tortuga from the Netherlands over one hundred years after the first buccaneering settlements had been established, he learned from the island's inhabitants about the buccaneers who had lived there in the past. He also learned of those who still populated the interior of Hispaniola and Tortuga. He described these settlers as "a mongrel sort of people of several bloods," who hunted wild swine and cattle.<sup>19</sup> The hunters had lived for years killing animals for meat and

<sup>18</sup> G.B. Harrison, ed., *The Jacobean Journals: Being a Record of Those Things Most Talked of During the Years 1603-1606* (London, 1946); Dunn, *Sugar and Slaves*, 16; Robert A. Naylor, *Penny Ante Imperialism: The Mosquito Shore and the Bay of Honduras, 1600-1914* (London, 1989), 27; Barbour, "Privateers and Pirates," *AHR*, XVI (1910); 536; Watts, *The West Indies*, 132-34; George Woodbury, *The Great Days of Piracy in the West Indies* (New York, 1951), 31; Parry and Sherlock, *Short History of the West Indies*, 82; D.A.G. Waddell, *The West Indies and the Guianas* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1967), 47; Burns, *History of the British West Indies*, 293; William J. Chambliss, "State Organized Crime," *Criminology*, XXVII (1989), 185; Parry, *Spanish Seaborne Empire*, 227-28; Dudley Pope, *The Buccaneer King: The Biography of Sir Henry Morgan, 1635-1688* (New York, 1977), 57; Haring, *Buccaneers in West Indies*, 125; Rankin, *Golden Age*, 7; Peter Wood, *The Spanish Main* (Alexandria, Va., 1979), 106, 108-110; Knight, *Caribbean*, 97, 100; Irene A. Wright, *Cuba* (New York, 1912), 272.

<sup>19</sup> Alexander O. Exquemelin, *The Buccaneers of America: a true account of the most remarkable assaults committed of late upon the coast of the West Indies by the buccaneers of Jamaica and Tortuga* (Amsterdam, 1678); reprint ed., with an introduction and notes by Robert C. Ritchie. Publication of Classics of Naval Literature, ed. Jack Sweetman (Annapolis, Md., 1993), 41.

hides in the *rescate* trade. Europeans who came to obtain hides for merchants in their respective lands rejuvenated their numbers .

Buccaneering began on Hispaniola on the northern plains where the Spanish had never settled and where interloping ships often anchored. Wild cattle, hogs, horses, and dogs, the offspring of domesticated animals Spaniards had brought with them, roamed the island. As Cuba's and Hispaniola's populations grew, hunters made their living by killing animals, cooking meat, and selling the goods to passing ships. The original buccaneers came from Spanish settlements on the southern coast of Hispaniola. They traveled to Tortuga to take part in the *rescate* trade. Hunters from Europe sent by merchant companies joined them. A Jesuit priest in the area called them "an unorganized rabble of men from all countries."<sup>20</sup>

These people chose to remain on the periphery, especially the island of Tortuga. Regions where European vessels traded offered the most rewarding existence. Colonists lived without Spain's blessing and took part in *rescate* trade, growing crops and trading hides to survive. The Spanish failed to enforce laws excluding foreigners from trading with Spanish colonies. It became impossible to supply their colonies with Spanish goods, and the resulting dearth made illicit commerce more widespread in the

<sup>20</sup> Jean-Baptiste Dutertre, *Histoire Générale des Antilles habitées par les Français* (Paris, 1667-1671), I, 415; Thomas Gage, "A New Survey of the West Indies and the Guinas, 1648," in A.P. Newton, ed., *The English American* (New York, 1979), 20-22; Exquemelin, *Buccaneers of America*, 41; Haring, *The Buccaneers in the West Indies*, 57; John Masefield, *On the Spanish Main, or Some English forays on the Ithmus of Darien, With a Description of the Buccaneers and a Short Account of Old-Time Ships and Sailors* (London, 1906), 112; Peter T. Bradley, *The Lure of Peru: Maritime Intrusion into the South Sea, 1598-1701* (New York, 1989), 103; Cordingly, *Under the Black Flag*, xviii; Peter Earle, *The Sack of Panama: Sir Henry Morgan's Adventures on the Spanish Main* (New York, 1981), 44-45; Rankin, *Golden Age*, 7-8; Roberts, *French in the West Indies*, 43; Knight, *The Caribbean*, 96.

Caribbean. Tortuga became a stopover for smugglers, privateers, and European pirates. A multinational settlement developed there, perhaps the first independent European community in the New World. The island's location and fertility made it enticing to Spain's colonists. Merchants and businessmen who facilitated the international trade joined the *rescatadores* and buccaneers on Tortuga.<sup>21</sup>

Buccaneers developed communities scattered on many islands of the Caribbean. They moved anywhere wild cattle and pigs roamed. They became most populous on Tortuga and northern and western Hispaniola. Buccaneers also sheltered along the Gulf of Honduras and the Mosquito Coast, on Cuba, and upon St. Kitts. On the western side of Hispaniola towns first established by buccaneers became trading centers, including Petit Guave, Leogane, Port-de-Paix, Cape Tiberon, and Semana.<sup>22</sup>

Spanish reports indicate that La Yaguana had over 150 households by 1595. Guanahibes was similar in size. Both towns had a thriving trade with interlopers. Samuel de Champlain described best the nature of all northern European ventures to the Caribbean. While he captained a Spanish ship to the region in 1599, he met "thirteen ships, French, English, and Flemish, half armed for war, half with merchandise" off

21 Herbert L. Osgood, *The American Colonies in the Eighteenth Century* (New York, 1924), 525-26; Bridenbaugh, *No Peace Beyond the Line*, 62, 176; Watts, *West Indies*, 132; Andrews, *Spanish Caribbean*, 214; Rogozinski, *Brief History of the Caribbean*, 84.

22 Masefield, *On the Spanish Main*, 111; Andrews, *Spanish Caribbean*, 255; Haring, *Buccaneers in the West Indies*, 76; Kenneth R. Andrews, "The English in the Caribbean, 1520-1620," in K.R. Andrews, N.P. Canny, and P.E.H. Hair, eds., *The Westward Enterprise: English activities in Ireland, the Atlantic, and America, 1480-1650* (Liverpool, 1978), 122; Wright, *Cuba*, 294-5; Perry and Sherlock, *Short History of the West Indies*, 81, 89-90; Watts, *West Indies*, 142; Osgood, *American Colonies*, 526; Rogozinski, *Brief History of the Caribbean*, 84; Means, *The Spanish Main*, 164-65.

the northwest side of Hispaniola.<sup>23</sup> He noted both privateers and merchant captains used the same harbors and cays, often sharing food supplies and goods. Dutch ships arrived off the coasts of Cuba and Hispaniola over 100 times a year. The Cunas, a Native American tribe upon Hispaniola, frequently joined with the French and Dutch hunters. They allowed French Huguenot buccaneers to take refuge in their territory and marry Cuna wives. The trade was similar in Cuba. Manzanilla, on the southern coast of Cuba, grew from contraband trade. The Spanish suspected almost four hundred people lived in the forests outside that town hunting animals for the hide trade.<sup>24</sup>

Alarmed at the tremendous influx of foreign ships, the Spanish in 1599 considered depopulating Baracoa, the old capital of Cuba and largest *rescate* community. Many Cubans protested, however, and Cuban officials decided instead to send out small fleets to destroy the intruders. While these ships engaged enemy vessels around Hispaniola, Cuba, and the Windward Passage, Spanish efforts accomplished little. Most vessels sent to the West Indies from Europe, especially by the Dutch, were too large to engage in combat or else they traveled in fleets too massive to attack. In September 1603, Spanish vessels spotted a convoy of twenty-two Dutch ships on the south coast of Cuba. They also found eleven English, Flemish, and French Ships of

<sup>23</sup> Alice Wilmere *et al.*, eds., *Narrative of a Voyage to the West Indies and Mexico in the Years 1599-1600...by Samuel Champlain* (London, 1859), 15-16.

<sup>24</sup> Luis Cabrera de Córdoba, *Relaciones de las cosas sucedidas en la corte de España desde 1599 hasta 1614* (Madrid, 1857), 276; Andrews, *Elizabethan Privateering*, 170; Wright, "Rescates," *HAHR*, III (1920), 354; Andrews, *Trade, Plunder and Settlement*, 284-85; Sluiter, "Dutch-Spanish Rivalry," *HAHR*, XXVIII (1948), 190; Rogozinski, *Brief History of the Caribbean*, 84; Burns, *History of British West Indies*, 51; Andrews, *Spanish Caribbean*, 195.

100 to 400 tons accompanied by more than twenty launches, at Guanahibes. Outraged by the violation of his laws for the Caribbean, King Philip III of Spain ordered the entire depopulation of the cattle ranching zone on northwestern Hispaniola to stop French, English, and Dutch interloping.<sup>25</sup>

New governors dispatched to Havana and Santo Domingo directed the merchants of those cities to stop encouraging the *rescate* trade. By then, *rescatadores* populated most of western Hispaniola and eastern Cuba. At the same pivotal moment, the English reentered the West Indies trade *en masse* for the first time in thirty years. While the governor of Cuba sought to carry out the king's orders peacefully by levying petty fines coupled with arrests and pardons, the Council of the Indies ordered the depopulation of Puerto Plata, Yaguana, and Bayahá on the northern part of Hispaniola in August 1603.<sup>26</sup>

Meanwhile, in London where the Black Death had destroyed 33,000 people, King James I decreed after the treaty of London that he would execute anyone who pillaged the Caribbean. Most merchants interested in the hide trade ceased their business with the West Indies. Others, however, found the lure of Spanish merchandise or the leather trade too great. They returned to the *rescate* haunts. The

<sup>25</sup> Irene A. Wright, *Further English Voyages to Spanish America* (London, 1951), 151; Andrews, "English in the Caribbean," in Andrews, Canny, and Hair, eds., *Westward Enterprise*, 120; Sluiter, "Dutch-Spanish Rivalry," *HAHR*, XXVIII (1948), 175; Watts, *West Indies*, 132; Goslinga, *Dutch in the Caribbean*, 60-61; Andrews, *Spanish Caribbean*, 179, 185; Israel, *Dutch Primacy in World Trade*, 66.

<sup>26</sup> Andrews, *Spanish Caribbean*, 204-07, 208; Sluiter, "Dutch-Spanish Rivalry," *HAHR*, XVIII (1948), 192-93; Rogozinski, *Brief History of the Caribbean*, 42; Andrews, *Trade, Plunder and Settlement*, 285, 286; Goslinga, *Dutch in the Caribbean*, 61.

*rescatadores* still attracted the Dutch and French as well as a handful of Italians and Portuguese. These settlers lived "with so little anxiety that they sometimes leave their ships beached while their launches are scattered at sea, fetching and carrying merchandise for hides with as much freedom and shamelessness as if they were at home."<sup>27</sup>

Santo Domingo's town council stalled the approval of the Council of the Indies's plan to depopulate northern Hispaniola. By 1605, two years after the original order, it still had not taken action. Later that year the Council of the Indies received startling information. Antonio Osario, governor of Hispaniola, informed them that four large Dutch ships with numerous soldiers had arrived at Guanahibes. Another Dutch force had united seventeen smuggling vessels of all nationalities. According to Osario, men on these ships were determined to construct a base at the bays of both Guanahibes and Bayahá.<sup>28</sup> The council did not know, however, that thirty-four ships left the Netherlands for *rescate* trading bases that same year. These ships returned with two hundred tons of hides. When this information reached the Council of the Indies, it moved to expedite depopulation.<sup>29</sup>

The Council of the Indies proposed to strip northwestern Hispaniola of colonists and move the area's Spanish settlers to Santo Domingo. The Council also considered the same process for Cuba's southern coast, but decided against it. Santo Domingo's

<sup>27</sup> *Archivo General de Indies*, Santo Domingo, 177: Melgarejo to Crown, 21 June 1604, cited in Andrews, *Spanish Caribbean*, 185-86.

<sup>28</sup> Demorizi, *Relaciones Históricas de Santo Domingo*, 184-88.

<sup>29</sup> Sluiter, "Dutch-Spanish Rivalry," *HAHR*, XVIII (1948), 183-84; Andrews, *Spanish Caribbean*, 186; Andrews, *Trade, Plunder and Settlement*, 286.



town council pleaded with the crown that only two fleets arrived each year from Spain. It argued that *rescatadores* only participated in the contraband trade because they never received needed supplies. It explained that this dearth had forced *rescatadores* away from the towns to begin with. The Santo Domingo council argued the cattle of the region, estimated at over 110,000, could never be moved. It pleaded that a valuable trading commodity would be lost, and that the population of poor whites, mestizos, mulattos, and Africans would flee inland and continually resist, only encouraging smuggling more. Crown officials refused to hear their pleas. The governor of Hispaniola, Osario, ordered an assault. He obtained 150 troops from Puerto Rico, and on 2 August 1605 he personally led the troops, reading the royal order of depopulation in Guanahibes, Bayahá, Puerto Plata, Monte Christe, and La Yaguana.<sup>30</sup>

The colonists revolted immediately. In the resulting chaos, Spanish soldiers burned houses, public buildings, churches, and convents. Osario later reflected that he had hoped to

take away their women and belongings, compelling them to move with them to new settlements and setting fire to their houses to make it clear that this had to be done. They burned easily, being of thatch. I went myself to their ranches and rounded up their cattle staying there until they had got them ready and on the move. At every stage throughout they tried all sorts of tricks and schemes to distract me from my purpose, threatening me at every step with what the enemy might do and the many ambushes he had allegedly laid, but they could not get away.<sup>31</sup>

30 Demorizi, *Relaciones Históricas de Santo Domingo*, 184-88; Rogozinski, *Brief History of the Caribbean*, 53; Sluiter, "Dutch-Spanish Rivalry," *HAHR*, XVIII (1948), 185-87; Andrews, *Spanish Caribbean*, 208, 211.

