PRIBER'S "KINGDOM OF PARADISE": BELIEF SYSTEMS AND ETHNICITY IN THE COLONIAL SOUTH

by

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(Under the Direction of Jace Weaver)

ABSTRACT

This thesis explores Native, African, and European belief systems in the early to mid eighteenth-century colonial South. Between 1736 and 1743, Christian Gottlieb Priber, a German immigrant, devised a plan to establish a "Kingdom of Paradise" in Cherokee country. In this society, all goods would be held in common, and all peoples would be welcome and treated equally. Priber's scheme provides a unique opportunity to explore the intersection of Native, African, and European belief systems at this particular time and place. This thesis researches major concepts from each of these cultures in order to reveal a more holistic view of American religious history.

INDEX WORDS: Priber, Pryber, Prieber, Preber, Cherokee Belief System, Overhill Cherokee, African Traditional Religion, Slave Society in Carolina, Pietism, Utopianism, Natural Right, colonial South

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B.A., Appalachian State University, 2004

A Thesis Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of The University of Georgia in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree

MASTER OF ARTS

ATHENS, GEORGIA

2009

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to acknowledge the entire Religion Department at the University of Georgia. In particular, I would like to thank my major professor Dr. Jace Weaver and my committee members Dr. Sandy D. Martin and Dr. Carolyn J. Medine for their guidance and encouragement, not only with this thesis, but also throughout my time at the University of Georgia. I would also like to thank Dr. Charles Hudson and Dr. Eric Bowne for first introducing me to Christian Priber and taking time from their busy schedules to contribute vital insight to this project. Writing this thesis would not have been possible without the help of these five people.

A special acknowledgement goes to the University of Georgia Graduate School Dean's Award and the Institute of Native American Studies for providing funding to help me complete my research.

Viola Bell, Dee Etheridge, Julie Crouse, Christina Torns, and Kelly Williams provided much needed moral support during this process. True friends are a gift, and my life is better for having these ladies in it. In addition, I would like to thank my family for their encouragement.

Finally, I would like to thank Ms. Zinetta McDonald and Ms. Kimbley Scott for operating the best department at the University of Georgia. They are two of the most patient and compassionate people I know.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This study focuses upon the southern colonies in the early to mid-eighteenth century. During these decades Christian Gottlieb Priber, a German immigrant, devised a blueprint for a utopian community to be located within the Cherokee Nation. This unique situation offers a chance to dissect this particular time in American religious history. That is, this study examines the life and activities of Christian Gottlieb Priber as a lens through which to examine belief systems in the colonial South, most specifically as it encompasses the interactions of Natives/Indians, Blacks/Africans, and Whites/Europeans.

Originally from Zittau, Saxony, Priber arrived in Great Tellico, an Overhill Cherokee town, around 1736. He befriended the headman Moytoy and married his niece. Priber was highly educated and could speak several languages. Unfortunately, the British accused him of being a Jesuit attempting to win the loyalty of the Cherokee for the French. In 1743, Creek Indians, allied with the British, captured Priber, and he was imprisoned at Fort Frederica until his death.

Priber's captors found three manuscripts among his possessions. The writings included a personal journal, a dictionary of the Cherokee language, and a book called *Paradise*, which outlined his plan for the utopian society.[1] Although the documents themselves do not seem to have survived, fragments of his

[1] Richard Beale Davis, *Intellectual Life in the Colonial South 1585-1763* (Knoxville, University of Tennessee Press, 1976), 171-2.

writings are available and much can be gleaned from the remaining pieces. Of most importance, Priber's utopia "would welcome 'Fugitive English, French, Germans and Negroes, and they were to take particularly under protection, the runaway Negroes of the English'…He proclaimed that in his 'republic there would be no superiority; that all should be equal there'… Furthermore, all 'lodging, furniture and clothing should be equal and uniform…[and] all goods should be held in common…'"[2] Was this utopia a proto-communistic society in colonial America? Did Priber have some other motives behind his scheme? Many questions like these remain unanswered.

Many historians have been fascinated with the story of Christian Priber.[3] Unfortunately, little to nothing Priber wrote while residing in the colonial South exists today. However, colonial records, writings from traders and travelers, and newspaper articles provide enough information to sketch a reasonable image of Priber's character and ideas.

In order to dissect this particular time and place, this study will employ the method of the Annales School, founded by Marc Bloch and crystallized by Fernand Braudel:

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[2] Allen D. Candler, comp., "Account of Christian Pryber's Proceedings," in *The Colonial Records of the State of Georgia*, vol. 36 (Savannah: Georgia Historical Society: 1937), 129-30.

[3] For two examples, see Verner Crane, "A Lost Utopia of the First American Frontier," in *The Sewanee Review Quarterly*, vol. XXVII, ed. John M. McBryde, Jr. (Sewanee: The Sewanee Review, Inc., 1919), 48-61; and, Knox Mellon, Jr., "Christian Priber's Cherokee 'Kingdom of Paradise,'" in *The Georgia Historical Quarterly*, vol. LVII (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1973), 319-31.

> [T]he Annales school conceived of research on historical time as parsing out along three levels of analysis. One was the event. The event is the stuff of everyday life, things that happen that are of short duration—such phenomena as wars, elections, and earthquakes. There are then the trends and cycles of history, those phenomena that play out over several years or even decades—things such as social trends, economic ups and downs, environmental pulses, and so on. There are then the structures of long duration, or structures of the *longue duree*. These are the long-lasting, slow-changing, structural elements of life—phenomena such as kinship systems, belief systems, and geography. The task of the historian, according to Braudel, is to separate out the elements of history into these different kinds of time—to determine the events, cycles, and structures of the *longue duree* for a people and place and to then see how they all fit together by finding the connections between them. The result is a total history, wherein the particularities of historical events, instead of being strung like so many beads on a string as in traditional narrative history, could be explained and analyzed within a larger social and historical framework and, in turn, could be used to understand the full and underlying structure of a society in a given time.[4]

Of course, the concept of a "total history" can be viewed as an ideal that may not ever be truly possible due to biases and limitations of any human being, historian or not. On the other hand, one cannot deny the interconnected layers that exist in societies. Often, Western scholars speak of religion as though it is an isolated phenomenon that can be studied and analyzed outside of the social, cultural, and temporal spheres in which it exists, but as nothing occurs in a vacuum, individual belief systems must be viewed as working within a system that includes geography, economics, politics, and so on. Of course, the

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[4]Thomas J. Pluckhahn, et. al, introduction to *Light on the Path: The Anthropology and History of the Southeastern Indians,* ed. Thomas J. Pluckhahn and Robbie Ethridge (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2006), 16. The definitive work is Fernand Braudel, "History and the Social Sciences: The *Long Duree*," in *On History*, trans. by Sarah Matthews (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980), 25-54. See also, Marc Bloch, *The Historian's Craft*, trans. Peter Putnam (New York: Vintage Books, 1953).

uniqueness of religion and belief systems in general lies in the meaning and social orientation they provide for individuals in the material world. Arguably, religion is the heart of culture. In addition, colonization during the eighteenth century can, at the very least, be seen as a pivotal trend or cycle within the newly formed Modern World-System. Quite possibly, colonization could be categorized as a structure of the *longue duree*.[5] Either way, colonization cannot be ignored in the religious history of the United States. It is colonization that brought diverse peoples together and altered landscapes in extraordinary ways. Thus, this technique of analyzing history by uncovering and studying its many layers will be the tool used for exploring the nature of this particular situation in colonial history.

Chapter Two highlights probable beliefs held by Priber by exploring prominent philosophical and religious views of Europeans and European colonists, specifically the British. Chapter Three looks at the Cherokee Nation in the New World. Chapter Four focuses upon African and African-Americans in the North and South Carolina colonies. Chapter five outlines Priber's plan from the existent information. Chapter Six looks at the British reaction to Priber's plan. Finally, Chapter Seven concludes the analysis.

As a history, the presentations of these cultures in the pages that follow are not meant to represent modern belief systems of the descendents of these peoples. Like most worldly things, belief systems are far from static and subject to change over time. In addition, these discussions are not meant to be

[5] I am still working through the concept of colonization. No doubt it is a vital aspect of the dominant economic system; however, because of its impact and far-reaching consequences, it could be a new structural phenomena of the *longue duree*.

exhaustive, for surely it would be impossible to do so within the confines of this study. Instead, key concepts of each are presented in order to conceptualize their worlds during this time period. Hopefully, it will uncover the roots of the unique varieties of religious expression that exist in the United States today.

In order to clarify the language employed in this work, Natives/Indians, Blacks/Africans, and Whites/Europeans will be used interchangeably. In addition, the spelling of Priber's name varies from source to source. Therefore, except when quoting from specific accounts, this study will refer him as "Christian Priber." Because of their common usage, "America" and "New World" will also be used interchangeably. "Carolina" and "Carolina colony" will be used when referring to the South Carolina colony and sometimes will refer to both the North and South Carolina colonies. Finally, quotations from primary sources will maintain their original spelling and punctuation.

CHAPTER 2

PRIBER'S RELIGIOUS AND PHILOSOPHICAL BACKGROUND

> *In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters…And God said, "Let there be a dome in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters." So God made the dome and separated the waters that were under the dome from the waters that were above the dome. And it was so. God called the dome Sky…And God said, "Let the waters under the sky be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear." And it was so. God called the dry land Earth, and the waters that were gathered together he called Seas. And God saw that it was good. Then God said, "Let the earth put forth vegetation: plants yielding seed, and fruit trees of every kind on earth that bear fruit with the seed in it." And it was so…*
>
> -From the Judeo-Christian Creation Myth[6]

Christian Gottlieb Priber was born on March 21, 1697 in Zittau, Saxony. His father Friedrich Priber was the proprietor of a beerhouse and also sold cloth. His mother's name was Anna Dorothea Bergmann. Priber next pops up in the historical record in college. He obtained a doctor of philosophy in the study of law from the University of Erfurt. In 1722, his dissertation entitled *The Use of the Study of Roman Law and the Ignorance of that Law in the Public Life of Germany* was published. Later that same year, he began practicing law in Zittau and

[6] Genesis 1:1-11, *The New Oxford Annotated Bible,* NRSV, ed. Bruce M. Metzger and Roland E. Murphy (New York: Oxford UP, 1991).

married Christiane Dorothea Hoffman. From 1723 to 1732, Priber and his wife have five children. Little more is known of Priber's life in Europe.[7]

Turning to the broader European landscape, one must ask, what ideas circulating throughout Europe helped shape the character and beliefs of Christian Priber? Considering Priber's nationality and educational background, three main ideologies, in particular, stand out. These ideologies include Pietism, utopianism, and the concepts of natural law and the natural rights of humankind. This chapter focuses upon these trends in European thought and the likelihood of their influence upon Priber.

Pietism[8]

The Protestant Reformation created quite the stir in Europe. The effects of this major event in Christian history could be felt for centuries. Conflicting views and practices, along with widespread persecution and religious upheavals, led many people and congregations to flee to the newly established colonies in the New World. Once in America, these immigrants established communities and towns to practice their faiths. The various ideas they brought with them greatly shaped and molded Christianity in early American history. One such ideology is Pietism. This post-Reformation reform movement had profound effects upon Christian thought from the late seventeenth to the early nineteenth centuries. This section will focus upon the origins and nature of Pietism.

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[7] Knox Mellon, Jr., "Christian Priber's Cherokee 'Kingdom of Paradise,'" in *The Georgia Historical Quarterly*, vol. LVII (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1973), 319.

[8] Pietism is often overlooked or even absent in religious history. Thus, it will be explored at length in this analysis. Because the other trends cited in this chapter are more popular topics in scholarship, they may not be explored to the same extent.

A seemingly simple place to begin one's research is by defining the topic at hand. Unfortunately, a specific, uniform definition for Pietism does not appear to exist. Likewise, citing a specific beginning or point of origin for Pietism is extremely difficult. Many scholars link Pietism definitively to Philipp Jakob Spener, however, most seem to view Spener not as a founder but instead as the first to crystallize its themes and ideas into a coherent ideology. Scholarly debates concerning these issues appear to be ongoing phenomena.[9] One scholar explains how "Pietism as a distinct religious movement began to take recognizable shape in the later decades of the seventeenth century. It is an exceedingly difficult movement to define, however, despite the fact that few Protestant impulses have been fraught with larger or more enduring consequences."[10] Therefore, the simplest approach involves illuminating certain sources of influence and inspiration that emerge from the abundance of information concerning this subject and time period in history.

Most scholars locate the beginnings of Pietism as a movement within Lutheranism. For instance, contemporary theologian and scholar Theodore G. Tappert explains, "At the outset it is well to underscore the fact that these people regarded themselves as Lutheran. They expressed this in their high regard for Martin Luther. They thought of themselves as followers of the Reformer and

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[9] Carter Lindberg, introduction to *The Pietist Theologians: An Introduction to Theology in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries*, ed. Carter Lindberg (Malden: Blackwell, 2005), 2-3.
[10] Sydney E. Ahlstrom, *A Religious History of the American People*, 2nd ed. (New Haven: Yale UP, 2004), 236.

declared that if he were to reappear Luther would certainly be a Pietist."[11] Further, its adherents viewed Pietism as "the continuation of the Reformation, a 'new Reformation,' or 'second Reformation.'"[12] Many contemporary scholars also refer Pietism in this way.

Therefore, an initial inspiration is Luther himself. As historian Fernand Braudel illustrates, "To denounce the abuses, absurdities and complications of the Church; to dispel uncertainty by staking everything on redemption by faith ('just people are saved by their faith'); to be content with spontaneous, emotional views without seeking to reduce them to meticulous order—that was the clear and simple message of the young Luther. It was romantic and revolutionary."[13] The glaring difference is Luther had been speaking of the Catholic Church; Pietists felt Lutheranism was in grave danger of becoming precisely what it had rebelled against. Theologian Peter C. Erb explains:

> Following Luther's death in 1546 a number of controversies arose within Lutheranism over which theological principles were central to faith and which were not, whether good works were necessary for salvation…the role of the law, [etc.] These questions were eventually resolved in the *Formula of Concord* (1580). In their attempts to defend their respective theologies both Lutherans and Calvinists developed a precise theological methodology and a vocabulary that characterized an academic theology known as Protestant Orthodoxy or Scholasticism…It insisted legalistically on the acceptance of precisely worded doctrinal confessions. To its enemies, the later Pietists, it was seen as dry, polemical, and intolerant, lacking concern with practical piety…From its beginnings Lutheran Orthodoxy was opposed by men [and women] who were

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[11] Theodore G. Tappert, "The Influence of Pietism in Colonial American Lutheranism," in *Continental Pietism and Early American Christianity*, ed. F. Ernest Stoeffler (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1976), 21.
[12] Lindberg, 5.
[13] Fernand Braudel, *A History of Civilizations* (New York: Penguin Books, 1995), 351.

> primarily interested in personal renewal, individual growth in holiness, and religious experience.[14]

Thus, just as Catholic Scholasticism led to the Reformation, Protestant Scholasticism highly influenced the Pietistic movement.[15]

Another major influence was Johann Arndt. Arndt emerged in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries as a prominent Lutheran theologian. He is best known for his devotional texts *True Christianity*. These four books espoused a practiced faith. German scholar Johannes Wallmann explains, "The Foreword to the first book contains the key sentence from which the individuality of his work has to be understood: 'Christ has many servants, but few followers.'…Arndt chose a formulation that paid attention to the pastors and theology students as well as the laity…[Arndt stated,] 'First of all I have desired to draw the souls of students and preachers back from their far too characteristic disputatious and quarrelsome theology that has again become nearly a *Theologia scholastica*. For the others I have intended to lead the believers in Christ from dead faith to a faith that brings forth fruits."[16]

The Reformation greatly altered the theological terrain in Europe. One scholar explains, "Luther's proclamation of justification by faith, the good news that salvation is received not achieved addressed late medieval people who sought salvation by good works, pilgrimages, and indulgences. Thanks to the acceptance of that message peoples' religious interest turned to consequences

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[14] Peter C. Erb, introduction to *Pietists: Selected Writings,* ed. Peter C. Erb (New York: Paulist Press, 1983), 3.
[15] Sandy D. Martin, Personal Communication.
[16] Johannes Wallmann, "Johann Arndt (1555-1621)," in *The Pietist Theologians*, ed. Carter Lindberg (Malden: Blackwell, 2005), 28-9.

of justification. What follows from faith? The emphasis shifted from justification to sanctification and rebirth, to the godly life."[17] Arndt sought to combine "justification by faith" with the "sanctification" of life through works.[18] In other words, one leads a holy life by orthopraxy, living the faith he or she espouses. Hence, "Christ has many servants, but few followers."

Included in Arndt's ideology is the mystical belief of the union with God in this life. For example, Wallmann illustrates, "The central Biblical passage for Arndt is Luke 17:21 where, according to the translation of the Luther Bible, it reads 'the kingdom of God comes not with observable things; one thus is not able to say: See here or there it is, for behold, the kingdom of God is *within* you.' Thus according to contemporary linguistic sense, Luther's translation is misleading. Today we read, 'the kingdom of God is among you.' For Arndt the kingdom of God is an event in the human soul."[19] One could experience this union by justification and sanctification. *True Christianity* became one of the most widely read books in Germany. In fact, "by the mid-seventeenth century Orthodox theologians began to exhort Lutherans not to forget to read the Bible because they were so taken by reading Arndt."[20]

Lutheran pastor and theologian Philipp Jakob Spener was highly influenced by Arndt. He definitely considered himself a devout Lutheran, but he felt, like many people, problems existed in the church that needed to be addressed. In 1675, Spener published *Pia Desideria* or *The Piety We Desire*.

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[17] Lindberg, 6.
[18] Johannes Wallmann, 35.
[19] *Ibid*., 30.
[20] Lindberg, 6.

This small book was included as a kind of introduction to a new publishing of *True Christianity*. If one was hard-pressed to pinpoint a specific origin of Pietism, it seems *Pia Desideria* and Spener could be just that beginning.[21] In the text, "Spener offered six concrete reform proposals: a more extensive use of Scripture by clergy and laity; the establishment and exercise of a lay spiritual priesthood; a stress upon righteous Christian living; better participant conduct in religious controversies; a pious reform of theological education; and the preaching of sermons that would produce faith and its fruits."[22] Spener took the ideas of Arndt, among others, and laid them down into a "how-to" type of manual.

Crucial to Spener's teachings were the involvement of the laity in the church and Christian practice. He advocated a more engaged church community. He felt, "the laity should have the opportunity to gather together with the clergy for common Bible study. The people are not to be 'objects' of sermons and pastoral activity, but 'subjects' to be involved in practicing Christianity by means of the meditative appropriation of the whole Bible."[23] Spener felt the clergy was somewhat removed from the laity, and he sought to lessen the hierarchical tiers in the church. Thus, small scriptural study groups were organized, which encouraged active participation of the entire community. Further, like Arndt, Spener elevated orthopraxy over orthodoxy. A believer could achieve a personal union with God in this life and part of this included charitable works and missions,

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[21] Mark A. Noll, *A History of Christianity in the United States and Canada* (Grand Rapids: Wm B. Eerdmans, 1992), 70.
[22] K. James Stein, "Philipp Jakob Spener (1635-1705)," in *The Pietist Theologians*, ed. Carter Lindberg (Malden: Blackwell, 2005), 28-9.
[23] Lindberg, 8.

in addition to adhering to the gospel of Jesus. The founding of Halle University brought these notions to fruition. Scholars detail how “under his vigorous leadership a number of social institutions were created making Halle the reform center for the theological education, social amelioration, and foreign missions that typified Lutheran Pietism.”[24]

Needless to say, Spener’s theology drew opposition from the Orthodox Lutheran community. One prominent issue was that “the Orthodox theologians were genuinely afraid that Spener’s promotion of Christian piety would subvert the historic Lutheran doctrine of salvation by grace alone. They viewed his emphasis on the activity of the Holy Spirit in peoples’ lives as a threat to adherence to biblical and creedal authority.”[25] Nonetheless, many people saw him “as the second greatest theologian in Lutheranism after Luther.”[26] His legacy thrived for generations and continued to breed controversy and conflict for many years after his death.

