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"This Natural Defect of Apprehension": Native Americans and the Politics of Time in the Young United States

Eran Shalev

- 1 In the years following the creation of the United States citizens of the young republic conducted a vigorous debate on Indigenous history, or rather on indigens and history. Some of the commentators who wrote about Native Americans during the long Federal Decade (1787-1800) acknowledged that they had a history and that indigenous traditions were helpful in tracing it; in their view Natives were people of and in history. Another significant group of historians and intellectuals held the exact opposite view: Natives were extra-historical people. Consequently, modern scholars have recognized various ways through which contemporaries construed Native Americans as a "people without history." This article sheds light on yet another and previously unnoticed cluster of late eighteenth century natural and political historians who constructed an even more radical and novel position: these authors argued that Natives were history-less, but they also lacked the capacity to understand the medium through which history unfolded, namely time.¹
- 2 Constructions of Native Americans as living in a perpetual present, devoid of historical agency and unable to perceive time, acquire their full meaning and significance within the larger discussion of history and historical consciousness in the young United States. Repeated representations of Natives as lacking temporal sensibilities (or more radically, a sense of temporality), and the consequent assertion that they lacked historical consciousness, was not only a means to further marginalize an indigenous population that by the late eighteenth century was rapidly vanishing from the eastern seaboard of North America. Denying Natives temporality came, I will argue, at a time when citizens of the young United States' own history-related anxieties were particularly aggravated: at the very moment when historians and commentators

repeatedly represented Indigenous peoples as if experiencing a time-less being, novel modes of representing change through time were emerging on the intellectual horizon. Hence, the historical consciousness embedded in the early histories and accounts of the American Revolution that emerged during the 1790s cannot be properly understood without acknowledgment of the extent to which their authors represented themselves, in direct contrast to Native Americans, as the generators of and a people within history on the grandest scale. It was no coincidence that as early commentators were chronicling the nascent history of the American republic they and others simultaneously informed the discussion about Native American's capacity to fathom time. This essay thus does not intend to contribute to the history or better appreciation of Native Americans, as it is an intellectual history whose agents are white literate Americans. It does demonstrate for the first time however how those American authors made use of a backdrop of an a-temporal Indigenous people for claiming the new and still tenuous ability of republican citizens to think in and through time.

Time, History, and the Long Federal Decade

- 3 The years following the ratification of the federal Constitution in 1788 were formative for the young American republic. National institutions began operating as the United States asserted itself in a volatile world, while the demographic, economic and geographical expansion that characterized the colonial era were about to regain the vigor of the pre-war years.² During that critical time the young nation's citizens began assessing exactly how the "thirteen clocks" that began ticking together in 1776 would function under the novel federal construction.³ Those years have also been portrayed as a time when issues of identity and power were hotly debated, hence would prove critical for relations between Native Americans and whites.⁴ Indigenous people, allegedly history-less and lacking the ability to perceive time, would function as a counterpoint to republican citizens, who had mastered change and were grand actors on the stage of world history.
- 4 Global as well as local developments served as a backdrop to the American republic's quarrel with time during the long Federal Decade: the twelve years spanning the constitutional convention (1787) to the pivotal elections of 1800. Generally, before the seventeenth century history was not self-explanatory but was commonly believed to lie in the realm of the supernatural, in a Christian time dominated by a sequence of events outside of human reach. When not understood as a stage for divine action, history could be seen as a game of chance (a manifestation of the pagan *fortuna*), as valuing timeless custom (echoing an order established in time immemorial"), or as an endless cycle of rise and fall (an idea rooted both in the Hebrew Bible and in Greek philosophy).⁵ Such pre-modern views, while still influential decades after the Founding, inherently limited the importance of and the ability to perceive change. However, the common Enlightenment view of history, which fully materialized after the seventeenth century, worked to stress change over time. With an accepted view of a rational cosmic order, nature (perceived in terms ranging from deistic through organic to human) was perceived as advancing toward betterment and fulfillment. In an enlightened world of "laws, measurements, predictions, and constancies" in the words of Gordon Wood, history became a field of consistent and knowable patterns, a steady, predictable march of civilization.⁶

- 5 New historical sensibilities formed, but almost simultaneously a novel temporality came to dominate much of the Western world. By the late eighteenth century awareness of time, a process that included technological advances as well as conceptual changes, had spread steadily in Europe and America. The surge in public clocks and ringing bells after the sixteenth century made mechanical time a daily experience for an increasing number of people (including the British colonies).⁷ By carving for themselves time that could be devoted to the creation of wealth, rising early modern commercial communities across the Atlantic resisted the long-reigning idea that all time belonged to God. And eventually, after the eighteenth century profit-maximizing industrialists would create a factory system that forced workers to internalize a more coherent awareness of time. The long-term increase in time awareness thus culminated in the rise of time discipline, the shift "from being aware of clocks to being dominated by them."⁸ The disciplining power of clock time would spread even over the most unlikely of places such as the slave owning, agricultural American South. Time awareness, an important student of temporality concludes, became a "modern compulsion."⁹
- 6 History and temporality were thus in the midst of a long-term transformation (even while older attitudes such as cyclicalality could still remain relevant), and by the end of the eighteenth century a novel historical consciousness was clearly discerned: the present was qualitatively different from the past, hence making change, in historian Anthony Kemp's words, "the arbiter of time."¹⁰ This historical consciousness would eventually enable the birth of the doctrine of historicism, holding that "all historical phenomena can be understood historically, that all events in historical time can be explained by prior events in historical time." In the United States the march toward historicism was anything but straightforward, however, as Dorothy Ross has brilliantly demonstrated, and would take a longer and more convoluted route than its European equivalent.¹¹
- 7 The early histories of the birth of the new nation reflected and further drove this American historicist *sonderweg*. As the first histories recounting the Revolution surfaced during the late 1780s and the following decade, contemporaries became conscious of the way posterity would remember them and their unprecedented endeavors. This sensibility was compounded by the fact that from the vantage point of the 1790s, the preceding revolutionary decades seemed a world apart. A rupture appeared to have occurred after the Revolution, separating two distinct epochs, the present and the (recent) revolutionary past. The world of revolutionary America seen through the patriotic accounts of the Revolution published during the Federal Decade would not have been strange to contemporary readers accustomed to the classical tradition of history writing. The early historians of the United States, like their ancient predecessors, attempted to portray a past with an enduring image of their deepest values, which the present seemed to lack. Accordingly, revolutionary America was represented in mythic terms, a golden age that may never return. While the revolutionary world was thought of and remembered as a world of republican heroes and deeds, the United States of the 1790s, when these histories were written, was more easily conceived of as a world of parties, power struggles, and intrigues.¹² The conclusion of the Revolution seemed to have opened a wide gap that separated the mundane present from the heroic preceding decades, between the United States of the 1790s, and a revolutionary America that now existed only in memory. In other words,

the Revolution seemed to have generated genuine historical change. This novel historical sensibility was closely linked to the a-temporalization of Native Americans: as we shall see, the image of the history-less Indian would be juxtaposed to a republican America defined through its quarrel with time and history.

- 8 Other factors made the 1790s decisive for a temporality distinct to the United States. The post-revolutionary westward push, for instance, opened a vast new geo-temporal space in which the nation's destiny could be imagined. The wreckage of Native Americans may have led some European visitors to interpret the American landscape in historical rather than "natural" terms, but for most whites, Natives blocked the new nation's way to its destiny. The disappearance of Natives, a process noticed for centuries, was suddenly hastened by military victories of the United States against indigenous tribes in the northwest. Historian Peter Fritzsche thus sees General Anthony Wayne's victory over the confederate Native tribes at Fallen Timbers in 1794 as a crucial moment in a massive expansion of both geographical and cognitive space for American citizens to imagine their country's expansion. It was a moment after which time seemed to have been cleaved into two parts, "'Indian times' and those that came after."¹³ Time and history were shaken during the 1790s, as Indigenous people, as Richard White famously pointed out, found the middle ground they trod unhinged.¹⁴ The years following the founding of the federal republic were also remarkably fertile for the articulation of the image of the Indian in the White imagination, when "many prominent Americans produced sustained or repeated representations of the savage or primitive other."¹⁵ History was central to the discourse of Natives in the last decade of the eighteenth century, when, in the words of Anthony Pagden, the Native American image surprisingly still retained after centuries of contact, in the eyes of contemporaries, including in the United States, something "disquietingly new."¹⁶ This may be less surprising in light of a centuries-old tradition through which Native Americans' very authenticity was measured, in Cheryl Wells's words, "in opposition to the symbols and processes of modernity": the more underdeveloped they seemed, the more Indian they were perceived.¹⁷ Not all representations were blatantly negative, as commentators habitually situated Natives in one of the most highly regarded historical positions of the West's culture, as resembling the ancient Greeks and Romans. Citizens of the early Republic were not the first to identify the similarities of Natives and classical ancients: from the early days of the Encounter, Europeans had commented on this supposed resemblance.¹⁸ Nevertheless, in the immediate aftermath of the American Revolution there emerged remarkably favorable comparisons of natives to the classical begetters of republicanism, whose histories played a significant part in inspiring the Revolution and providing it with meaning. The motives, function and context of the representation of indigenous Americans as classical ancients in the declining years of the eighteenth century carried distinct political overtones. These representations also made a powerful statement regarding the historical imagination of the young republic, and the role of Native Americans in the formation of its political cosmology.¹⁹
- 9 The favorable properties of such comparisons regardless, republican citizens of the new nation, who persistently imagined themselves during those same years as Romans garbed in togas, never implied that the natives' historical role was equivalent to their own.²⁰ While classical history was meant to impart meaning to revolutionary action, the representation of Native Americans in classical terms had the opposite aim, namely to distance them from the upheavals of the present by their portrayal as belonging to an antiquated and archaic eon. White Americans adorned their heroes as latter-day

ancients, as they perpetuated the tradition of representing indigenous Natives as obsolete, if venerable, relics.