31 Demorizi, *Relaciones Históricas de Santo Domingo*, 289.

The soldiers attempted to destroy and scatter the herds of animals. Many inhabitants fled to the jungle or to foreign boats that quickly raised anchors and sails. Some also sailed to Cuba. Few actually moved but fled into the jungles and waited for the Spaniards to leave. No more than 1000 cattle were taken back to Santo Domingo. Most settlers who fled returned, and Osario had to send troops for years against those who remained.<sup>32</sup>

While most pirate historians have argued this attack engendered piracy by converting "butchers of cattle into butchers of men,"<sup>33</sup> no evidence exists to confirm this assertion. The *rescatadores* rioted, buccaneers included, but they sought their revenge upon land, not the sea. The debacle's most important result was that the Dutch and French limited their business with the *rescatadores*, thereby abandoning many French and Dutch hunters on the islands. These men were the first buccaneers who could not claim Spanish heritage. Riots and rebellions followed the Spanish oppression of northern Hispaniola. Troops sent to put down the insurrections met fierce resistance. The *rescate* trade moved to eastern Cuba where the Spanish took no action. The population of Santiago de Cuba burgeoned by two to three hundred persons after the depopulation of Hispaniola.<sup>34</sup>

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 293-95; Sluiter, "Dutch-Spanish Rivalry," *HAHR*, XVIII (1948), 187; Burns, *History of the British West Indies*, 294; Rogozinski, *Brief History of the Caribbean*, 84.

<sup>33</sup> Philip Gosse, *The History of Piracy* (New York, 1932), 144; Parry and Sherlock, *Short History of the West Indies*, 82-83; Burns, *British in the West Indies*, 294; Haring, *Buccaneers in the West Indies*, 69-70.

<sup>34</sup> K.G. Davis, *The North Atlantic World in the Seventeenth Century*, volume four in *Europe and the World in the Age of Expansion*, ed. Boyd C. Shafer (Minneapolis, 1974), 31.

Although Spanish officials in the Caribbean hoped to destroy the buccaneers, *rescatadores*, and their illicit trade, the extermination of their settlements did little to inhibit foreign intrusion. In February 1606, off the coast of Manzanilla, Cuba, a Spanish squadron dispersed a smuggling fleet of twenty-four Dutch ships looking for salt and hides, six French ships also searching for hides to take to Rouen, and one English pirate ship.<sup>35</sup> The Spanish fleet attacked, but all escaped save one *rescate* vessel that sunk a Spanish man-of-war before it went down. The governor of Cuba issued a general pardon to *rescatadores* in 1607 to keep the Council of the Indies from depopulating Cuba's coast. The pardon expanded the *rescate* trade. In 1607, the Spanish governor of Jamaica reported to the crown the presence of buccaneers on his island.<sup>36</sup> By 1608, the hide trade on the southern banks of Cuba occupied twenty Dutch ships annually. In exchange for linen, woolens, metal goods, paper, and wine, the Dutch took home cargoes of hides. Northern Hispaniola, meanwhile, did not recover its contraband trade for the next ten years.<sup>37</sup> Peace between the Dutch and the Spanish in 1609 enabled more Dutch interlopers than ever to infiltrate the Caribbean. The Dutch West India Company allowed private individuals who had paid a fee, to plunder ships, smuggle, and trade in areas unoccupied by the Company's settlements.

35 Engel Sluiter, "Dutch Maritime Power and the Colonial Status Quo," *Pacific Historical Review*, XI (1942), 33.

36 Andrews, *Spanish Caribbean*, 222.

37 Demorizi, *Relaciones Históricas de Santo Domingo*, 290-92, 297-301; Andrews, *Spanish Caribbean*, 202, 212; Geoffrey Parker, *Spain and The Netherlands, 1559-1659* (London, 1979), 55; Wright, "Rescates," *HAHR*, III (1920), 353; Andrews, "English in the Caribbean," in Andrews, Canny, and Hair, eds., *Westward Enterprise*, 121; Goslinga, *Dutch in the Caribbean*, 96; Israel, *Dutch Primacy in World Trade*, 65.

Many Amsterdam merchants took advantage of this offer and profited by trading linen for hides. St. Christopher and Tortuga became way stations for these Dutch vessels. The interloping trade with buccaneers for meat and hides that benefited England and France should have discontinued with the ascension of James I, who made peace with Spain. This turn of events did not eradicate the foreign trade, however. In 1609, the *Junta de Guerra de Indies* informed the Spanish Crown that smugglers still infested the shores and bays of Tierra Firme, Araya, Hispaniola, Tortuga, and Cuba. These English and French interlopers allegedly traded with and supplied artillery and munitions to secret settlements of black, white, and mulatto rebels.<sup>38</sup>

By the end of 1612, the governor of Cuba complained "all these years these coasts have been infested with small pirate vessels, from which your majesty's subjects who live by trade and navigation have suffered much damage, and it is understood from some who have been robbed and put ashore that they are becoming as attached to *rescates* as to pillage."<sup>39</sup> During the respite in the overt fighting in the Caribbean, Tortuga became a base for smugglers and pirates from Europe, as did Cape Tiberon and Samana on Hispaniola. Despite the lull in foreign incursions that occurred from 1606 to 1620, the hunter-buccaneers of Cuba, Hispaniola, and Tortuga continued to participate in Caribbean smuggling. Even after 1620, when the Dutch had congregated

<sup>38</sup> Alexander Brown, *The Genesis of the United States* (Boston, 1901), I, 522; Goslinga, *Dutch in the Caribbean*, 107; Davis, *The North Atlantic World*, 8; Andrews, "The English in the Caribbean," in Andrews, Canny, and Hair eds., *Westward Enterprise*, 122; Andrews, *Spanish Caribbean*, 234.

<sup>39</sup> *Archivo General de Indies*, Santo Domingo, 100: Gaspar de Perda to Crown, 18 Dec. 1612, cited in Andrews, *Spanish Caribbean*, 234-35.

at Cape San Nicolas, the French at La Gonaive, and the English at Samana, all three nations rendezvoused at Tortuga to trade with the buccaneer-*rescatadores*.<sup>40</sup>

The outbreak of the Thirty Years War in 1618 ended the uneasy peace in the Caribbean. By 1623 Dutch, French, and English invaders had crippled Spanish forces. Dutch vessels struck from *rescate* bases. While the Spanish were occupied, English and French colonists had advantageously established several small colonies.<sup>41</sup> An increase in the population in the Caribbean added to the ranks of buccaneers, planters, and *rescatadores*. These transients built two towns upon the banks of northwestern Hispaniola, Port Margot and Port-de-Paix, where earlier in the century buccaneer communities had risen.<sup>42</sup>

Before the war in Europe, buccaneers came from querulous Spaniards operating *rescate* trade and defying the policies issued from Madrid and Seville. French hide traders from Rouen also contributed to this population. After the beginning of the war, however, the cultural background of these new arrivals to the *rescate* communities became more complex, as did the definition of buccaneer. Some of the new European

<sup>40</sup> Masfield, *On the Spanish Main*, 111; Goslinga, *Dutch in the Caribbean*, 55; Rogozinski, *Brief History of the Caribbean*, 43, 84; Newton, *European Nations in the West Indies*, 191.

<sup>41</sup> Andrews, *Trade, Plunder and Settlement*, 300; Dunn, *Sugar and Slaves*, 11, 16, 18-19, 117; McAllister, *Spain and Portugal in the New World*, 429; Andrews, *Spanish Caribbean*, 236; Rogozinski, *Brief History of the Caribbean*, 58; Naylor, *Penny Ante Imperialism*, 27.

<sup>42</sup> Andrews, *Spanish Caribbean*, 255; Roberts, *French in the West Indies*, 43; Masfield, *On the Spanish Main*, 111; Haring, *Buccaneers in the West Indies*, 65-66; Parry and Sherlock, *Short History of the West Indies*, 89-90; Watts, *West Indies*, 132-34; Knight, *The Caribbean*, 97.

settlers sought to make a living from plundering the Spanish. Others wished to continue trading meat and hides.<sup>43</sup>

Those first on the Spanish Caribbean periphery did not haphazardly arrive from northern Europe, as C.H. Haring suggested. They came from Spain. These colonists first settled along the coast of southern Hispaniola. There they built several towns, including Santo Domingo. Over the course of the sixteenth century, however, those colonists and their descendants found themselves in economic ruin. They fled to Hispaniola's northern beaches and the island of Tortuga. There they engaged in *rescate* trade. By trading with interloping northern European vessels, they built an elaborate bartering system based on exchanging hides and meat for European goods. When Spanish authorities attempted to destroy this arrangement by depopulating the region, the *rescatadores* resisted. Rather than resorting to piracy after the attacks, *rescatadores* regrouped and reestablished their trade. European pirates, anchoring at *rescate* haunts, harassed Spanish shipping until the opening of the Thirty Years War. Then European privateers and merchants continued visiting *rescate* ports while attacking Spanish vessels. The close proximity of buccaneer-*rescatadores* and European pirates led historians to believe buccaneers became the first New World pirates. An analysis of buccaneer existence will further illustrate the invalidity of that assumption.

<sup>43</sup> James B. Collins, *Classes, Estates, and Order in Early Modern Brittany* (Cambridge, 1994), 37; Andrews, *Spanish Caribbean*, 181-87; Burns, *History of the British West Indies*, 131, 290-91, 294; Means, *The Spanish Main*, 164-65; Goslinga, *Dutch in the Caribbean*, 244; Rogozinski, *Brief History of the Caribbean*, 66; Dunn, *Sugar and Slaves*, 8; Roberts, *French in the West Indies*, 44; Rankin, *Golden Age of Piracy*, 7-8; Knight, *The Caribbean*, 96.

### CHAPTER THREE

#### THE BUCCANEERS' WORLD

Since buccaneers did not live upon the sea, running about the decks of pirate ships, the question remains: how did they live? This is difficult to answer. Few sources exist that describe life anywhere in the early seventeenth-century Caribbean, much less Tortuga. These few sources, however, yield information that elucidates some aspects of buccaneer existence. The mystique of the modern Caribbean has further damaged historical interpretation of buccaneer society. To sixteenth- and seventeenth-century colonists, the Caribbean represented everything but romance. Colonists' perception that the New World was paradise quickly faded, and soon most Europeans believed the New World was hell itself, where Satan dwelt in a kingdom of savage Indians.<sup>1</sup>

Spanish *rescatadores* from southern Hispaniola accepted life in the Caribbean. When they left Santo Domingo and southern Hispaniola, they did not seek escape from their harsh lives in the West Indies. They sought existence away from Spanish authority, nationalism, and religious zeal. They also hoped to trade for necessities the Spanish empire had denied them. French buccaneers, sent by merchant companies to obtain hides, lived peacefully with Spanish *rescatadores* on Tortuga. These Frenchmen declined to leave and made their homes among Spanish traders and buccaneers. All of these colonists endured a hard, difficult life, but they must have found it better than life elsewhere, or they would not have remained.

<sup>1</sup> Lewis Hanke, *Aristotle and the American Indians: A Study in Race Prejudice in the Modern World* (Bloomington, Ind., 1959), 6.

When Spanish vessels no longer supplied Spain's West Indian colonists, illegal traders provided necessities settlers craved. To acquire these goods, some Spaniards moved out of tightly held Spanish bastions, such as Santo Domingo. These explorers fanned out along the fringes of northwestern Hispaniola and southwestern Cuba. They solicited foreign trade from interloping Dutch, French, and English vessels. These colonists realized hides brought more ships from Europe than any other commodity.<sup>2</sup>

Thus, hide traders came to dominate the populations of towns that grew along the coasts of Cuba and Hispaniola. The main *rescate* trading base was on Tortuga. *Rescatadores* hunted the northern plains of Hispaniola. Wild cattle, hogs, horses, and dogs, offspring of tamed creatures from Spain, roamed the islands. Hunters desperately sought the hides of these animals. Colonists who became *rescatadores* were familiar with the hide trade. Many Spaniards arrived in the West Indies from Castile. Northern Hispaniola reminded colonists of the hills of Castile. In sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Spain, those who preferred tending sheep and cattle occupied Castile. When some of these same individuals, who had migrated to Santo Domingo, moved to the fringes of Hispaniola, life tending animals for meat and hides was not new to them.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Herbert L. Osgood, *The American Colonies in the Eighteenth Century* (New York, 1924), 525-26; Carl and Roberta Bridenbaugh, *No Peace Beyond the Line: The English in the Caribbean, 1624-1690* (New York, 1972), 62, 176; David Watts, *The West Indies: Patterns of Development, Cultural and Environmental Change Since 1492* (Cambridge, 1987), 132; Kenneth R. Andrews, *The Spanish Caribbean: Trade and Plunder, 1530-1630* (New Haven, Conn., 1978), 214; J.H. Parry, *The Spanish Seaborne Empire* (Berkeley, 1966), 104-05; Jan Rogozinski, *A Brief History of the Caribbean* (New York, 1992), 84.

<sup>3</sup> Parry, *Spanish Seaborne Empire*, 104-05.



In the late sixteenth century, hunter-buccaneers were of predominately Spanish origin. As time wore on, however, they became "a mongrel sort of people of several bloods," an "organized rabble of men from all countries."<sup>4</sup> In other words, groups from several nations arrived and lived with the Spaniards on the periphery of the empire.<sup>5</sup> Spanish colonists still made up most of the *rescatadores*' population and they continued to leave tightly held Spanish cities throughout the sixteenth century. Supplies dwindled, and bombardments from northern European privateers provided extra impetus to seek calm and safety. French ships, attacking in 1555, 1565, and 1588, and English privateers from 1585 to 1603, severely demoralized remaining

<sup>4</sup> Alexander Exquemelin, *The Buccaneers of America: a true account of the most remarkable assaults committed of late upon the coast of the West Indies by buccaneers of Jamaica and Tortuga* (Amsterdam, 1678); reprint ed., with an introduction and notes by Robert C. Ritchie. *Publication of Classics of Naval Literature*, ed. Jack Sweetman (Annapolis, Md., 1993), 41; Jean-Baptiste Dutertre, *Histoire Générale des Antilles habitées par les François* (Paris, 1667-1671), I, 415.