One cannot emphasize enough the vital role that Pietism played in the shaping of Protestant faiths, which is probably why it is seen as a reformation of the Reformation. Pietism spread throughout Europe and infused with many other Protestant denominations. Generally scholars identify several different flavors of Pietists. These include Reformed Pietism, Radical Pietism, and Moravian Pietism, to name just a few.

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[24] Stein, 28-9.
[25] *Ibid*., 86.
[26] Lindberg, 9.

Specifically, the Moravians represent a unique blend of Lutheran Pietism and a group called the Unity of the Brethren. The origins of the Unity of the Brethren can be traced to "the Bohemian religious leader John Huss, who anticipated many of Luther's ideas and was burned as a heretic in 1415. Out of the ferment that he stirred arose the Bohemian Brethren, or [Unity of the Brethren]."[27] From their rocky beginnings, the Brethren were repeatedly persecuted and often had to relocate their families and communities. During this time, they began to be referred to more commonly as the Moravians because they had dwelt many years in the region of Moravia located in Eastern Europe. After many continued years of persecution and exile, Nicholas Ludwig von Zinzendorf in Saxony gave the Brethren refuge on his property called Herrnhut or "the Lord's House."[28]

Zinzendorf was Philipp Jakob Spener's godson and attended the University of Halle. Zinzendorf differed somewhat with mainstream Pietism in Germany. His version of Pietism "centered in the shaping of the beloved community. On August 13, 1727, he led the Herrnhut community in a communal revival experience…While the Moravians retained the general Pietistic pattern, they added many innovations...They also were especially strong in missions. As a whole, their basic distinction lies in the formation of the independent piety-

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[27] Peter W. Williams, *American Religions: From Their Origins to the Twenty-First Century* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2002), 157.
[28] Ahlstrom, 241.

community."[29] Thus, from the amalgamation of these two faiths, the Brethren renamed themselves the Renewed Unity of the Brethren.

The Moravians first attempt at a settlement in the British colonies occurred in 1734 when they obtained a land grant in Georgia. They were among the first settlers to arrive in the nascent colony. Unfortunately, one reason Georgia had been established was to act as a defense against Spanish controlled Florida. Inevitably, conflict occurred between the British and the Spanish, and "the Moravians were expected to bear arms. This was not only against their religious principles, but it also violated an understanding their leaders had had with the trustees of Georgia. The Moravians abandoned their outpost in Georgia and moved to Pennsylvania in 1740 where they established two towns, Bethlehem and Nazareth." The settlements in Pennsylvania proved a success, and they eventually established first Bethabara and later Salem in North Carolina.[30]

As previously stated, Pietism developed mainly in Germany and then spread to other European countries from there. In addition, Zinzendorf, his Moravian community, and Christian Priber resided in Saxony. All ended up in the British colonies in America at about the same time in hopes of actualizing a special plan for their ideal societies. Thus, although it is difficult to know for certain Priber's exact influences, it seems reasonable to imagine Pietism being one of them.[31]

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[29] Frederick Herzog, *European Pietism Reviewed* (San Jose: Pickwick, 2003), 21.
[30] *Ibid*., 103.
[31] As an aside, the first Christians to establish a permanent mission in Cherokee country were the Moravians in the late eighteenth century. See: William G. McLoughlin, *Cherokees & Missionaries, 1789-1839* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1995).

Utopianism

As touched upon earlier, the association between Priber and a utopian ideology mainly comes from Verner Crane's 1919 article in the *Sewanee Review* entitled "A Lost Utopia of the First American Frontier," and later historians, like Knox Mellon, Jr., added to this notion of Priber's scheme being modeled upon utopian ideology. Thus, a further exploration of this notion is warranted here.

Generally, modern usage of the term "utopia" revolves around images of an idealistic place, a paradise. The Oxford English Dictionary defines utopia as "an imagined place or state of things in which everything is perfect. The word was first used in the book *Utopia* (1516) by Sir Thomas More." The word itself is derived from Greek and has been interpreted as meaning both "no place" and "good place."[32] Almost immediately following the publication of the book, scholars began to debate its meaning. Topics of discussion range from categorizing the book as a humorous farce to it being a political treatise.[33] This debate continues to this day.

The premise of the book centers upon an imaginary island whose actual location is unclear, but from descriptions given in the book, one assumes it is somewhere near the eastern shore of Brazil.[34] BOOK ONE introduces the main character Raphael Hythloday to the reader. Like "utopia," the name is type of linguistic word play. Raphael in Hebrew literally translates as "God heals."

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[32] Robert M. Adams, trans., *Utopia: A Revised Translation, Backgrounds, and Criticism*, 2nd ed. (New York: W. W. Norton & CO., 1992), 3.
[33] For more elaborate details concerning the controversy over meaning, see R. W. Chambers, "The Meaning of Utopia;" Alistair Fox, "An Intricate, Intimate Compromise;" Edward L. Surtz, "Humanism and Communism;" G.R. Elton, "The Real Thomas More?"
[34] Adams, 5-6.

Whereas, Hythloday comes from Greek root meaning "nonsense" plus a Latin suffix meaning "of God." Thus, taken together means, "God heals [Heb., *Raphael*] through the nonsense [Gr., *huthlos*] of God [Lat., *dei*]."[35] According to More's story, Raphael traveled with Amerigo Vespucci, and at the close of the last voyage, he, along with twenty-four others, stayed behind in the New World.[36] The men travel around and eventually come upon the island of Utopia.

Besides this brief introduction, throughout the rest of BOOK ONE, Raphael addresses several political ills suffered throughout many European countries. These include problems with extreme poverty, criminal systems, land enclosures, the ruling class, and religious authorities, among others. Having made his arguments concerning these issues by making various references to Utopia, his audience, namely Thomas More and Peter Giles, implore him to provide a more thorough illustration of the island. Thus, the first part of the book ends with Raphael agreeing to "explain in order of everything relating to [the Utopians'] rivers, towns, people, manner, institutions, laws—everything, in short…"[37]

BOOK TWO is essentially an intricately composed blueprint of Utopia. For example, beginning with geography, Raphael illustrates, "The island of the Utopians is two hundred miles across in the middle part where it is widest, and is nowhere much narrower than this except toward the two ends. These ends,

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[35] *Ibid*, 5.
[36] Paul Turner points out in the introduction to his translation of *Utopia* that Vespucci did in fact maroon twenty-four men at Cape Frio in 1504. [Paul Turner, introduction to *Utopia* by Thomas More (New York: Penguin Books, 2003), xiii.]
[37] Thomas More, *Utopia*, 2nd ed., trans. Robert M. Adams (New York: W. W. Norton and Co., 1992), 30.

drawn toward one another as if in a five-hundred-mile circle, make the island crescent-shaped like a new moon…"[38] With this type of detailed imagery, More goes on to paint an elaborate picture of his "no place/good place." In fact, his descriptions are so vivid he goes so far as explaining how "in choosing marriage partners, they solemnly and seriously follow a custom which seemed to us foolish and absurd in the extreme. Whether she is a widow or a virgin, the bride-to-be is shown naked to the groom by a responsible and respectable matron; and, similarly, some respectable man presents the groom naked to his future bride."[39] The book closes with a few paragraphs where More admits to agreeing to some, but definitely not all, of the customs of the Utopians. He ends, "Yet I confess there are many things in the Commonwealth of Utopia that I wish our own country would imitate—though I don't' really expect it will."[40]

There is little question as to the importance of *Utopia*. One scholar explains, "More's *Utopia* gave its name to a literary genre, of which over three thousand specimens since 1516 were listed in L. T. Sargent's bibliography, *British and American Utopian Literature*."[41] Early examples of this genre include Francis Bacon's *Nova Atlantis*, Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*, and Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*, all published prior to 1730 and widely translated and well received by the public in many European nations. European travels and "discoveries" inspired many people to imagine far away and exotic places.

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[38] *Ibid,* 31.
[39] *Ibid,* 61.
[40] *Ibid,* 85.
[41] Turner, xx.

Further, these distant lands provided the possibility of escape from less than desirable conditions throughout much of Europe.

Although most historians point to the economic impetus behind colonization as the driving force for the founding of the American colonies, many average Americans often cite utopian-style plans as the leading cause. There is little doubt that the image of Pilgrims suffering through a hard journey and early trials as a fledgling New World society is burned upon the minds of modern Americans. The gross historical inaccuracies of the tale seem to matter little to the overall population. Utopian schemes and visions do appear often enough to be categorized as a trend in American history. Other examples include the Mormons, Transcendentalists, and the Oneida community, just to name a few. Even in the twentieth and twentieth-first centuries, communities like Earthaven and Celo, two communities devoted to a self-sustaining ideology in North Carolina, dot the landscape of the United States.

Aside from the influence of *Utopia* upon literature, many scholars ponder its philosophical intentions pointing to a mixture of both communism and humanism.[42] Turning first to communism, the OED defines it as “a political theory derived from Karl Marx, advocating class war and leading to a society in which all property is publicly owned and each person works and is paid according to their abilities and needs; origin—mid-nineteenth century.” A major problem arises when using this notion of communism in relation to *Utopia*. Communism is recognized as being introduced into linguistic use in the mid nineteenth century.

[42] See footnote 33.

One must be careful of using modern terms and concepts in relation to past events. More's island must be analyzed and understood in light of its own time. Therefore, communism, in this modern sense, will not be applied in this study.

When scholars do speak of "communism" in relation to *Utopia*, they seem to be namely referring to the absence of private property. In the novel, Raphael Hythloday states, "But as a matter of fact, my dear More, to tell you what I really think, as long as you have private property, and as long as cash money is the measure of all things, it is really not possible for a nation to be governed justly or happily. For justice cannot exist where all the best things in life are held by the worst citizens; nor can anyone be happy where property is limited to a few, since those few are always uneasy and the many are utterly wretched."[43]

In addition, the label communism when applied to *Utopia* seems to encompass other spheres of the island's culture. For example, every person is required to farm. Other trades are assigned to each citizen according to talents and interests. More even goes so far as to standardize clothing for all citizens, making even attire equal in the sense of appearance.[44] Raphael explains, "Such a life style must necessarily result in plenty of life's good things, and since they share everything equally, it follows that no one can ever be reduced to poverty or forced to beg."[45]

The OED defines humanism as "an outlook or system of thought attaching prime importance to human rather than divine or supernatural matters. Humanist

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[43] More, 28.
[44] *Ibid,* 36-40.
[45] *Ibid,* 45.

beliefs stress the potential value and goodness of human beings, emphasize common human needs, and seek solely rational ways of solving human problems; [often capitalized] 'Humanism' [that refers to] a Renaissance cultural movement that turned away from medieval scholasticism and revived interest in ancient Greek and Roman thought." Thus, humanism seems to include certain communal beliefs, i.e. "common human needs." Specifically, the last section of the definition is of utmost importance for this study. There can be little doubt about the influence of Plato upon *Utopia*. The book opens with a poem describing the island. It states:

> UTOPIA was once my name,
> That is, a place where no one goes.
> Plato's *Republic* now I claim
> To match, or beat at its own game;
> For that was just a myth in prose,
> But what he wrote of, I became,
> Of men, wealth, laws a solid frame,
> A place where every wise man goes:
> EUTOPIA is now my name.[46]

In *The Republic*, Plato hypothesizes the ideal society several centuries before More's attempt. Here, too, the abolition of private property can be seen. For example, Plato divides his society into three classes.[47] In the upper two classes, "both private property and the family are to be abolished…He thought that private interests and private affections distracted a man from his duties to the community; and both are centred in the family. As far as the abolition of private property…[Plato] thought that it led to nothing but disunity, that pursuit of

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[46] Thomas More, *Utopia*, trans. Paul Turner (New York: Penguin Books, 2003), 5.
[47] Plato, *The Republic*, 2nd ed., trans. Desmond Lee (New York: Penguin Books, 1987), 177.

riches corrupted government and disrupted society…"[48] Clearly, this line of thinking influenced More when creating his island.

Another work of Plato, namely *Laws*, also espouses communally held property. Here, the absence of private property is ubiquitous among the classes and not reserved for the upper classes. For example, land is divided among households; "however, the division of lands is to be understood in something like the following way: each shareholder must consider his share to be at the same time the common property of the whole city, and must cherish his land, as a part of the fatherland, more than children cherish their mother; he must consider the land as a goddess who is mistress of mortals."[49] This type of communal land holding can be found on the island of Utopia. Thus, this work may have also have influenced More.

Overall, due to the overwhelming popularity of *Utopia* and the many works it influenced, it is, at the very least, feasible that Christian Priber was aware of the novel. On a deeper level, it also seems reasonable to assume that Priber, being a scholar of law and philosophy, would have been familiar with and influenced by utopian ideologies and political systems. These ideas were popular during this time period, and the title of his dissertation was *The Use of the Study of Roman Law and the Ignorance of that Law in the Public Life of Germany*.

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[48] Desmond Lee, introduction to *The Republic* by Plato, 2nd ed. (New York: Penguin Books, 1987), 44.
[49] Plato, *The Laws*, trans. Thomas Pangle (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1980), 127.

The Theories of Natural Law and Natural Rights

In February of 1742, Antoine Bonnefoy, a Frenchman, met Christian Priber in Cherokee country. He conversed with him on several occasions and had ample opportunity to learn a great deal about Priber's character and life. In his journal, Bonnefoy details one of the few first-hand descriptions of Priber's plan. He states how "the law of nature should be established for the sole law…"[50] Another source quotes Priber as "enumerat[ing] many whimsical Privileges and natural Rights, as he calls them, which his citizens are to be entitled to…"[51] How can the law of nature, or natural law as it is commonly called, and the natural rights of humankind be defined as used in this context?

Like utopianism, the concepts of natural law and natural rights have been around for centuries. And again, the search for answers lead to the ancient Greek philosophers. Most sources point to Aristotle and his *Nicomachean Ethics* as one of the first works to formulate the idea of natural law.[52] In Book V, Chapter VII of this work, Aristotle explains, "One part of what is politically just is natural, and the other part legal. What is natural is what has the same validity everywhere alike, independent of its seeming so or not. What is legal is what originally makes no difference (whether it is done) one way or another, but

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[50] Antoine Bonnefoy, "Journal," in *Early Travels in the Tennessee Country, 1540-1800*, ed. Samuel Cole Willaims (Johnson City: The Watauga Press, 1928), 157.
[51] *South Carolina Gazette*, Monday, August 15, 1743.
[52] For two examples, see: Leo Strauss *Natural Right in History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999); Bertrand Russell, *A History of Western Philosophy* (New York: Simon and Schuster, Inc., 1972).

makes a difference whenever people have laid down the rule…"[53] Thus, Aristotle posits, and others pick up the idea, that there exists a set of laws that exist outside of a society or societies and are "present everywhere alike."[54]

The Stoics took this idea of natural law and expanded it to include the notion of natural rights. Bertrand Russell concisely explains, "The doctrine of *natural right*, as it appears in the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries, is a revival of a Stoic doctrine…It was the Stoics who distinguished *jus naturale* from *jus gentium*. Natural law was derived from first principles of the kind held to underlie all general knowledge. By nature, the Stoics held, all human beings are equal."[55] Therefore, according to this theory, natural rights stem from natural law, which exists everywhere equally regardless of cultures and empires.

In the sixteenth century, Thomas Hobbes expounded upon these notions. In *Leviathan*, he states, "Nature hath made men so equal, in the faculties of the body, and mind; as that though there be found one man sometimes manifestly stronger in body, or of quicker mind than another; yet when all is reckoned together, the difference between man, and man, is not so considerable, as that one man can thereupon claim to himself any benefit, to which another may not

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[53] Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, trans. Terence Irwin (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Co., 1985), 133.

[54] Others who have taken the concept of natural law and applied it to morality in general include St. Thomas Aquinas and Immanuel Kant. Analysis of their works is not relevant to this study.

[55] Bertrand Russell, *A History of Western Philosophy* (New York: Simon and Schuster, Inc., 1972), 270.

pretend, as well as he."[56] And later, he explains, "The RIGHT OF NATURE, which writers commonly call *jus naturale*, is the liberty each man hath, to use his own power, as he will himself, for the preservation of his own nature; that is to say, of his own life; and consequently, of doing any thing, which in his own judgment, and reason, he shall conceive to be the aptest means thereunto."[57] Essentially, it is each man's[58] "natural right" to govern himself for the express purpose of his personal survival.

From this basis emerges John Locke in the seventeenth century and his interpretation of the theories of natural law and natural rights. While, generally, Locke agrees with the previous definitions of these theories, many scholars[59] cite Locke as the thinker who solidified their meanings. For example, Bertrand Russell notes, "In Locke's theory of government, I repeat, there is little that is original. In this Locke resembles most of the men who have won fame for their ideas. As a rule the man who first thinks of a new idea is so much ahead of his time that every one thinks him silly, so that he remains obscure…Then,

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[56] Thomas Hobbes," Leviathan" in *Morality and Moral Controversies: Readings in Moral, Social, and Political Philosophy*, 6th ed., ed. John Arthur (Upper Saddle River: Pearson Education, Inc., 2002), 6.
[57] *Ibid*, 12.
[58] For this part of the discussion, I will continue to use masculine engendered nouns and pronouns as these particular philosophers do. I do not think it would be appropriate to use more modern, less sexist language here, because it is doubtful that women would have been included in this context.
[59] Two examples are: A. John Simmons, *The Lockean Theory of Rights* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1992); and, Barbara Arneil, *John Locke and America: The Defence of English Colonialism* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996).

gradually, the world becomes ready for the idea, and the man who proclaims it at the fortunate moment gets all the credit."[60]

In his "Second Treatise of Government," Locke clearly defines these concepts as he sees them. He explains, "To understand political power aright, and derive it from its original, we must consider what state all men are naturally in, and that is a state of perfect freedom to order their actions and dispose of their possessions and persons as they think fit, within the bounds of the law of nature, without asking leave, or depending upon the will of any other man…The state of nature has a law of nature to govern it, which obliges everyone; and reason, which is that law, teaches all mankind who will but consult it, that, being all equal and independent, no one ought to harm another in his life, health, liberty, or possessions."[61] Thus, it appears natural rights, for Locke, are comprised of life, health, liberty and possessions. Of course, Locke's view of personal liberty inspired the writers of the United States Declaration of Independence and later the Constitution.