- 10 Western thought commonly held Native Americans as being "outside the dictates of time and history," neither having a history nor being affected by history, at least until their "discovery."²¹ Rendering Natives as static, timeless, atavistic (therefore powerless) became the norm.²² As Johannes Fabian has demonstrated, the use of time in anthropological (or in the case of eighteenth-century Americans, pre-anthropological) discourse was "made for the purpose of distancing those who are observed from the Time of the observer."²³ During the 1790s citizens of the United States imagined themselves as modern ancients recreating a Roman republic on western shores; Natives' portrayals as Greeks and Romans were meant to represent them as inhabiting, and belonging to, a separate, archaic time.

History, Conjecture and the Native American

- 11 If Natives resembled the Greeks and Romans, many contemporaries wondered why Indigenous society had not developed like its European counterpart. For an answer they typically turned to conjectural history, an influential Enlightenment-age school that propagated a theoretical stadial model of the development of human societies, and dominated late eighteenth-century Americans' thought on social progress.²⁴ Conjectural history justified its name by conjecturing that societies pass and advance through well-defined stages (four was the convention), typically starting with "savagery" and advancing toward the final mature stage of "commerce." That Enlightenment-era history was a normative discipline that could not understand the past on its own terms but rather unapologetically served present-day moral needs, allowing conjectural historians to draw inferences and speculate about the past with little regard to what would soon be deemed reliable historical sources.
- 12 The stadial paradigm of social development provided a possible resolution to the Native American mystery: if Natives were currently at an early stage of their social life, as many – including Thomas Jefferson – believed, they could and would possibly develop in time.²⁵ Scottish thinker Adam Ferguson thought that "it is in their [Natives'] present condition that we are to behold, as in a mirror, the features of our progenitors."²⁶ Jean-Jacques Rousseau believed that "they are like us as we once were."²⁷ Native Americans were thus regularly represented as outside of, or at least not synchronized with, the historical narrative of civilization's progress.²⁸ Further, since a sense of time was fundamental to human thought, and stadial history described a process of change, eighteenth century minds were inclined to regard as obsolete the notion of Natives being a prior stage in the process. Through such modes of thought history became an arena of development and suppression, and cultural difference became temporal difference. While contemporaries now saw development as unfolding historically in time, a serious problem became clear: many thought that Natives had no pre-Columbian history at all. By this view, Native Americans did not belong to the world of historical change.
- 13 Repeatedly described and represented as noble savages occupying a timeless paradisiacal land, at least until their "discovery," modern scholarship has recognized the extent contemporaries saw Natives as "people without history."²⁹ Scholars such as literary historian Pamela Regis have demonstrated how eighteenth-century

commentators repeatedly depicted Natives through the popular genre of natural history in separate "manners-and-customs" chapters, through which they represented the Natives as conducting an a-historical, time-indifferent existence.³⁰ One barrier, epistemological in nature, separating American Natives from history, was a mode of thought held and refined since the time of Herodotus with regard to "barbarians." Namely, Native Americans "had not made any advance toward the discovery of letters."³¹ Citizens of the early United States found the fact that indigenous societies had "no code of laws, no evidences of property, or any public transactions to be recorded," so crucial because precisely those features defined their own society in many ways.³² Samuel Williams, the author of a "natural and civil history" of Vermont, found Natives' illiteracy to stem from their "savage state, which was unfavorable to all intellectual improvements." Natives, "occupied solely with hunting and war...had no idea or wish for any intellectual attainment, which was not immediately connected with...[their] favourite professions." According to Williams those "favourite professions" consisted of hunting, fishing and fighting. He concluded that since the Native Americans' intellectual economy did not require literacy they had never developed a system of writing; "taking the game, and subduing his enemy, did not depend on the knowledge of letters." For similar reasons Natives lacked "the art of numbering and computation": unlike nations "where business is transacted, or any considerable intercourse and commerce is carried on...the savage had nothing to number that was of much importance to him."³³

- 14 While Native Americans lacked an alphabet, early observers such as Cotton Mather further concluded that there was "very Little in any Tradition of the Salvages [sic] to be relied upon."³⁴ Later commentators did acknowledge that Natives had at least a rudimentary desire to document; they were quick however to point out that "the only thing" which Natives "appeared anxious to record was the exploits of their warriors." After successful battles, they noted, Natives would make "some very rough figures or inscriptions upon the trees," which represented "the direction of their march, the number of enemies which they have slain, and taken captive." Historian Jeremy Belknap (1744-98) witnessed similar recording impulses, and labeled a tree in Moultonborough, New Hampshire – perhaps tongue in cheek – on which local Natives "carved the history of one of their expeditions," an "Indian Gazette." The "Gazette" consisted of carvings of "the number of the killed and prisoners, [which] was represented by so many human figures; the former were marked with the stroke of a knife, across their throats."³⁵ Belknap would have surely agreed with Samuel Williams when the latter asserted that those figures' "rudeness and awkwardness denotes that the formers of them were at a great remove from the knowledge of alphabet." If even "in attempting to estimate the antiquity of the most polished [European] nations" one could derive "but little information from history," how futile an equivalent project to trace the history of a "race of savages, which had not the knowledge of letters" must have seemed.³⁶ For white thinkers the invention of writing had been seen as the crucial transition to an ordered social world in which social, cultural and scientific progress was at all possible.³⁷
- 15 Lacking the tools of Western societal memory, a system of writing, Natives in the eyes of American citizens became "a people with a past, but without a history," as historian Steven Conn noted.³⁸ Some however believed that oral histories and traditions were a source of possible reckoning with the Native American past. Jonathan Carver (1710-1780), who travelled the western frontier extensively and lived for a period

among tribal Natives, tellingly chose to quote a European authority rather than rely on his own observations concerning the inadequacy of oral traditions in Indigenous societies as historical evidence: "new events, and a new arrangement of things, give rise to new traditions, which efface the former, and are themselves effaced in turn. After one or two centuries have passed, there no longer remain any traces of the first traditions; and thus we are involved in a state of uncertainty."³⁹ In the absence of written records, an epistemological barrier presumably left both Native Americans and whites in a state of historical uncertainty regarding the former's past. As the Scottish conjectural historian William Robertson admitted, "It is extremely difficult to procure satisfying and authentic information concerning nations while they remain uncivilized."⁴⁰ The definition of history as a text-based enterprise meant that Natives could not have a history, but also that they could not function as their own historians.⁴¹ Late eighteenth-century authors in the United States thus concluded that the history of the American natives "before their acquaintance with the Europeans" was "wrapt up in the darkness of antiquity," and were not surprised when Native nations were unable to provide accounts of their own histories, about which they seemed as "ignorant as we are."⁴² Conjecture, which stipulated a known and predictable developmental course, was crucial for understanding the arc of Native progress. Nevertheless, evolution was not enough to replace narrative, and for late eighteenth-century whites a people without writing was a people without history.⁴³

A People without History?