<sup>5</sup> Thomas Gage, "A New Survey of the West Indies and the Guinas, 1648," in A.P. Newton, ed., *The English American* (New York, 1979), 20-22; Exquemelin, *Buccaneers of America*, 41; C.H. Haring, *The Buccaneers in the West Indies in the XVII Century* (New York, 1910; reprint ed., Hamden, N.Y., 1966), 57; John Masefield, *On the Spanish Main, or Some English forays on the Ithmus of Darien, With a Description of the Buccaneers and a Short Account of Old-Time Ships and Sailors* (London, 1906), 112; Richard Hill, *The Picaroons; Or, One Hundred and Fifty Years Ago* (Dublin 1869; reprint ed., New York, 1971), 7; Arthur Percival Newton, *The European Nations in the West Indies* (London, 1933), 231; Peter T. Bradley, *The Lure of Peru: Maritime Intrusion into the South Sea, 1598-1701* (New York, 1989), 103; David Cordingly, *Under the Black Flag: The Romance and the Reality of Life Among the Pirates* (New York, 1995), xviii; Peter Earle, *The Sack of Panama: Sir Henry Morgan's Adventures on the Spanish Main* (New York, 1981), 44-45; Hugh F. Rankin, *The Golden Age of Piracy* (New York, 1969), 7-8; W. Adolphe Roberts, *The French in the West Indies, 1624-1664* (New York, 1942; reprint ed., 1971), 43; Franklin Knight, *The Caribbean: The Genesis of a Fragmented Nationalism*, 2nd ed. (New York, 1990), 96.

populations. Privateers stopped virtually all traffic to Spanish ports and terrified colonists with the constant threat of destruction.<sup>6</sup> Attacks crippled the Spanish Caribbean economy and left poorer settlers with little option but joining *rescatadores*.

With the establishment of a hide trade between the Old World and New, European governments supported the capture of feral animals on West Indian islands for meat and hides. Before colonists migrated to the periphery of the islands, pastoral products, especially hides and tallow, were major exports. Dyestuffs also were important. Some dyes had to be searched for in the jungles. Spaniards introduced others, including indigo, as a cultivated crop. Some *rescatadores* tended crops, and others hunted. Those who planted raised sugar, cassava, and indigo. Originally, Europeans relied upon Spanish *rescatadores* to hunt down animals and sell them to merchant vessels that called at their ports. To this end, *rescatadores* rounded up hordes of swine and cattle and penned them, creating ranches to take advantage of Dutch and French interloping. Europeans later took more initiative, particularly the French. In an effort to bolster the hide trade of Normandy and Brittany, they side-stepped Spanish commercial laws and sent ships directly to the islands. Merchant companies sent men and materiel into Caribbean jungles to track down animals and bring them to ports. No careful estimate exists of how many people became involved in this trade. Reportedly, it incorporated 360 hunters on Cuba and 500 Spaniards on

<sup>6</sup> Violet Barbour, "Pirates and Privateers in the West Indies," *American Historical Review*, XVI (1910), 532; Kenneth R. Andrews, *Elizabethan Privateering: English Privateering during the Spanish War, 1585-1603* (Cambridge, 1964), 184; Andrews, *Spanish Caribbean*, 187-88; Kenneth R. Andrews, *Trade, Plunder and Settlement: Maritime Enterprise and the Genesis of the British Empire* (Cambridge, 1984), 118, 281-83.

Hispaniola.<sup>7</sup> A Spanish inquiry outside Santo Domingo in October 1606 found 174 cattle-ranches, 2 pig farms, 163 ginger plantations, and 171 plantations growing cassava, maize, and other vegetables.<sup>8</sup>

Of the European *rescatadores*, the French made up the largest number. Most came from Rouen. Others hailed from Cherbourg, Dieppe, Le Havre, St. Malo, and La Rochelle. Pierre le Grand, allegedly the first buccaneer pirate according to Exquemelin, sailed from Dieppe. Le Grand reportedly captured an entire Spanish treasure fleet with one small sloop. He then returned to France to live from his spoils.<sup>9</sup> Huguenots fleeing France contributed to the *rescatadore* population. Beginning in 1627, the siege of La Rochelle lasted fourteen months and resulted in thousands of Huguenot deaths. France did not provide a welcome environment for Protestants in those days. Many were murdered, butchered, and had their body parts sold in the streets.<sup>10</sup>

Englishmen also contributed to the ranks of buccaneer hunters. By 1603, the English, who maintained a privateering presence in the West Indies, began to rid themselves of their more disrespectful elements. Following a law passed by Parliament

<sup>7</sup> Irene Wright, "Rescates, : With Special Reference to Cuba, 1599-1610," *Hispanic American Historical Review*, III (1920), 354; Parry, *Spanish Seaborne Empire*, 55-56.

<sup>8</sup> Rogozinski, *Brief History of the Caribbean*, 49; Cornelis Goslinga, *The Dutch in the Caribbean and on the Wild Coast, 1580-1680* (Gainesville, Fla., 1971), 96; Andrews, *Spanish Caribbean*, 181-83, 213.

<sup>9</sup> Exquemelin, *Buccaneers of America*, 78.

<sup>10</sup> Andrews, *Trade, Plunder and Settlement*, 284; David E. Stannard, *American Holocaust: The Conquest of the New World* (New York, 1992), 61.

in 1597, "criminals and vagabonds," who were beginning to "swarm everywhere more frequently," were banished and deported to the West Indies.<sup>11</sup> This may have been to the prisoners' advantage. In seventeenth-century London, the Black Death ran rampant. Other Englishmen, with freedom of choice, also migrated to the West Indies. They believed they could find wealth and prestige in the New World, enough to earn positions in England's upper classes. As English society became fractured along political, economic, and social lines leading toward civil war, more people fled to colonies. England's intelligentsia regarded the colonies as the cure for England's social upheaval. Widespread social unrest, unfruitful harvests, plagues, and the popular belief that the population was eclipsing employment opportunities also forced many young men into merchant service as a means of survival. An acute depression between 1620 and 1624 added to the chaos. Many anti-Catholic sentiments throughout English society also rallied Protestants to seek every opportunity to harm Spain. Some men, especially from London and Oxenham, tried their hands at piracy.<sup>12</sup>

People from disparate nations living in close proximity did not cause chaos on Hispaniola and Cuba. The combined population of militant English Protestants and French Huguenots created stability in an environment exhibiting with many nationalities. Religious allegiance bound many traders together. Additional Protestants at the turn of the century, fleeing the Spanish invasion of the Netherlands and the

11 G. B. Harrison, *The Jacobean Journals: Being a Record of Those things Most Talked of During the Years 1603-1606* (London, 1946), 65.

12 Masefield, *On the Spanish Main*, 116; Andrews, *Trade, Plunder and Settlement*, 32; Richard B. Sheridan, *Sugar and Slavery: An Economic History of the British West Indies, 1623-1775* (St. Lawrence, Barbados, 1974), 75; Barry Supple, *Commercial Crisis and Change in England, 1600-1642* (Cambridge, 1959), 20-29, 52-69.

Inquisition, added to the anti-Spanish environment. Even *rescatadores* and buccaneer hide traders who originally hailed from Spain grew to hate their mother country. Spain did little to resolve the situation. Spanish policies of torturing, executing, and mutilating those found participating in *rescate* trade further antagonized *rescate* settlements. Allegiance against Spain proved a powerful unifying force as Flemish, French, and English ships careened together and anchored in the same harbors.<sup>13</sup>

Since such an odd multinational conglomeration existed, traditional European nationalism ceased to exist. While settlers fell into groups dominated by a nationality, Spanish, English, French, or Dutch, everyone resided in peace in *rescate* communities. Either nationalism and religion must not have been taken very seriously among these communities, or else their hatred of the Spanish produced peace among the groups.

"Among themselves," Exquemelin wrote of buccaneers, "they are very civil and charitable to each other."<sup>14</sup> Buccaneers on Tortuga developed a social order that controlled anarchy. They established insurance for hunters who fell sick or injured on the hunt. These articles became the basis for pirate articles developed later in the seventeenth century. They also elected leaders from among their population.<sup>15</sup> To

<sup>13</sup> Sir Alan Burns, *History of the British West Indies* (London, 1954), 321; Dudley Pope, *The Buccaneer King: The Biography of Sir Henry Morgan, 1635-1688* (New York, 1977), 57; J.H. Parry and P.M. Sherlock, *A Short History of the West Indies*, 3rd ed. (London, 1956), 82; Andrews, *Spanish Caribbean*, 185-86, 204-207; Engel Sluiter, "Dutch-Spanish Rivalry in the Caribbean Area, 1594-1609," *HAHR*, XXVIII (1948), 192-93.

<sup>14</sup> Exquemelin, *Buccaneers of America*, 84.

<sup>15</sup> Père Labat, *The Memoirs of Père Labat, 1693-1705*, trans., John Eaden (London, 1970), 36-37. Gordon K. Lewis, *The Growth of the Modern West Indies* (New York, 1968), 48; Burns, *History of the British West Indies*, 294-95.

trade with passing ships, *rescatadores* derived a method of communication with sailors who cruised around their islands. Those unfamiliar with buccaneer trading methodology misinterpreted the signals. On a voyage through the West Indies, Père Labat described "men waving signals" on a westerly point of Hispaniola. Labat's crew thought it "unsafe to run risks on the coast, as they [signalers] might prove to be anything but honest folk and might try to seize the barque."<sup>16</sup>

Buccaneers frightened many who settled and sailed in the Caribbean for two main reasons. Northern European pirates anchored at Tortuga to plunder Spanish towns and shipping. These raiders were not above assaulting each other. Those who colonized the Caribbean feared anyone associated with European terrorists. Settlers also feared buccaneers because the hunters neglected their native cultures and "savagely" prowled the jungles hunting food like Indians. Sir Henry Colt, a traveler to the West Indies in the 1630s, found that one of the most persistent and dreaded threats to insubordinate colonists and sailors was to send them to live with the "cow-killers." Spanish colonists in tightly held towns believed *rescatadores* sought vengeance on anyone still allied with Spain. Europeans believed buccaneers would set them out in the jungles and hunt them for sport, just as they hunted animals. Living free from the regulations of European culture clearly did not appeal to everyone. Yet, large numbers of Europeans came to North America and the Caribbean and chose to become like the natives they found there.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>16</sup> Labat, *Memoirs*, 174.

<sup>17</sup> Sir Henry Colt, "The Voyages of Sir Henry Colt to the Islands of the Antilles...", In *Colonising Expeditions to the West Indies and Guiana, 1623-1667*, ed. V.T. Harlow. Hakluyt Society, 2nd Ser. LVI (London, 1925; reprint ed., Nendeln, Liechtenstein, 1967), 92; Newton, *European Nations in the West Indies*, 169; James Axtell, "The White Indians of Colonial America," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd

Buccaneers evidently made peace with the conflict of cultures, constructing their lives by selling meat. In addition to their meat products, the people of Tortuga sold dyewoods, which grew in great abundance on the island. Dyewoods later became more profitable than meat. The English outlawed the importation of dyewoods, but Dutch and French vessels, often bringing slaves and other Europeans to help cut and remove the wood, eagerly purchased dyewood while contributing to the growing population of the buccaneers.<sup>18</sup>

Buccaneers endured a hard life in the West Indies. They became nomadic to track down and kill their prey. Buccaneers used Indian methods to cook the animals they killed. Through this process they earned their names. The hunters cured their meat by smoking it over a slowly burning fire of green wood. They constructed a wooden grate, called a "boucan," over the fires.<sup>19</sup> Labat also described a "little dome-shaped" cooking hut as a boucan. The Caribe, Arawak, and Brazilian Indians developed these forms of cooking. When available, buccaneers used salt to preserve the meat. After the meat finished cooking, it looked "red as a rose and of tempting smell," but was often "so dry it is as hard as a board." The French, who dealt the

Ser., XXXII (1975), 56. Axtell has devoted an entire book to cultural conflict entitled *The Invasion Within: The Contest of Cultures in Colonial North America* (New York, 1985).

<sup>18</sup> Nellis M. Crouse, *French Pioneers in the West Indies, 1624-1664*, (New York 1944; reprint ed., 1977), 82; Philip Ainsworth Means, *The Spanish Main: Focus of Envy, 1492-1700* (New York, 1935), 179-180; Newton, *European Nations in the West Indies*, 107-111; Watts, *West Indies*, 134.

<sup>19</sup> Dutertre, *Histoire Générale des Antilles*, I, 415; Newton, *European Nations in the West Indies*, 169; Rankin, *Golden Age*, 7; Haring, *Buccaneers in the West Indies*, 66.

most with these hunters, first called them *boucaniers*. The English adapted the name to "buccaneer."<sup>20</sup>

Exquemelin wrote in the 1660s that different sets of buccaneers roamed the savannas of Hispaniola and Tortuga. Many hunted only cattle, while some stalked boars, and others sought pigs. No matter which animals they sought, group hunts with five or six companions roamed for six months at a time, and some went for as long as a year. They built camps along the coast and returned with their kills periodically during the long hunts. From there, fellow *rescatadores* prepared the hides and meat and sold the goods to merchant traders. After they prepared and cooked the meat and hides, buccaneers traded their wares for powder, shot, cloth, wine, brandy, and cooking instruments. Buccaneers hunted with guns of four feet and used one ounce bullets. They carried a *gargoussier*, a leather bag ten inches long and six deep for cartridges. They lived without a specific home to return to. On the hunt, buccaneers built and camped in sheds covered with leaves. They rendezvoused where feral animals could be found, or along the coast, near a beach where many ships passed.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>20</sup> Labat, *Memoirs*, 176-77; Dutertre, *Histoire Générale des Antilles*, I, 415; Masefield, *On the Spanish Main*, 112; Newton, *European Nations in the West Indies*, 169; Burns, *History of the British West Indies*, 131, 292, 293; Douglas Botting, *The Pirates* (Alexandria, Va., 1978), 24; Barbour, "Privateers and Pirates," *AHR*, XVI (1910), 526; Alec Moncreith, "Besieged By Thieves," *Military History*, VIII (1991), 47; Michael Craton, *A History of the Bahamas* (London, 1962), 72; Philip Gosse, *The History of Piracy*, (New York, 1932; reprint ed., 1946), 12-43; Rankin *Golden Age*, 7; Haring, *Buccaneers in the West Indies*, 66; Parry and Sherlock, *Short History of the West Indies*, 82.

<sup>21</sup> Exquemelin, *Buccaneers of America*, 65; Labat, *Memoirs*, 175; Dutertre, *Histoire Générale des Antilles*, I, 415; Masefield, *On the Spanish Main*, 113.