Locke was very involved in the colonizing of America. He served as secretary and advisor to Lord Ashley, a proprietor of the Carolina colony and the first Earl of Shaftesbury. In fact, Locke was instrumental in drafting the Fundamental Constitutions of Carolina.[62] Locke perceived "America [as] the

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[60] Russell, 624.
[61] John Locke, "The Second Treatise of Government," in *Morality and Moral Controversies: Readings in Moral, Social, and Political Philosophy*, 6th ed., ed. John Arthur (Upper Saddle River: Pearson Education, Inc., 2002), 270-1.
[62] Walter Edgar, *South Carolina: A History* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1998), 41-46. The Fundamental Constitutions of Carolina was never ratified by the Carolina colony.

beginning of civilization, to the extent that it reveals civil society's natural origins…Steeped in the colonial zeal of his patron, the Earl of Shaftesbury, John Locke saw America as the second Garden of Eden; a new beginning for England should it manage to defend its claims in the American continent against those of the Indians and other European powers."[63] Herein lies one of the major problems with Locke's natural law theory. Bertrand Russell explains, "The great objection to the state of nature is that, while it persists, every man is the judge in his own cause, since he must rely upon himself for the defence of his rights. For this evil, government is the remedy, but this is not a *natural* remedy. The state of nature, according to Locke, was evaded by a compact to create a government. Not any compact ends the state of nature, but only that of making one body politic. The various governments of independent States are now in a state of nature towards each other."[64]

Further, Locke viewed America as a "pristine" land, of how things were at the beginning of creation. Thus, he espouses the typical, Western view of the world, which includes a linear view of time. Essentially, this view holds that human beings begin in a "natural state," which includes, for example, hunter-gatherers. From this type of state, human societies "naturally" become more organized, eventually leading to a Western-civilization type of society. These ideas, which had been around for centuries, are transformed in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and are applied to human beings and societies in the New and Old Worlds. Of course, several decades after Locke's death, Jean-

[63] Arneil, 1.
[64] Russell, 626.

Jacques Rousseau expounds upon these concepts by developing the "natural man" theory and compares "natural existence" to "civilization."[65]

Although it is difficult to know for sure what types of philosophical and religious ideas and theories influenced Christian Priber, it seems reasonable to assume Pietism, utopianism, and the theories of natural law and natural rights played some role in shaping his character and worldview. Again, during this time, Pietism was prominent in Europe, but especially in the area of Saxony, Germany, Priber's birthplace and residence. In addition, it seems reasonable to assume a scholar of law and philosophy, as Priber unquestionably was, would have at the very least been familiar with utopian ideologies. The work did have a major impact upon philosophy and literature and had influenced scholars and explorers since it was first published in the sixteenth century. Finally, several different records do clearly indicate Priber speaking of natural rights being an important aspect of his proposed society.[66]

Perhaps, it is not surprising Priber immigrated to America, because "for more than two centuries the New World had exercised a magical dominion over the minds of such dreamers as Priber; and had, moreover, profoundly influenced the trend of their ideas toward communistic utopianism."[67] Again, More's *Utopia*

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[65] For more information regarding Rousseau and these ideas see his work entitled, *The Social Contract*.

[66] Aside from Antoine Bonnefoy, James Oglethorpe, Ludovick Grant, and James Adair all make mention in their writings of Priber's emphasis upon natural rights and the law of nature. These writings are explored further in Chapter Five.

[67] Crane, 52.

is set in the New World. Thus, Priber's story now turns to the Cherokee Nation and the colonial South.

CHAPTER 3

AN OVERVIEW OF THE CHEROKEE NATION

The earth is a great island floating in a sea of water, and suspended at each of the four cardinal points by a cord hanging down from the sky vault, which is of solid rock…When all was water, the animals were above in Galun'lati, beyond the arch; but it was very much crowded, and they were wanting more room. They wondered what was below the water, and at last Dayuni'si, "Beaver's Grandchild," the little Water-beetle, offered to go and see if it could learn. It darted in every direction over the surface of the water, but could find no firm place to rest. Then it dived to the bottom and came up with some soft mud, which began to grow and spread on every side until it became the island which we call the earth. It was afterward fastened to the sky with four cords, but no one remembers who did this. At first the earth was flat and very soft and wet. The animals were anxious to get down, and sent out different birds to see if it was yet dry, but they found no place to alight…At last it seemed to be time, and they sent out the Buzzard and told him to go and make ready for them…He flew all over the earth, low down near the ground, and it was still soft. When he reached the Cherokee country, he was very tired, and his wings began to flap and strike the ground, and wherever they struck the earth there was a valley, and where they turned up again there was a mountain. When the animals above saw this, they were afraid that the whole world would be mountains, so they called him back, but the Cherokee country remains full of mountains to this day…

-From the Cherokee Creation Myth[68]

Whereas, Chapter One focuses upon prominent European belief systems, this chapter looks at the Cherokee Nation, their belief system and their place within the eighteenth-century colonial South. On June 13, 1735, James Oglethorpe addressed the trustees of the nascent Georgia colony. At this meeting, Oglethorpe possessed a letter from Christian Gottlieb Priber requesting

[68] James Mooney, *History, Myths, and Sacred Formulas of the Cherokee* (Ashville: Bright Mountain Books, Inc., 1992), 239.

passage and residence in this new colony.[69] Little more is known about Priber until December 1735 when several advertisements appear in the *South Carolina Gazette*, a newspaper based in Charles Town. The advertisements read, "'To be sold by Mr. Priber, near Mr. Leaurans the Sadler, ready made men's cloathes, wiggs, spatterdashes of fine holland, shoes, boots, guns, pistols, powder, a silver repeating watch, a sword with a silver gilt hilt, english seeds, beds and a fine chest of drawers very reasonable for ready Money, he intending to stay but a few weeks in the Town.'"[70] From the items listed in this advertisement, it appears Priber sought to sell most of his possessions. Indeed, the French trader Bonnefoy, in his journal, noted, "The individual [Priber] was to have as his only property a chest of books and paper and ink."[71]

Priber's exact voyage to the British colonies is unknown. Did he journey to Savannah, and then from there to Charles Town? Or, did he bypass Georgia and somehow travel, instead, to Charles Town?[72] In *The Georgia Dutch*, George Fenwick Jones states Priber came to the South Carolina colony "as an officer in the British army," however, the endnote concerning this fact is unclear, and no other evidence has been found to support this claim.[73] At any rate, it is known that Priber was living among the Overhill Cherokee in the town of Great Tellico by 1736 and continued to live there for the next seven years. He befriended

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[69] Allen Candler, comp., *Colonial Records of the State of Georgia*, vol. 1 (Atlanta: Franklin Printing and Publishing Co., 1904), 218.
[70] *South Carolina Gazette,* December 6, 20, 27, 1735.
[71] Bonnefoy, 157.
[72] Extensive research of ships' manifests has produced no evidence of Priber's voyage.
[73] George Fenwick Jones, *The Georgia Dutch: From the Rhine and Danube to the Savannah, 1733-1783* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1992), 65.

Moytoy, a man of great stature within the town, and married into his family.[74] Many sources[75] cite this woman as being Moytoy's daughter, however, due to the matrilineal kinship system practiced among the Cherokee, she was most likely his niece.[76]

It is doubtful that scholars today can truly conceptualize the nature of Cherokee society and politics in the early to mid-eighteenth century. One reason for this is the lack of well-rounded sources from this time period. Many of the authors of the primary documents that exist were written by people, e.g. European traders and government officials, with political or economical motivations, and they, overall, cared very little about understanding Cherokee culture on its own terms. Also, primary documents from the early to mid-eighteenth century are not as plentiful as they are for the latter part of it. Another reason scholars wrestle with this topic is that the eighteenth century, as a whole, was a transformational time for the Cherokee Nation, as it was for most Native peoples in eastern North America.[77] Thus, what follows is a summary of key

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[74] James Adair, *The History of the American Indians,* ed. by Kathryn E. Holland Braund (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2005), 258; Candler, *Colonial Records*, vol. 1, 130.

[75] These sources include the records of Indian traders such as James Adair and Ludovick Grant, who were contemporaries of Priber and met him on a number of occasions in Cherokee country.

[76] Kathryn E. Holland Braund points out in her introduction to Adair's *History* how matrilineal kinship perplexed the majority of Europeans during this time period. Theda Perdue also notes this problem in her book *Cherokee Women*. Matrilineal kinship is discussed further later in this chapter.

[77] Charles Hudson, personal communication. Fred Gearing, "Priests and Warriors: Social Structures for Cherokee politics in the 18th century," in *The American Anthropologist*, Memoir 93, Vol. 64, No. 5, Part 2 (Menasha: George Banta Company, Inc., 1962), 5.

concepts from the information known concerning the Cherokee Nation during this time period.

Geography and Demography

Theda Perdue illustrates in *Cherokee Women: Gender and Culture Change, 1700-1835*, "The descendants of Kana'ti and Selu defined themselves as a distinct people in ways that did not always make sense to European observers. Cherokees called themselves Ani-Yun Wiya, the Real People, which distinguished them from others with whom they had contact…"[78] Differing accounts exist as to the origin of the name "Cherokee." For example, one source explains how "Cherokee," meaning "the cave people," was used by other Native nations in the region to refer to the Ani-Yun Wiya.[79] James Adair states in his *History of the American Indians*, "Their national name is derived from *Chee-ra*, 'fire,' which is their reputed lower heaven, and hence they call their magi, *Cheera-tahge*, 'men possessed of the divine fire.'"[80] "Tsalagi" or "Tsalakee," are also other names referring to the people belonging to the Cherokee Nation.[81] Their language belongs to the Iroquoian language family, and in the eighteenth century, it is believed they spoke three dialects of that language.[82]

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[78] Theda Perdue, *Cherokee Women Gender and Culture Change 17---1835* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998), 41.
[79] John Phillip Reid, *A Law of Blood: The Primitive Law of the Cherokee Nation* (Dekalb: Northern Illinois UP, 2006), 3.
[80] Adair, 247.
[81] "Tsalagi" comes from the official website of the Cherokee Nation. "Tsalakee" or "Tsulakee" is an older spelling, which is commonly used in eighteenth century documents. Tsalagi sometimes refers to the name of the Cherokee language.
[82] Sarah H. Hill, *Weaving New Worlds: Southeastern Cherokee Women and their Basketry* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997), 67.

Modern Western science holds that the Cherokee people migrated from the north[83] to the area they inhabited at European contact. Interestingly, Alexander Longe, an early eighteenth-century trader, recorded a Cherokee migration story. A Cherokee "priest" had related the information to Longe. He explained to Longe:

> We belonged to another land far distant from here; and the people increased and multiplied so fast that the land could not hold them so that they were forced to separate and travel to look out for another country. They travelled so far that they came to a country that was so cold that it was unsufferable. Yet going still on they came to mountains of snow and ice…We were forced to make raquetts (snowshoes) to put on our feet old and young; and being all loaded with provisions and fat lightwood, we pressed on our journey and at last found ourselves so far gone over these mountains till we lost sight of the sun and went through darkness for a good space and then perceived the sun again and going on we came to a country that could be inhabited and there we multiplied so much that we overspread all this maine. We brought all manner grains with us as corn and peas, pumpkin and muskmelon and watermelon. As for all sorts of wild fruits we found here naturally growing. As we were on journey over these mountains, we lost a vast quantity of our people by the unseasonable cold and darkness that we went through.[84]

It is estimated that "at its greatest extent the area claimed by the Cherokee Indians included all of what presently constitutes the northern portions

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[83] The exact time frame for their migration is not known and debates range from centuries to millenniums before European explorers arrived in the Southeast. For more information concerning the prehistory of the people and their land, see H. Trawick Ward and R.P. Stephen Davis, Jr., *Time Before History: The Archaeology of North Carolina* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999); Charles Hudson, *Knights of Spain, Warriors of the Sun: Hernando de Soto and the South's Ancient Chiefdoms* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1997); Jefferson Chapman, *Tellico Archaeology: 12,000 Years of Native American History* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1994); and Robert J. Conley, *The Cherokee Nation: A History* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2005).

[84] Alexander Longe, "A Small Postscript of the ways and maners of the Indians called Charikees," in *Southern Indian Studies*, vol. 21

of Georgia, Alabama, and South Carolina, and also western North Carolina, southwest Virginia and West Virginia, the entire state of Kentucky, and Tennessee east of the Tennessee River."[85] The totality of their domain was approximately forty thousand square miles, including hunting grounds.[86]

The population of the Cherokee living in this area fluctuated greatly during the eighteenth century. It is estimated that the "Cherokee population totaled around 20,000 persons at the time of contact with Europeans, but this number was reduced to 12,000 or less during the eighteenth century, because of epidemics and hostilities with Anglo Americans and other Native Americans."[87] Take, for example, Indian trader James Adair's account of the eighteenth-century Cherokee. He states that around 1735, the Cherokee Nation "had 64 towns and villages, populous, and full of women and children. [T]hey amounted to upwards of six-thousand fighting men [for a total population of over sixteen thousand]; a prodigious number to have so close on our settlements, defended by blue-topped ledges of inaccessible mountains…"[88] Adair later describes how "about the year 1738, the Cheerake received a most depopulating shock, by the small pox, which reduced them almost one half, in about a year's time: it was conveyed into Charles-town by the Guinea-men, and soon after among them, by infected

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[85] Gary C. Goodwin, *Cherokees in Transition: A Study of Changing Culture and Environment Prior to 1775* (Chicago: Department of Geography/University of Chicago, 1977), 6.
[86] Jefferson Chapman, *Tellico Archaeology: 12,000 Years of Native American History* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1994), 99.
[87] Gerald F. Schroedl, "Cherokee Ethnohistory and Archaeology from 1540-1838," in *Indians of the Greater Southeast: Historical Archaeology and Ethnohistory*, ed. Bonnie G. McEwan (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 2000), 204.
[88] Adair, 248.

goods."[89] Christian Priber had been residing in Cherokee Country for about two years when this outbreak occurred.

Adair describes Cherokees towns as being "always close to some river, or creek; as there the land is commonly very level and fertile, on account of the frequent washings off the mountains, and the moisture it receives from the waters, that run through their fields."[90] These towns were dispersed throughout four, sometimes cited as five, main geographical regions. The Lower Towns were located near the Chattooga, Keowee and Tugaloo rivers, the northern Savannah river system, along the border of what are now the states of Georgia and South Carolina. The Valley Towns were situated along the Hiwassee and Valley rivers of the region that is now southwestern North Carolina. This area also extended into northern Georgia. The Middle Towns were north and east of the Valley Towns and northwest of the Lower Towns along the Little Tennessee, Tuckasegee and Oconaluftee River systems. The last region was the Overhill Towns, sometimes called the Upper Towns, which were located in the ridge and valley area of what is now eastern Tennessee. The rivers and tributaries that supported these towns included the Hiwassee and the Little Tennessee.[91] A fifth small region, located northeast of the Middle Towns, comprised the Out Towns.[92]

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[89] *Ibid.*, 252.
[90] *Ibid.*, 247.
[91] Hill, 67-8. A wonderful map of eighteenth century town locations can be found on page 68 of this work. Hill lists four main regions. Sometimes the Valley and Middle Towns are cited as one division together as in Chapman's *Tellico Archaeology*, specifically page 99.
[92] Schroedl, 204-5. For a detailed map that includes five geographical regions, see page 205 of this work.

Overall, this region seems to have exerted little political influence in the eighteenth century.[93]

Town layouts were similar from town to town, regardless of the region. The basic pattern included "at least three elements—residential dwellings, ceremonial centers, and agricultural fields, both common and familial. Towns lay in bottomlands following the contours of the land…As little as two or three miles separated most villages, enough distance to disperse settlers and fields, and enough proximity to facilitate communication, exchange, and mutual aid."[94] Central to any town was the council house. Henry Timberlake, a visitor to the Overhill town Chota in 1762, illustrates in his memoirs:

> The town-house, in which are transacted all public business and diversions, is raised with wood, and covered over with earth, and has all the appearance of a small mountain at a little distance. It is built in the form of a sugar loaf, and large enough to contain 500 persons, but extremely dark, having, besides the door, which is so narrow that but one at a time can pass, and that after much winding and turning, but one small aperture to let the smoak out, which is so ill contrived, that most of it settles in the roof of the house. Within it has the appearance of an ancient amphitheatre, the seats being raised one above another, leaving an area in the middle, in the center of which stands the fire; the seats of the head warriors are nearest it.[95]

The townhouse mentioned above was actually used during the winter months, and "opposite the townhouse entrance was a summer townhouse or

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[93] Reid, 12; and incidentally, members of the Eastern Band of the Cherokee are the descendents of the Cherokee living in the Out Towns during the time of Removal. For more information, see John R. Finger, *The Eastern Band of the Cherokee: 1819-1900* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1984).

[94] Hill, 69.

[95] Henry Timberlake, *The Memoirs of Lt. Henry Timberlake: The Story of a Soldier, Adventurer, and Emissary to the Cherokees, 1756-1765*, ed. Duane H. King (Cherokee: Museum of the Cherokee Indian Press, 2007), 17. See also Chapman, 110-3.

pavilion. This structure measured 48 by 23 feet. A less substantial structure, the pavilion was probably a roofed, open shed that contained benches. Beyond the pavilion was the plaza which was bordered by domestic dwellings…"[96] The plaza was a public area used for special events, such as ceremonies and stick ball.[97]

Each town could have between "ten to sixty domestic structures, with populations ranging from 100 to 600 people. Smaller settlements and individual farmsteads were found in more remote locations throughout Cherokee territory."[98] Like the council house, family dwellings consisted of two structures, one for summer and one for winter. The winter houses were circular structures, with walls constructed of wattle and daub. In the center of each house was a hearth. The roof, like the roof of the council house, was conical in shape and had a hole above the hearth to allow smoke to escape. Beside the winter houses, the rectangular summerhouses, lacked the wattle and daub construction and had gabled roofs. Storage pits, corn cribs, and menstrual huts were found near the dwellings.[99]

Belief System

The Cherokee creation story, quoted at the beginning of the chapter, is geomythological. That is, it intimately connects the Cherokee people to their land, namely the southern Appalachian Mountains and surrounding regions.[100] As this

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[96] Chapman, 110.
[97] Schroedl, 205.
[98] *Ibid*., 206.
[99] Chapman, 110-14; Perdue, 43. For a detailed description of Cherokee house construction and style, see: Adair 403 and 406-8.
[100] Jace Weaver, personal communication (January 8, 2007). Dr. Weaver defines geomythological as "a five dollar word meaning 'based upon geography.'"

myth illustrates, the Cherokee's cosmology included three realms, the Upper World, the Under World and This World, also called the Middle World. Like most creation stories, this one provides the framework for how the Cherokee ordered their world and society. These divisions represented basic categories into which most things belonged.[101] For example, "in Cherokee cosmology, fertility, change, and future time were all within the province of the underworld whereas purity, order, and past time rested with the upper world."[102] The name "This World" provides its own definition.[103] The Sun and creatures of the sky, i.e. birds, belonged to the Upper World realm. Conversely, water and "vermin, such as snakes, lizards, frogs, fish, perhaps insects," etc. were associated with the Lower World. Humans, the "four-footed animals," and plants belonged to This World. [104]

Keeping these categories separated was of vital importance to the Cherokee. For example, "it was forbidden to pour water on the sacred fire" because water belonged to the Lower World, and sacred fire was "the earthly representative and ally of the Sun." Anomalous creatures, such as the kingfisher, who could not be placed in one specific realm, were thought to have special power.[105]

Evidence suggests the number four as being sacred to the Cherokee. It denotes the four cardinal directions, and the earth is anchored to the sky vault by cords attached at each direction. Every dwelling contained four central support

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[101] Charles Hudson, *The Southeastern Indians* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1976), 122-6.
[102] Perdue. 34.
[103] Apparently, This World is comprised of seven levels. See: Hudson, 122-3.
[104] Hudson, 128.
[105] *Ibid*., 126-8.