- 16 By the late eighteenth century historians had developed sophisticated historical practices, which were commonly employed to produce national narratives. Still earlier, during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, they had rediscovered, and since admired and studied in depth, classical societies' physical ruins and other material traces that dotted Europe.⁴⁴ In sharp contrast to the Old World, America was seen as an "Adamic" and "virgin land," unencumbered by the past and missing ostensible signs of a human past.⁴⁵ Lacking the characteristic marble pillars, arches and temples that dotted Europe, one of the most important commentators of the era, J. Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur, observed that while European "musty ruins" belonged to an ancient past, America was a land devoid of "revolutions, desolations, and plagues," which positioned the "boundless continent" for future "cultivation and improvement."⁴⁶ Native Americans would be censured however for having no concrete knowledge of the material human traces and artifacts that lay in their midst.
- 17 While many citizens of the United States seemed genuinely interested in Native cosmologies and in the folklore explanations of their natural environs, particularly of the large vertebrate fossils that were excavated in North America from the mid-eighteenth century onward, they found it much harder to credit Native human history.⁴⁷ However, after 1770, when settlement began expanding westward to the Ohio valley, they were little prepared for the ancient cultures they came upon and the large and sophisticated earthworks they left behind.⁴⁸ The thousands of enigmatic monumental "mounds," which varied in size and location, and were overgrown with trees and shrubs that attested to their antiquity, that they encountered in the expanding frontier made the question pressing. In the eyes of contemporaries the North American Natives' sparsity, and the fact that they were perceived as seminomadic and allegedly "savages,"

made them or their ancestors the unlikely creators of the mounds. No less damaging was the Natives' want of traditions relating to the mounds. When questioned they typically replied that those physical traces were "the work of the ancients, many ages prior to their [the Natives'] arrival and possessing this country." Contemporary American citizens became convinced that peoples other than those with whom they co-inhabited the continent were responsible for the mounds.⁴⁹ They further pointed out that the "various stories" Native Americans did tell about the mounds amounted to "no more than mere conjecture" (which was, ironically, no less speculative than their own prevailing and often outlandish hypotheses about the Natives' origins).⁵⁰

- 18 Characteristically contemporaries concluded, as did the astronomer Francis Baily in 1796 on a trip to western Virginia, that the mounds must have been "built by a race of people more enlightened than the present Indians, and at some period of time very far distant."⁵¹ They went on to elaborate several theories (and one Mormon religion) regarding the mounds, typically concluding that they were the work of a vanished race.⁵² In the minds of contemporaries, Native American, who had no collective recollection of a massive construction project, could not be the progenitors of the North American mounds. The two logical options seemed that either North American Natives were newcomers without a history that replaced a "vanished race," or the builders of the mounds who could not recall their own history. The distancing of local tribes from the human environment they lived in was the fruit of an ideology of conquest.⁵³ The disappearance of the mound builders could also signify a break in the conjectural scheme (which did not account for vanished peoples) and thus potentially exclude eighteenth-century Natives from the projection of progress and development. As we shall come to see, however, it contributed to and clearly manifested a powerful republican temporality that reduced the Native perception of time and simultaneously aggrandized the alleged ability of the citizens of the young United States to command time and history.

A People without Memory

- 19 Some argued that the Native Americans' lack of history stemmed from their memory, which was "so feeble, that to-day they do not remember what they did yesterday." Without ever setting foot in the New World, Western authorities such as Cornelius De Pauw concluded that their memory was utterly deficient, a "capacity so blunt, that they are incapable of thinking or putting their ideas in order."⁵⁴ Nevertheless, even citizens of the early republic who cannot be accused of flattering Natives on other counts disagreed with such extreme conclusions. Jedidiah Morse (1761-1826), a popular author who drew knowledge of In Natives for his *History and Geography* from other travelers' reports, declared, "the mental qualities of the [Native] Americans are not in the least inferior to those of the Europeans."⁵⁵ Jonathan Carver, who unlike Morse had extensive first-hand experience of Natives from extensive travelling to the Great Lakes and the upper Mississippi river, agreed that they were "in general very happy in a retentive memory," and suggested that they could "recapitulate every particular that has been treated of in council." Carver even believed that they could "remember the exact time when these [councils] were held" for generations.⁵⁶ To prove this, he elaborated peculiar Native mnemonic devices such as wampum belts, through which they preserved "the substance of the treaties they have concluded with the neighboring

tribes for ages back, to which they will appeal and refer with as much perspicuity and readiness as Europeans can to their written records." When injured, "no bounds are set to his resentment and revenge," while "no length of time, will obliterate the memory of a favour."⁵⁷ Benjamin Trumbull (1735-1820) concurred: while "they were not more easily provoked than the English... [yet] once they had received an injury, it was never forgotten."⁵⁸ So, if nothing was defective in Native Americans' ability to recollect, an oral society could at least perhaps maintain ways of preserving its collective memory, even if it would eventually become "wrap up in the darkness of antiquity."

20 Late eighteenth-century commentators realized that Natives were indeed able somehow to preserve their collective memories. Without keeping records of their councils, they could imprint the proceedings of those meetings "on their memories, and tell it to their children" with the help of the tribes' women, whose business it was "to notice every thing that passes." Women literally embodied, "the records of the council." Contemporaries were especially impressed by the "surprising exactness" with which they were able to "preserve the stipulations of treaties entered into a hundred years back."⁵⁹ If the proceedings of Native Americans' deliberations were stored in their women's memories, tales of martial glory were the realm of the elders. Loyalist historian William Smith (1728-1793) pointed out how "the men frequently associate themselves for conversation, by which means they not only preserve the remembrance of their wars, and treaties, but diffuse among their youths, incitements to military glory, as well as instruction in all the subtleties of war."⁶⁰ Native history, like its Western counterpart, thus seemed didactic in nature; yet unlike Western history it was not printed in books or produced and perpetuated by erudition, but memorized and recited collectively. Those martial recollections were chanted during impassioned war rites, in which before battles "the warriors, who are frightfully painted with vermillion, rise up, and sing their own exploits, or those of their ancestors, and thereby kindle a military enthusiasm."⁶¹ Jeremy Belknap, the acclaimed historian of New Hampshire, noted "a great dance and feast; on which occasion the elderly men, in songs and speeches recite their histories, and deliver their sentiments, and advice, to the younger."⁶²

21 In an era that preceded the scientific racism of the late nineteenth century and the twentieth, citizens of the United States did not explicitly blame a physiological memory-related defect for the natives' lack of history.⁶³ In their view, the absence of written records, and Native societies being based on oral communication, might not have been the cause, but rather the effect of the absence of Native history. Their lack of temporal sensibilities (at least in Western form) whatever its cause, their inability to understand – or even perceive – the very concept of time—a prominent group of writers concluded, that seemed to separate Natives from history. Their non-experience of time, not merely their unique existence *in* time, explained the absence of Native history, as well as their seeming failure to understand the idea of history in the first place.

A People without Time

22 John Locke in Book II of his *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1690) struggled to understand the connection between human epistemology and historical knowledge. Locke argued that as a prerequisite for understanding history one needed to come to

terms with time, the medium through which history unfolded. The way humans interacted with time on the most basic level was through the "train of ideas which constantly succeed one another in [their] understanding." This inescapable and continuous "train of ideas," the "appearances of several ideas one after another in our minds," has furnished humans, according to Locke, with "the idea of succession." Having recognized this contemplative succession, the constant cognitive flow of images and notions, one could proceed to distinguish duration, "the distance between any parts of that succession, or between the appearance of any two ideas in our minds." Locke understood the experience of "the train of ideas" as universal, hence of succession and duration, which evidently involved complex cognitive processes; no human could avoid the "train of ideas which constantly succeed one another in... [his] understanding." The perception of duration, of the steady flow of moments, ceases only when one "sleeps soundly." There is no escape, Locke concluded, from experiencing succession and duration, or from the internal experience of time. Since humans cannot "hinder the constant succession of fresh" ideas, all they can do is "mind and observe what the ideas are that take their turns in [their] understanding."

- 23 The next step in Locke's fascinating discussion landed in the realm of history. Time, according to Locke, transformed duration "into an ordering principle that enables knowledge and history." It was a distancing perspective on temporality, as literary historian Amit Yahav points out, that "moved beyond individual experience (each person's 'Train of Ideas'), to yield an objective view," which was "required for such public discourses as Knowledge and History."⁶⁴ Time, an artificial measure of duration, adjudicated the respective lengths of given durations and considered "the distinct order wherein several things exist." With notions of duration and succession only, without time to regulate them, "a great part of our knowledge would be confused, and a great part of history be rendered very useless." Time alone then enabled humans to establish and recognize periods and epochs, that is, history. If Natives, as most contemporaries would seem to agree, experienced succession and duration like the rest of humankind, they did not necessarily, or a-priori understand the medium through which history occurred: time.
- 24 Locke did not directly draw a line between his conception of time and Natives. He famously stated that "in the beginning all the world was America," leaving open the question of whether or not such a state of nature, which he imagined Natives inhabiting, was in time or rather timeless. Regardless however, Lockian temporality surely maintained Natives' humanity (as subjects that experienced duration and succession). It could nonetheless simultaneously serve as a backdrop to deny them the experience of time, thus of history. Indeed, exactly a century after the publication of Locke's *Essay* and his influential presentation of temporality such an approach to Natives, as humans who did not experience time, would characterize an important contingent of early republican Americans.
- 25 Representations of the lethargic, indolent Indigen, a staple of portrayals of Native Americans, shed light on assessments of Natives as deficient in, or even lacking temporal sensibilities (and complied with the Lockian conceptions described above). We have now come to understand how what citizens of the early United States perceived as apathy and laziness of Native males was the hunter's way of life; active during hunting campaigns - often when few Europeans were around to witness - and resting at all other times. Observers found these characterizations especially disturbing

because Native women, not men, typically engaged in agricultural work, a division of labor that seemed perverse to white Americans. However, under the accounts of the idle, lethargic Native lay moralistic and gendered judgments of an indigenous culture that contemporaries did not appreciate: but they were also describing what they perceived as Native Americans' foreign operation in time.⁶⁵