Tortuga served as the main trading place for most buccaneers. Other *rescatadores* who farmed that island joined them. There, men, women, and children built a village of several hundred people. The *rescatadores* lived in huts, constructed of four or six strong forks of straight timber tied together forming a conical roof, covered by reeds or palm, plantain, or sugar cane leaves. There might have been hammocks inside or possibly a table. Eventually, these dwellings developed into more European style buildings. The "cow-killers" formed contracts with the *rescatadores* on Hispaniola to furnish meat for a year at certain prices or for specific items. Planters paid them with two or three hundred pounds of tobacco in leaf, or provided the buccaneers with a servant.<sup>22</sup>

Tortuga was not the most hospitable place to live. The first *rescatadores* found the island a dense forest of cedars. They divided into small companies and uprooted shrubs and little trees, clearing spaces to build huts and plant seeds. In 1666, Exquemelin described the island as "very mountainous and full of rocks," with "hugely thick lofty trees" that grew among stones. On the rugged coast of northern Tortuga, little shrubs grew thickly on top of rocks, entangling them like "branching ivy against our walls."<sup>23</sup> The island of Tortuga rose two miles off the northwestern coast of Hispaniola, and fifty-five miles south-south-east of Inagua in the Bahamas. It was twenty-five miles long. From the shore of Hispaniola it looked like the back of a great sea turtle, so Columbus named it *Isla de la Tortuga*. When he arrived in 1492, he

<sup>22</sup> Dutertre, *Histoire Générale des Antilles*, I, 415; Exquemelin, *Buccaneers of America*, 63-64, 65; Watts, *West Indies*, 153.

<sup>23</sup> Exquemelin, *Buccaneers of America*, 27, 30, 66; Newton, *European Nations in the West Indies*, 168; Haring, *Buccaneers in the West Indies*, 60.

found savannas on the southwest portion of the island cultivated by Native Americans whom the Spanish killed or drove off. High and hilly, Tortuga had mountains on the north side and a harbor on the south.<sup>24</sup>

Annual precipitation of 39-59 inches helped the planters who cultivated and planted tobacco on Tortuga after 1598. These settlers placed tobacco seeds in twelve foot squares which they covered with palmetto leaves so the sun did not bake the seeds in the soil. Farmers also grew indigo, potatoes, cassava, oranges, bananas, and melons. Arawak Indians, the original inhabitants of the island, grew sweet potatoes, maize, beans, and squash, which Europeans also grew in the early seventeenth century. Arawaks also supplemented their diet, as did Europeans, with fish and fowl and cassava bread, made from the manioc plant *yucca*. At times, the *rescatadores* on Tortuga consumed rats, iguanas, turtles, and crabs, as well as coconuts and pineapples.<sup>25</sup>

Meat was the buccaneers' main staple, and their meat exportation spread throughout the Caribbean. The smoked flesh provided a tasty alternative to usual ship board fare, and colonists also enjoyed it. Among the more distasteful choices presented by the tropical environment for consumption, a continuous diet of meat pleased Europeans. Most in Europe could not afford to eat meat as often as they desired. Sir Henry Colt enjoyed meat "baked in a pye," although he suggested

24 Christopher Columbus, *The Log of Christopher Columbus*, trans., Robert H. Fuson (Camden, N.J., 1987), 127, 129, 131, 132, 135; Means, *The Spanish Main*, 174; Haring, *Buccaneers in the West Indies*, 58; Craton, *History of the Bahamas*, 72-74.

25 Colt, "Voyage of Sir Henry Colt," in Harlow, ed., *Colonising Expeditions*, 91, 93; Exquemelin, *Buccaneers of America*, 30, 65, 69; Watts, *West Indies*, 16, 21, 65, 152; Burns, *History of British West Indies*, 19; Means, *Spanish Main*, 181.

travelers should eat less meat in the West Indies than at home in England. Thomas Gage, a contemporary traveler in the Caribbean, disagreed. He complained that no matter how much meat he ate at a meal he felt hungry again in two or three hours. Food in the Caribbean offered no "substance or virtue," Gage lamented, and his stomach constantly commanded him "Feed, Feed."<sup>26</sup>

Buccaneers found a clear spring on Tortuga to quench their thirst. This source provided most of their daily liquid intake. They also made several alcoholic drinks. One of them was "mobbie." A thick substance, mobbie came from potatoes cut into small slices and covered with hot water. After the vegetable soaked up the water, the juice was forced through a coarse cloth into a pot where, after settling for a couple of days, buccaneers proclaimed it fit to drink. They derived another beverage from the juice of palmettos that the inhabitants of Tortuga drank as wine. They also produced a crude form of banana extract, an extremely potent and "excellent liquor both in strength and pleasantness of taste." Settlers found this liquid "easily causes drunkenness" but "frequently inflames the throat."<sup>27</sup>

Buccaneers had difficulty obtaining European manufactured goods, but heavy woolen fabrics would have been useless to the prowling hunters in hot, humid, climates. Unlike many European colonists, buccaneers concerned themselves more with survival than obtaining the contemporary European styles. Common buccaneer

<sup>26</sup> Colt, "Voyage of Sir Henry Colt," in Harlow, ed., *Colonising Expeditions*, 92, 99-100; Gage, "New Survey of West Indies," in Newton, ed., *English American*, 43, 200.

<sup>27</sup> Exquemelin, *Buccaneers of America*, 29, 33, 66-67, 68; Richard Ligon, *A True and Exact History...of Barbadoes*, (London, 1657; reprint ed., London, 1970), 30-32; Labat, *Memoirs*, 174-75.

attire seemed quite savage to European travelers in the West Indies. They dressed at most in a pair of trousers with a loose shirt worn over them, fastened at the waist by a hide belt. They blackened their clothes by staining them with the blood of their kills, and they smelled terrible. Often buccaneers owned a small hat with a brim four inches wide cut to a point over their eyes. They made shoes for themselves with a single piece of hide, folded over their foot and sewed shut.<sup>28</sup> The buccaneers' most prized possession was a sack or thick net. They tied it to their belt at day and slept wrapped up in it at night. This netting afforded them protection from "the innumerable insects which bite and suck the blood from all parts of their bodies which were left uncovered."<sup>29</sup> All creatures could not be avoided by netting, however. Insects, lizards, large land crabs, and snakes were a constant annoyance, and colonists found head lice unavoidable in the tropics.<sup>30</sup>

Although the primary sources say nothing of disease, many *rescatadores* undoubtedly died of disease. Malaria, yellow fever, cholera, and other diseases crippled, maimed, and killed. The psychological effects of watching people die of yellow fever, which causes black vomit, or hook worm, which slowly eats the

28 Labat, *Memoirs*, 175; Dutertre, *Histoire Générale des Antilles*, I, 415; Burns, *History of the British West Indies*, 293; Haring, *Buccaneers of the West Indies*, 68; Ligon, *History of Barbadoes*, 42, 66-67.

29 Labat, *Memoirs*, 175.

30 Dutertre, *Histoire Générale des Antilles*, I, 415; Ligon, *History of Barbadoes*, 42, 61-67; Colt, "Voyage of Sir Henry Colt," in Harlow, ed., *Colonising Expeditions*, 65, 73, 83; Haring, *Buccaneers in the West Indies*, 68.

intestines after causing the desire to eat dirt, very likely lowered the morale of even the most staunch entrepreneurs.<sup>31</sup>

Since the cow killing buccaneers left no descriptive works of their own, they have existed in history as other Europeans perceived them. Amid the violence and suspicion of the Caribbean, and bemused by the stateless domain buccaneers constructed, Spanish and other Europeans perceived buccaneers as different from themselves. In reality, buccaneers were not "the other" because they were European in origin, but they adopted some Native American traits and isolated themselves from the predominant European social and cultural structure.<sup>32</sup> In this respect, buccaneers were different from their fellow colonists, but they were not alone in assuming Native American characteristics. In the Spanish Caribbean and Latin America, and the English and French North American colonies, some European settlers joined the Indians or adopted Native lifestyles.<sup>33</sup> Clearly, buccaneers were some of these individuals. They interacted daily with Indians, adopting native hunting and cooking

<sup>31</sup> Philip Curtin, *Death By Migration: Europe's Encounter with the Tropical World in the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge, 1989), 62, 68.

<sup>32</sup> Anne Perotin-Dumon, "The Pirate and the Empoeror: Power and the Law on the Seas, 1450-1850," in James D. Tracy, ed., *The Political Economy of Merchant Empires* (Cambridge, 1991), 210; Knight, *The Caribbean*, 100; Tzevetan Todorov, *The Conquest of America: The Question of the Other*, trans., Richard Howard (New York, 1992); Enrique Dussel, *The Invention of the Americas: Eclipse of "the Other" and the Myth of Modernity*, trans., Michael D. Barber (New York, 1995).

<sup>33</sup> Axtell, *The Invasion Within*, 302-327; Stannard, *American Holocaust*, 103-05; John R. Swanton, "Notes on the Mental Assimilation of Races," *Journal of the Washington Academy of Sciences*, XVI (1926), 493-502; A. Irving Hallowell, "American Indians, White and Black: The Phenomenon of Transculturalization," *Current Anthropology*, IV (1963), 519-31; Richard Drinnon, *White Savage: The Case of John Dunn Hunter* (New York, 1972).

methods, trading with Indians, and intermarrying into native populations.<sup>34</sup> Since buccaneers adopted many Indian traits, including the ways they built shelters and dressed, Europeans perceived them as "savages" like the Indians, only more disturbing because they had been "civilized" Europeans.

Spanish and English officials did not look favorably upon those who lived with or like Indians. They believed native populations were destined for conquest. Spaniards had wrestled control of the islands from the Indians, and they were not pleased that Spanish colonists lived and traded with island natives. Spanish clergy felt that willingly dwelling with "savages" represented a renunciation of Christianity. English officials concurred. Colonial governors forbade living with Indians. When a few English colonists joined native tribes outside Jamestown in 1612, the governor ordered their destruction: "Some he apointed to be hanged Some burned Some to be broken upon whells, others to be staked and some to be shott to deathe."<sup>35</sup>

European colonists feared that *rescatadores* and those from Europe who arrived to hunt hides lived similarly to ways depicted in Thomas More's *Utopia*: "They join with themselves the natives if they are willing to dwell with them. When such a union takes place, the two parties gradually and easily merge and together absorb the same way of life and the same customs."<sup>36</sup> This actually occurred for some Europeans,

34 Dutertre, *Histoire Générale des Antilles*, I, 415; Gage, "New Survey of West Indies," in Newton, ed., *English American*, 19; Exquemelin, *Buccaneers of America*, 67; Burns, *History of the British West Indies*, 51.

35 George Percy, "A Trewe Relacyon of the Procedeinges and Occurrentes of Momente which have hapned in Virginia," *Tyler's Quarterly Historical and Genealogical Magazine*, III (1922), 280; Stannard, *American Holocaust*, 105; Parry, *Spanish Seaborne Empire*, 185-91.

36 Thomas More, *Utopia*, ed. Edward Surtz (New Haven, Conn., 1964 [orig.

particularly the French. The Cunas, an Indian tribe on Hispaniola who were never effectively destroyed by the Spaniards, joined the French and Dutch in hunting and farming. They even allowed the French to marry Indian women.<sup>37</sup>

Since Europeans regarded buccaneers with the same pejorative attitude as they did Native Americans, the European interpretation of Indians must be evaluated to understand their conception of buccaneers. Europeans supposed the native peoples of America inferior because they were different. Fernandez de Oviedo best described this inferiority: "The people of the Indies, although rational and of the same branch of the holy ark of Noah, are made irrational and bestial by their idolatries, sacrifices, and infernal ceremonies." In contemporary European sources, buccaneers were often likened to Indians or said to do certain tasks "in the Indian fashion." This must have been particularly troubling for those Europeans who witnessed buccaneers and Indians living together or in close proximity. Thomas Gage reported that in one Caribbean harbor "nude and savage Indians" came out to meet the ships in which he traveled. He wrote they came in canoes "whereof had been painted by our English, some by the Hollanders, some by the French" who used that harbor as a trading station with *rescatadores*.<sup>38</sup>

By the mid-seventeenth century, some Europeans concluded that buccaneers ate one another, the most common fear among cultures that perceive each other as inferior

publ. London, 1516]), 76.

<sup>37</sup> Burns, *History of the British West Indies*, 51.

<sup>38</sup> Oviedo in Dussel, *Invention of the Americas*, 36; Gage, "New Survey of West Indies," in Newton, ed., *English American*, 19; Esquemelin, *Buccaneers of America*, 67; Patrick Pringle, *Jolly Roger: The Story of the Great Age of Piracy* (New York, 1953), 53.

or different. Europeans also believed the same of the Aztecs, Incas, and Caribbean Indians when they first met them. A Spanish Dominican priest, Tomas Ortiz, wrote the Council of the Indies in Spain describing his perception of the Indians. It was an interpretation eerily descriptive of European behavior in the West Indies: "...they eat flesh. They are more given to sodomy than any other nation. There is no justice among them. They go naked. They have no respect either for love or for virginity. They are stupid and silly. They have no respect for the truth, save when it is to their advantage. They are unstable...They are brutal."<sup>39</sup> In Virginia, John Smith agreed. He wrote Native Americans were "all Savage," and that "Their chiefe God they worship is the Divell."<sup>40</sup>

Europeans perceived *rescatadores* and buccaneers as inferior and threatening, worthy of destruction or subjugation because they lived like Indians.<sup>41</sup> Spaniards had even more reasons to disdain them. Not only had *rescatadores* adopted the lifestyle of the "savages" Spanish forces had wrestled the islands from, but they harbored the ships of more dangerous "savages," northern European vessels that pillaged Spanish shipping and bombarded coastal villages. In 1606, Spanish forces attacked *rescate* settlements and destroyed and subjugated those they found.<sup>42</sup>

<sup>39</sup> Anghiera P. Martyr, ed., *De Orbe Novo* (New York, 1912), II, 4.

<sup>40</sup> Edward Arber and A.G. Bradley, eds., *Travels and Works of Captain John Smith, President of Virginia and Admiral of New England, 1580-1631* (Edinburgh, 1910), I, 65, 75.

<sup>41</sup> Masefield, *On the Spanish Main*, 207; Todorov, *The Conquest of America*, 42-43; Rayner Thrower, *The Pirate Picture* (London, 1980), 77; Dussel, *Invention of the Americas*, 39.

<sup>42</sup> See chapter two.