posts.[106] The number four was also vital in ceremonies, rituals, and rites of passage. Take Antoine Bonnefoy's vivid account of his adoption into the Cherokee Nation. When his party arrived home, they "made entry into [the] village in the order of a troop of infantry, marching four in each rank…and march[ed] three or four times around a great tree…After this march was finished they brought us into the council-house, where we were each obliged to sing four songs."[107] In addition, during the annual Busk[108], the number four played a prominent role. Alexander Longe recounts how a Cherokee headman advised the men of his village "that 4 days before the busks that you keep yourselves from women and all that 4 days you shall prepare and purge yourselves with physic and by washing yourselves in the water."[109]

Certain ceremonies and rituals revolved around seasonal/agricultural cycles. Take the Busk, just mentioned above, for example. Alexander Longe referred to it as the "Feasts of the First Fruits."[110] Henry Timberlake explains, "They have few religious ceremonies, or stated times of general worship: the green corn dance seems to be the principal, which is, as I have told, performed in a very solemn manner, in a large square before the townhouse door: the motion here is very slow, and the song in which they offer thanks to God for the corn he has sent them, far from unpleasing."[111] The Busk lasted for several days and

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[106] Schroedl, 206.
[107] Bonnefoy, 153.
[108] Sometimes the Busk is referred to as the Green Corn Ceremony.
[109] Longe, 16.
[110] *Ibid*., 14.
[111] Timberlake, 35.

involved many dances that reenacted myths.[112] Alexander Longe recalled witnessing several of these dances at the Busk he attended.[113]

Duane H. King succinctly sketches the Busk:

> The preliminary or new Green Corn Feast was held when the young corn was first ready to eat. This feast was called *selu tsunistigistiyi* (corn, when they eat them) and was held in August. The feast was held on the night of the full moon nearest the period when the corn was ripe. There was a strong cultural prohibition against everyone eating new corn before the ceremony. The mature or ripe Green Corn Feast was held about forty to fifty days later in mid- to late September. It was called tu:naka?ni and was held when the corn had become perfect. The ceremonies generally lasted for four days and were preceded by fasting. Every fire in the village was extinguished; fire hearths were swept clean and rekindled from the new fire, called the sacred fire, made in the townhouse.[114]

In *The Southeastern Indians*, Charles Hudson observes, "We would have something approaching the Green Corn Ceremony if we combined Thanksgiving, New Year's festivities, Yom Kippur, Lent, and Mardi Gras. In terms of its meaning, perhaps it comes closest to our New Year's festival, an occasion on which many people try to straighten out their affairs and make resolutions to be better people in the coming year."[115]

Religious specialists did exist in Cherokee society. They were responsible for leading prescribed rituals and ceremonies. Take, for example, Longe's description of a post-hunting ritual he observed. He illustrates, "When there has any deer killed for the town…[it] is brought up to the high place where their

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[112] Hill, 80.
[113] Longe, 24.
[114] Duane H. King, notes to *The Memoirs of Lt. Henry Timberlake: The Story of a Soldier, Adventurer, and Emissary to the Cherokees, 1756-1765*, ed. Duane H. King (Cherokee: Museum of the Cherokee Indian Press, 2007),121.
[115] Hudson, 374-5.

temple is builded quite round with and is supported with great pillars of wood, a round hearth in the middle of the house. The fire never goes out. This deer flesh is never eat by anybody till the priest cuts a piece of it and throws it in the midst of the fire and when so done, he cuts 4 other pieces and throws one north the other south the other east and the other west."[116] In addition, the "high priest"[117] was responsible for tending the Sacred Fire. During the Busk, this person "took a piece of dry poplar, willow, or white oak with a hole drilled partly through it and placed it between his knees. Then he took a short length of wood of a different kind and briskly drilled it between his hands for several minutes until the piece of wood between his knees began to smoke. Then he put on chips and splinters of pitch pine and fanned up flames with the wing of a white bird."[118]

Some of the religious specialists were also healers. Adair referred to these people as the "old magi and religious physicians."[119] He describes how a healing ritual begins with the healer "approach[ing] them in a bending posture, with their rattling calabash, preferring that sort to the North-American gourds: and in that bent posture of body, they run two or three times around the sick person, contrary to the course of the sun, invoking God…Then they invoke the raven, and mimic his croaking voice…They also place a bason of cold water with some pebbles in it on the ground, near the patient, then they invoke the fish, because of its cold element…[T]hey solicit [the eagle] as he soars in the heavens, to bring

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[116] Longe, 12.
[117] I use this description/term for lack of a better one.
[118] Hudson, 371-2.
[119] Adair, 252.

down refreshing things for their sick."[120] Alexander Longe once became very ill while residing in a Cherokee village. He illustrates, "I was in such a miserable condition that I was so blind that I could not see above ten paces from me…[The healer] went out and went down to the river side and brought with him an herb and bruised it and dropped the juice thereof in my eyes. As soon as the juice touched my eyes, I found ease and the next morning I was quite well."[121]

Certain rites of passage were recorded from this time period. Take Bonnefoy's adoption into the Cherokee Nation. He initially entered the village painted, barely clothed, and bound by a slave collar. After he had performed the prescribed rituals, Bonnefoy details how "they buried at the foot of the tree a parcel of hair from each one of us…Then the savages who had adopted us came and took away our collars. I followed my adopted brother who, on entering into his cabin, washed me, then after he had told me that the way was free for me, I ate with him…dressed and treated like himself."[122] Another example concerns birth. Henry Timberlake details, "As soon as a child is born, which is generally without help, it is dipped into cold water and washed, which is repeated every morning for two years afterward, by which the children acquire such strength, that no rickety or deformed are found amongst them. When the woman recovers, which is at latest in three days, she carries herself to the river to wash it; but though three days is the longest time of their illness…nay, I have known a

[120] *Ibid*., 204-5.
[121] Longe, 48.
[122] Bonnefoy, 153.

woman delivered at the side of a river, wash her child, and come home with it in one hand, and a goard full of water in the other."[123]

In addition, Longe describes "Their Burial of the Dead and Their Way of Mourning for Them." When a person dies, his or her relatives:

> [M]ourn for 24 hours and then the priest of the town is sent for to bury the corpse. They are buried as the white people does. If it be a king all the nation mourns for him and all that is of royal descent buries a good quantity of good with him. Likewise all the other common people has vast quantities of all sorts of goods buried with them which is a great advantage to the merchants of South Carolina and especially to the Indian traders that uses (trades) amongst them. This goods that is buried with these corpses is given part to them to serve them in their voyage and part to present their friends and relations in the other world, speaking to the deceased, telling them to give such and such things to such and such relations. All the goods that belongs to the dead they burn, as loath to keep anything that belongs to them lest it should be the occasion of their not going to that good place that is prepared for them.[124]

All of these actions were performed to ensure a smooth the transition from This World to the "other world" for the deceased person.

As Longe illustrates above, the Cherokee did believe in an afterlife. Adair adds: "The most intelligent among them, say the human soul was not made of clay, like the brute creation, whose soul is only a corporeal substance, attenuated by heat, and thus rendered invisible."[125] In addition, a priest told Longe that they bury the dead "with their face toward the rising sun; and when the sun rises, it shines on the faces of those good people that are buried. The fourth day the soul rises out of the grave and goes toward the sun's rising…[at] midday…the sun

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[123] Timberlake, 35.
[124] Longe, 26.
[125] Adair, 108.

sends a messenger with the soul and sets it at two parting paths…But the messenger that the sun sends with the good souls points to the good soul to go unto that small path which leads straight to the sun setting where there is one of the finest countries that it is past the apprehension of man."[126] On the other hand, "bad souls" are lead down a very difficult path and encounter "serpents and all sorts of vile beasts and amongst briars, bushes and shrubs and thorns and woods…and those venomous creatures torments them to all eternity."[127]

Memoirs from the eighteenth century reveal that the Cherokee referred to a supreme being/spirit. Timberlake observed, "They generally concur…in the belief of one superior Being, who made them, and governs all things, and are therefore never discontent at any misfortune, because they say, the Man above would have it so."[128] Longe also commented, "Their opinion of the divine power, they own one supreme power that is above the fermement and that power they say was he that made the heavens and the earth and all things that is therein and governs all according to his will and pleasure. This great king as they call him has 4 messengers that he has placed in the winds east, west, north and south. These 4 messengers are always there to attend the 4 Seasons of the year, which we call the 4 quarters of the year and to mind the moving of the sun and moon and stars."[129]

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[126] Longe, 8.
[127] *Ibid.*, 10.
[128] *Ibid.*, 34.
[129] *Ibid.*, 10.

Social Organization

The basic unit of social organization among the eighteenth century Cherokee was the clan. In this kinship system, "all members of a clan supposedly descended from the same individual…Although there may have been other clans in earlier times, the Cherokees of the historic era had seven clans: Aniwahiya or Wolf; Anikawi or Deer; Anidjiskwa or Bird; Aniwodi or Paint; Anisahoni, perhaps meaning Blue; Anigotigewi, perhaps Wild Potato; and Anigilohi, perhaps Twister. According to the principle of matrilineal descent, people belonged to the clan of their mother: their only relatives were those who could be traced through her…Children were not blood relatives of their father or grandfather; a father was not related to his children by blood.[130] The most important male figure in a child's life was his or her uncle, not the father. For this reason, Priber most likely married Moytoy's niece, not his daughter. At this point in Cherokee society, marrying Moytoy's daughter would not have linked Priber to Moytoy in any major way.

Matrilineal descent, generally, lends to a more egalitarian-type of society in regards to gender. That is, women in this system have a certain amount of power, not found societies that practice patrimonial descent. In any given Cherokee town, subdivisions of the seven matrilineal clans, called matrilineages, controlled their dwellings, farming land, and various other property like cookware and farm equipment, for instance.[131] The males in the clans lived in houses controlled by their mothers, sisters, and other female members of the clan. In

[130] Perdue, 42.
[131] Hudson, 186; Perdue, 46; Reid, 133.

Cherokee Women, Theda Perdue notes, “The only permanent members of household were the women. Husbands were outsiders; that is, they were not kinsmen. When a man married, he moved from the household of his mother to that of his wife. A man’s move to his bride’s residence did not mean that he became a part of her clan and lineage; in Alexander Longe’s words, ‘Their wives is nothing akin to them.’”[132] Marriage within one’s clan was forbidden.[133]

Marriage ceremonies are described in eighteenth-century writings. Take, for example, Longe’s account. He illustrates, “The young couple that is to be married goes and visits one and other and promises to each other that if they like and then acquaints the old people with it, the father and mother of the young man sends for the parents of the young woman and consults about the matter. If they agree the next morning the young man takes his axe and goes and cuts a hording of wood and brings it and lays it at the young woman’s door. If the young woman comes and take of the wood and makes fire therewith and calls him in and gives him victuals to eat, the marriage is confirmed.” Longe later adds, “I have this to say that the women rules the roost and wears the breeches.”[134]

Take, also, James Adair’s comments concerning a marriage ceremony. He explains, “When the bridegroom marries the bride, after the usual prelude, he takes a choice of ear of corn, and divides it in two before witnesses, gives her one half in her hand, and keeps the other half to himself; or otherwise, he gives her a deer’s foot, as an emblem of the readiness with which she ought to serve

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[132] Perdue, 43; Longe, 32.
[133] Hudson, 197.
[134] Longe, 30.

him: in return, she presents him with some cakes of bread, thereby declaring her domestic care and gratitude in return for the offals; for the men feast by themselves, and the women eat the remains. When this short ceremony is ended, they may go to bed like an honest couple."[135]

As mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, the eighteenth century was a time of transformation for the Cherokee. Concerning their political system Fred Gearing describes how "early in the 18th century there was no formal political system beyond the villages. Then, the Cherokee tribe was an aggregate of politically independent villages; there were no structures to facilitate decisions by the tribe at large, or to permit the systematic coordination of tribal actions. After the creation of a tribal state at mid-century, the villages remained political entities within the larger, sovereign state."[136] If using Gearing's description, then during the third, fourth and fifth decades of the eighteenth century, their political organization can best be likened to his second category. That is, "each Cherokee town was an autonomous unit, its inhabitants striving for consensus when discussing major issues. There were no leaders in the European sense, no king or prince who wielded coercive authority over others. At most, a local chief [or headman] led by persuasion and example. Such an atomized society was unfathomable to Europeans accustomed to more centralized authority."[137]

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[135] Adair, 177.
[136] Fred Gearing, "Priests and Warriors: Social Structures for Cherokee politics in the 18th century," in *The American Anthropologist*, Memoir 93, Vol. 64, No. 5, Part 2 (Menasha: George Banta Company, Inc., 1962), 5.
[137] John R. Finger, *The Eastern Band of Cherokees, 1819-1900* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1984), 4; See also, Tom Hatley, *The Dividing Paths: Cherokees and South Carolinians through the Revolutionary Era* (New York: Oxford UP, 1995), 8.

Like many things in Native culture, Englishmen never really understood the political system of the Cherokee, namely their concepts of personal liberty and rule by consensus. A Cherokee headman remarked to Colonel George Chicken "'the people would work as they pleased and go to Warr when they pleased, notwithstanding his saying all he could to them, and that they were not like White Men.'"[138] Adair details how "not an individual durst ever presume to infringe on another's liberties. They are all equal—the only precedence any gain is by superior virtue, oratory, or prowess." He continues, "Governed by the plain and honest law of nature, their whole constitution breathes nothing but liberty: and, when there is that equality of condition, manners, and privileges, and a constant familiarity in society, as prevails in every Indian nation, and through all our British colonies, there glows such a chearfulness and warmth of courage in each of their breasts, as cannot be described."[139]

Although there was no centralized government, journals and other writings from this time do mention a prominent figure within individual towns. Scholars often refer to this person as the "headman." In his *Memoirs*, Timberlake explains how "the chiefs being chose according their merit in war or policy at home; these lead the warriors that chuse to go, for there is no laws or compulsion on those that refuse to follow, or punishment to those that forsake their chief: he strives, therefore, to inspire them with a sort of enthusiasm…These chiefs, or headmen, likewise compose the assemblies of the nation, into which the warwomen are

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[138] J. Ralph Randolph, *British Travelers Among the Southern Indians, 1660-1763* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1973), 112.
[139] Adair, 375. Note Adair's use of "law of nature."

admitted."[140] Similarly, Adair notes, "The power of their chiefs, is an empty sound. They can only persuade or dissuade the people, either by the force of good-nature and clear reasoning, or colouring things, so as to suit their prevailing passions. It is reputed merit alone, that gives them any titles of distinction above the meanest of people."[141] In *A Law of Blood*, John Philip Reid succinctly describes, "The best contemporary evidence, as well as the consistency of legal principles, point to the conclusion that the leader of a Cherokee town was either the person who presided over the council, or the politician who most frequently expressed or created the consensus resolving major issues. It is very likely that the people elected a speaker for the council who also may be called a headman, or even the headman of the village."[142]

In addition to the headman, each village had "Beloved Men" and "Beloved Women." These people seem to have been respected elders in the town. Timberlake described them as "old warriors likewise, or war-women, who can no longer go to war, but have distinguished themselves in their younger days, have the title of Beloved. This is the only title females can enjoy; but it abundantly recompences them, by the power they acquire by it, which is so great, that they can, by the wave of a swan's wing, deliver a wretch condemned by the council, and already tied to the stake."[143] Adair also makes several references to these people as holding prestigious positions in Cherokee society.[144]

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[140] Timberlake, 36.
[141] Adair, 376.
[142] Reid, 52.
[143] Timberlake, 37.
[144] See: Adair, 141 and 146-7.

Rule by consensus involved village meetings held in the town council. Here, men would speak their minds and/or argue their points. Meetings could last for days, sometimes weeks. Again, Reid explains, “The procedural function of the council was to crystallize opinion. It was a forum in which the conflicting interests within the town discussed their points of view, often for days on end, over and over again, with every man permitted to speak and every voice having equal weight, until finally a consensus emerged. But consensus came not by vote. It came with the disappearance of opposition, through compromise or withdrawal, not by the minority acknowledging that it was constitutionally bound to yield its views to majority rule.”[145] Those who disagreed or withdrew from the meetings do not appear to be stigmatized in society. They simply did not participate in the execution of the decision.[146]

Given the nature of Cherokee society in the early to mid-eighteenth century, one can easily see why clan kinship played a central role. Above all else, “Cherokees distinguished themselves from others not by skin color or political allegiance but by their membership in a Cherokee clan. Any person, regardless of ancestry or nationality, who was born or adopted into one of the seven clans was a Cherokee; any person who did not belong to a Cherokee clan was not a member of the tribe and was liable to be killed almost at whim.”[147] Clan membership linked people residing in towns hundreds of miles apart.

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[145] Reid, 50.
[146] Hatley, 10.
[147] Perdue, 49.

A final function of clan kinship to be discussed is its role in the overall law of the towns. In *Cherokee Women*, Theda Perdue states, “By far the most important role that matrilineal clan played was as the arbiter of justice. Cherokee jurisprudence was simple, and enforcement was swift and certain.”[148] Put quite simply, if a person from the Deer clan, for example, killed a person from the Bird clan, intentionally or accidentally, the Bird clan had a right to retribution. Longe summed it up simply: “Life for life.”[149] Adair observed, “The Indians strictly adhere more than the rest of mankind to that positive, uprepealed law of Moses, ‘He who sheddeth man’s blood, by man shall his blood be shed:’ like the Israelites, their hearts burn violently day and night without intermission, till they shed blood for blood.”[150] Even though Adair’s *History* sought to connect Native Americans to the Lost Ten Tribes of Israel, his observations concerning law, and other aspects of their society, cannot be discounted (and are confirmed by other sources). This “life for life” also extended to other Native Nations. For example, Longe, again, illustrates, “There is no mercy showed to them that kills one of their own nation.”[151] The death of one or more members of the Cherokee Nation could, and often did, erupt into a war with another Native nation because of the “legal duty or social requirement that deaths be avenged.”[152]

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[148] *Ibid.*
[149] Longe, 32.
[150] Adair, 183.
[151] Longe, 32; See also, Reid, 54-72
[152] Reid, 154. For more information, see: Reid, 153-73.

Subsistence, Economics and the Carolina Colony

A seemingly little known fact, at least outside of the academic setting, is that the domestication of plants and animals sprang up independently in the southeastern North America around 2500 BCE.[153] The domesticated plants included sunflower and knotweed, for instance, and are apart of what is referred to as the "Eastern Agricultural Complex."[154] Corn and beans arrived from Mesoamerica sometime between 200 BCE and 400 CE.[155] Native peoples of the Southeast had been farming for thousands of years prior to the coming of Europeans. Thus, at the time of cultural contact Native peoples were farming corn, beans, squash, gourds, sunflowers, and pumpkins. After contact, Cherokees added sweet potatoes, peas, and watermelon to their staple crops.[156]

One Cherokee myth called "Kana'ti and Selu: The Origin of Game and Corn," lays out the foundation for the subsistence pattern of the people. Quite simply, Kana'ti, meaning "The Lucky Hunter," was responsible for hunting game, and his wife, Selu, meaning corn, provided the vegetables.[157] Theda Perdue explains:

> The myth of Kana'ti and Selu provided the Cherokees with an explanation for why men and women in their society lived the way they did, occupying separate categories that opposed and balanced each other. Men hunted because the first man had been responsible for providing his family with meat. Women farmed because Selu first gave birth to corn in the storehouse and then

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[153] Jared Diamond, *Guns, Germs, and Steel: The Fates of Human Societies* (New York: W. W. Norton and Co., 1999), 100.
[154] Hudson, 59-60.
[155] *Ibid*., 62 and 81. Evidence for corn cultivation shows up earlier than beans in the archaeological record.
[156] Goodwin, 51-55.
[157] Mooney, 242-9.