- 26 Citizens of the early United States tended to agree that the Natives' natural state was apathy. If when engaged in hunting and war the Native "appears active, enterprising, and indefatigable," when "these favourite occupations are ended, an universal inactivity, and indolence, take place." Hence most often Natives seemed to contemporary observers inactive and indolent, their time "spent in eating, sleeping, and sitting still." Even "when he" (contemporaries habitually referred to "the Indian" in the third person masculine singular, further de-historicizing their subjects) "applies to any kind of labour, it is with little activity, and with a great aversion."⁶⁶
- 27 Eighteenth-century republican Americans embraced, in theory if not always in practice, an ethos that Max Weber has famously labeled "the spirit of capitalism," a worldview that Protestantized toil and turned worldly usefulness into a spiritual vocation. Through such an encompassing worldview that universalized the obligation to work and methodized time, citizens of the early republic evaluated Natives' perceived inactivity and indolence.⁶⁷ Time and again detailed descriptions of laziness hinted at and underscored contemporaries' views of Native Americans' attitudes to time. Natives "will spend whole years in making a pipe, forming a canoe, or building a hut," attesting to a supposedly scandalous waste of time.⁶⁸ But not only their alleged ineffectiveness and waste of precious time bothered contemporary commentators. Even in satisfying their physical needs and wants, for example on returning hungry and thirsty from a long hunt, Natives seemed to operate on a distinct and separate temporal scale, taking their time and acting slowly even before gratifying their most urgent physical needs.⁶⁹ While citizens of the new nation criticized what Natives did, they also condemned the rhythms at which they operated.
- 28 Contemporary observers further recognized the perceptual gap that divided Natives from themselves as they discerned that Indigenous people watching them were dumbfounded by "the anxiety, the care and perpetual industry of the white people." The "constant scenes of hurry, care, and business," derived from a Protestant ethic, "were objects averse to all their feelings and wishes."⁷⁰ A capitalistic intellect, bearing attitudes that seamlessly equated time with money, furnished an unequivocal conclusion: the Native's "time was of no value to him."⁷¹ A cosmological rift opened between the Euro-American observers and their Native subjects of observation who seemingly allotted no value to time. Underlying the moralistic accusations of lethargy and dawdling was the fact Native Americans operated in a different temporal mode than Euro-Americans. The logical conclusion from Native "laziness" was that they did not operate similarly *in time*.
- 29 By the eighteenth century Natives' supposed inability to look beyond satisfaction of immediate wants seems to have become a commonplace.⁷² But that their time was not yet commodified, hence lacked value in a commercial market, concealed a larger predicament. Natives, commentators concluded, were consumed by, and caged in, a perpetual present. Pamela Regis demonstrates how the representations of human beings in separate "manners-and-customs" descriptions led contemporaries to "fix the Other [Native] in a timeless present."⁷³ In these repeated a-historical descriptions the

American Natives were extracted from time for the sake of observation and description, while the rhetoric of such descriptions denied them "a history, individual or cultural, because that rhetoric did not include a way to represent time."⁷⁴ Even though Native Americans "possessed a finely honed sense of time," as Cheryl Wells reminds us, contemporaries commonly used rhetorical strategies that presented Indigenous societies as a-historical to the point that in the late eighteenth century they actually understood Indigenous cognitions as steeped in a perpetual present.⁷⁵ Benjamin Trumbull, who lived most his life in Connecticut so most likely did not have any extended interaction with Natives, noted in his history of Connecticut that like "wild creatures" they "had no set meals, but ... ate when they were hungry, and could find any thing to satisfy the cravings of nature." Trumbull concluded: "if they had a supply for the present, they gave themselves no trouble for the future."⁷⁶ Many Indigenous nations, Jedidiah Morse asserted too, with little known interaction with tribal Natives, were "neither capable of forming an arrangement for futurity" nor did "their solicitude or foresight extend so far...they set no value upon those things of which they [were] not in some immediate want."⁷⁷ Natives' worries, Jeremy Belknap concurred, would lie solely "in providing for their subsistence, by hunting, fishing and planting, or in guarding against and surprising their enemies."⁷⁸ Others agreed, asserting that the Indigenous "savage" was "occupied solely with hunting and war," having "no idea or wish for any intellectual attainment, which was not immediately connected with his favourite professions," that is, fishing and hunting, to satisfy corporeal needs.⁷⁹

30 Natives' alleged misunderstanding of and indifference to time seemed so drastic that they appeared unable to analyze and calculate the opportunities as well as risks that lay ahead of them. A Native, for whom time was of no value, who could not realize that time was an exploitable resource, could not, and perhaps should not, be expected to realize time's future value. "They will continue, whole days, stretched in their hammocks, or seated on the earth, without changing their posture, raising their eyes, or uttering a single word," Jedidiah Morse observed. Unsurprisingly, they concluded that Natives lacked the ability of distinguishing past, present and future, therefore acted, or rather could not act, accordingly.⁸⁰ "Their imagination," observers believed, "takes in only *the present*, and in that only what intimately concerns themselves."⁸¹ This image of the a-temporal Native is evident in Joel Barlow's poetic descriptions in his epic *The Vision of Columbus* (1787), which demonstrates how pervasive were understandings of the Native as locked in an eternal present: "Bask in sunshine, wander with the beast, Feed on the foe, or from the victor fly, Rise into life, exhaust their rage, and die." Living in an unending here and now, Natives were "free from all care, and without foresight," doomed to be "fix'd here for ages, in their swarthy face."⁸²

31 Even authors who cannot be accused of excusing perceived Native Americans' imperfections, such as Jedidiah Morse and Samuel Williams, did not necessarily explain Natives' presentism through racial, or rather bodily, discourses.⁸³ Yet if Natives were steeped in the present for reasons stemming from nurture, not nature, the problem was still very real and acute. Native Americans, living in a perpetual present, lacked the ability to understand the past and were thus devoid of a meaningful future. Citizens of the United States, engaged in a vigorous discourse on their own past and historical identities, were deeply disturbed by Native Americans, who seemed solely preoccupied with the present and unable (or at least unwilling) to explore the past. There was

nothing more foreign to these republican citizens than a people to whom "the transactions of [their] ancestors, were not of much importance."⁸⁴

- 32 One can sense Jeremy Belknap's astonishment when he pointed out that "the original natives of this part of America, were not ambitious of perpetuating their fame by durable monuments."⁸⁵ The difference in this regard between Natives and the generation of American nation builders could not have been greater. Contemporaries were preoccupied with their future fame but also with providing historical meaning to their present endeavors by creating usable pasts.⁸⁶ In stark contrast to the United States founding generation, Native Americans showed no interest, at least none evident to white eyes, in leaving their historical mark or trace. As we have seen, Native Americans occasionally carved "Gazettes," figurative inscriptions on trees representing military expeditions. Such "Gazettes," however, providing no dates, names, or motives, supplied neither chronological nor causal explanations, leading many citizens of the early republic to determine that Natives fell short of engaging in historical thought.
- 33 Native Americans' purported indifference to time, some speculated, may have stemmed from their alleged inability to pursue theoretical thinking. They may have been "capable of all, even the most abstract sciences; and...if equal care was taken of their education, if they were brought up from childhood in seminaries, under good masters, were protected and stimulated by rewards, we should see rise among the Americans, philosophers, mathematicians, and divines." Currently, Samuel Williams pointed out, they "had no name for any of the sciences, or for abstract and universal ideas" in general.⁸⁷ At a time when intellectuals believed, in the words of Anthony Pagden, that "what a man spoke was, to a very large degree, what a man was," Natives whose languages seemed to lack the vocabularies to express intangible and theoretical ideas, seemed deficient in rationality.⁸⁸ To contemporaries they seemed unaware of "time, space, duration, substance, and all those terms, which are used to represent abstract and universal ideas." Such disembodied ideas, they could conclude, "probably never were the objects of their inquiry, contemplation, or thought," possibly because only an alphabetic script could adequately record and perpetuate a discourse of abstractions and universals.⁸⁹ Even Natives' eloquent and admired forms of speech, which contemporaries, as we have seen, repeatedly compared to that of the classical ancients, demonstrated their lack of ability directly to address abstractions and complex thought without relying on, and constantly referring to, particulars and metaphors.⁹⁰ This inability to conceptualize time and space hindered Natives, in Lockian terms, from transcending their personal experience of succession and duration to conceptualizations of time, hence from engaging in historical thought. Without inquiring, contemplating and thinking temporally, Native Americans, so commentators argued, could not comprehend the historical project in the first place.
- 34 Jedidiah Morse's thoughts on the topic appeared in the several editions and abridgments of his popular histories and geographies (and were copied verbatim by at least one historian of the Revolution) and provide the quintessential view of Native Americans' lack of an understanding of time. In Morse's remarkable account, Natives cannot compute the succession of days, nor of weeks. The different aspects of the moon alone engage their attention, as a measure of time. Of the year they have no other conception than what is suggested to them by the alternate heat of summer, and by the cold of winter; nor have they the least idea of applying to this period the obvious computation of the months which it contains.⁹¹