After the Spanish attack on northern Hispaniola, most of the organized *rescate* trade moved to the southern coast of Cuba. Only a few traders remained on northern Hispaniola where they lived under constant threat of Spanish attack. Many former hide traders moved to Port Margot and Port-de-Paix, or nearby Tortuga. There they operated *rescate* trade by prowling the interior of Hispaniola for the animals and returning with the meat and hides to Tortuga, where the ships of France and the Netherlands still visited in the hopes of purchasing their wares. French and Dutch colonists continued to arrive to hunt animals, and Spanish *rescatadores* still braved the wrath of Spain by staying there. Some of these refugees harvested and exported dyewoods, particularly, native satinwood, that made yellow dye. They also cut *ligum vitae*, that was believed to cure syphilis, and the laxative *cassia fistula*.<sup>43</sup>

Far from idyllic, *rescatadores*, buccaneers included, lived a cruel existence upon the periphery of Spanish power in the Caribbean. Driven by Spanish apathy for their West Indian colonists, *rescatadores* invited interlopers farther into Spain's domain. Without the help of Spanish itinerants who disavowed their allegiance to Spain, Dutch, French, and English intruders would not have been as successful in infiltrating and weakening Spain's presence in the Caribbean.

Among the foreign interlopers who anchored near *rescate* settlements, English pirates wrought the most destruction to Spanish territory at the dawn of the seventeenth century. The English plagued Spanish dominance in the West Indies as the century progressed, sending more pirates into Spanish waters and forming colonizing ventures to seize Spanish property. More than the French and Dutch, the English placed

<sup>43</sup> Helmut Blume, *The Caribbean Islands*, trans., Johannes Maczewski and Ann Norton (London, 1974), 234; Watts, *West Indies*, 134.

emphasis on both plunder *and* settlement. In order to plunder, Englishmen realized they needed bases in the Caribbean to orchestrate successfully the strongest possible attacks. In England, men with money, power, and influence organized companies that combined the risks of colonization and "privateering." One company's decision to place a settlement upon Tortuga led to far reaching consequences for the history and interpretation of buccaneers.

CHAPTER FOUR  
NEW WORLD PIRACY, EUROPEAN SETTLERS, AND THE END OF  
BUCCANEERS

The morning Alexander Exquemelin left Le Havre in 1666, his ship formed a convoy with other Dutch and French vessels bound for the New World. They feared English frigates. Dutch sailors believed English ships lurked on the horizon waiting to ambush them. The fog that morning, rising thick from the sea and obscuring the sunrise, enabled Exquemelin's ship to pass through the English Channel without incident. Later, however, when they reached the Atlantic, the convoy met a friendly vessel whose captain complained "that a French privateer had robbed him that very morning. This complaint being heard, we endeavored to pursue the said pirate."<sup>1</sup> Exquemelin's synonymous use of privateer and pirate in the opening pages of a history of buccaneers is remarkable. A considerable difference existed between privateers and pirates, and he knew it.<sup>2</sup>

Between 1585 and 1642 privateers, during times of war and with legal commissions, sailed in open warfare on the Caribbean Sea. Buccaneers dwelled on Tortuga and Hispaniola hunting animals at the same time. Europeans robbed ships upon the sea without privateering commissions and during times of peace. They called

<sup>1</sup> Alexander Exquemelin, *The Buccaneers of America: a true account of the most remarkable assaults committed of late upon the coast of the West Indies by buccaneers of Jamaica and Tortuga* (Amsterdam, 1678); reprint ed., with an introduction and notes by Robert C. Ritchie. Publication of Classics of Naval Literature, ed. Jack Sweetman (Annapolis, Md., 1993), 21-22.

<sup>2</sup> See chapter one.

themselves "privateers," but they were pirates. Most pirates came from the ranks of Europeans arriving in droves to the West Indies in the early years of the 1600s. The European settlement of buccaneer haunts created the symbolic transformation of buccaneer hunter to buccaneer pirate. New World arrivals, settlers from northern Europe and deported criminals, engendered a European culture in the New World, a culture of violence. The story of English, French, and Spanish settlers on Tortuga reveals that piracy migrated to the New World along with Old World colonists.

A visitor to the West Indies in the seventeenth century remarked that "all men are heer made subject to the power of the Infernall Spiritt."<sup>3</sup> Men from all nations sought to seize land from their neighbors. Mercantilist philosophy, based upon the premise that only a certain amount of wealth existed in the world, drove men to such actions. English, Dutch, and French fought to obtain land in New World territories. Spaniards fought for the very existence of their empire. Spanish forces attempted to destroy northern Europeans in the Caribbean. They destroyed *rescate* and buccaneer settlements instead. Europeans hostile to Spain took their place. From Tortuga, Spain's enemies attacked and plundered Spanish shipping. These violent settlers who replaced the buccaneers became the first pirates in the New World.

One of the first steps the Spanish took to defend their empire was to exterminate northern European transients from the periphery of their islands. Spanish officials in the Caribbean had hoped to destroy *rescatadores* in 1606. Their attacks did little to inhibit foreign intrusion, however. In February 1606, the Spanish depopulated

<sup>3</sup> Sir Henry Colt, "The Voyage of Sir Henry Colt Knight to the Ilands of the Antilleas...", in Vincent T. Harlow, ed., *Colonising Expeditions to the West Indies and Guiana, 1623-1667*, Publications of the Hakluyt Society, 2d Ser., LVI (London, 1925; reprint ed., Nendeln, Liechtenstein, 1967), 73.

northwest Hispaniola. For the first time they realized the extent of northern European intrusion. A Spanish squadron found and dispersed a smuggling fleet of twenty-four Dutch ships looking for salt and hides. They also encountered six French ships searching for hides to take to Rouen, and one English privateer.<sup>4</sup> Presumably, the interloping trade with buccaneers for meat and hides that benefited the merchants of England and France in the Caribbean would have discontinued with the ascension of James I, who made peace with Spain. This turn of events did not end the foreign trade, however. In 1609, the *Junta de Guerra de Indies* informed the Spanish crown that smugglers still infested the shores and bays of Tierra Firme, Araya, Hispaniola, Tortuga, and Cuba. These English and French interlopers allegedly supplied artillery and munitions to secret settlements of black, white, and mulatto settlers.<sup>5</sup>

Pirates sailing from Europe, mistaken for *rescatadores*, continued to plunder Spanish shipping. The governor of Cuba complained in 1612: "all these years these coasts have been infested with small pirate vessels, from which your majesty's subjects who live by trade and navigation have suffered much damage, and it is understood from some who have been robbed and put ashore that they are becoming as attached to

<sup>4</sup> Engel Sluiter, "Dutch Maritime Power and the Colonial Status Quo," *Pacific Historical Review*, XI (1942), 33; K.G. Davis, *The North Atlantic World in the Seventeenth Century*. Volume four in *Europe and the World in the Age of Expansion*, ed. Boyd C. Shafer (Minneapolis, 1974), 31; Kenneth R. Andrews, *The Spanish Caribbean: Trade and Plunder, 1530-1630* (New Haven, Conn., 1978), 222.

<sup>5</sup> Alexander Brown, *The Genesis of the United States* (Boston, 1901), I, 522; Kenneth R. Andrews, "The English in the Caribbean, 1560-1620," in K.R. Andrews, N.P. Canny, and P.E.H. Hair, eds., *The Westward Enterprise: English activities in Ireland, the Atlantic, and America, 1480-1650* (Liverpool, 1978), 122; Andrews, *Spanish Caribbean*, 234.

*rescates* as to pillage."<sup>6</sup> *Rescatadores*, buccaneers included, did not become the first pirates of the Caribbean. Ships from England, France, and the Netherlands pillaged Spanish vessels. While these ships claimed to have been privateers, none had valid privateering commissions. During the respite in the overt fighting in the Caribbean, Tortuga became a way station for smugglers and pirates from Europe, as did Cape Tiberon and Samana on Hispaniola. Despite the lull in foreign incursions that occurred from 1606 to 1620, the hunters of Cuba, Hispaniola, and Tortuga still served as a link into the maze of illegal smuggling in the Caribbean. Even after 1620, when the Dutch had congregated at Cape San Nicolas, the French at La Gonaive, and the English at Samana, sailors from all three nations rendezvoused at Tortuga to trade with buccaneers and *rescatadores*.<sup>7</sup>

Privateers from France, the Netherlands, and England attacked Spanish shipping after the outbreak of the Thirty Years War. The Dutch operated from islands they held strongly, such as St. Martins and St. Eustatius in the Antilles, and Curaçao and Bonaire off the Venezuelan coast. The Dutch presence in the Caribbean, larger than that of any other nation, interfered with Spanish commerce, disturbed Spanish trade within the islands, and thwarted Spanish forces, leaving them unable to fight off any interlopers,

<sup>6</sup> *Archivo General de Indies*, Santo Domingo, 100: Gaspar de Perda to Crown, 18 Dec. 1612 as cited in Andrews, *Spanish Caribbean*, 234-35.

<sup>7</sup> John Masefield, *On the Spanish Main, or some English forays on the Ithmus of Darien, With a Description of the Buccaneers and a Short Account of Old-Time Ships and Sailors* (London, 1906), 111; Cornelis Goslinga, *The Dutch in the Caribbean and on the Wild Coast, 1580-1680* (Gainesville, Fla., 1971), 55; Jan Rogozinski, *A Brief History of the Caribbean, From Arawak and the Carib to the Present* (New York, 1992), 43, 84; Arthur Percival Newton, *The European Nations in the West Indies, 1493-1688* (London, 1933), 191.

regardless of nationality. By the 1620s, many Dutch captains had established regular bases upon Tortuga.<sup>8</sup>

During this period of intense privateering, buccaneers continued to hunt the wild animals of the islands, interacting with commerce raiders for trade, but not joining in the plunder.<sup>9</sup> English Pilgrims and Puritans added to the number of hunters, subsistence planters, and traders on Tortuga and other islands. While many sought the profits of privateering voyages, other Englishmen became struggling planters for many years. When Thomas Warner landed on the shores of St. Christopher in 1624, with two dozen men to plant tobacco, he found the island already populated with both Caribe Indians and at least thirty buccaneer farmers and planters.<sup>10</sup>

Warner's party doubled the next year with the arrival of French colonists. Together, these settlers attempted to destroy the Indians on the island. Afterwards, they shared the island and planted tobacco, and the buccaneers joined the French. A

<sup>8</sup> Sir Alan Burns, *History of the British West Indies* (London, 1954), 131, 290-91, 294; Philip Ainsworth Means, *The Spanish Main: Focus of Envy, 1492-1700* (New York, 1935), 164-5; Goslinga, *Dutch in the Caribbean*, 244; Lyle N. McAllister, *Spain and Portugal in the New World, 1492-1700* (Minneapolis, 1984), 307; Sluiter "Dutch Maritime Power," *PHR*, XI (1942), 29-41; Rogozinski, *Brief History of the Caribbean*, 66; Richard S. Dunn, *Sugar and Slaves: The Rise of the Planter Class in the English West Indies, 1624-1713* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1972), 8; W. Adolphe Roberts, *The French in the West Indies* (New York, 1942; reprint ed., 1971), 44; Hugh F. Rankin, *The Golden Age of Piracy* (New York, 1969), 7-8.

<sup>9</sup> Franklin W. Knight, *The Caribbean: The Genesis of a Fragmented Nationalism*, 2d ed. (New York, 1990), 96; Burns, *History of the British West Indies*, 131.

<sup>10</sup> Jean-Baptiste Dutertre, *Histoire Générale des Isles de S. Christophe, de la Guadeloupe, de la Martinique et autres, dans l'Amérique* (Paris, 1654), 4; Rogozinski, *Brief History of the Caribbean*, 58; Dunn, *Sugar and Slaves*, 19; Andrews, *Spanish Caribbean*, 243.

hurricane destroyed the first crop, but the second, amounting to 9500 pounds, fetched a high price in London. Four hundred more recruits joined the population of St. Christopher at the end of 1625. By 1627, the genocidal policies of those on St. Christopher had driven the Indians from the island, and the place had become a way-station for passing vessels, in the same fashion of Tortuga. By 1629, fifty slaves worked the island's fields.<sup>11</sup>

When the English settled Barbados in 1627, they established another tobacco colony, similar to the Chesapeake Bay region. Nearly all of the immigrants to Barbados came from Devon and Cornwall in England where "meaner husbandmen...hedgers, ditchers, reapers, shepherds, and herdsmen formed a very large class."<sup>12</sup> A contemporary described these first settlers of Barbados as "loose vagrant People, vicious and destitute of means to live at home, (being either unfit for labour, or such as could find none to employ themselves about, or had so mis-behaved themselves

11 Richard B. Sheridan, *Sugar and Slavery: An Economic History of the British West Indies* (Baltimore, 1973), 236; Rogozinski, *Brief History of the Caribbean*, 75; Andrews, *Spanish Caribbean*, 243; Robert Carlyle, "Why Sugar? Economic Cycles and the Changing of Staples on the English and French Antilles, 1624-54," *Journal of Caribbean History*, VIII (1976), 6; 107; Kenneth R. Andrews, *Trade, Plunder and Settlement: Maritime Enterprise and the Genesis of the British Empire, 1480-1630* (Cambridge, 1984), 301.

12 Carl Bridenbaugh, *Vexed and Troubled Englishmen, 1590-1642* (New York, 1968), 49, 127, 426; Christopher Hill, *The Century of Revolution, 1603-1714*. 2nd edition (New York, 1980), 16, 19; Peter Laslett, *The World We Have Lost* (New York, 1965), 58, 59; Dunn, *Sugar and Slaves*, 18, 49; Jack P. Green, *The Pursuits of Happiness: The Social Development of Early Modern British Colonies and the Formation of American Culture* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1988), 43; James Horn, *Adapting to a New World: English Society in the Seventeenth-Century Chesapeake* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1994), 31, 66.



by Whoreing, Thieving, or other Debauchery, that none would set them to work)."<sup>13</sup>  
Those on St. Christopher had similar origins in England and Ireland.<sup>14</sup>

Colonists on St. Christopher did not have much success during the first few years of settlement. In 1624 and 1626 severe hurricanes devastated the colony, destroying all the structures and tobacco. Tension also grew between the Frenchmen and Englishmen on the island who began to fight amongst themselves after the Indians no longer consumed their animosity. These hard times persuaded some colonists to move to Tortuga where more amicable relations existed between nationalities. More important, money could be made more easily there. A Spanish assault upon St. Christopher and Nevis also provided incentive to move elsewhere. Spanish forces destroyed all the buildings and crops in September 1629, leaving only 200 alive on St. Christopher. The Spanish deported all they could catch to England. Most survivors from Nevis united under the leadership of Anthony Hilton and migrated to Tortuga.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Sir Josiah Child, *A New Discourse of Trade...* (London, 1693), 170.