> became the source of corn…Men helped clear fields and plant crops, but the primary responsibility for agriculture rested with women. When women accompanied men on the winter hunt, they confined their activities to gathering nuts and firewood, cooking for the hunters, and perhaps preparing skins…A person's job was an aspect of his or her sexuality, a source of economic and political power and an affirmation of cosmic order and balance."[158]

The English trader James Adair resided in Cherokee country for over thirty years. In his writings, he details their subsistence practices. "Every dwelling-house has a small field pretty close to it: and, as soon as the spring of the year admits, there they plant a variety of large and small beans, peas, and the smaller sort of Indian corn[159], which usually ripens in two months, from the time it is planted," he observes. On another occasion, he illustrates, "There is a favourite method among them of fishing with hand-nets. The nets are about three feet deep, and of the same diameter at the opening, made of hemp, and knotted after the usual manner of our nets. On each side of the mouth, they tie very securely a strong elastic green cane, to which the ends are fastened. Prepared with these, the warriors a-breast, jump in at the end of a long pond, swimming under water, with their net stretched open with both hands, and the canes in a horizontal position."[160]

Just as Native peoples of the New World had been farming long before European contact, so had they been participating in intercontinental commerce. As already mentioned, corn, for example, which was domesticated in

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[158] Perdue, 17-8. For specific information concerning subsistence, see: Hudson, 258-316.
[159] The Cherokee had two types of corn, a "flinty multicolored 'hominy corn' and a white-grain 'flour corn.'" Perdue, 18-20. Perdue describes specifics of cultivation on the same pages.
[160] Adair, 396-8.

Mesoamerica, begins to be cultivated in the Southeast around 200 BCE. In *The Southeastern Indians*, Charles Hudson explains, "An extensive trade network appears to have developed during the Woodland period. At present we know virtually nothing about how it was organized, but we do know that many exotic materials from far away places were interred with bodies in burials. There was much use of copper of the freely occurring kind that is found in abundance around the Great Lakes and in lesser quantities in isolated parts of the Southeast. Mica from the Appalachian Mountains was used throughout most of the Southeast, as were sea shells and fossilized sharks' teeth from the Atlantic and Gulf coasts."[161] Thus when Europeans show up in the sixteenth century, the barter system was not new to Native nations, but European goods were.

The first British colonists to interact with the Cherokee were James Needham and Gabriel Arthur in 1673.[162] Within forty years, Eleazar Wiggan, an English trader, had set up shop in Tanasi, an Overhill Cherokee town.[163] By the middle of the eighteenth century, traders from the Carolina colony lived in many Cherokee towns throughout every region of the Nation. The Englishmen "maintained homes after the English mode…Their log storehouses were separate structures in which they kept their goods and from behind the counters of which they carried on their daily traffic. Always the Indians were in debt to

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[161] Hudson, 65-6.
[162] See: John Locke, "The Journeys of Needham and Arthur," in *The First Explorations of the Trans-Allegheny Region by the Virginians, 1650-1674*, comp. Clarence Walworth Alvord and Lee Bidgood (Cleveland: The Arthur H. Clark Co., 1912), 209-26.
[163] Henry Thompson Malone, *Cherokees of the Old South: A People in Transition* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1956), 5-6; Randolph, 121; and Chapman, 100.

them, for the traders outfitted their customers on credit charged against each man's anticipated take of deerskins."[164]

In addition to deerskins, another Cherokee trade item was "the split wood and cane baskets made by Cherokee women, [which] were from the beginning among the highest value trade items regularly offered by the tribe."[165] James Adair describes how "those baskets which the Cheerake made, were so highly esteemed even in South Carolina, the politest of our colonies, for domestic usefulness, beauty, and skilful variety, that a large nest of them cost upwards of a moidore."[166] In exchange for deerskins, baskets, and other Native-made goods, Indians received Europeans items such as guns, ammunition, horses, cloth, beads, hoes, and rum, among others.[167]

Because of their more remote location, the Cherokee-English trade network was established later than other Southeastern nations. This relationship was cemented in the second decade eighteenth century. Allan Gallay explains, "As the Cherokee desire for European goods increased they more actively

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[164] David H. Corkran, *The Cherokee Frontier: Conflict and Survival, 1740-62* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1962), 11. In light of the United States current financial situation, reflecting upon the past seems fitting. It appears the European economic system in the America has always involved predatory lending practices. Unfortunately, many peoples from various Native nations in the Southeast stayed in perpetual debt to representatives of the British government and later the United States. For a compelling account of the Creek/British deerskin trade see: Kathryn E. Holland Braund, *Deerskins and Duffels: The Creek Indian Trade with Anglo-America, 1685-1815* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1996).

[165] Hately, 33.

[166] Adair, 413. Braund defines a moidore as a "Portuguese gold coin widely circulated in the English colonies during the eighteenth century." Kathryn E. Holland Braund, notes to *The History of the American Indians*, by James Adair (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2005), 545.

[167] Hudson, 436.

hunted deerskins and established stronger ties with the Carolinians. Their participation in the invasion against the Tuscarora led by James Moore brought them into closer contact with English colonial society. The growing military power of the Cherokee and their geopolitical importance to the French and English ensured that they would play a key role in the South in the coming years." Before the Seven Years War, competition between England and France, especially, provided a certain amount of leverage, and thus power, for Cherokee diplomacy. This fact created an air of paranoia among the European powers.[168]

Great Tellico

As discussed earlier, the Overhill Cherokee were the farthest west villages, and hence closer to French interests. Traveling from Cherokee country to French stations was relatively simple for the time. Historian Tom Hatley explains, "From the Overhill Towns the Tennessee [River] followed a great loop around the southern edge of the Cumberland Plateau and passed carrying spots where short portages linked to headwaters of the Coosa and other rivers emptying into the Gulf. The French fort at the 'Alabamas' was only seven days by this land and water route."[169] Located on the Tellico River, a branch of what is now called the Little Tennessee River, Great Tellico became the home to Christian Priber for approximately seven years.[170]

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[168] Alan Gallay, *The Indian Slave Trade: The rise of the English Empire in the American South, 1670-1717* (New Haven: Yale UP, 2002), 321-2. See also: Hudson, 438-40.
[169] Hatley, 14.
[170] Actually, Great Tellico, along with several other Native villages, is now submerged under Tellico Lake.

Great Tellico rose to prominence around 1730 when the Scotsman Sir Alexander Cuming traveled throughout Cherokee country. In an odd and historically hazy turn of events, Cuming selected Moytoy of Great Tellico as "presid[ing] at present as Emperor over the whole [nation].'" Cuming left Cherokee country with six headmen. The envoy traveled to Charles Town and then to England to meet the king and negotiate a treaty. Much of Cuming's mission remains a mystery. Various interpretations of the nature of Cuming's journey exist. In fact, not too much is known about Cuming himself.[171]

As for the relationship established between the Cherokee and the British, Robert J. Conley succinctly explains, "Certainly, Cuming visited the Cherokees, traveling from town to town and addressing the people assembled in their townhouses, and certainly he came away from the Cherokee country having reached some sort of agreement with them and having had "Moytoy" appointed as something. But whatever he accomplished, he certainly embellished the tale for the benefit of King George…What the Cherokees probably agreed to was not much more than what they had already agreed to in Charlestown nine years earlier. That is to say, they probably agreed to trade with the British colonies and not with the French. And they probably selected one man ("Moytoy") as their trade representative."[172] However this event is interpreted, many scholars[173] do

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[171] Randolph, 117-25. See also: Corkran, 16. The treaty itself can be found in: J.H. Easterby, ed., *The Colonial Records of South Carolina: The Journal of the Commons House of Assembly: November 10, 1736-June 7, 1739* (Columbia: The Historical Commission of South Carolina, 1951), 106-8.

[172] Robert J. Conley, *The Cherokee Nation: A History* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2005), 29.

[173] See footnote 171. See also: Hatley, 67-8 and Finger, 4-5.

agree that this instance represents the beginnings of a centralized government within the Cherokee Nation in the eighteenth century. Great Tellico was a major player in the new shift of governmental structure. This shift was a gradual one and certainly did not occur overnight.

It is doubtful Christian Priber chose to live in Great Tellico and befriend Moytoy randomly. Unfortunately, it is also unclear exactly what spurred Priber to journey to the South Carolina Colony, sell his belongings soon after arriving, and travel "some five hundred miles by mountain trail across the southern Appalachians, [c]arrying with him paper, ink and a truck of books."[174] The next chapter turns to the African and African American world in the colonial South.

[174] Mellon, 323; Bonnefoy, 157.

CHAPTER 4

An Overview of Black Society in Carolina

Earth is a mountain over a body of water that is the land of the dead, called Mpemba, where the sun rises and sets just as it does in the land of the living. Between these two realms, the lands of the dead and the living, the water is both a means of access and an impenetrable barrier. The world is like two mountains opposed at their bases and separated by the ocean.

-From Bakongo Mythology[175]

In the beginning, there was only the creator God, Olodumare, who lived in the sky, and the earth below, which was covered by the primordial waters. After creating the gods, called orisha, Olodumare told one of them [named Odudua] to take a container of earth and spread it out over the waters to create more dry land…Odudua came down from the sky by means of iron chains that hung down to the earth. He carried an earth-filled snail shell and a chicken to spread the earth out over the waters. After the chicken spread out the earth by scratching it in all directions with is feet, Odudua placed a chameleon on the ground to test its stability and firmness. The chameleon, whose walk is extremely careful and delicate, reported after two attempts that the earth was 'wide enough.'

-From the Yoruba Creation Myth[176]

The earth is said to be a female, supported on one of the horns of the Sa Na Duniya, Bull of the World, and when he gets tired holding it on one, he tosses it to the other, and it is this that makes the earth quake. It is flat like a plate, divided in two by a wall, and it meets the sky.

-From Hausa Mythology[177]

In the beginning, Kalumba came from the east and was the one who forged the sun. He is black and resembles man. He sits far away from the earth; the sky is near in comparison.

-From the Luba Creation Myth[178]

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[175] Harold Scheub, *A Dictionary of African Mythology: The Mythmaker as a Storyteller* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 190.
[176] Benjamin C. Ray, *African Religions: Symbol, Ritual, and Community*, 2nd ed. (Upper Saddle River: Prentice Hall, 2000), 9.
[177] Scheub, 224.
[178] *Ibid*., 98.

> *The primary mythic signs, numbering 266, represent the basis of knowledge, Doni Dyu, the seed of knowledge, the basis of creation. The origin of creatures is in the signs. The universe emerged from the spirit and thought of a creator god who first brought forth, out of nothing, these signs that designated in advance all that was to make up the creation. God created matter in the form of a placenta, on the walls of which were engraved the first signs of all that was to be created. The development of beings and things is also prefigured by the 266 primordial signs. This system of signs explains the genesis of a world whose components were all sketched originally in the consciousness of God.*
>
> -From the Malinke Creation Myth[179]

> *In the beginning there was nothing but the emptiness of the void. Emanations from this void, through the root sound of Yo, created the structure of the heavens, of the earth, and of all living and nonliving things. The entire universe began from a single point of sound, the root sound of creation, Yo. Yo is the first sound, but it is also the silence at the core of creation.*
>
> -From the Bambara Creation Myth[180]

This chapter explores African and African-American society in the colonial South during the early to mid-eighteenth century. Since Black culture varied from colony to colony, what follows specifically applies to the North and South Carolina colonies.[181] When Christian Priber arrived in Charles Town in 1735, he entered "North America's greatest slave port."[182] Historian Peter Wood observes, "Sullivan's Island, the sandy spit on the northeast edge of Charlestown harbor where incoming slaves were briefly quarantined, might well be viewed as the Ellis Island of black Americans. In fact, the colonial ancestors of present-day Afro-

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[179] *Ibid*., 40.
[180] Clyde W. Ford, *The Hero with an African Face: Mythic Wisdom of Traditional Africa* (New York: Bantam Books, 1999), 171.
[181] The original Carolina colonial boundaries included most of the area that today makes up both North and South Carolina. North Carolina became a separate colony in 1711, but the two remained closely linked thereafter.
[182] Ira Berlin, *Many Thousands Gone: The First Two Centuries of Slavery in North America* (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard UP, 1998), 22; see also: Philip Morgan, *Slave Counterpoint: Black Culture in the Eighteenth-Century Chesapeake & Lowcountry* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998), xv.

Americans are more likely to have first confronted North America at Charlestown than at any other port of entry. It has been estimated that well over 40 percent of the slaves reaching the British mainland colonies between 1700 and 1775 arrived in South Carolina, while most of the remainder were scattered through the Chesapeake region."[183] Wood's work reflects that "by 1730 (with the smaller ports of Georgetown and Port Royal now actively buying slaves via Charlestown and shipping back produce in return) the ratio [of Blacks compared to Whites] had grown to more than two to one, and the sizable black majority continued in South Carolina through the American Revolution."[184] In 1737, Samuel Dyssli, a Swiss immigrant, famously stated how "'Carolina looks more like a negro country than a country settled by white people.'"[185]

If the problem of well-rounded sources concerning Native American society during this period is insufficient, the situation surrounding Africans and African Americans is even worse. In addition, as with Native peoples, the existent primary documents were written mostly by European officials, travelers, and colonists, and thus, reflect their biases.[186] Archaeology, combined with historical documentation, can provide more insight into this period of history. Anthropologist Leland Ferguson explains, "Fragments of pots, the outlines of

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[183] Peter Wood, *Black Majority: Negroes in Colonial South Carolina from 1670 through the Stono Rebellion* (New York: W. W. Norton & Co. 1974), xiv; see also: Berlin 22.
[184] Peter Wood, "The Changing Population of the Colonial South: An Overview by Race and Region, 1685-1790," in *Powhatan's Mantle: Indians in the Colonial Southeast*, ed. Peter Wood, Gregory A. Waselkov, and M. Thomas Hatley (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1989), 47.
[185] Leland Ferguson, *Uncommon Ground: Archaeology and Early African America, 1650-1800* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1992), 59; Wood, *Black Majority*, 132.
[186] Ferguson, xliv.

houses, and so forth represent a past material world that not only provided tools for cooking and shelter, but also served as symbols that reinforced people's views of themselves as culturally distinct from others. Deciphering the meaning of those symbols teaches us about African American power."[187] Therefore, as with the Cherokee Nation, both disciplines will be employed in this discussion.

Throughout this chapter, it is important to keep in mind the particular situation of African peoples in the colonial South at this point in time. The slave trade, during the fourth and fifth decades alone, caused tens of thousands of people to be uprooted from their native land and traditions.[188] This is not to say that these traditions were somehow erased, but they were transformed. Historian Philip D. Morgan observes, "After all, slaves did not arrive in the New World as communities of people; they had to *create* communities. The slave trade irrevocably severed numerous social bonds that had tied Africans together. Unable to transport their institutions slaves were forced to rebuild a society in the New World. They brought a few building blocks with them, but they had to fashion the foundation and framework of their new lives from scratch. Their organizational task was immense; they forged a social life only under the most severe handicaps."[189]

Geography and Demography

In Africa, Native peoples identified themselves by the ethnic group to which they belonged. Groups such as the Malinke, Wolof and Bakongo, just to

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[187] *Ibid*., xliv.
[188] See the following section on demography.
[189] Morgan, 442.

name a few, inhabited the region along the west coast of Africa from present day Senegal to Angola. The majority of these peoples transported to the British colonies were slaves. In the New World, they became simply "African" or "black." The latter term stems from Europeans defining themselves as "white," and so darker skinned people they referred to as "black." Thus, many scholars point to Europeans having "invented" the modern concept of race.[190] In addition, Albert J. Raboteau, an expert on African American religious history, states, "[I]t was only after they were brought to the Americas that Africans began to think of themselves as just Africans, instead of Ibo, Akan, or Bakongo. Slavery itself, which mixed Africans from various regions, tended, on the one hand to emphasize the separateness of the slaves' origins, and on the other to emphasize the areas of similarity that made communication and cooperation among them possible."[191]

During the first twenty-five years or so of the Carolina colony, the majority of the slaves brought to the colony came from the Caribbean, not directly from Africa. These slaves came to the nascent colony with their White immigrant owners. Most likely these slaves were either directly or indirectly, e.g. through ancestry, from the Gold Coast region of Africa. However, soon after the colony established indigo and rice, especially, as its major cash crops, shiploads of Africans, brought directly from slave ports located along the west coast of Africa,

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[190] Sandy D. Martin, personal communication (January 22, 2008); William S. Pollitzer, *The Gullah: People and their African Heritage* (Athens, University of Georgia Press, 1999), 13-21; Berlin, 99. This statement is not meant to undermine the fact that plantation owners knew, and had preferences for, certain ethnicities.

[191] Albert J. Raboteau, *Canaan Land: A Religious History of African Americans* (New York: Oxford UP, 2001), 7.

began pouring into Charles Town;[192] in fact, "by 1740 the black inhabitants of the colony numbered roughly 39,000. During the preceding decade more than 20,000 slaves had been imported from Africa…[T]his means that by the end of the 1730s fully half of the colony's Negroes had lived in the New World less than ten years."[193] In addition, in *Many Thousands Gone: The First Two Centuries of Slavery in North America*, Ira Berlin explains, "The birth rates of lowcountry slaves continued to fall during the middle years of the eighteenth century, while mortality rates rose sharply. Between 1730-1760, deaths outnumbered births among lowland slaves, and only the steady importation of Africans allowed for population growth."[194] Between 1716 and 1744, the largest percentage of these new arrivals, with known origins, came from the Kongo-Angola region, followed by Senegambia, the Bight of Biafra, and Gold Coast regions.[195]

The slave population was concentrated near the coastal regions on large plantations because the cultivation of rice and indigo required this type of environment.[196] A smaller percentage of slaves did reside in urban areas, as is illustrated by this notice: "ORDERED that any Slave or Slaves that shall be found playing or making a noise in the Streets so as to Disturb any of the Inhabitants of this Town [Wilmington, North Carolina] every slave so offending shall receive at

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[192] Margaret Washington Creel, *"A Peculiar People: Slave Religion and Community-Culture Among the Gullahs* (New York: New York UP, 1988), 31; Wood, *Black* Majority, 45 and 131.
[193] Wood, *Black Majority*, 302.
[194] Berlin, 149.
[195] Pollitzer, 44-6; Raboteau, *Canaan Land*, 7; Raboteau, *Slave Religion: The 'Invisible Institution' in the Antebellum South* (New York: Oxford, 2004), 327-9; Creel, 32-3; Wood, *Black Majority*, 334-40; Edgar, 64-5; Morgan, 62-9; Berlin, 145.
[196] Creel, 33; Morgan, 521.

the publick Whipping Post thirty lashes on his or her bare back, unless the owners of such slave or slaves shall pay to the Commissioners the sum of Five Shillings Proclamation money."[197] According to records from the eighteenth century, the White and Black populations in the towns and cities of Carolina were about equally proportionate.[198]

The dynamic of slave communities depended upon the location. On plantations, a unique Black culture existed within the slave quarter. Ira Berlin describes, "The slave quarter, standing at the center of these huge agricultural factories…was the heart of African-American life in the countryside. [L]owcountry planters carefully organized the slave quarter along well-tended streets or tidy squares to fit the overall design of their estates—keeping the slave quarter within sight of the Big House but separate nonetheless. But whereas planters designed their grounds, slaves constructed the buildings, employing materials and methods familiar to Africans. Built of a seashell muck of their own making or bricks fired in the plantation kiln, the slaves' houses and their distinctive configuration gave the slave quarter the appearance of a separate village or 'Negro town,' as more than one visitor observed."[199]

Excavations on two plantations on the Santee River, which date to the mid eighteenth century, show "narrow, single- and double-unit buildings without chimneys. Trenches were dug into the ground to hold the foundations; then, according to the excavators, courses of clay reinforced with upright posts were

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[197] Watson, 134.
[198] Berlin, 154-5.
[199] *Ibid.*, 162.

laid in the bottom of the trenches and built to the desired height of the wall plate." Basically, houses were small, wattle and daub or clay-bricked dwellings with gabled roofs thatched with palmetto fronds. Because of common building techniques in the eighteenth-century colonial South, anthropologist Leland Ferguson hypothesizes that some of the roofs were also constructed with split plank or bark. Hearths were found both inside and outside of the houses. Near the houses, pits and small structures probably used for storage have also been excavated.[200]

Slaves living in urban areas would sometimes rent their own living quarters, independent from their owners' residence. The following newly enacted law in Wilmington, North Carolina illustrates this practice: "That the commissioners of the said town are hereby particularly required and directed to make the necessary regulations to prevent slaves from keeping house in the said town, and to impose fines and penalties on the owners and tenants of houses who shall suffer the same to be occupied by slaves."[201]

Maroon communities also existed throughout the colonial South. Take John F. D. Smyth's account of his travels in the eighteenth century. He notes, "Run-away Negroes have resided in these places [swampland between Albemarle Sound and the Pamlico River in coastal North Carolina] for twelve, twenty, or thirty years and upwards, subsisting themselves in the swamp upon corn, hogs, and fowls, that they raised on some of the spots not perpetually under water…and on such spots they have erected habitations and cleared small

[200] Ferguson, 63-7.
[201] Watson, 143.

fields around them; yet these have always been perfectly impenetrable to any of the inhabitants of the country around, even to those nearest to and best acquainted with the swamps."[202] Another picture of a maroon community emerges from the details a South Carolina military expedition sent to destroy the settlement and capture its inhabitants. An official relates, "[T]hat on their arrival at the Town which was then totally deserted they found it a square consisting of four Houses 17 feet long and 14 feet wide, that the kettles were upon the fire boiling rice and about 15 bushels of rough rice, Blanketts, Potts, Pails, Shoes, Axes, and many other tools all which together with the Town they set fire to."[203] This settlement was in the Savannah River area.