- 35 The logical inference from such a flagrant absence of temporal sensibilities was that Natives lacked any sense of history, indeed, that they had no historical consciousness. "When it is asked of any old [Native] man ... even the most civilized, what age is he of? The only answer he can give is the number of caciques [Indigenous rulers] he has seen." Native time was either divided into natural phenomena such as seasons, or into social durations such as political events and successions. Natives, unlike white Americans, did not divide time into units of equal, objective, duration, a mode of thought that by the late eighteenth century had become the basis of a new mode of Western thinking of, and through, history. However, the problem that commentators such as Jedidiah Morse perceived did not stem from Natives' lacking a systematic arrangement for measuring and calculating time. That Natives were "never known to fix the dates of any events in their minds" made them unable to "trace the succession of circumstances that have arisen from such events." Incapable of creating fixed chronologies, mental maps of the sequence of past events, Natives, Morse determined, could not trace the logic of reasons and causes that underlay the historical process. Without the cognitive skills necessary to engage in the re-creation of past events, Native Americans were disqualified from having a history, but also from perceiving history altogether. If "their imagination takes in only *the present*, and in that only what intimately concerns themselves," neither "discipline" nor "instruction [could] overcome this natural defect of apprehension."⁹² Attempting to explain what seemed an inability to engage in historical inquiry, Morse chose here to ascribe Natives' lack of historical thought to nature, not nurture.
- 36 From the vantage point of an age that recognizes the ways in which time and space are closely intertwined, perhaps we should not be surprised that Native Americans' alleged absence of temporal understanding was coupled with allegations of a complementary spatial ignorance. Jeremy Belknap argued: Natives "never traveled to any greater distance than their hunting required; and so ignorant were they of the geography of their country, that they imagined New-England to be an island, and could tell the name of an inlet or freight by which they supposed it was separated from the main land."⁹³ Their deep temporal and spatial confusion seemed to confine Natives to an existence without the benefits of history and geography, time and space. Further, their alleged lack of coherent temporal understandings and perceptions seemed to condemn them to mythical remembrance, which did not require a rigorous understanding of time. "They only recollect the most distant" of their princes, Jedidiah Morse pointed out, "while those who lived in a more recent period they have lost all remembrance."⁹⁴ The consequences of this lack of history were grave, and marked yet another divide between civilization and barbarity, between republican citizens and Native Americans. When, for instance, the historian and playwright John Daly Burk discussed governments that derived their descent and authority from a false and unverified mythical past, indeed from divine consent, his example for such autocratic and oppressive governments was not a hereditary European monarchy that claimed divine right for their rule from time immemorial.⁹⁵ As the paradigm for a history-less, therefore "horrible" and repressive government, Burk pointed to "the tribes of the Natches" as well as other Amerindians, with the "idolatrous respect entertained for their monarchs."

The Temporal Native

- 37 The ability of citizens of the United States to describe Natives Americans in contradictory paradigms, the images, in the words of historian Robert Berkhofer, of the "good Indian" and the "bad Indian," is undeniable.⁹⁶ Hence we should not be surprised that contemporary commentators were also divided with regard to Natives' ability, or failure, to come to terms with time and history. Contrary to what we have seen thus far, the authors of several natural histories acknowledged that Natives were in fact capable of thinking of and through history.⁹⁷ The origin of the Native Americans, an issue hotly debated in Western scholarly circles since the Discovery, provides a case in point for this alternative strand of thought. Contemporaries believed that "few questions have excited more attention" than Native Americans' origin. Traditionally, as mentioned earlier, the presence of the Natives was explained in terms of Biblical or classical narratives. However, during the 1790s investigation of "the means by which America received its first inhabitants" paid particular attention to the meaning, usefulness and veracity of Native oral traditions to such questions.⁹⁸ The debate about Natives' capacity coherently to preserve and remember their past intensified in the Age of Federalism.
- 38 Botanist and natural historian Benjamin Smith Barton (1766-1815) embarked on a surprisingly modern-looking project to trace the *Origin of the Tribes and Nations of America* (1797). Transcending traditional explanations based on canonical Old World texts, classical and biblical, Barton, who had personal experience with Natives from surveying the western boundary of Pennsylvania, wished to examine the "circumstances of figure and complexion" in tracing Native Americans origins, but also "religious worship, the mythology, and even ... traditions."⁹⁹ Committed to a more empirically unbiased and ethnological outlook, naturalist and explorer William Bartram (1739-1823) presupposed that if "traditions of a people" were in general irrational, "mixed with fables, which are the children of fancy, of fear, of superstition," they could still prove useful. Such traditions, which characterized "nations, who are incapable of transmitting to their posterity written monuments of their successes or misfortunes," might be the only key to knowledge of the Natives' past. For Bartram, who knew tribal Natives intimately from his four-year journey to the southern frontier, the fact that Natives did not leave written records was not detrimental to acquiring knowledge of their past. Silas Wood (1769-1847), another writer who commented extensively on Native Americans, agreed, and discussed their "habit of relying upon their memories for the knowledge of past transactions" and their traditional mnemonic apparatus of dancing and singing, "the artificial means used to strengthen the principle of association." He concluded that their memories and traditions "render them surprisingly retentive."¹⁰⁰ Jonathan Carver further mentioned peculiarly effective Native American mnemonic devices, such as wampum belts that enabled them to preserve their collective histories.¹⁰¹ In short, this was a group of anthropologically inclined natural historians, who agreed, in contrast to the commentators examined earlier, that Natives possessed at the very least a rudimentary capacity for history. Ironically, denying Natives of memory secured them a part in the great drama of biblical history, while by acknowledging their memory denied them that respectable pedigree.

- 39 Barton was fascinated with the Native Americans' stories of origins and reviewed the major theories of their ancestry, as historian Steven Conn pointed out.¹⁰² In doing so he found Native American traditions and mythologies consistently useful for his inquiry into their origins. Barton pointed out that "were it not for the traditions of many American nations we might for ever remain in doubt concerning the real origin of these people."¹⁰³ The Delawares' belief, for example, of being formerly "a very powerful people" was buttressed by "the great spread of their language" as well as by their "traditional history." Accordingly, "the traditions of the tribes and nations of America are, indeed, entitled to much attention in an inquiry into their origins." Barton speculated on the mechanism of Natives' preservation of their history through oral traditions and mythologies. He found it "an easy matter for nations, however ignorant of arts, to preserve, through a series of several generations, the great features of their history." What should prevent "the present Chikkasah from knowing that the nation originally crossed the Mississippi?" Barton then asked, "is it likely that the posterity of the Sawwannoo will ever forget that they once inhabited the banks of the Savanna River?" His answer rested on a cumulative historical epistemology: "If all, or many, of the North-American tribes had preserved a tradition, that their ancestors formerly dwelt towards the rising of the sun, and that in the process of time...they had moved towards the setting of the same planet, would not such a tradition be thought entitled to some attention in an inquiry concerning the original of these people?" The claim of many Native American tribes and nations that they originated west of the Mississippi persuaded Barton that they may have actually preserved a genuine event from their distant past. Since Native traditions were "often preserved for a long time in considerable purity," they did not originate, as some speculations ran, from "the Norwegians, the Welsh, and other nations of Europe."¹⁰⁴ That a natural historian such as Barton attributed historical weight and veracity to Native American traditions undermined by definition the belief in Natives' lack of historical consciousness. If Natives could preserve a coherent chronology for generations without the assistance of written documents, the notion that they lived in a perpetual present would be seriously challenged.
- 40 Jonathan Carver, another natural historian, posed the most elaborate refutation of the paradigm of the history-less Native. Most remarkable in his account was that his positive conclusions were based on similar empirical observations that led Jedidiah Morse and others to contrary conclusions, namely that Native Americans lived in a continuous present and could not perceive time. Like those who believed Natives lacked temporal sensibilities, Carver pointed out that they counted "their years by winters; or as they express themselves, by snows." Like the commentators he opposed, Carver further observed that "every month has with them a name expressive of its season...when the moon does not shine they say the moon is dead ... The moon's first appearance they term its coming to life again. They make no division of weeks; but days they count by sleeps."¹⁰⁵ If, however, from similar observations Jedidiah Morse concluded that Native Americans lacked any coherent concept of time (Morse argued, we recall, that Natives could not "compute the succession of days, nor of weeks," since "the different aspects of the moon alone engage their attention, as a measure of time"), Carver concluded that Natives' attitudes to time were coherent and reasonable, and that "time is very rationally divided by the Indians." As to Natives' spatial competence (and in other branches of knowledge) Carver may have agreed with Jeremy Belknap's observation that "the Indians are totally unskilled in geography as well as all the other

sciences...their sole knowledge in astronomy consists in being able to point out the pole-star...they have no idea of arithmetic...figures as well as letters appear mysterious to them, and above their comprehension." Yet here too he reached very different conclusions from Belknap's. Native Americans could "reckon the distance of places," if not by miles or leagues then "by a day's journey, which...appears to be about twenty English miles." Carver thus observed that Natives measured distance by temporal, not spatial, units. So precise was their measuring that Natives could "draw on their birch bark very exact charts or maps of the countries with which they are acquainted. The latitude and longitude is only wanting to make them tolerably complete." If the measuring of Indigenous time (and space) was little disputed, the meaning different observers attached to Natives' attitude to time, to their historical consciousness, was in the eye of the beholder.