<sup>14</sup> Dunn, *Sugar and Slaves*, 17-18, 120; Newton, *European Nations in the West Indies*, 171; Sheridan, *Sugar and Slavery*, 86-87; Carl and Roberta Bridenbaugh, *No Peace Beyond the Line: The English in the Caribbean, 1624-1690* (New York, 1972), 20, 21; David Lowenthal, "The Population of Barbados," *Social and Economic Studies*, VI (1957), 450-451; Frank G. Innes, "The Pre-Sugar Era of European Settlement in Barbados," *JCH*, I (1970), 1-11.

<sup>15</sup> Cecil Headlam, ed., *Calender State Papers, Colonial Series, America and the West Indies* (London, 1930-1933), I, 1574-1660, 92, 103, 105, 112, 118-19, hereafter as *CSPC*; William L. Grant and James Munro, eds., *Acts of the Privy Council, Colonial Series* (Hereford, Eng., 1908-19), 1628-29, 37; Bridenbaugh, *Vexed and Troubled Englishmen*, 410; Andrews, *Trade, Plunder and Settlement*, 302; Sheridan, *Sugar and Slavery*, 85, 86-87; Means, *The Spanish Main*, 177; Dunn, *Sugar and Slaves*, 8, 117-119; Burns, *History of the British West Indies*, 202; C. H. Haring, *The Buccaneers in the West Indies in the XVII Century* (New York, 1910; reprint ed., Hamden, N. Y., 1966), 60; Violet Barbour, "Privateers and Pirates of the West Indies,"

In 1630 the Puritans arrived in the Caribbean with the establishment of the Providence Company. This joint stock company blended colonizing and agricultural investments with "privateering" ventures. High level Puritans including four lords, various gentlemen, and a few merchants founded the company with a combined subscription of £3800. These men included John Pym, the earl of Warwick; Robert Rich, the second earl of Warwick; his brother Henry, the earl of Holland; Lord Brooke; and Viscount Saye and Sele. Robert Rich had been an original member of the Somers Island Company, the New England Company, the Guineas Company, and had invested in the Virginia Company.<sup>16</sup>

The Providence Company first settled Providence Island (Santa Catalina) off the coast of Nicaragua. Captain Philip Bell, leading discontented colonists from Bermuda, was in charge of the operation. The Company made Bell governor. English pirates began using the island immediately after settlement as a base for plundering Spanish shipping. Other settlers grew cotton, tobacco, and indigo, and cut dyewoods for exportation. They lived on potatoes, cassava, oranges, bananas, melons, hogs, fish, and turtles. Soon after the arrival of these settlers on Providence, the colonists

*American Historical Review*, XVI, (1910), 538.

<sup>16</sup> Dunn, *Sugar and Slaves*, 12; Means, *The Spanish Main*, 177; Hill, *Century of Revolution*, 32; Karen Ordahl Kupperman, *Providence Island: The Other Puritan Colony* (Cambridge, 1993), chapters one and two; Robert C. Ritchie, *Captain Kidd and the War Against the Pirates* (Cambridge, Mass., 1986), 13; Robert A. Naylor, *Penny Ante Imperialism: The Mosquito Shore and the Bay of Honduras, 1600-1914* (London, 1989), 27; W. Frank Craven, "The Earl of Warwick, A Speculator in Piracy," *Hispanic American Historical Review*, X (1930), 457-79; Burns, *History of the British West Indies*, 203-04.

received word from Tortuga that the planters on that island sought the Company's protection.<sup>17</sup>

Tortuga's population had oscillated since the Spanish assault in 1606. French hide traders and hunters increased after the Spanish attack. The assault had resulted in the death or removal of many *rescatadores*. Some Spanish colonists remained, but others who survived had moved to Cuba fearing further reprisals from Spain. Frenchmen from Normandy and Brittany joined remaining Spanish *rescatadores*. As more European settlers colonized the Caribbean during the 1620s, some also ended up on Tortuga, especially following the Spanish attacks on St. Christopher and Nevis.<sup>18</sup> A substantial colony thrived on the small island, which served as a multinational trading center, the first *entrepôt* of the West. As years progressed, more discontents arrived on Tortuga after escaping indentured servitude.

Labor presented a problem in the seventeenth-century West Indies. Native Americans had been the first laborers "ordering the Cassavie and making bread," fishing "with bows and arrows and were footmen."<sup>19</sup> When the Indians died, the English, French, and Dutch brought in Europeans and Africans to do the work.

17 Artur Percival Newton, *Colonising Activities of the English Puritans: The Last Phase of the Elizabethan Struggle with Spain* (New Haven, Conn., 1914), 145-150, 153-155; Burns, *History of the British West Indies*, 203-04; Means, *The Spanish Main*, 181; Newton, *European Nations in the West Indies*, 173.

18 Exquemelin, *Buccaneers of America*, 64; Barbour, "Pirates and Privateers," *AHR*, XVI (1911), 538; Dunn, *Sugar and Slaves*, 20; Andrews, *Spanish Caribbean*, 181-87, 214; Masefield, *On the Spanish Main*, 113, 114, 116; David Cordingly, *Under the Black Flag: The Romance and Reality of Life among the Pirates* (New York, 1995), 39.

19 Richard Ligon, *A True History and Exact History of Barbados, 1653* (London, 1657; reprint ed., London, 1970), 54.

Slavery did not become profitable until later in the century, however, and until then planters relied on indentured labor. Most laborers were poor and young, aged fifteen to twenty-four. Many were Irish, although some were English, Scottish, or Welsh. Traders of indentured servants often kidnapped people or transported condemned criminals as an alternative to execution. If a servant transporter could not find enough men, he signed up women to fill his ship.<sup>20</sup>

Servants worked in gangs from sunrise to sunset. Their overseers often abused them. While Richard Ligon toured Barbados he saw "an Overseer beat a Servant with a cane about the head, till the blood has followed, for a fault that is not worth speaking of; and yet he [servant] must have patience, or worse will follow. Truly, I have seen such cruelty there done to servants as I did not think one Christian could have done to another."<sup>21</sup> Overseers tortured servants by tying their hands together and lighting matches between their fingers. This atmosphere was indicative of the violent culture of the seventeenth-century Caribbean. Servants plotted to kill planters and flee to ships at sea. On his visit to the West Indies, Sir Henry Colt found that servants flocked to

20 Hilary McD. Beckles, "Rebels and Reactionaries: The Political Response of White Labourers to Planter Class Hegemony in Seventeenth Century Barbados," *JCH*, XV (1981), 2; Sheridan, *Sugar and Slavery*, 235; Alec Moncreith, "Besieged by Thieves," *Military History*, VIII (1991), 45; Dunn, *Sugar and Slaves*, 52, 57, 69; Knight, *The Caribbean*, 100; Dudley Pope, *The Buccaneer King: The Biography of Sir Henry Morgan, 1635-1688* (New York, 1977); Edmund S. Morgan, *American Slavery American Freedom: The Ordeal of Colonial Virginia* (New York, 1975), 298; Abbot Emerson Smith, *Colonists in Bondage: White Servitude and Convict Labor in America, 1607-1776* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1947), 310; Davies, *North Atlantic World*, 96; Andrews, *Trade, Plunder and Settlement*, 303; Bridenbaugh, *No Peace Beyond the Line*, 10, 30.

21 Ligon, *True History of Barbados*, 44, 115.

every ship at night attempting to escape from their masters' estates.<sup>22</sup> Most often, servants fled for their lives to other colonies in the Caribbean to escape cruel masters. Only Tortuga offered a reprieve that would not force servants back into indentured labor.

Men who ventured to the West Indies from Europe behaved in a manner that would have been considered barbarous at home. Masters and their servants acted on their hate for each other as planters did among themselves. Many lower middle class Englishmen first moved to the Caribbean from the Old World. Some of the early poor farmers first had been indentured servants. Servants had to wait to obtain land until after their indentures expired, but little land was available in the Caribbean. The islands lacked the expanse of the mainland colonies. Within a few years all the areas that could be planted had been claimed. Those who could not find land had two choices, stay as wage laborers or leave.<sup>23</sup>

22 John Smith, *Narrative of a Voyage to Maryland...*, (Maryland Historical Society, publication no. 7, Baltimore, 1875), 162-3; Ligon, *True History of Barbados*, 109-17; Dunn, *Sugar and Slaves*, 72; Beckles, "Rebels and Reactionaries," *JCH*, XV (1981), 3, 6; Bridenbaugh, *No Peace Beyond the Line*, 102-17; Pope, *Buccaneer King*, 51-52.

23 Ligon, *True History of Barbados*, 109, 113-15; Colt, *Voyage of Sir Henrye Colt*, 66-68; Newton, *European Nations in the West Indies*, 173; Sheridan, *Sugar and Slavery*, 236; Dunn, *Sugar and Slaves*, 12, 52, 67, 273, 288; Morgan, *American Slavery American Freedom*, 298-99; Bridenbaugh, *No Peace Beyond the Line*, 18, 219; Kupperman, *Providence Island*, chapter four; Hilary McD. Beckles, "Land Distribution and Class Formation in Barbados, 1630-1700: The Rise of a Wage Proletariat," *Journal of the Barbados Museum and Historical Society*, XXXVI (1980), 136-142.

Women accompanied men to the West Indies.<sup>24</sup> They went to Providence Island and the other English colonies, as both servants and wives. White men always outnumbered white women, however. The absence of white women did not mean an absence of sexual relationships, or necessarily the likelihood of homosexual relationships. English planters and farmers slept with their own slaves as well as their neighbors' slaves. The large number of women servants deported from England for the crime of prostitution further frustrated the establishment of a Puritan controlled, monogamous environment. The tropical weather somewhat hampered the experience, however. According to Ligon, women were "so sweaty and clammy, as the hand cannot passe over, without being glued and cemented in the passage of motion; and by that means, little please is given to, or received."<sup>25</sup>

Although information is scarce, the manner in which Europeans adapted to the natural environment on Tortuga must have been similar to other European colonies in the Caribbean. This is true especially concerning disease and death. While those few buccaneer hunters who lived for several years in the islands had suffered through their time of "seasoning," they watched new arrivals die with the same horror that others experienced elsewhere in the Caribbean. More than the heat, an unfamiliar disease

24 CSPC, I, 137.

25 Ligon, *True History of Barbados*, 104, 105-07; Dunn, *Sugar and Slaves*, 252, 326; Bridenbaugh, *No Peace Beyond the Line*, 175-76. The presence of women on the islands profoundly contradicts B.R. Burg's thesis presented in *Sodomy and the Perception of Evil: English Sea Rovers in the Seventeenth-Century Caribbean* (New York, 1983) that buccaneers sought a homosexual environment facilitated by an absence of women in the Caribbean; one will find no review of this work in any scholarly journal but for further analysis of Burg see Geoffrey Scammell, review of *Sodomy and the Perception of Evil*, by B.R. Burg, in *Times Literary Supplement*, 1 July 1983, 694.

environment decimated colonists. An average of 33 percent of all immigrants died of disease. The most common killers were malaria, yellow fever, dysentery, dropsy, leprosy, yaws, hookworm, and elephantiasis. Another persistent problem was bloody flux, dysentery from filthy living conditions, unwashed and spoiled food, and dirty water. Some diseases caused black vomit and other terrifying results. Hookworm, for instance, drove victims to consume dirt.<sup>26</sup> Apart from buccaneers already dwelling on Tortuga, the French first experienced these killers when they moved to the island in 1628. Peripatetic French and English colonists from Nevis and St. Christopher added to the population the following year, after the Spanish destroyed their colony.

English colonists flocked to Tortuga, following Hilton's lead, fearing further Spanish attack on Nevis and St. Christopher. Small planters, landless freemen, and newly discharged servants also moved to Tortuga during the 1620s and 1630s. In 1629, Hilton began lobbying the Providence Company to take Tortuga under its protection because he feared the nearby Spanish. He proposed that the Providence Company use the island as a "privateering" base and trade center. In this fashion, Hilton built his own personal kingdom, stayed somewhat loyal to the English crown, and traded with whomever he pleased.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>26</sup> Ligon, *A True History of Barbados*, 21; Karen Ordahl Kupperman, "Fear of Hot Climates in the Anglo-American Colonial Experience," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3d ser., XLI (1984), 217; Hilary McD. Beckles, "Sugar and White Servitude: An Analysis of Indentured Labour during the Sugar Revolution of Barbados, 1643-1655," *JBMHS*, XXXVI (1981), 237; Dunn, *Sugar and Slaves*, 302, 305. Dunn provides the best description of West Indian diseases in chapter nine.

<sup>27</sup> Père Labat, *The Memoirs of Père Labat, 1693-1705*, translated and abridged by John Eaden (London, 1931; reprint ed., London, 1970) originally *Nouveau Voyage aux Isles de l'Amérique* (Paris, 1743), II, 202; Masefield, *On the Spanish Main*, 117; Barbour, "Privateers and Pirates," *AHR*, XVI (1910), 538; Newton, *Colonising Activities of the English Puritans*, 103-10, 142-44; Rogozinski, *Brief History of the*

On 17 June 1631, Hilton's work finally paid off. Providence Company extended its charter to incorporate Tortuga. Company officials hoped the island could be used as a base for raiding Spanish shipping. The company appointed Hilton governor of the island and named his settlement "Association." Providence Company officials decided dyewood should be the colony's main staple. They instructed the merchants on Association to rely on dyewood profits and profits from raiding Spanish shipping for a return on their investments. Despite the influx of English Puritans to the island, French pirates continued to use Tortuga as a base. Hilton did not mind their presence. He fostered the island's image as a multinational trading facility.<sup>28</sup>

Hilton's government enlisted *rescatadores* and buccaneers to help cut and export dyewoods. He incorporated the exportation of hides and boucanned meat into his domain. Hilton instructed colonists to grow cotton, maize, and tobacco. Officials

*Caribbean*, 76; Burns, *History of the British West Indies*, 19, 295-296; Haring, *Buccaneers in the West Indies*, 58; Clinton V. Black, *Pirates of the West Indies* (Cambridge, 1989), 5; Bridenbaugh, *No Peace Beyond the Line*, 62; Newton, *European Nations in the West Indies*, 171; Dunn, *Sugar and Slaves*, 120; Andrews, *Trade, Plunder and Settlement*, 302; Michael Craton, *A History of the Bahamas* (London, 1962), 72.