As far as freed Black people, Philip D. Morgan observes in *Slave Counterpoint: Black Culture in the Eighteenth-Century Chesapeake & Lowcountry*, "In colonial South Carolina, the number of free blacks was minuscule. There are no estimates of their numbers before 1790, when they stood at eighteen hundred persons, less than 2 percent of the state's black population. Many of these eighteen hundred had only recently gained their freedom, for masters freed more slaves in the 1780s than in the previous three decades…In terms of numbers alone, then, the gap between slavery and freedom was always small in eighteenth-century South Carolina." Those freedpeople were generally Creole and lived in Charles Town.[204]

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[202] *Ibid*., 84.
[203] Morgan, 450; Berlin, 170.
[204] Morgan, 490-1.

Of course, in terms of demography, it is important to understand that Natives were among those enslaved.[205] The Yamassee War sharply curbed the trade, but it took decades for it to subside, and even then it is probable that many generations of Native peoples continued to be enslaved. In fact, following the Yamassee War, records reveal how "Native American slaves soon vanished from the census enumerations and plantation daybooks, as planters simply categorized their Indian slaves as Africans. This terminological hocus-pocus suggests how planters had redefined race so that slavery was equated with African ancestry, whether the slaves descended from Africa or not."[206] Advertisements throughout the eighteenth century illustrate this point. Take, for example, the following descriptions of runaway slaves: "[T]hree runaways, claiming to be brothers, were described as two 'dark Negroes' and one 'yellow,' being 'somewhat of the Indian breed'; a 'black negro' man ran off with his mother, his Indian wife, their two-year-old child, and a mulatto boy; and a slave named Bastian, described as a 'mustee', ran off with is 'very black' creole wife, Lucy."[207] Clearly information in public announcements and advertisements differed from the information supplied to colonial officials.

As far as language, historian Philip D. Morgan points out, "One of the least densely populated continents in the world Africa is *the* most linguistically complex. Today about sixteen hundred languages are spoken in Africa, and

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[205] For more information about the Native American slave trade, see Alan Gallay, *The Indian Slave Trade: The Rise of the English Empire in the American South 1670-1717* (New Haven: Yale UP, 2002); and Eric E. Bowne, *The Westo Indians: Slave Traders of the Early Colonial South* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2005).
[206] Berlin, 145; Morgan, 481.
[207] Morgan, 482.

eleven hundred of those are confined to a belt that encompasses most of the territory that supplied slaves to British North America…Nevertheless, African languages, though multiple, shared affinities. The differences among West African languages are mainly lexical. Their structures—their grammatical, phonological, and semantic systems—are often quite similar."[208] Of course, in Carolina, newly arriving slaves would have had to learn at least some English. Differing dialects and Creole languages did develop in the colonial South. For example, take Ben who is described as speaking "'plain and tolerably free from the common negro dialect.'" One minister illustrated how '"there is a great diversity in their manner of expressing themselves. Many words they will pronounce their own way, let them be spelt as they may. Those of them who can read, learn to read by our common spelling, and would be at a loss to read their own lingo as we would spell it.'"[209] The Gullah language is a good example of a Creole language.[210]

Belief Systems[211]

The majority of slaves who arrived in Charles Town had belonged to a traditional African belief system. Because African traditional religions are ethic-based systems of beliefs and many ethic groups existed in the exploited regions

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[208] *Ibid*., 561.
[209] *Ibid*., 566.
[210] For more information regarding the Gullah and their language, see: Politzer, *The Gullah* and Creel, *"A Peculiar People."*
[211] Unless otherwise noted, this section comes from Sandy D. Martin, personal communication (August 24, 2007 and October 8, 2007).

of Africa, the varieties of religious expression were vast. Even so, scholars[212] have outlined similar ideas and themes that are common to many of the traditional religions of Africa. Therefore, even though an exhaustive analysis is not possible for a discussion of this length, certain common themes and characteristics will be explored. This discussion will mainly be confined to those themes that can be shown to have been retained in some way in the North and South Carolina colonies.

As ethnic-based systems of beliefs, if an individual were to join another ethnic group, e.g. through marriage, then she or he would then take up the religious views of the new group. Thus, many scholars point to this as fostering an atmosphere of especial adaptability among the peoples who belong to these traditions. For example, Albert J. Raboteau explains, "Precisely because of their adaptability, African religions could embrace new gods and new rituals without losing their fundamental character."[213]

Religious leaders and specialists did exist in most African Traditional Religions. For example, most cultures had priests and/or shamans who assisted in ceremonies, healing rituals, etc. Olaudah Equiano, referring to the Ibo religion, describes in his autobiography how, "Though we had no places of worship, we had priests and magicians, or wise men…They calculated our time and foretold events…These magicians were also our doctors or physicians. They practiced

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[212] See: John S. Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy* (New York: Anchor Books, 1970) and *Introduction to African Religion*, 2nd ed. (London: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd., 1991); Emmanuel Chukwudi Eze, ed., *African Philosophy: An Anthology* (Malden: Blackwell Publishers Ltd., 1998); Benjamin C. Ray, *African Religions: Symbol Ritual, and Community*, 2nd ed. (Upper Saddle River: Prentice Hall, 2000).
[213] Raboteau, *Canaan Land*, 13.

bleeding by cupping; and were very successful in healing wounds and expelling poisons. They had likewise some extraordinary method of discovering jealousy, theft, and poisoning."[214]

Although it is difficult to determine which traditional beliefs and practices carried over to the Carolina colony, documentary evidence notes instances of rituals performed by religious specialists. Take Bristoe, for example. Court records from Johnston County, North Carolina describe how he "dug a hole and put Brandy in it and rubed Toms foot with it and cut a piece of root and gave it to Lucy to prevent her going to Drowning Creek, that Bristoe was to give him something to make his master Sell him, for which he Jacob was to give five and half a [*record illegible*] but he never went. That he once rubed dust in his hand to prevent his master from whiping him."[215] In addition, archaeologists have recovered from excavated plantations various charms and canes with special carvings dating to the eighteenth century. The archaeologists believe these items could have been used in conjuring rituals similar to those described above.[216]

Concerning cosmological beliefs of Africans and African-Americans in the colonial South, some clues are available for interpretation. For example, archaeologists have uncovered a specific type of fired clay bowl called "Colono ware." Large quantities of these bowls have been found in rivers located on old rice plantations. All the bowls are marked with equal sided crosses or "Xs," with

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[214] Olaudah Equiano, "Traditional Ibo Religion and Culture," in *African American Religious History: A Documentary Witness*, ed. Milton Sernett (Durham: Duke UP, 1999), 15.
[215] Watson, 45.
[216] Ferguson, 116.

some having circles drawn around the markings. Scholars now hypothesize that the symbol is "derived from depictions of the cosmos traditional among Bakongo priests from the southwest coast of Africa. The basic form of this cosmogram is a simple cross with one line representing the boundary between the living world and that of the dead, and the other representing the path of power from below to above, as well as the vertical path across the boundary."[217] Further, Bakongo priests perform the ritual near water because it "separates the corporeal and spirit worlds in Bakongo cosmology."[218] In addition, the circle found on some of the bowls "pervades West African ideology from the area of Bakongo culture all the way to Gambia and Senegal on the Windward coast." In these cultures, the circle represents the cycle of life. This type of circle is found on other artifacts from slave quarters.[219]

Another characteristic of African traditional religions is the importance of rites of passage. Evidence for the continued importance of these rites exists in the colonial South. Funerals, in particular, are frequently noted as very special occasions among the slave population in South Carolina. One woman describes how "'use tuh alluz beat duh drums at fewnuls. Right attuhduh pusson die, dey beat um tuh tell duh uddahs bout duh fewnul…On duh way tuh duh grabe dey beat duh drum as dey is mahchin long. Wen duh body is put in duh grabe, ebrybody shout roun duh grabe in a suckle, singin an prayin.'"[220] South Carolina officials cautioned citizens about the "'Ill consequences which may attend the

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[217] *Ibid.*, 110.
[218] Morgan, 633.
[219] Ferguson, 115
[220] Raboteau, *Slave Religion,* 71-2.

Gathering Together such Great Numbers of Negroes, both in Town and Country, at their Burials, and on the Sabbath Day.'"[221]

At least one belief of the afterlife was noted during this time period. Some slaves seem to have believed that once a person died in the colonies, he or she would return to Africa. Take, for example, one father "buried his son with a small bow and arrows, a little bag of food, a stick seemingly in the form of an agricultural tool, a piece of cloth 'with several curious and strange figures painted on it in blue and red, by which he said, his relations and countrymen would know the infant to be his son,' and a miniature canoe and paddle 'with which he said it would cross the ocean to his own country.' After casting a lock of his own hair into the grave, the father 'then told us the God of his country was looking at him, and was pleased with what he had done.'"[222] Various artifacts have been found near burials and cemeteries. These artifacts include items such as decorated spoons made of pewter and at one cemetery on Parris Island, South Carolina, "a cache of 4,000 glass beads that may have been part of African American religious ritual."[223]

Another commonality of African traditional religions is the belief in a supreme being or high god. Olaudah Equiano's describes the Ibo creator in his autobiography. He illustrates how "there is one Creator of all things, and that he lives in the sun, and is girded round with a belt, that he may never eat or drink;

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[221] Morgan, 641.
[222] *Ibid.*, 642.
[223] Ferguson, 116-7.

but according to some, he smokes a pipe, which is our own favorite luxury."[224] Here again, evidence for this belief in the colonial South exists. For example, an Anglican missionary in the South Carolina colony noted, "'Our Negro-Pagans have a Notion of a God." All in all, the supreme being did not play a major role in the day-to-day lives of the people. Instead, lesser deities and ancestor spirits were more important. Again, Equiano explains, "Those spirits…such as their dear friends or relations, they believe always attend them, and guard them from the bad spirits of their foes. For this reason, they always, before eating, as I have observed, put some small portion of the meat, and pour some of their drink, on the ground for them."[225] Proper burial was crucial for well being of one's ancestor and the community as a whole. This could be another reason why burials were such important events in Black culture in the colonial South.

In addition to African traditional religions, it is estimated that somewhere between six to twenty percent of slaves were Muslims. In *Canaan Land: A Religious History of African Americans*, Albert J. Raboteau explains, "Islam, extended from North Africa by way of trans-Saharan trade routes, reached the Sudan and beyond by the eleventh century. The Senegambia region, where the Wolof and other peoples had adopted Islam, supplied a large number of Muslim Africans to the Atlantic slave trade."[226] Various primary documents support this fact. For example, in the eighteenth century, a Moravian missionary described Dave, a slave, as "'a Negro who in his homeland was instructed in the religion of

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[224] Equiano, 13.
[225] *Ibid*., 14.
[226] Raboteau, *Canaan Land*, 8.

Mahomed and who clings to it very firmly.'" Another slave remarked to a Methodist bishop that he was "'raised by my Parents in the fear of God…The name of God was Ala.'"[227]

A small percentage of slaves were also surely Christian or, at the very least, were familiar with the faith. Again, Raboteau illustrates how "Christianity had entered Egypt and Ethiopia in the third and fourth centuries and inspired the growth of desert monasteries in which monks and nuns lived apart from society, practicing the virtues of obedience, poverty, and celibacy… Christianity in Atlantic Africa was carried to the Kongo by the Portuguese in the sixteenth century."[228] Historian Ira Berlin adds, "At the beginning of the sixteenth century, the royal house of Kongo converted to Christianity."[229] Even though European Christians, in theory, were opposed to enslaving other Christians, it seems reasonable to assume some of the slaves, given their region of origin, were either Christians themselves or were, at the very least, familiar with Christianity.

Social Organization

The basic unit of social organization among slaves during the fourth and fifth decades of the eighteenth century was the family. Historian Philip D. Morgan observes, "In the face of formidable obstacles, eighteenth-century slaves struggled to create and maintain families."[230] According to inventories that listed kin groups, in the 1730s, about half of slaves were categorized as belonging to

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[227] Morgan, 635.
[228] Raboteau, *Canaan Land*, 8.
[229] Berlin, 21.
[230] Morgan, 498.

either one or two-parent households. The number increases to a little over sixty percent in the 1740s.[231]

Records do not show any extended family groups during these decades. The large influx of African-born slaves during this time, as is noted above in the discussion concerning demography, probably partially accounts for the lack of extended families. That is, the majority of the slaves simply had not lived in Carolina long enough to establish extended, generational kin ties. In addition, Morgan explains, "The Lowcountry region's heavy reliance on imported Africans, which resulted in a severe imbalance between men and women [with men far outnumbering women], meant that many adult slaves, even in the last half of the eighteenth century, found it difficult to find a mate. This problem was more acute on small plantations, but many slaves from large plantations undoubtedly faced shortages in persons of the opposite sex."[232] Records from the 1750s reveal a small number of extended family groups. Thus, family for this discussion applies to nuclear family units and single parent households.

Not much is known of specific marriage ceremonies during this period in the eighteenth century. However, one North Carolina law points to the happenings. It proclaims, "That nothing in this Act shall be construed to prevent any persons from sending his Slaves on his lawful Business with a pass, in Writing; nor to hinder Neghbours' Negroes intermarrying together, so that Licence being first had and obtained of their several Masters." John Brickell, who in 1737 wrote *The Natural History of North Carolina*, observed, "Their *Marriages*

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[231] *Ibid*., 500.
[232] *Ibid*., 508.

are generally performed amongst themselves, there being very little ceremony used upon that Head; for the Man makes the Woman a Present, such as a *Brass Ring* or some other Toy, which if she accepts of, becomes his Wife; but if ever they part from each other, which frequently happens, upon any little Disgust, she returns his Present: These kind of Contracts no longer binding them, than the Woman keeps the Pledge given her."[233]

Evidence of the importance of family ties is also supplied by observations of others and advertisements for runaways. Take, for example, one man, present at a slave auction, remarked, "Whilst at Wilmington, I witnessed a heart-rending spectacle, the sale of a negro family under the sheriff's hammer. They were driven in from the country, like swine for the market. A poor wench clung to a little daughter, and implored, with the most agonizing supplication, that they might not be separated. But alas, either the master or circumstances were inexorable—they were sold to different purchasers. The husband and residue of the family were knocked off to the highest bidder."[234] Except when slave families were divided by similar circumstances, i.e. sold to different people, the evidence available suggests families were matrifocal much of the time.[235]

Take, also, this advertisement that proclaims: "TWENTY DOLLARS REWARD, WILL be given, for taking up and delivering to me, or securing so that I get him again, a NEGRO MAN, named ISAAC, who ran away about fifteen days past. He is about five feet nine inches high, well made and twenty five years of

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[233] Watson, 42.
[234] *Ibid*., 43.
[235] Berlin, 161; Morgan, 532. Women were the primary caregivers, so this scenario is plausible.

age. He took with him a short blue coat and breeches, and I have reasons to believe that he is lurking in Perquimans county, where I understand he has lately taken a wife."[236] Another example concerns a man who wrote to the previous owner of one of his slaves. He explains, "The negro wench I purchased of you is Run away and I have reason to believe that She Is gon back to washington…I am expect She will indevour to get back to where She was Raised, but am convinced that She will call for her Husband…"[237]

Naming practices also demonstrate the importance of family to eighteenth-century Africans and African-Americans in the colonial South. During this time period, sons were named after their fathers four times more than daughters were named for their mothers. Philip Morgan suggests, "The sheer fact of slavery explains the differential naming of sons for fathers as opposed to daughters for mothers. Masters recognized the kinship relationship of a mother to her offspring, not that between a father and his children. Slaves named sons for fathers as their way of asserting that a child had relatives through both paternal and maternal lines. The practice, also, of course, points to a more influential role for fathers than a matriarchal view of slave family life would permit."[238]

Little is known of overall community organization, however, elders do appear to have played an important role in slave communities. For example, one slave explained to officials how the older men held council in doors while he and the other younger men "'kept out in the Yard where they were playing on the

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[236] Watson, 43.
[237] *Ibid*., 44.
[238] Morgan, 546-7.

Bangio for the most part.'" Take also the missionary of Saint James Goose Creek who described how slaves had "'sent six of the[ir] Old Men with a Present of Poultry.'"[239] It is difficult to know exactly, but these recordings do offer clues to slave society.

Of course, much of Black society existed outside of the view of the dominant culture. Evenings and all of Sunday constituted "free time." For example, one eighteenth-century traveler describes in his journal, "Hot, sultry Weather, but the Heat a little alleviated by a Breeze from the sound. This being Sunday, the Negroes have a Holy-Day, according to the Custom."[240] Take, also, the plantation owner who noted in reference to his slaves, "'Night is their day.'" Morgan explains, "Under cover of darkness, slaves played, danced, visited 'night shops,' traded, and committed crimes, but above all they rambled about, visiting friends and relatives. These nightly peregrinations were a fact of life. Richard Parkinson's lament that 'though you have them slaves all the day, they are not so in the night' must have been echoed by many a planter."[241]

While John F. D. Smyth traveled throughout the colonial South, he encountered a slave who "instead of retiring to rest, as might naturally be concluded he would be glad to do, he generally sets out from home, and walks six or seven miles in the night, be the weather ever so sultry, to a negroe dance…and scarcely has time, or strength, to return home before the hour he is

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[239] *Ibid*., 474.
[240] Watson, 50.
[241] Morgan, 525.

called forth to toil next morning."[242] As these instances illustrate, it was during these times that a separate world flourished.