- 41 In a larger sense we see that those authors who believed that Native Americans could perceive time at the very least implied that they were on course in the stadial scheme of history, and could thus eventually become like "us." Thus conjectural history's categories and stipulations, regardless of its whiggism and prejudiced outlook, in the eyes of commentators such as Carver provided indigenous peoples a roadmap for progress and eventual westernization. Still, conjectural history was not likely to assuage the predispositions of those who believed that Native Americans were incapable of a temporal existence. The popular ideas of stadial progress and temporal change were not enough to disarm the Natives' harsh critics of their determinate ideas of the "savage," timeless and unchanging Native. If they maintained a stadial thus a dynamic outlook of history, it was discordant with their assumptions regarding the people they shared the continent with.

Federal Time

- 42 The discourse on Indigenous time during the Age of Federalism was set within a larger debate about history and historical consciousness in the United States. Lingering insecurities regarding the republic's legitimacy and durability, and the young federal union's place in the world, were exacerbated by European critics such as the polymath Georges-Louis Leclerc, Comte de Buffon.¹⁰⁶ They also perpetuated a debate about history and America. As earlier mentioned, the first histories of the American Revolution, which were published simultaneously with the debate on Indigenous time, signaled the development of novel temporal sensitivities.¹⁰⁷ Those revolutionary histories interpreted the creation of the young American nation as a momentous historical event. Commonly those histories began with the moment of Discovery, almost universally seen as a prelude to the founding of the United States, following through to the Revolution and the framing of the federal constitution. Contemporary historians such as Mecry Otis Warren, David Ramsay, William Gordon and others all agreed with the aforementioned Jedidiah Morse that the Revolution was "one of the most remarkable scenes that ever commanded the attention of the world."¹⁰⁸ Acting in such a perceived dramatic and meaningful field of historical occurrences, those national historians were deeply aware of history, and repeatedly reassessed their exceptional place within it (often likened to the great polities and civilizations of the past). Further, historians of the Revolution described a rupture in time that appeared to have occurred after the Revolution, separating two seemingly distinct epochs,

revolutionary and Federal America.¹⁰⁹ The Revolution emerged from those histories as an epic event out of the annals of classical antiquity. However, while revolutionary America was represented as a Livian world of republican heroes and deeds, Federal America of the 1790s, the world in which those histories were produced, was more easily conceived as a Tacitean world of parties, power struggles and intrigues.¹¹⁰ The United States had seemingly experienced a fall from a mythic existence into a mundane, imperfect reality as soon as the Revolution concluded. An unbridgeable gap that separated the revolutionary decades from the 1790s present had opened. The early histories of the Revolution underscored the extent to which the society of the North American colonies-turned-states was transformed in less than two decades. In other words, during the 1790s republican Americans developed an acute sensitivity to change over time, a sensibility closer to what modern historians would come to call historicism.¹¹¹

- 43 The attitudes to history and time that emerged from the revolutionary histories were closely linked to the contemporary temporalization of Natives Americans. Contemporaries palpably used the image of Natives as a negative reference group, a part of a larger delusional project of misinterpreting the world based on racial assumptions.¹¹² The pertinence of these discourses grows even clearer once we become aware of a significant and remarkable divide among authors on the question of Indigenous experience of time: historians who celebrated the American Revolution and the birth of the nation, and incorporated in their writings discussions of Natives (such as Jedidiah Morse, Benjamin Trumbull and Jeremy Belknap), portrayed the natives as history-less -- some, as we have seen, going as far as arguing that they were incapable of experiencing time altogether. The more anthropologically inclined commentators, who recognized and acknowledged that Natives possessed temporal sensibilities (such as Jonathan Carver and William Bartram), chose *not* to participate in the nationalist discourse and *did not* chronicle the history of the Revolution.¹¹³
- 44 The natural historians who did not see Native Americans through nationalistic lenses tended to describe them as temporal beings, and at least by implication believed that they would progress in the manner that conjectural historical schemes predicted.¹¹⁴ On the other hand, the patriot historians of the American Revolution perceived Natives as history-less, mobilizing them as a counterpoint to republican citizens. For them, Natives who did not belong to the world of historical change shored up contemporaries' alleged ability to master change. Patriot historians thus denied Natives a historical and temporal agency and understood them as frozen in time, thereby undermining the conjectural scheme that would situate them on a developmental arc. Once more, as historian Daniel K. Richter points out, white Americans' ideological motivations in constructing Indian-ness overrode evidence and any (meta-historical) preconceptions they may have had.¹¹⁵
- 45 Should we be surprised that historians who denied Native Americans temporality (such as Morse, Belknap and Trumbull) had only second-hand knowledge of Natives, while those who interacted extensively with tribal Natives and recognized Indigenous temporality and history (such as Carver, Barton and Bartram) experienced them as living and temporal human beings? Denying Native history and historical consciousness was a powerful strategy in the national toolbox of self-assertion. It was much easier to stress American republicanism in its full dynamic glory vis-à-vis alleged Indigenous temporal immobility while addressing Natives from afar, caricaturizing

them as frozen relics. Not knowing Natives firsthand freed contemporary authors from the need to confront the realities and complexities of real life.

- 46 Historian Dorothy Ross pointed out three decades ago "how much we still need to learn about when, where, and how historicism entered American culture."¹¹⁶ The discourse on Native Americans and time, on Indians and history, brings us a step closer to such understanding. Ross details how the United States experienced the transition to historicism only late in the nineteenth century. Nevertheless, discourse on Indigenous temporality offers a glimpse of an early and formative manifestation of a prevalent mode of thought. This would later evolve into a belief that Western history, in the words of historian Daniel Segal, is "both *post*-prehistory and the segment of time *ahead* of Others."¹¹⁷ This article has linked the discussion on Indigenous time, particularly the construction of the historically consciousness-less Native American in the national discourse of the early United States (as well as the presence of the historical Native in natural histories), and the way in which the literally timeless Native Americans functioned as a counterpoint to republican citizenship, which imagined republican citizens as grand actors on the stage of world history. Early historians of the United States seemed to balance their admission that time involved change by portraying Natives as people without history, but also without the ability to understand the changes that history fostered. The denial of an indigenous past, the notion of Indigenous timelessness (which would continue to thrive throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries), and the representations of Native Americans' incapacity to understand and act in history within the national discourse of the early United States, was ominous.¹¹⁸ Without a past Natives could hardly expect to have a future, at least in the confines of a restless American republic that was in and of history.

NOTES

1. Eric R. Wolf, *Europe and the People Without History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982). For comparable contemporary temporal constructions of African-Americans see Mechal Sobel, *The World they Made Together: Black and White Values in Eighteenth Century Virginia* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989), esp. pp. 21-44. A more recent discussion has underscored how the categories of thought and words of the eighteenth century still mar our attempts to come to terms with the history of American indigenous populations. See "Forum: Colonial Historians and American Indians," *The William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd series 69:3 (2012), 451-540, and especially, James H. Merrell, "Second Thoughts on Colonial Historians and American Indians," *op. cit.*, 451-512. A note on terminology: Although historians of the United States still often use the term "Indians," in this paper I use "Native American," "Natives" and "Indigenous" interchangeably in referring to the native peoples inhabiting North America.

2. A useful if politically biased work on the era is Stanley Elkins and Eric L. McKittrick, *The Age of Federalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993). More recently Woody

Holton added to our understanding of the relationship between the time's politics and the economy: Holton, "Did Democracy Cause the Recession that Led to the Constitution?" *The Journal of American History* 92.2 (2005), 442-69.

3. For important interpretations of the Founding and the meaning of the new federal union that have emerged in recent years see: Max Edling, *A Revolution in Favor of Government: Origins of the U.S. Constitution and the Making of the American State* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003); David C. Hendrickson, *Peace Pact: The Lost World of the American Founding* (St. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2003); Alison La Croix, *The Ideological Origins of American Federalism* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2010); Eric Slauter, *The State as a Work of Art: The Cultural Origins of the Constitution* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2009).