<sup>28</sup> CSPC., I, 131-33; John Hilton, "Relation of the First Settlement of St. Christophers and Nevis, by John Hilton, Storekeeper and Chief Gunner of Nevis," in ed. V.T. Harlow *Colonising Expeditions to the West Indies, 1623-1667* (Nedleln, Liechtenstein, 1967), 15; John Churchill, *A Collection of Voyages and Travels* (London, 1732), V, 642; Newton, *Colonising Activities of the English Puritans*, 103-105, 107; Kupperman, *Providence Inland*, 87; Nellis M. Crouse, *French Pioneers in the West Indies, 1624-1664* (New York, 1940; reprint ed. New York, 1977), 82; Bridenbaugh, *No Peace Beyond the Line*, 26; Rogozinski, *A Brief History of the Caribbean*, 84; Cyril Hamshere, *The British in the Caribbean*, (Cambridge, 1972), 39-40, 42-43; Newton, *European Nations in the West Indies*, 169; Andrews, *Trade, Plunder and Settlement*, 302; David Watts, *The West Indies: Patterns of Development, Cultural and Environmental Change Since 1492* (Cambridge, 1987), 170.



in England sent six cannon and ammunition with instructions to build a fort on the southwest corner of the island. Disenchanted servants from St. Christopher and Barbados continued to move there, as did English and French sailors turned pirate. Puritan pirates began raiding commerce in the Windward Passage, which runs between Cuba and Hispaniola. They sacked ships and returned with supplies. Hilton traded stolen goods from Spanish ships to purchase Dutch flyboats. He also sponsored full blown piracy by his colony's citizens. Both the Spanish and the English began to eye Hilton warily because he recruited *rescatadores*, purchased Africans from Dutch ships to use in the dyewood industry, and continually encouraged piracy.<sup>29</sup>

Soon after Hilton began exporting massive cargoes of dyewoods, he isolated the French buccaneers on the island. He despised their indigenous practices. He also hoped to set up a strictly English colony. Many *rescatadores* left the southern part of Tortuga, where the town of Association existed, and moved to the northern shore of Hispaniola. There they continued the hide trade away from Puritans. Some returned to France. The parting was not an amicable one. By the end of 1631, most Puritans on the island feared retaliation from the "cow-killers." They feared the French buccaneers would return to destroy Association. Hilton fostered their fears as a means of crowd control. An English skipper once complained to Hilton about a troublesome

<sup>29</sup> Newton, *European Nations in the West Indies*, 174; Burns, *History of the British West Indies*, 207; Crouse, *French Pioneers in the West Indies*, 81-82; John J. McCusker and Russell R. Menard, *The Economy of British America, 1607-1789* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1985; reprint ed. Chapel Hill, N.C., 1991), 148-49; J. H. Parry and P. M. Sherlock, *A Short History of the West Indies*, (London, 1956), 58; Means, *The Spanish Main*, 179-80; Hamshere, *The British in the Caribbean*, 41.

crew he had sailed with on the way to Tortuga. "Speake but ye words," Hilton told the captain, "and I will sett them ashore att Hispaniola amonge ye Cow Killers."<sup>30</sup>

In June 1631, Providence Company officials in London received permission to send to Association "apprentices who will serve their time for meat, drink, and apparel, and after their time receive half profits of the land set out for them."<sup>31</sup> These apprentices considerably boosted the population of Association. Although some died, as elsewhere in the Caribbean, they did not starve, as many others did. Hilton still used buccaneers to feed his island. Buccaneers delivered two hundred beasts a month to Tortuga, enough that the Providence Company did not have to send food supplies directly from England. The semi-humid environment of Tortuga, created by a few mountains on the island's northern side, produced enough rainfall to help crops grow and fresh water for the colonists to drink.<sup>32</sup>

Immigrants and supplies continued to flow into Association in 1632. In May of that year, Samuel Filby, a planter from St. Christopher, led another group of colonists to Tortuga, including his wife and several female servants. The Providence Company retracted its earlier policy and sent unattached female servants in early 1632. Company officials decided females on Providence Island would not inhibit the quest for Spanish riches. The godly Puritan capitalists used female servants in a variety of occupations.

<sup>30</sup> Hilton, *Relation of First Settlement*, 14; Newton, *European Nations in the West Indies*, 169; Peter Earle, *The Sack of Panama: Sir Henry Morgan's Adventures on the Spanish Main* (New York, 1981), 44-45; Burns, *History of the British West Indies*, 295.

<sup>31</sup> *CSPC*, I, 131-32.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 160-61, 235; Helmut Blume, *The Caribbean Islands*, trans., Johannes Maczewski and Ann Norton (London, 1974), 213, 226.

They divided labor not by race, but by age, sex, physical attributes, and personality. Attractive women, white indentured servants or Africans, resided in domestic environments. The former whores and female thieves who had been banished to the colonies added a new dimension to buccaneer and Puritan towns. According to Exquemelin, the residents of Tortuga did not forget "the goddess Venus, for whose beastly delights they find more women than they can make use of. For all the tavern-keepers and strumpets wait for the coming of these lewd Buccaneers, even after the same manner that they do at Amsterdam for the arrival of East India fleet."<sup>33</sup> In the hopes of mitigating their colonists' lust for the "goddess Venus," the Providence Company sent a minister to the island in November. He arrived on a vessel transporting a powder magazine. His arrival was not heralded as a glorious event, especially after he pleaded with his wayward flock to "burn all cards, dice, and tables." The minister lost even more followers when he attempted to prohibit "mixed dancing."<sup>34</sup>

After the Providence Company decided to allow indentured servitude on Association, they first sought servants from Nevis, rather than England. The company also sent agents as far away as Wales and Ireland in search of suitable servants. Most Caribbean settlers turned down the offer of abandoning their labor as planters to cut logwood or tend tobacco. In London, Pym urgently considered the matter. He knew Hilton robbed the company of profits by paying French buccaneers to cut the logwood

<sup>33</sup> Exquemelin, *Buccaneers of America*, 64; Beckles, "Sugar and White Servitude," *JBMHS*, XXXVI (1981), 240; Newton, *Colonising Activities of the English Puritans*, 109; Kupperman, *Providence Company*, 158-60.

<sup>34</sup> *CSPC*, I, 150, 157, 187; Newton, *Colonising Activities of the English Puritans*, 110.

and sell it to French and Dutch merchant shippers. In October, Pym decided "English bodies [were] not fit for that work," and sent word that slaves should be used to cut logwood. He also ordered everyone but the English and their slaves from engaging in the logwood trade. This action angered both the *rescatadores* and the French buccaneers. Hilton had bought a few slaves early in his stay upon Association, but by 1633 he had imported at least forty slaves who worked *with* the buccaneers in cutting logwood.<sup>35</sup>

Slave labor predominated in English colonies. For the English, slaves had been among the first settlers who landed on Barbados in 1627. After Association began using slave labor, and slaves began to live longer, Providence Island started using slaves as a consequence of allowing their use on Tortuga. In 1633, a shipping mix-up landed slaves on Providence Island rather than Tortuga. Bewildered colonists wrote to London begging "the disposal of ordinance, servants, and Negroes from Association." Included in that cargo were female slaves whom the Puritans "regarded as quite a novelty." Hilton had female slaves brought in the first cargo to Tortuga.<sup>36</sup>

With more labor to produce more logwood, multi-national interlopers, and an open market, Association became an international trading center under Anthony

<sup>35</sup> CSPC., I, 146, 159; Smith, *Colonists in Bondage*, 58; Kupperman, *Providence Island*, 166; Dunn, *Sugar and Slaves*, 226; Newton, *Colonising Activities of the English Puritans*, 106-07; Burns, *History of the British West Indies*, 295; Jonathan I. Israel, *The Dutch Republic and the Hispanic World* (Oxford, 1982), 214-15.

<sup>36</sup> CSPC., I, 167, 194; Eduardo Galeano, *Open Veins of Latin America: Five Centuries of the Pillage of a Continent*, trans. Cedric Belfrage (New York, 1973), 40, 49, 60; Newton, *Colonial Activities of English Puritans*, 213; Kupperman, *Providence Company*, 167; Dunn, *Sugar and Slaves*, 226; C. H. Haring, *The Spanish Empire in America* (New York, 1947), 218-22.

Hilton's leadership. He gave the planters on the island permission, against the company's instructions, to sell their own tobacco to whomever they pleased. Besides the tobacco, hides, and meat sold by buccaneers, Puritan colonists sold cotton and fruits. Hilton's defiance of company policy earned him an accusation of mutiny by Puritan agents in Association. Hilton retaliated by threatening "to desert the island and draw most of the inhabitants along with him." The company pacified him and allowed his followers to continue "certain ways of profit already discovered." One of these ways was piracy. Ships sailing around Association reported: "the coast is dangerous for strange vessels."<sup>37</sup>

In 1634, Hilton died and his second in command, Captain Wormeley, succeeded him in the leadership of the Puritan part of Tortuga. When Wormeley took control, he reported 150 colonists living in the town of Association. This number did not include slaves on Tortuga. Wormeley inherited financial chaos. Hilton had mismanaged the government of Tortuga since his arrival. He bullied planters into giving him a cut from their profits and then demanded more money than they thought reasonable. These actions prompted one colonist to write London declaring Tortuga was useful as a pirate base and nothing else. Many planters departed to northern Hispaniola to escape Hilton's fraud and mismanagement. Others, more sympathetic to Hilton's causes, and afraid Providence Company agents would restrict the privileges Hilton had allowed on the island, took to the seas. They attacked ships off Cuba, Santo Domingo, and Puerto Rico.

While Hilton had gained many friends through his government on Tortuga, his practices also earned him bitter enemies. One of the former planters, Irishman John

<sup>37</sup> *CSPC.*, I, 164, 172, 173, 174, 194; Kupperman, *Providence Island*, 94.

Murphy, hated Hilton so much he informed Spanish authorities in Santo Domingo of the Puritans' presence on Tortuga. After Hilton's pirates infested the waters of that harbor, Spaniards needed little prodding to make arrangements to destroy the Protestant threat in their islands.<sup>38</sup>

The Spanish governor at Santo Domingo ordered 250 soldiers under Don Ruy Ferdandez de Fuenmayor to drive the intruders from Tortuga. Spanish forces invaded in January and landed in canoes, destroying the Puritans' fortification. The Spanish hanged all the men they could catch and deported the women and children to England. Colonists on Providence Island suffered attack as well, but they held the Spanish off. Spanish sources describe 600 men, women, and children present on Tortuga at the time of the attack. This accounts for slaves, *rescatadores*, and the 150 at the town of Association. Two women who arrived in London after the ordeal blamed Wormeley for the destruction "by reason of his own cowardice and negligence." Others irrationally blamed the "Negroes in the island."<sup>39</sup>

The Puritans were the focus of the attack and they bore the brunt of the casualties. The Spanish did not exterminate everyone as they alleged, however. Many

38 CSPC., I, 189, 201, 249; Jean-Baptiste Dutertre, *Histoire Générale des Antilles habitées par les Français* (Paris, 1667-1671), I, 169-70; Hamshere, *British in the Caribbean*, 43; Crouse, *French Pioneers in the West Indies*, 82-83; Kupperman, *Providence Island*, 168, 197; Newton, *Colonising Activities of English Puritans*, 192; Means, *Spanish Main*, 182.

39 CSPC., I, 200, 201, 249; Labat, *Memoirs*, II, 21-24; Father Pierre-François Charlevoix, *Histoire de l'Isle Espagnole ou de S. Domingue* (Paris, 1730-31), II, 12-21; Hamshere, *British in the Caribbean*, 43; Rogozinski, *Brief History of the Caribbean*, 84-85; Newton, *Colonising Activity of English Puritans*, 193; Burns, *History of British West Indies*, 295; Means, *Spanish Main*, 182, 188; Dunn, *Sugar and Slaves*, 17; Newton, *European Nations in the West Indies*, 174-75; Davies, *North Atlantic World*, 39-40; Parry and Sherlock, *Short History of the Caribbean*, 58.

buccaneers remained hidden in the hills of Tortuga and on the northwest coast of Hispaniola. The Providence Company did not want to lose its grip on Tortuga. Having heard Association was in disarray, the Providence Company sent more settlers, two more pieces of artillery, thirty muskets, and a new governor. Nicolas Riskinner was a more appropriate governor for the island than the Providence Company at first deemed. He was a pirate at heart. On his way to Tortuga, he boarded a ship bound for Providence Island, threatened to "shoot or hang" the councilor for the company on board, and promised if he met any resistance he would "make it a bloody day." After these threats, he seized goods on the vessel meant for Providence Island and sailed on to Tortuga.<sup>40</sup>

Soon after Riskinner had set up the government of Association, he died, succumbing to one of the New World's many diseases. Those living within in the colony of Association formed a council of government when Riskinner died. At first this council's largest concern was the 150 African slaves on the island. They also worried about the French buccaneers and Spanish *rescatadores*. Their apprehensions concerning the peaceful buccaneers originated from reports of French forces landing on the western side of Hispaniola. These Frenchmen were cutting and exporting loads of brazilwood to Europe. Buccaneers who remained on Tortuga continued to sell hides to French and Dutch shippers. The substantial presence of French and Dutch alarmed Providence Company officials back in London. They worried that Tortuga might be lost to an invasion force.<sup>41</sup> Ultimately, the council found no way to resolve the

<sup>40</sup> CSPC., I, 200, 202, 204; Kupperman, *Providence Island*, 301; Newton, *Colonising Activities of English Puritans*, 210-11; Burns, *History of British West Indies*, 295-96; Haring, *Buccaneers of the West Indies*, 62.

<sup>41</sup> CSPC., I, 226, 233; 236; Newton, *Colonising Activities of the English*

problem and forgot it. They appointed a Captain Hunt as governor who had served with the Protestants at the siege of La Rochelle. Hunt's Huguenot ties attracted more French pirates to the island.<sup>42</sup>

Late in 1636, William Rudyard arrived from Providence Island as the new governor for Association. Like Riskinner, Rudyard was a volatile character. He stirred up trouble wherever he went. When Rudyard had arrived on Providence Island in 1632, he quarreled with the ministers on the island. They accused him of "drunkenness, swearing, [and] ill carriage toward the Governor." In 1634 he beat a servant to death for not working hard enough. Rudyard came from a wealthy family and had "commanded in the wars." The company considered him too valuable to deport because of his extensive military skill.<sup>43</sup> They sent him instead to Tortuga. When he arrived at Association, he immediately began issuing charlatan privateering commissions to whoever wanted one.