Subsistence, Economics and the Carolina Colony

Really, Carolina can be considered a "colony of a colony."[243] The funding and outline for the colony came directly from wealthy plantation owners in Barbados, because "the Proprietors realized that [it] could provide seasoned settlers from a short distance at a minimal cost. With sugar production intensifying and slave imports increasing, the white population had begun to decline in relative and absolute terms, and emigration [from Barbados] was already common."[244] The nascent Carolina colony provided new opportunities for plantation owners.

Although it was not a new economic venture, the plantation system was perfected in Barbados, and "by 1670 the Barbadian socio-economic model that would be replicated in the English West Indies and South Carolina had evolved. It was exploitative and materialistic…Sugar, the major cash crop, was produced on plantations by slave labor…There was a highly stratified social structure, with a tremendous gap between the island's haves and have-nots."[245] With minor adjustments, the plantation system became the economic system of Carolina. The basis of the plantation system was slave labor. Thus, slaves were the foundation of the economic system of the Carolina colony; therefore, "slaves represented a most valuable form of property in early America. Bondsmen were

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[242] Watson, 51.
[243] Wood, 13-34; Edgar, 35-46.
[244] Wood, 15.
[245] Edgar, 38.

not only the most important marker of social prestige, but through their labor offered the principal avenue to material wealth."[246]

Whereas sugar was the primary cash crop in Barbados, indigo and rice, in particular, became the moneymakers of the colonial South. Historian Ira Berlin explains, "Rice reshaped the destiny of black people in lowcountry South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida much as tobacco reformed the lives of Chesapeake slaves. Although the production of pitch and tar played a pivotal role in the early development of the staple-based economy in South Carolina, by the end of the seventeenth century rice was fast becoming the dominant plantation crop. In 1720 more than half of the value of all of Carolina's exports derived from rice. Rice bankrolled the expansion of plantation society, brought thousands of Africans to American shores, and transformed the nature of slavery in the lowcountry."[247] Growing rice has been described as "the most arduous, the most unhealthy, and the most prolonged of all mainland plantation staples."[248] Its cultivation required a year or more for one crop and copious amounts of hard labor. Slaves were "amassed on sprawling plantations, [and] labored in large, well-ordered gangs under close supervision, according to the seasonally determined routine that rice dictated."[249]

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[246] Watson, 11.
[247] Berlin, 143. See also: "Black Labor—White Rice" in Wood, *Black Majority*, 35-62.
[248] Morgan, 149.
[249] Berlin, 146. For detailed descriptions of the complete rice cycle, including pre-planting preparations, see: Berlin 142-7; Pollitzer, 87-90; and Morgan, 147-58.

In addition to plantation labor, slaves served as weavers, healers, blacksmiths, and construction workers, among many others.[250] On the frontier, slaves were often used for cattle rustling. In effect, they may have been the first "cowboys" in the British colonies.[251] Urban slaves "handled much of the domestic drudgery in the towns, manned shops, operated drays, and constructed houses and public buildings. In the coastal region, slaves figured prominently in maritime activities, serving as stevedores on the docks, pilots along the rivers, and cooks, stewards, and sailors on ships."[252] For example, in 1735, Reverend Richard Marsden remarked in a letter to a bishop in London how he had spent quite a bit of money "being often obliged to take negroes for three or four days in a week to transport me by water where I necessitated to preach."[253]

In their free time, slaves sold various goods and provided various services for a profit. Take this public notice that states, "THE inhabitants of the town of Edenton [North Carolina] being determined, after the 5th of August next, to take up all negroes bringing or exposing any thing for sale, or purchasing any kind of goods, or trafficking in any manner whatever, without a permission in writing (expressing the articles exposed for sale, and those wanted to purchase) from their master or mistress—hereby give notice that all those who transgress may depend on being prosecuted to the utmost rigour of the law."[254] In addition, freed blacks often hired slaves. For instance, one man complained that two of his

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[250] Ferguson, 61.
[251] Berlin, 68.
[252] Watson, 133.
[253] *Ibid*., 22.
[254] Watson, 140.

female slaves hired themselves out to “freed negroes” to perform various domestic tasks including sewing.[255]

Concerning subsistence, in theory, plantation owners provided rations for their slave population. These rations included staple items such as corn, rum, and sometimes, meat. Of course, in practice, these items were not nearly enough to sustain the individuals living in the slave quarters.[256] Janet Schaw, a Scottish traveler in the eighteenth century, observes in her journal, “The allowance for a Negro is a quart of Indian corn pr day, and a little piece of land which they cultivate much better than their Master. There they rear hogs and poultry, sow calabashes, etc. and are better provided for in every thing than the poorer white people with us.”[257] Thus, even though many slaves were supplied a ration of food and cloth by their owners, in order to survive, and, at times, to earn extra money from their labor, slaves grew gardens, tended animals, fished, hunted, and gathered wild fruits, vegetables, and nuts.[258]

Legislation would eventually prohibit slaves from owning livestock and growing the colony’s cash crop in personal gardens. For example, one law passed in North Carolina in 1741 states, “And be it further Enacted, by the Authority aforesaid, That no slave shall be permitted, on any Pretence whatsoever, to raise any Horses, Cattle, or Hogs; and all Horses, Cattle and Hogs that Six Months from the Date thereof, shall belong to any Slave, or of any Slave’s Mark in this Government, shall be seized and sold by the Church

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[255] Morgan, 494.
[256] *Ibid*., 134.
[257] Watson, 27.
[258] Berlin, 69.

Wardens of the Parish where such Horses, Cattle or Hogs shall be, and the Profit thereof be applied, One Half to the Use of the said Parish, and the other Half to the Informer."[259] These things were most likely outlawed to prevent marketable challenges to the dominant system.

The Great Awakening

The Great Awakening can best be defined as "a series of revivals in colonial America, from 1720s to the 1760s, that began in the middle colonies and extended to the New England and finally to the South. Its characteristics included flamboyant and highly emotional preaching, visible displays of emotion, and clearly observable religious and personal experiences that showed individuals were abandoning sin and becoming Christian."[260] Prominent religious figures such as George Whitefield traveled throughout the colonies preaching with religious fervor and seeking converts from all social classes and ethnicities. Albert J. Raboteau illustrates, "The Great Awakening represented 'the dawning of the new day' in the history of the conversion of slaves to Christianity…When the full tide of the Great Awakening swept over the colonies, beginning in 1740, blacks were among those lifted to new heights of religious excitement. Whitefield, Tennent, and other revivalists noted with satisfaction the presence of black people swelling the crowds who flocked to hear their powerful message of salvation."[261]

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[259] Watson, 28.
[260] Sandy D. Martin, personal communication (September 12, 2007).
[261] Raboteau, *Slave Religion,* 128.

These revivals created controversies among the slaveholders and within the plantation society. Colonial authorities were often notified concerning the excitement surrounding these religious gatherings, and religious leaders were often accused of inciting social unrest and helping orchestrate rebellions. For example, Philip Morgan explains how "after George Whitefield's tour of South Carolina in 1740, the prominent Bryan family, along with neighboring whites…were sufficiently aroused to begin proselytizing blacks. In 1742, their actions in drawing blacks from 'different Plantations' in 'frequent and great Assemblies' came to the attention of the South Carolina legislature." Hugh Bryan was indicted with predicting "the destruction of Charles Town and the deliverance of the Negroes from their Servitude."[262] Such charges were not uncommon in the colonial South during the Great Awakening. The dominant culture carefully guarded the balance of the economic system through which they thrived and greatly profited.

Hopefully, this chapter has illuminated important aspects of Black culture and society in the colonial South during the fourth and fifth decades of the eighteenth century. Philip Morgan succinctly summarizes the nature of slave life:

> Whatever the constraints, slaves contributed to the making of their history. Not only did they work for their masters, but they labored for themselves; not only did they engage in unrelenting toil for few benefits, but they derived personal satisfaction and political self-assertion from their work; not only were their lives destroyed and disrupted, but they built and rebuilt family structures that sustained them; not only were they exploited, but they engaged in numerous

[262] Morgan, 423-24. Andrew Bryan, the Black preacher who became famous later in the eighteenth century, was Jonathan Bryan's slave, a relative of Hugh Bryan.

> struggles against their exploitation. Slaves actively participated in their destiny *and* were victims of a brutal, dehumanizing system. Subject to grinding daily exploitation, caught in the grip of powerful forces that were often beyond their power to control, slaves nevertheless strove to create order in their lives, to preserve their humanity, to achieve dignity, and to sustain dreams of a better future.[263]

When Christian Priber included Africans and African Americans in his plans, he was essentially threatening the entire economic system of the colonial South. As stated above, government officials would not allow such challenges to the dominant system already in place. However, before exploring the British reaction, Priber's plan must be outlined next.

[263] *Ibid.*, xxiv.

CHAPTER 5

PRIBER'S PLAN IN THE NEW WORLD

Then God said, "Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the wild animals of the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth." So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.

-From the Judeo-Christian Creation Myth[264]

Men came after the animals and plants. At first there were only a brother and sister until he struck her with a fish and told her to multiply, and so it was. In seven days a child was born to her, and thereafter every seven days another, and they increased very fast until there was danger that the world could not keep them. Then it was made that a woman should have only one child in a year, and it has been so ever since.

-From the Cherokee Creation Myth[265]

God created the earth, the plants and the animals, the trees and the termites. The termites got busy at once and built a huge termite hill. When it was finished, God made a hole in it and called: 'Come out!' Out came the first man and his wife…

-From the Ova-Ndonga Creation Myth[266]

Nzambi created the first man, who was called Ndosimau, and the first woman, who was called the Breaker of Prohibition. Nzambi told the couple what to do and set them free in the world. They built a hut and in due course of time they had a baby. Nzambi came to see them and said: 'If the baby dies, do not bury it, but cover the body under layers of firewood. After three days he will revive.' The baby died the next day, so the parents buried it under firewood, but after a time it began to smell, so they buried it in the earth. Nzambi came back and said: 'You will have other children but they will all die and none will revive after that…'

-From the Bakongo Creation Myth[267]

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[264] Genesis 1:26-27, *The New Oxford Annotated Bible*.
[265] Mooney, 240.
[266] Jan Knappert, *African Mythology: An Encyclopedia of Myth and Legend* (London: Diamond Books, 1995), 191.
[267] *Ibid*., 32.

> *And certainly We create man of an extract of clay, Then We make him a small life-germ in a firm resting-place, Then We make the life-germ a clot, then We make the clot a lump of flesh, then We make (in) the lump of flesh bones, then We clothe the bones with flesh, then We cause it to grow into another creation. So blessed be Allah, the Best of creators!*
>
> -From the Islamic Creation Myth[268]

> *When the earth first emerged out of chaos, Ale decreed that when any man died he should be buried there. From her womb, she bore the earth. When the dead are buried, they return to earth; the people believe that they are of one body with Ale.*
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> -From the Igbo Creation Myth[269]

The most detailed accounts of Christian Priber's unique plan for a separate society in the colonial South come from Antoine Bonnefoy, James Adair, Ludovick Grant, James Oglethorpe and "Americus," the pen name of an anonymous writer who visited Priber at Fort Frederica. Of these, Antoine Bonnefoy's record provides the most information. A look at each of their accounts is warranted for this discussion.

Antoine Bonnefoy's account of his capture and adoption by the Overhill Cherokee is an excellent piece of journalism. It is a play-by-play of events, without much personal interjection. In August 1741, Bonnefoy and approximately three hundred Frenchmen departed New Orleans, "destined for the Illinois." Most of the men traveled in three "bateaux," however, there were also several "pirogues," traveling up the Mississippi. Bonnefoy was one of eight people in one of the pirogues. When about eighty "Cherakis" warriors near the confluence of the Ohio and Wabash rivers ambushed Bonnefoy's boat, Bonnefoy and four others were captured, and, subsequently, adopted by different Cherokee warriors

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[268] The Believers 23:12-14, *The Holy Qur'an*, trans. by Maulana Muhammad Ali (Columbus: Lahore Inc., 1995).
[269] Scheub, 10.

and taken to Great Tellico. It is in Great Tellico that Bonnefoy met and spoke with Priber on several occasions. Bonnefoy recounted these conversations in his journal. Priber explained to Bonnefoy:

> [T]hat for twenty years he had been working to put into execution the plan about which he had talked to us; that seven or eight years before he had been obliged to flee from his country, where they wished to arrest him for having desired to put his project into execution; that he had gone over to England, and from there to Carolina, and had also been obliged to depart thence for the same reason, 18 months after having arrived there…that he had 100 English traders belonging to his society who had just set out for Carolina, whence they were to return the next autumn, after having got together a considerable number of recruits, men and women, of all conditions and occupations, and the things necessary for laying the first foundations of his republic, under the name of the Kingdom of Paradise…that he was determined to locate himself half way between them and the Alibamons…and there he would be disposed to open a trade with the English and French; that in his republic there would be no superiority…that the lodging, furniture and clothing should be equal and uniform as well as the life; that all goods should be held in common, and that each should work according to his talents for the good of the republic; that the women should live there with the same freedom as the men; that there should be no marriage contract, and that they should be free to change husbands every day; that the children who should be born should belong to the republic…[270]

According to Bonnefoy, Priber had been designing his "Kingdom of Paradise" for twenty years. Because of this plan, Priber had been "obliged to flee his country, where they wished to arrest him for having desired to put his project into execution." Priber did publish his dissertation twenty years prior to this meeting with Bonnefoy, and it was based upon "Roman Law and the Ignorance of that Law in the Public Life of Germany."[271] One can see how this subject might upset some governmental officials in his homeland. Next, Priber states he

[270] Bonnefoy, 155-7.
[271] Mellon, 321.

traveled to England then to Carolina, where he apparently upset more folks and had to leave about a year and a half later. No documentation has been found confirming Priber's stories of being forced to leave Saxony and Carolina under these pretences.

Priber also tells Bonnefoy he has about one hundred English traders working as recruiters throughout Carolina. According to Priber's description he was hoping to recruit just about anyone willing to live in a "republic" where "the lodging, furniture and clothing should be equal and uniform as well as the life; that all goods should be held in common, and that each should work according to his talents for the good." In addition, raising children was to be a communal affair. With the exception of possibly the last one, this "Kingdom of Paradise" does sound quite a bit like *The Republic* or *Utopia*, but it also describes the nature of Cherokee society at this time,[272] especially the next part: "[T]he women should live there with the same freedom as the men." This was not the case in *Utopia*, but as is demonstrated in Chapter Three, does come closer to describing Cherokee society at this time.

James Adair wrote of Priber in his *History of the American Indians*, which was first published in 1775. Adair observes how Priber "formed them [the Cherokee] into a nominal republican government—crowned their old Archi-magus [Moytoy], emperor, after a pleasing new savage form, and invented a variety of high-sounding titles for all the members of his imperial majesty's red court, and the officers of state…He himself received the honourable title of his

[272] Raising children in the Cherokee was more like a "clan affair."

imperial majesty's principal secretary of state, and as such he subscribed himself, in all the letters he wrote to our government, and lived in open defiance of them."[273] From Adair, the reader learns that Priber gave Moytoy the title "emperor," while Priber referred to himself as Moytoy's "principal secretary of state." About a decade prior, Cuming had also given Moytoy a distinguished title. It is unclear what these titles meant in this particular context, but it is clear Priber wrote letters to Carolina officials, but more about this in the next chapter.[274]

James Oglethorpe, the governor of Georgia, sent a detailed letter to the Trustees describing Priber's proposed society. Oglethorpe had the unique opportunity of reading Priber's writings. He observes how Priber's "Scheme seems to have been chiefly in Imitation of the Paulists in the Brasil, that is to say, to make a Asylum for all Fugitives, and the Cattel and Effects they might bring with them, and he hoped for the Protection of the Cherokee Indians and the French. He expected a great Resort for the benefit of the Asylum from the numbers of Debtors, Transport Felons, Servants, and Negroe Slaves in the two Carolina's and Virginia. Amongst his Papers are the Articles of a Government regularly drawn out, all Crimes and Licentiousness were to be tolerated except Murder and Idleness."[275] Oglethorpe compares Priber to the Jesuit missions in Brazil[276] and notes how "Debtors, Transport Felons, Servants, and Negroe

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[273] Adair, 259.
[274] Grant corroborates this fact; see page 101.
[275] Candler, 130-1.
[276] For more information concerning the Jesuits in Brazil and the New World in general, see: Magnus Morner, ed. *The Expulsion of the Jesuits from Latin America* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf Inc.,1965); Dauril Alden, *The Making of an Enterprise: The Society of Jesus in Portugal, Its Empire, and Beyond, 1540-1750* (Stanford: Stanford UP, 1996).

Slaves in the two Carolina's and Virginias" would be welcome. This was the second time Oglethorpe mentions slaves. Earlier in the letter, he emphasizes how "they [Priber's society] were to take particularly under the Protection, the runaway Negroes of the English."[277]

In addition to these details, Oglethorpe adds that Priber "mentions a private Treasurer at Charles Town." Furthermore, Oglethorpe reports to the Trustees that Priber's writings include letters "intended for the French or Spanish Governours, but neither Sealed or Signed, their Contents demanding Protection, and referring for Particulars to the bearer Mr. Pryber."[278] The identity of this treasurer and the full content of the letters to French and Spanish officials remain a mystery. What these details do reveal is the amount of careful planning Priber had done toward actualizing his republic.

The next record of Priber's happenings to be discussed comes from Ludovick Grant, one of the traders residing in Great Tellico at the same time as Priber. Grant illustrates how Priber "proposed to them a new System or plan of Government, That all things should be in common amongst them, that even their Wives should be so and that the Children should be looked upon as the Children of the public and be taken care of as such & not by their natural parents, That they should move the chief seat of Government to a place nearer the ffrench called Coosawattee, where in ancient times a Town had stood belonging to the Cherokees, And that they shoul'd admit into their Society Creeks & Catawbaws, French & English, all Colours and Complexions, in short all who were of These

[277] Candler, 129.
[278] *Ibid*., 130.

Principles, which were truly such as had no Principles at all."[279] To the outline already established by other accounts, Grant's account adds "that they shoul'd admit into their Society Creeks & Catawbaws."

In addition, Grant states that Priber's republic was to be located at "Coosawattee." In Bonnefoy's account, Priber proposed this republic to be located about halfway between the Cherokee and the "Alibamons," or Alabama Indians who were apart of the Upper Creek.[280] Oglethorpe states in his report to the Trustees of Georgia that Priber intended to settle his "designed town and Society 'about Cusoteu.'"[281] In regards to this remark, anthropologist Charles Hudson observes:

> I am thinking that 'Cusoteu' in the document might refer to the area around Bussell Island, at the mouth of the Little Tennessee River. In De Soto's time that was the location of the main town of Coste. I have elsewhere made this identification, noting that quite a few of the De Soto placenames in this general area were words of the Koasati language, and when the Cherokees occupied this country they kept a lot of the placenames, sometimes modified by their own linguistic habits. I now doubt that Priber would have planned to locate his utopia at Coosawattee. The 'Cusa's' in the document refer to the Coosa who had by this time moved pretty far down the Coosa River into what is now northern Alabama.[282]

From the accounts discussed here, only Grant specifically names "Coosawattee" as the location, but the source of his information is unclear. Grant also says Priber "had lived about three years in the Cherokee Nation," but numerous other

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[279] Grant, 59.
[280] Eric E. Bowne, personal communication.
[281] Candler, 129.
[282] Charles Hudson, personal communication (May 25, 2008).

sources show this was not the case.[283] In addition, Oglethorpe's account seems more credible because he has in his possession Priber's actual written plan, from which he quotes directly to the Trustees. Others who have written about Priber's Kingdom of Paradise, e.g. Crane and Mellon, have stated "Cusawatee" as the proposed location. Crane's article, though very good, was written in 1919; Mellon's article appeared in 1973. Hudson's book retracing the De Soto expedition was published in 1997.[284] In light of modern scholarship, Coste seems just as likely, if not more so, than Coosawattee as the proposed location.