4. Eve Kornfeld, "Encountering 'the Other': American Intellectuals and Indians in the 1790s," *The William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd series 52.2 (1995), 287-314, p. 289. Joyce Appleby, *Inheriting the Revolution: The First Generation of Americans* (New York: Belknap, 2001) and Appleby, *Capitalism and a New Social Order: The Republican vision of the 1790s* (New York: New York University Press, 1984); Joseph J. Ellis, *After the Revolution: Profiles of American Culture* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2002); Elkins and McKittrick, *The Age of Federalism*; Steven Watts, *The Republic Reborn: War and the Making of Liberal America, 1790-1820* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987); and Thomas P. Slaughter, *The Whiskey Rebellion: Frontier Epilogue to the American Revolution* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986). For important literature on the era's politics see David Waldstrechier, *In the Midst of Perpetual Fetes: The Making of American Nationalism, 1776-1820* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997); Joanne Freeman, *Affairs of Honor: National Politics in the New Republic* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002).

5. For major contributions on temporality in a political context see John G. A. Pocock, *The Machiavellian Moment: Florentine Political Thought and the Atlantic Republican Tradition* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975); Trevor Colbourn, *The Lamp of Experience: Whig History and the Intellectual Origins of the American Revolution* (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1998 [1965]); Peter Fritzsche, *Stranded in the Present: Modern Time and the Melancholy of History* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010).

6. Gordon Wood, "Conspiracy and the Paranoid Style: Causality and Deceit in the Eighteenth Century," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 39:3 (1982), 401-441, p. 413. Hannah Spahn, *Thomas Jefferson, Time and History* (Charlottesville: The University of Virginia Press, 2010), 108-9.

7. Alexis McCrossen, *Marking Modern Times: A History of Clocks, Watches, and other Timekeepers in American Life* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2013), 25-28.

8. Michael J. Sauter, "Clockwatchers and Stargazers: Time Discipline in Early Modern Berlin," *The American Historical Review* 112:3 (2007), 685-709 (quote on 685).

9. The cornerstone of this narrative, that whereas labor was task-oriented before 1700 with workers putting in only the hours needed to complete a given task, by 1800 the factory system had disciplined workers to arrive at a certain time and to work continuously for a specific duration, remains E. P. Thompson's classic article "Time, Work-Discipline, and Industrial Capitalism," *Past and Present* 38 (1967), 56-97. Mark A. Smith made Thompson relevant to the American slaveholding South in *Mastered by the Clock: Time, Slavery and Freedom in the American South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 1997). For a critique of Thompson see Gerhard Dohrn-van Rossum, *History of*

the Hour: Clocks and Modern Temporal Orders (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1996). Quote in Sauter, "Clockwatchers and Stargazers," 686.

10. Anthony Kemp, *The Estrangement of the Past: A Study in the Origin of Modern Historical Consciousness* (London: Oxford University Press, 1991), 157.

11. Hence, the views of history that reigned until the late eighteenth century, were by definition "prehisotocist." Dorothy Ross, "Historical Consciousness in Nineteenth-Century America," *American Historical Review* 89 (1984), 909-928 [910].

12. Eran Shalev, *Rome Reborn on Western Shores: Historical Imagination and the Creation of the American Republic* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2009), 188-216.

13. Fritzsche, *Stranded in the Present*, 162. Quote from Elizabeth Perkins, *Border Life: Experience and Memory in the Ohio Valley* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1998), 168.

14. Richard White's classic *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010, 2nd edition) focuses on the American Revolution and its wake as a watershed in the balance of power between Indians and European empires.

15. Kornfeld, "Encountering 'the Other'," 291; Bernard W. Sheehan, "Paradise and the Noble Savage in Jeffersonian Thought," *The William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd series 23.3 (1969), 327-359, 329. For a European context of this discourse see Harry Liebersohn, "Discovering Indigenous Nobility: Tocqueville, Chamisso, and Romantic Travel Writing," *The American Historical Review* 99.3 (1994), 746-766.

16. Anthony Pagden, *European Encounters with the New World: From Renaissance to the New World* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), 11. For the initial implications and repercussions of the Discovery see Anthony Grafton, *New Worlds, Ancient Texts: The Power of Tradition and the Shock of Discovery* (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap, 1995).

17. Cheryl A. Wells, "'Why[,] These Children Are Not Really Indians': Race, Time, and Indian Authenticity," *The American Indian Quarterly* 39:1 (2015), 1-24, quote on p. 1. See also Philip J. Deloria, *Playing Indian* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), 101.

18. See David Lupher, *Romans in a New World: Classical Models in Sixteenth-Century Spanish America* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2003), especially 189-234, and Sabine McCormack, *On the Wings of Time: Rome, the Incas, Spain and Peru* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006).

19. The literature on the influence of antiquity on revolutionary America is vast. See (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2009); Caroline Winterer *The Mirror of Antiquity: American Women and the Classical Tradition, 1750-1900* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2007) and Winterer, *The Culture of Classicism: Ancient Greece and Rome in American Intellectual Life, 1780-1910* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001); Carl J. Richard, *The Founders and the Classics: Greece, Rome and the American Enlightenment* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1994).

20. For revolutionary Americans performing as Romans see Shalev, *Rome Reborn on Western Shores*, 151-187.

21. Robert F. Berkhofer, "White Conceptions of Indians," in *History of Indian-White Relations*, Volume 4, *Handbook of North American Indians* (Wilcomb E. Washburn, ed.) (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1988), vol. 4, 528. Berkhofer points out that Whites still picture the "real" Indian as the one before contact or during the early

period of that contact; 528. See also Bruce G. Trigger, "Archeology and the Image of the American Indian," *American Antiquity* 45.4 (1980), 662-676.

22. Wells, "Why[,] These Children Are Not Really Indians," 3.

23. Johannes Fabian, *Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes Its Objects* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 25.

24. Karen O'Brien, "Between Enlightenment and Stadial History: William Robertson on the History of Europe", *Journal of Eighteenth-Century Studies*, Vol. 16, No. 1, 1993, 53-4, and H.M. Höpfl, "From Savage to Scotsman: Conjectural History in the Scottish Enlightenment," *Journal of British Studies*, Vol. 17, No. 2. For the American context see McCoy, *The Elusive Republic*, 18-22 and *passim*.

25. Jefferson characteristically believed that Native Americans were illustrative of the first stage of social progress as they lived off the land but did not use, sustain, or improve it. Untied to the land they freely roamed over vast parcels of land to gather food and other goods to sustain themselves, and thus needed no laws beyond the laws of nature. M. Andrew Holowchak, "Differences of Circumstance, Differences of Fact: Jefferson's Medialist View of History," *American Studies in Scandinavia* 47:1 (2015), pp. 3-21, p. 10.

26. Adam Ferguson cited in J. W. Burrow, *Evolution and Society: A Study in Victorian Social Theory* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1966), 12.

27. Jean-Jacques Rousseau quoted in Pagden, *European Encounters*, 117.

28. Thomas Jefferson's famous letter to William Ludlow is a late manifestation of the conjectural mind frame and its relevance to the coming to terms with the Indian past. In the letter, Jefferson takes a "philosophic...journey from the savages of the Rocky Mountains, eastwardly towards our sea-coast." In that imaginary expedition the traveler first observes in the savage West "the earliest stage of [human] association living under no law but that of nature, subscribing and covering themselves with the flesh and skins of wild beasts." This journey that concludes after the familiar conjectural stages in "the improved state in our seaport towns" is not only a geographical journey but evidently also one in time. Thomas Jefferson, Sept. 6, 1824, in *Jefferson: Political Writings*, Joyce Appleby and Terrence Ball, eds., (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 590.

29. Wolf, *Europe and the People Without History*; Sheehan, "Paradise and the Noble Savage," 358

30. Pamela Regis, *Describing Early America: Bartram, Jefferson, Crèvecoeur, and the Influence of Natural History* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999), 25.

31. Williams, *The Natural and Civil History of Vermont*, 172.

32. *Ibid*; For the significance of law in early America see Jack P. Greene, "'By Their Laws Shall Ye Know Them': Law and Identity in Colonial British America," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 33.2 (2002), 247-260.

33. Williams, *The Natural and Civil History of Vermont*, 172.

34. Quoted in Paul Semonin, *American Monster: How the Nation's First Prehistoric Creature Became a Symbol of National Identity* (New York: New York University Press, 2000), 33.

35. Jeremy Belknap, *The history of New-Hampshire. Volume III. Containing a geographical description of the state; with sketches of its natural history, productions, improvements, and*

present state of society and manners, laws and government (Boston: Belknap and Young, 1792), 89.

36. Williams, *The Natural and Civil History of Vermont*, 172, 197.

37. Pagden, *European Encounters*, 135.

38. Steven Conn, *History's Shadow: Native Americans and Historical Consciousness in the Nineteenth Century* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), 21.

39. Charlevoix quoted by Jonathan Carver, *Travels through the interior parts of North America*.

Three years travels, through the interior parts of North-America, for more than five thousand miles ... together with a concise history of the genius, manners, and customs of the Indians ... and an appendix, describing the uncultivated parts of America that are the most proper for forming settlements (Philadelphia: Joseph Crukshank, 1792), 103.