In early 1638 the worst fears of the English on Tortuga were finally realized. The Spanish again sent an expeditionary force against Tortuga under Carlos de Ibarra. Over 200 settlers lost their lives during the assault. The Spanish army's tumultuous advance across the island created panic in Association. Slaves rebelled, adding to the chaos, and all who could fled to northern Hispaniola. Spanish lancers operating on the north coast of that island killed many French buccaneers.<sup>44</sup>

*Puritans*, 201-11, 214-15; Burns, *History of the British West Indies*, 295-96.

<sup>42</sup> CSPC., I, 235; Newton, *Colonising Activities of the English Puritans*, 118; Hamshere, *British in the Caribbean*, 76; Kupperman, *Providence Island*, 246.

<sup>43</sup> CSPC, I, 131, 132, 146, 244; Kupperman, *Providence Island*, 59, 66, 67, 69, 157, 158, 211; Burns, *History of the British West Indies*, 295-96.

<sup>44</sup> Charlevoix, *Histoire de l'Isle Espagnole*, II, 9-10; CSPC., I, 249; Irene A.



As in the past, when the Spanish left, English settlers returned to Tortuga. Most Spanish *rescatadores* were lost, however. They had either been killed in the attack or had moved to less populated regions of the Caribbean. Englishmen returned in their place. Settlers recognized Tortuga's auspicious location near Spanish shipping lanes in the Windward Passage. Colonists from St. Christopher added to their ranks. Despite the English presence on Tortuga, the Providence Company canceled its Association design. Between concerns over Providence Island and domestic politics in England, company officials decided to distance themselves from Association. Mainly French interlopers took advantage of the island's depopulation. They took up hunting, hide-trading, and logwood cutting. Some of the French and English who fled Tortuga during the raid drifted to Port Margot and Port-de-Paix and began planting as well as hunting. The Dutch also continued their visits. Cornelius Joles led sixteen Dutch galleons and several pirate ships against Havana in summer 1639, in retaliation for the Dutch killed in the Spanish attack.<sup>45</sup>

Settlers quickly repopulated Tortuga. Competition was fierce for any territory in the Caribbean no matter how dangerous the land seemed. As many as 300 people, French and English, moved to the island in 1639. Colonists of both nations sailed from St. Christopher. Other French settlers also came from Rouen where, in the summer of 1639, the fiercest Protestant revolt in Normandy occurred. Years of poor harvests and plagues had resulted in widespread poverty. Citizens had been taxed heavily,

Wright, *Cuba* (New York, 1912), 211; Masefield, *On the Spanish Main*, 112; Kupperman, *Providence Island*, 169; Haring, *Buccaneering of the West Indies*, 62-63; Newton, *Colonising Activities of the English Puritans*, 216, 279.

<sup>45</sup> Masefield, *On the Spanish Main*, 117; Crouse, *French Pioneers in the West Indies*, 83-84; Burns, *History of the British West Indies*, 296; Wright, *Cuba*, 211.

especially in Rouen. When the rioting started, many Normans boarded ships for the New World.<sup>46</sup>

The French who arrived on Tortuga embraced the lifestyle if not the anti-nationalism of buccaneer existence. French buccaneers took an average of 200 animals a month from Hispaniola to Tortuga. They rejuvenated the weakened commercial trade for hides and meat. French merchant shippers, who purchased most of the hides, used northern Hispaniola as a pirate base again. Advertisements, drawn up by the crews of each vessel, outlined voyage plans and stipulated the division of spoils.<sup>47</sup>

Englishmen on the island also joined in the robberies. The king of England, rather than regrant Providence Company the rights to Tortuga, granted the Providence Company the power to issue privateering commissions. The English on Tortuga, who had attacked Spanish commerce for some time without privateering commissions, then assaulted more ships, and even towns and cities. After Puritans again formed a significant force on Tortuga, they lashed out ferociously and in greater numbers against Spanish vessels. Wars in Europe added to the ranks of those few who still tilled the earth and sought the meat and hides of the animals of Tortuga.<sup>48</sup> Spanish forces, this time sent from Cartagena, attacked Tortuga again with a cursory force in May 1641. Eventually, the English beat them back. The French on Tortuga, tired of both the English and Spanish, petitioned Governor de Poincy of Saint-Christophe to come seize

46 *CSPC.*, I, 223; Crouse, *French Pioneers in the West Indies*, 84; D. H. Pennington, *Europe in the Seventeenth Century* (London, 1970), 266; Newton, *Colonising Activities of the English Puritans*, 280.

47 *CSPC.*, I, 235; Newton, *Colonising Activities of the English Puritans*, 118; Hamshere, *British in the Caribbean*, 76; Kupperman, *Providence Company*, 246.

48 *CSPC.*, I, 202, 204, 226, 236, 313.

the island for France.<sup>49</sup> The buccaneers' era on Tortuga had ended. Their escape and withdrawal from their home was foiled. Rather than rejoin their homeland, their homeland rejoined them.

De Poincy seized his opportunity. He controlled the quarrels between Catholics and Protestants on Saint-Christophe since settlement. He decided to alleviate the problem by sending Huguenots to capture Tortuga. He offered the Huguenots' leader on his island, Le Vassuer, the leadership of Tortuga if he successfully captured that island. He also offered him a contract of religious freedom for those who joined him there, as long as one-tenth of their profits was sent to the French king. Le Vassuer accepted and set sail in May 1642. He first landed at Port Margot and Port-de-Paix. There, he gathered more soldiers for his attack from the ranks of French settlers. When he arrived at Tortuga, the French gathered to his side, glad to see an invading army not bent on their destruction. The English fled to the Bahamas where they continued open piracy. Frenchmen, meanwhile, built a fort on Tortuga, under Le Vassuer's leadership, and braced for an inevitable Spanish assault. When it finally came, the French successfully and convincingly drove the Spanish back into the sea. Soon, more French troops and colonists arrived, including more pirates. From Tortuga, Port Margot, and Port-de-Paix, the French founded the colony of St. Domingue. Some Spanish and Dutch buccaneers continued to stay and hunt in northern Hispaniola and Tortuga. They continued to sell hides and meat at Tortuga under French supervision, living separately from the French colonists. French pirates still

<sup>49</sup> Charleviox, *Histoire de l'Isle Espagnole*, II, 12-13; Rogozinski, *Brief History of the Caribbean*, 85; Newton, *Colonising Activities of English Puritans*, 281; Crouse, *French Pioneers in the West Indies*, 84.

made that island the base of many of their assaults into the Caribbean. These pirates continued attacking Spanish shipping.<sup>50</sup>

Spanish attempts to destroy buccaneer settlements on northern Hispaniola and Tortuga during the 1630s eradicated former Spanish citizens, *rescatadores*, and left more lethal enemies in their place. The Providence Island Company's colony of Association, manned by English pirates under the leadership of Anthony Hilton, further antagonized the Spanish. Attacks by Spanish forces to destroy Englishmen strengthened English determination to remain in the Caribbean. The Spanish assaults only weakened the buccaneers. The passing of Spanish *rescatadores* marked the passing of the original buccaneers. Spanish forces also destroyed French buccaneers, the second generation of buccaneers sent to obtain hides for French merchants. Those who survived the attacks found their population eclipsed by French armed forces and colonists. These French settlers held Tortuga and northern Hispaniola firmly in their grasp. As England erupted into Civil War after 1642, the demographics of the region changed again. Many Royalists were exported to the islands: prisoners of war, political prisoners, "felons condemned to death, sturdy beggars, gipsies, and other incorrigible rogues, poor and idle debauched persons."<sup>51</sup> These prisoners came to the

50 Dutertre, *Histoire Générale des Antilles*, I, 171; Charlevoix, *Histoire de l'Isle Espagnole*, II, 12-13; Haring, *Buccaneers of the West Indies*, 64-65; Phillip Gosse, *The History of Piracy* (New York, 1932), 144-45; Roberts, *French in the West Indies*, 44-45; Crouse, *French Pioneers in the West Indies*, 83-86; Newton, *Colonising Activities of the English Puritans*, 281; Rogozinski, *Brief History of the Caribbean*, 85; Parry and Sherlock, *History of the West Indies*, 83; Burns, *History of the British West Indies*, 295-96.

51 CSPC., I, 229; Knight, *The Caribbean*, 98; Sheridan, *Sugar and Slavery*, 236; Smith, *Colonists in Bondage*, 152-63, 164-70; Gosse, *History of Piracy*, 144-45.

islands as punishment. When they gained freedom, they attempted to punish the world. Their revenge upon society was full-fledged piracy. Since they gravitated toward Tortuga, and anchored at the island's towns, they became known as "buccaneers." The remnant of buccaneers on Tortuga existed in name only. Those referred to as "buccaneers" after 1642 never hunted the woods for hides and never sold boucanned meat. They lived only as pirates. The era of buccaneer hunters had passed. The era of "buccaneer" pirates had just begun.

## CONCLUSION

In the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, buccaneers existed on the periphery of the Spanish West Indies. Most congregated on Tortuga Island, just northwest of Hispaniola. The buccaneer population consisted of French and Dutch hide traders and *rescatadores*, Spanish settlers who participated in illegal trade with northern European merchants. Contrary to popular and even scholarly view, buccaneers were not pirates. Unfortunately, historians of piracy and the West Indies have incorrectly concluded that piracy originated with the buccaneers. This misconception has led to the myth that the first pirates were social bandits, noble robbers who stole ships and hunted down Spanish vessels.

The origins of buccaneers cannot be separated from the origins of *rescatadores*. Buccaneers formed a substantial population within the ranks of *rescatadores*. These marginal people originated from Spanish colonists who lived in the villages of southern Hispaniola, especially Santo Domingo. Over time these towns grew less important to Spanish officials, and shipping decreased to Hispaniola. Some settlers, to keep from starving, fled southern Hispaniola and migrated to the northern part of the island. There, they traded crops, hides, and meat with Dutch, French, and English merchantmen. Hides were a valuable commodity in Europe at the dawn of the seventeenth century. When European merchants found that hides could be easily obtained, they sent men to help in this trade. These men, mainly from French companies, joined the *rescatadores* who lived on Tortuga and hunted in Hispaniola.

All ships that visited Tortuga did not seek hides. As the century progressed, more vessels arrived seeking Spanish treasure and goods. They took advantage of the friendly ports on Tortuga, using the island as a way station for more nefarious

purposes. These men were the first Caribbean pirates. For effective attacks on Spanish possessions, Englishmen established companies that blended colonization efforts with piracy. The Providence Company settled three such colonies, one of them on Tortuga.

All Tortuga residents endured a hard, difficult life. They preferred existence away from European powers and away from European conflicts over territory and religion. The arrival of boat loads of colonists brought the European world with all its strife back to Tortuga's buccaneers. Factions developed where peace had previously existed among settlers from many nations. After those on Tortuga attacked Spanish commerce, Spanish forces arrived on the island waging war against northern Europeans.

Spanish forces attacked Tortuga on four separate occasions. Over the course of those battles, Spanish *rescatadores* and French buccaneers, peaceful to Spain, were killed or driven from the island. Some returned when Spanish forces withdrew; others did not. In their place moved European settlers who waged war upon Spanish territories and plundered Spanish shipping. In 1642, a French army seized Tortuga and conquered western Hispaniola, thus ending the era of Tortuga's buccaneers.

The French still allowed other vessels to visit the island's ports. English royalists, French Protestants, and Dutch merchants formed the Tortuga's new population. These new inhabitants made friends with anyone who brought goods to the island and they made enemies with anyone more fortunate than themselves. They could be bought for any price. Oliver Cromwell allied himself with Tortuga's pirates in 1654 and stormed Jamaica with 8200 of them.<sup>1</sup> Thousands more, including

<sup>1</sup> Richard S. Dunn, *Sugar and Slaves: The Rise of the Planter Class in the English West Indies, 1624-1713* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1972), 20-21.

Alexander Exquemelin, sailed under Henry Morgan in his attacks against the Spanish in the 1660s. These men were pirates, not buccaneers. They neither hunted animals, nor sold hides, at any point during their stay in the New World. They migrated from Europe on board pirate ships or prison vessels, and made war upon the world from their base upon Tortuga.

Of the original hunters and hide traders, most moved to Cuba or into the interior of Hispaniola. In 1642, Captain William Jackson found Hispaniola "abundeth with infinite Heardes of cattle, which ye Spanyards doe not Value, but onely for their Hides and Tallow; and to that purpose employ cowkillers yearly to slaughter many thousands: otherwise ye great increase of them would pester ye whole island."<sup>2</sup> Eventually, buccaneers died with the passing of time, or made their ways to other beaches in the Caribbean. Some of the very few who lived on Tortuga, no doubt, joined the pirates. Most, however, with the continual dream of escaping European society, ended up on Nicaragua's Moskito Coast, where they continued to live on the margins of society. Many buccaneers dwelled along Campeche Bay, in what became British Honduras, despite numerous Spanish attempts to remove them. In 1679, forty-seven ships traveled from Jamaica to Campeche to collect the logwood cut by those men. Vessels made the same trip every year for many years afterward.<sup>3</sup> These logwood cutters who abandoned society were the legacy of the buccaneers.

<sup>2</sup> V.T. Harlow, ed., *The Voyages of Captain William Jackson, 1642-45* (Camden, N.J., 1923), 87.

<sup>3</sup> Karen Ordahl Kupperman, *Providence Island, 1630-1641: The Other Puritan Colony* (Cambridge, 1993), 179-80; K. G. Davies, *The North Atlantic World in the Seventeenth Century, Europe and the World in the Age of Expansion, IV* (Minneapolis, Minn., 1974), 192.



During the Thirty Years War Europeans dominated the West Indies. Those who resided on Tortuga came to be known as "buccaneers" simply because they lived upon the island where the cowkillers once dwelled. Eventually, the colonists adopted the title for themselves. Instead of obliterating the pirates' presence in the Caribbean, Spanish assaults only destroyed the original buccaneers. These hunters had been caught in the cross-fire of history, between warring empires. Contemporary documents place hundreds of buccaneers of Tortuga in the early years of the seventeenth century. By mid-century they were gone. Pirates replaced them and appropriated their name and their island. By pillaging the seas from the buccaneers' abandoned home, colonists and privateers who moved to Tortuga in the seventeenth century converted the term "buccaneer" into "pirate."

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