The last eighteenth century account written about Priber was by a writer who used the pseudonym "Americus." His true identity is unknown, but he is believed to have been a British journalist.[285] Americus visited Priber at Fort Frederica and had extensive conversations with him. "After some months intercourse, I had, from his own mouth," writes Americus, "a confession of his designs in America, which were neither more nor less, than to bring about a confederation amongst all the Southern Indians, to inspire them with industry, to instruct them in the arts necessary to the commodity of life, and in short, to engage them to throw off the yoke of their European allies, of all nations."[286] Other than using the term "confederation" to describe the scheme, Americus, like Oglethorpe, suspects Priber was a Jesuit attempting to duplicate a mission in

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[283] Bonnefoy, Adair, and Oglethorpe 's accounts all reflect Priber lived with the Cherokee for six to seven years.
[284] Charles Hudson, *Knights of Spain, Warriors of the Sun: Hernando de Soto and the South's Ancient Chiefdoms* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1997).
[285] Mellon, 327; Crane, 55.
[286] Americus, "Jesuit Missionary in Georgia," in *The London Magazine* (September 19, 1760), 444.

North America similar to those in Latin America. His article begins “Permit me, through the channel of your valuable Magazine, to give the world some particulars of a Son of Loyola, which will prove that Society’s attempts to found Jesuit commonwealths, have not been confined solely to South America.”[287] Americus was a professional writer, and his language borders on hyperbole much of the time; thus, at times, it is difficult to discern fact from dramatic interpretation.

Overall, from the available historical information and sources, Christian Priber’s blueprint of his Kingdom of Paradise essentially represents a more unified, egalitarian vision for southeastern America. Whatever his influences, it does appear he dreamed of building a type of proto-communistic society. Verner Crane states of Priber’s plan: “Chimerical his enterprise must seem. By reason of it, however, the first American frontier became, for a few years, the first frontier of eighteenth-century social idealism.”[288] Along these lines, Americus claims Priber says, while imprisoned, this of his predicament: “I suffer,—though a friend to the natural rights of mankind,—though an enemy to tyranny, usurpation and oppression;—and, what is more,—I can forgive and pray for those that injure me.”[289]

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[287] *Ibid*., 443.
[288] Crane, 61.
[289] Americus, 444.

CHAPTER 6

THE BRITISH REACTION

Then the Lord God said, "See, the man has become like one of us, knowing good and evil; and now, he might reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life, and eat, and live forever"—therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from which he was taken. He drove out the man; and at the east of the garden of Eden he placed the cherubim, and a sword flaming and turning to guard the way to the tree of life.

-From Judeo-Christian Mythology[290]

In the old days the beasts, birds, fishes, insects, and plants could all talk, and they and the people lived together in peace and friendship. But as time went on the people increased so rapidly that their settlements spread over the whole earth, and the poor animals found themselves beginning to be cramped for room. This was bad enough, but to make it worse Man invented bows, knives, blowguns, spears, and hooks, and began to slaughter the larger animals, birds, and fishes for their flesh or their skins, while the smaller creatures, such as the frogs and worms, were crushed and trodden upon without thought, out of pure carelessness or contempt. So the animals resolved to consult upon measures for their common safety…They began then to devise and name so many new diseases, one after another, that had not their invention at last failed them, no one of the human race would have been able to survive…When the Plants, who were friendly to Man, heard what had been done by the animals, they determined to defeat the latters' evil designs. Each Tree, Shrub, and Herb, down even to the Grasses and Mosses, agreed to furnish a cure for some one of the diseases named, and each said: "I shall appear to help Man when he calls upon me in his need." Thus came medicine…

-From Cherokee Mythology[291]

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[290] Genesis 3:22-24, *The New Oxford Annotated Bible*
[291] Mooney, 250-2.

> *In the beginning, Nyame lived on the earth, mingling with the humans he had created; they regularly visited with each other. But all of this came to an end one day: Nyame was watching some women as they pounded grain in mortars with pestles. The women, not happy with his presence there, told him to move on; when he did not move away quickly enough they rushed at him, striking him with their pestles. Nyame, angry at this treatment, left the earth and determined to remain away permanently.*
>
> -From Asante Mythology[292]

> *At the beginning of time, men lived in the same village as Kalumba. Tired of the noise of their quarrels, the creator dispatched humankind to earth. There they suffered from hunger and cold, and came to know sickness and death. A diviner advised them to return to the sky to find immortality. So they began to build an enormous tower of wood, with its foundations in a lusanga tree. After many months of labor the builders arrived at the sky. They entered the celestial domain, beating a drum and playing a flute to make the news known to those who remained on earth. But these were too far away to hear. When he heard the noise God became angry and destroyed the tower, killing the musicians.*
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> -From Luba Mythology[293]

> *Nzambi, the supreme being, is the principal creator of the world and all living creatures. After his work of creation he withdrew himself, and since then, he has taken little if any further interest in the world and its inhabitants. He is strong, rich, and good, so good that he will not hurt humans. The sky is like the ceiling of a house, and far away there are posts supporting this ceiling. Above the sky, or this ceiling, is a river that frequently wears away its bed and comes through in the form of rain.*
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> -From Bakongo Mythology[294]

Needless to say, Priber's plan did not sit well with British officials. Historian Knox Mellon, Jr. explains, "The Indian country was an important geographical area, coveted as a source for pelts and as a market for staple goods by the Spanish in Florida, the French in the Mississippi Valley, and the English along the coast. As a consequence, tempers were short, violence common, and all through the region one found efforts by English, French, and

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[292] Scheub, 187-8.
[293] *Ibid*., 99.
[294] *Ibid*., 191.

Spanish to gain the Indian as an ally. If Priber's 'Utopia' had organized the Indians [and runaway slaves] as an independent social force, it would have upset the status quo. Hence from the English point of view, he had to be eliminated."[295] This chapter focuses upon the British reaction to Priber's proposed scheme.

The first Englishmen to notice the disruption of the "status quo" were the traders. According to Bonnefoy's journal, "there were three English traders there, who each had a store-house in the village where I was, and two servants of theirs."[296] These men disliked and distrusted Priber. Take, for example, James Adair's description of Priber in his *The History of the American Indians*. Thinking Priber was a French spy, Adair explained, "More effectually to answer the design of his commission, he ate, drank, slept, danced, dressed, and painted himself, with the Indians, so that it was not easy to distinguish him from the natives,—he married also with them, and being endued with a strong understanding and retentive memory, he soon learned their dialect…"[297] Americus also connects Priber to the French by referring him as a "Son of Loyola."[298]

Historian Verner Crane observes, "The immediate success of Priber in soliciting the confidence of the Indians won the admiration and the envy of the English traders who observed him. 'Being a great scholar he soon made himself master of their Tongue, and by his insinuating manner Indeavoured to gain their hearts, he trimm'd his hair in the Indian manner & painted as they did going generally almost naked except a shirt & a Flap.' In the view of Ludovick Grant, a

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[295] Mellon, 320.
[296] Bonnefoy, 153-4.
[297] Adair, 258.
[298] Americus, 443.

principal trader at Tellico, and of his associates in the trade, these tactics alone must have convicted Priber of being a French agent.'" Priber's diplomacy was akin to the French method of dealing with Native peoples, which differed sharply with the English method. Crane also points out how one of the main reasons Natives dealt with the English at all was because they offered the best prices on popular goods.[299] Another colonial official believed Priber sought to construct a French fort among the Overhill Cherokee.[300]

Another way Priber threatened the status quo of the traders was by showing Natives how to use weights and measures. Bonnefoy made a specific notation in his journal stating "they know inches and measures and have steel-yards which [Priber] has made them."[301] Historian Verner Crane succinctly sums up this situation. He states, "When [Priber] taught the Indians the use of weights and measures, and constructed for them steelyards, he probably accomplished more to protect them from cheating traders and pack-horsemen than had been accomplished in thirty years by a succession of assiduous but over-burdened Indian agents."[302] In addition to weights and measures, Adair states Priber wanted to "bring up a sufficient number of Frenchmen of proper skill to instruct them in the art of making gunpowder, the materials which, he affirmed their lands abounded with."[303] Priber threatened to disrupt the entire trading system the Englishmen had established.

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[299] Crane, 54-5.
[300] Mellon, 325. Mellon quotes a letter from Colonel Bull to the English Board of Trade.
[301] Bonnefoy, 158.
[302] Crane, 55.
[303] Adair, 259.

In addition, Priber threatened not only the trading system, but also the foundation of the colonial South's economic system and, on a larger scale, British colonization. For example, Priber offered a society where all peoples would be treated equal, including runaway slaves, Carolina's chief labor source. The plantation system in the colonial South could not generate profit for their wealthy owners without slaves. On a deeper level, Priber tampered with English political policies. Historian Philip Morgan explains, "White colonists hoped to use Indians in a divide-and-rule policy. If Indian and black antipathies could be fostered, whites would more easily dominate both peoples. The goal was, not to foster a division within the black community, but to keep that community demoralized and disinclined to engage in interracial cooperation."[304]

At this time, British colonists were already dealing with a similar situation. In 1738, Gracia Real de Santa Teresa de Mose was established just north of Saint Augustine. This fort and town was legally built by and for freedpeople in Spanish Florida. That same year, approximately seventy slaves from South Carolina headed toward Fort Mose, and thereafter, "a small but steady stream of Lowcountry slaves aimed their flight for Saint Augustine."[305] In addition, the "Stono Uprising" occurred in 1739. About twenty armed slaves banded together "'to rise and forcibly make their Way out of the Province' in an effort to reach the protection of the Spanish." Although the rebellion was put down by Carolina, it nonetheless made a huge impact upon slaveholders who "'saw their fears of

[304] Morgan, 477.
[305] *Ibid.*, 450.

open violence realized, and this in turn generated new fears."[306] Priber's blueprint would have provided a similar haven for slaves, except it would have been much closer than Fort Mose. In this heightened state of fear, Priber did nothing but create more paranoia among colonial officials.

Furthermore, Grant explained how Priber "inculcated most into the minds of the Indians a great care & Jealousy for their Lands, and that they should keep the English at a distance from them. This produced a very extraordinary letter to this Government from the Indians which was written by Pryber & signed by him as Prime Minister.—This first opened the Eyes of the Government, and shewed them the great danger of his continuing any longer there." These actions by Priber sealed his fate with South Carolina. Soon after, Carolina asked Grant to arrest Priber. When Grant attempted to do so, Moytoy told him "that they would not deliver to another people any Person who had taken shelter in their Country."[307] Not wanting to risk his business relations in Great Tellico, Grant decided against pursuing the issue further.

The British then enlisted Colonel Joseph Fox to find and arrest Priber. In 1739, a notation from the Colonial Records of South Carolina states: "To Col. Joseph Fox and two Men going to the Cherokees to fetch down Dr. Priber to be paid by Order from his Honour the Lieutenant Governour and his Majesty's Honourable Council Four hundred and two pounds."[308] In the eighteenth century,

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[306] Wood, *Black Majority*, 308-10.
[307] Grant, 59-60.
[308] J.H. Easterby, ed., *The Colonial Records of South Carolina: The Journal of the Commons House of Assembly, September 12, 1739-March 26, 1741* (Columbia: Historical Commission of South Carolina, 1951), 111.

four hundred and two pounds was a large sum of money. South Carolina obviously viewed Priber as a large enough threat to allot such an amount to secure his capture.[309] Adair describes the ensuing confrontation between Priber and Fox, “This seemed to be of so dangerous a tendency, as to induce South-Carolina to send up a commissioner, Col. F—x, to demand [Priber] as an enemy to the public repose—who took him into custody, in the great square of their state-house: when he had almost concluded his oration on the occasion, one of the head warriors rose up, and bade him forbear, as the man he entended to enslave, was made a great beloved man, and become one of their own people.” After this exchange, Priber “was so polite as to wish [Fox] well home, and ordered a convoy of his own life-guards, who conducted him a considerable way, and he got home in safety.”[310] No other attempts to arrest Priber are recorded until 1743.

In a letter written to the trustees of Georgia in 1741, Oglethorpe states, “The Cherokees have also acquainted me that if they are secured from the back Enemy, who lately killed their Emperour Moy Toy, They will be able to furnish 2,000 Men in Case we should have occasion for them.”[311] Moytoy’s death marked a major turning point in Cherokee politics. A power grab ensued with Chota emerging as the prominent Cherokee town.[312] With Moytoy dead, and Chota now the power center, Priber could have been viewed as a liability. Priber’s position can be viewed as tenuous, at best. Even though he remained

[309] Charles Hudson, personal communication.
[310] Adair, 259-60.
[311] Candler, 224.
[312] Corkran, 16-19.

married to Moytoy's niece, he officially had no clan of his own, so clan law offered him no protection, either. He could easily be harmed or even killed without retribution. As Charles Hudson states, "The Southeastern Indian lived in a world of kinsmen, and a man without kinsmen was like a man without a country."[313]

Adair does refer to Priber as a "beloved man;" however, it is not clear exactly what this title meant in this context. Adair also refers to Colonel Fox as the "English beloved man." Englishmen also often refer to headmen as "kings." A problem of translation exists. In this specific context, "beloved" was, no doubt, a title used to show senior status within a society, be it Cherokee or English, but not much more can be discerned from this situation. It also does not necessarily mean the title could not have been repealed.

It seems plausible that Priber had to leave Great Tellico soon after Moytoy's death. In fact, when Priber was apprehended, in March 1743, he had been living among the Creek Indians, not the Cherokee. Captain Kent, the commander of Fort Augusta, "had, for some time before, perceived a remarkable intractability in the Creek Indians, in matters of trade, and a sulkiness in that generous nation that betokened no good to the English: After a wise and secret enquiry, and from proper intelligence, he had great reason to imagine some ill humours were stirred up in these people, by a white man, who had resided some time in the Upper Towns, after having been many years amongst the Cherokees,

[313] Hudson, 184.

who always shewed him the utmost deference."[314] While Priber was traveling to Mobile, Kent hired several Creek Indians and English frontiersmen to arrest Priber.

Adair details his capture:

> In the fifth year of that red imperial era, he set off for Mobille, accompanied by a few Cheerake. He proceeded by land, as far as a navigable part of the western great river of the Muskohge; there he went into a canoe prepared for the joyful occasion, and proceeded within a day's journey of Alebahma garrison—conjecturing the adjacent towns were under the influence of the French, he landed at a Tallapoose town, and lodged there all night. The traders of the neghbouring towns soon went there, convinced the inhabitants of the dangerous tendency of his unwearied labours among the Cheerake, and of his present journey, and then took him into custody, with a large bundle of manuscripts, and sent him down to Frederica in Georgia; the governor [James Oglethorpe] committed him to a place of confinement, though not with common felons, as he was a foreigner, and was said to have held a place of considerable rank in the army with great honour.[315]

Grant corroborates Adair's account. He describes how "Pryber Continued to have many conferences with the Indians in favours of the French, and at Length he went over to the Halbama Fort, and was to have gone to Moville to transact some business of Importance but the Creek Indian traders were greatly alarm'd and they prevailed with their Indians to try to apprehend him which they accordingly did."[316] So, while only a day's journey away from Mobile, Priber is arrested. As these accounts reveal, it is believed that Priber was meeting with the French, but the nature of his business is not clear. It does seem reasonable that he could

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[314] Americus, 443.
[315] Adair, 260.
[316] Grant, 61.

have been attempting to flee the country. Either way, as Adair describes above, Priber was transported to Fort Frederica in Georgia where he became a prisoner.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION

> *…[A]nd after bearing his misfortunes a considerable time with great constancy, happily for us, he died in confinement,—though he deserved a much better fate…As he was learned, and possessed of a very sagacious penetrating judgment, and had every qualification that was requisite for his bold and difficult enterprise, it is not to be doubted, that as he wrote a Cherokee dictionary, designed to be published at Paris, he likewise set down a great deal that would have been very acceptable to the curious, and serviceable to the representatives of South-Carolina and Georgia; which may be readily found in Frederica, if the manuscripts have had the good fortune to escape the despoiling hands of military power.*[317]

In a 1760 article published in *The London Magazine*, Americus illustrates Priber's appearance and character. "Preber, as to his person, was a short dapper man, with pleasing, open countenance, and a most penetrating look," observes Americus. He continues, "His dress was a deerskin jacket, a flap before and behind his privities, with morgissons or deerskin pumps, or sandals, which were laced in the Indian manner, on his feet and ankles." As for Priber's character, Americus details, "The philosophical ease, with which he bore his confinement, the communicative disposition he seemed possessed of, and his politeness, which dress or imprisonment could not disguise, attracted the notice of every gentleman at Frederica, and gained him the favor of many visits and conversations." Before this article was published, Priber died, while still a

[317] Adair, 261.

prisoner at Fort Frederica.[318] No one knows the cause of his death or what became of his remains or his writings.

In *The History of North American Indians,* James Adair describes the Cherokee reaction to Christian Priber's capture and imprisonment. He illustrates, "When the western Cheerake towns lost the chief support of their imperial court, they artfully agreed to inform the English traders, that each of them had opened their eyes, and rejected the French plan as a wild scheme, inconsistent with their interests; except great Telliko, the metropolis of their late empire, which they said was firmly resolved to adhere to the French proposals, as the surest means of promoting their welfare and happiness."[319] As discussed in the previous chapter, Great Tellico's decline in importance occurred after Moytoy's death, not after Priber's arrest, although the two events did happen within two years of each other. At any rate, Chota became the prominent town in the Cherokee Nation until after the American Revolution.

The French and Indian War, or Seven Years War as it is called in Europe, began in 1756. Essentially, this was a series of wars fought between imperial powers for domination of the eastern half of North America. This event drastically changed Native and European relations. With the English victory, Native nations no longer had the leverage they had before by playing the French, Spanish, and English against one another. In addition, the outcome of the war signaled the end of Fort Mose. Its inhabitants fled to Cuba with the Spanish after their defeat.[320]

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[318] Mellon, 328; Crane, 61.
[319] Adair, 261.
[320] Berlin, 154; Hatley, 119.

In regards to American religious history, David W. Wills states, "Acknowledged or not, however, the gap between the races—a gap involving both the interpretation of the American experience and the degree of empowerment within it—remains one of the foundational realities of our national religious life."[321] Sandy D. Martin adds, "A major trait of American religion encompasses an understanding of the intersection among Natives, Europeans, and Africans, especially strong in the South."[322] Recognizing this intersection of diverse peoples offers a more holistic view of American religion. Priber's Kingdom of Paradise provides the perfect opportunity to delve into the interaction of these cultures and belief systems in the colonial South.

[321] David D. Wills, "Central Themes of American Religious History: Pluralism, Puritanism, and the Encounter of Black and White," in *African-American Religion: Interpretive Essays in History and Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1997), 20.
[322] Sandy D. Martin, personal communication.

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