40. William Robertson, *The History of the Discovery and Settlement of America*, 138.

41. Conn, *History's Shadow*, 21.

42. Smith, *The History of the Province of New York*, 56; William Bartram, *Travels through North & South Carolina, Georgia, East & West Florida, the Cherokee country, the extensive territories of the Muscogulges, or Creek Confederacy, and the country of the Chactaws; containing, an account of the soil and natural productions of those regions, together with observations on the manners of the Indians. Embellished with copper-plates* (Philadelphia: James and Johnson, 1791), 367.

43. Regis, *Describing Early America*, 37.

44. For a brilliant discussion of this theme see John G. A. Pocock, *Barbarism and Religion: Volume II, Narratives of Enlightenment* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

45. Nick Yablon, *Untimely Ruins: An Archaeology of American Urban Modernity, 1819-1919* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010), 5. Larzer Ziff commented that the absence of classical ruins on the American landscape should have created an American history undetermined by the past, a history that could actually begin at the beginning, with the Founding. Ziff, *Writing in the New Nation: Prose, Print, and Politics in the Early United States* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991), 47.

46. J. Hector St. John de Crevecoeur, *Letters from an American Farmer and Sketches of Eighteenth-Century America* (New York: Penguin, 1981), 43.

47. European and Euro-American explorers were considerably interested however in recording what Native Americans folklore explanations of the large vertebrate fossils that were excavated from the mid-eighteenth century. On Indian views and myths regarding the fossils, on the methodological obstacles of Native attempts to understand fossils, and on the ways they were reported by Euro-Americans see: Adrienne Mayor, *Fossil Legends of the First Americans* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2013), and Paul Semonin, *American Monster: How the Naiton's First Prehistoric Creature Became a Symbol of National Identity* (New York: NYU Press, 2000).

48. Roger G. Kennedy, *Hidden Cities: The Discovery and Loss of Ancient North American Civilization* (New York: Penguin, 1996), 2-3 and 7 ff.

49. Bartram, *Travels Through North and South Carolina*, 390.

50. *Ibid*, 367. Due to the apparent mystery of the Indian past Europeans have conducted a centuries-long debate on their origin, speculating that they were anything from Trojans who left to the New World after the fall of their city to the Greeks to Israelites

fleeing after the destruction of the Temple. See Zvi Ben-Dor Benite, *The Ten Lost Tribes: A World History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 169-198, and Antonello Gerbi, *The Dispute of the New World: The History of a Polemic, 1750-1900* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1973). During the Second Great Awakening the theory of the Israelite origins of the American Indians flared again, this time in the context of American national origins; Eran Shalev, *American Zion: The Old Testament as a Political Text from the Revolution to the Civil War* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013), 118-150.

51. Francis Bailey, quoted in Robert Silverberg, *The Mound Builders* (Athens OH: Ohio University Press, 1970), 41.

52. For nineteenth century understanding of the mounds see Yablon, *Untimely Ruins*. On Joseph Smith's theory, see Curtis Dahl, "Mound Builders, Mormons, and William Cullen Bryant," *New England Quarterly* 34, no. 2 (1961): 178-90.

53. Gordon M. Sayer, "The Mound Builders and the Imagination of American Antiquity in Jefferson, Bartram, and Chateaubriand," *Early American Literature* 33:3 (1985), 225-249.

54. Cornelios De Pauw, quoted in Morse, *The History of America*, 60.

55. *Ibid*, 66.

56. Carver, *Travels*, 124.

57. Williams, *The Civil and Natural History of Vermont*, 169.

58. Benjamin Trumbull, *Complete History of Connecticut, civil and ecclesiastical, from the emigration of its first planters from England* (Hartford: Hudson and Goodwin, 1797), 32.

59. Jedidiah Morse, *The American geography; or, A view of the present situation of the United States of America* (Elizabethtown: Shepard Kollock, 1789), 19. John Lendrum repeated Morse's account almost verbatim. John Lendrum, *Concise and Impartial History of the American Revolution* (Boston: Thomas and E.T. Andrews), 78.

60. Smith, *The History of the Province of New-York*, 50.

61. *Ibid*, 50-51.

62. Belknap, *The History of New-Hampshire*, vol. I, 50.

63. For an account of the history of modern modes of racist thought see George M. Fredrickson, *Racism: A Short History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003).

64. Amit Yahav, "Time, Duration, and Defoe's Novels," *Partial Answers* 6.1 (2008), 33-56.

65. Given Native women's apparent industrious conduct Euro-Americans would have been consistent if they would differentiate between Native feminine and masculine ability to experience time. Nevertheless they did not do so, and we can only speculate that the observers own gender-based biases precluded them from making such a differentiation. See Nancy Shoemaker, *Negotiators of Change: Historical Perspectives on Native American Women* (New York: Routledge, 1995). Eighteenth Century Euro-American's evaluations of the indigenous way correspond with modern anthropological assessments that use attitudes toward time to differentiate industrial from non-industrial people. Most notably, see Pierre Bourdieu, "The Attitude of the Algerian Peasant Toward Time," in Julian Pitt-Rivers (ed.) *Mediterranean Countrymen* (Paris: Mouton, 1963), p. 57.

66. Williams, *The Civil and Natural History of Vermont*, 153. In order to achieve coherence in their treatment of "Indians," citizens of the young United States had to flatten the impressive cultural diversity displayed in America. Hence, for example, historian John

Lendrum remarked on the remarkable "resemblance among all the American tribes... in respect to their genius, character, manners, and particular customs." In fact, the different tribes appeared so similar to him, that they seemed "as similar as though they formed but one nation." Lendrum, *Concise and Impartial History*, 18.

67. Our understanding of modernity and its novel attitude toward time originates in Weber's classic *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (New York: Routledge, 2001 [1905]). Weber located society's obsession with saving, making use of, and monetizing time in the sense of Calvinist anxieties. That "spirit" was famously summarized by Benjamin Franklin in dictums such as: "Lost time is never found again." Benjamin Franklin, *The Way to Wealth* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2014), 7. For the history of the elevation of work over leisure in America see Daniel T. Rodgers, *The Work Ethic in Industrial America, 1850-1920* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978).

68. Williams, *The Civil and Natural History of Vermont*, 153. What Euro-Americans described was what later anthropologists would interpret as a task-oriented system of time and work, in which work follows natural imperatives, and tasks get done when they need doing; Michael O'Mally, "Time, Work, and Task Orientation: A Critique of American Historiography," *Time and Society* 1992:1, 341-358. Historians, such as E.P. Thompson followed their contemporary anthropologists' cue, concluding that to "men accustomed to labour timed by the clock, this [task-oriented] attitude to labour appears to be wasteful and lacking in urgency." E.P. Thompson, "Time, Work-Discipline, and Industrial Capitalism," *Past and Present* 1967:38, 59-97: 60. As the above quoted eighteenth century views demonstrate, this attitude predated industrialization.

69. Carver, *Travels*, 104.

70. Williams, *The Civil and Natural History of Vermont*, 186.

71. *Ibid*, 153.

72. Pagden, *European Encounters*, 152.

73. Regis, *Describing Early America*, 23.

74. *Ibid*, 25.

75. Wells, "Why[,] These Children Are Not Really Indian," 5.

76. Trumbull, *History of Connecticut*, 34-35, 32.

77. Morse, *The History of America*, 48.

78. Belknap, *The History of New-Hampshire*, III, 83.

79. Williams, *The Civil and Natural History of Vermont*, 172.

80. Morse, *The History of America*, 49. See in this context Jack P. Greene, "Social and Cultural Capital in Colonial British America: A Case Study," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 29.3 (1999), 491-509. Weber, *op. cit.* ; For agricultural and industrial senses of time see O'Mally, "Time, Work, and Task Orientation," *op. cit.*

81. Morse, *The History of America*, 49. Even Rousseau who of course has never been to America held similar views: "such is still nowadays the extent of the Carib's foresight," he claimed, "that he sells his cotton bed in the morning and comes weeping to buy it back in the evening." Rousseau quoted in Pagden, *European Encounters*, 152.

82. Joel Barlow, *The Vision of Columbus: A Poem in Nine Books* (Hartford: Hudson and Goodwin, 1787), 52, 54.

83. It is not my purpose to ask what Americans ascribed this deficiency to, nature or nurture. It may be enough to realize, though that one of the severest critics of the

Indians believed that we have describing as "presentism" was "not to be ascribed to any defect in their natural genius, but to their state of society, which affords few objects for the display either of their literary or political abilities." Morse, *The History of America*, 18. Samuel Williams believed that "the Savage State" was "unfavourable to all Intellectual Improvements," since Indians were "occupied solely with hunting and war," and hence "had no idea or wish for any intellectual attainment." Similarly, Silas Wood believed that "the powers of their minds are in no respect inferior to the qualities of their bodies," bodies, we should remember, that Wood admired. "They exhibit unequivocal proofs of remarkable sagacity in their attention to those objects with which their circumstances render them familiar." Silas Wood, *Thoughts on the state of the American Indians. By a citizen of the United States* (New York: T. and J. Swords, 1794), 6. For a detailed discussion on early European attitudes toward Indian bodies see Joyce Chaplin, *Subject Matter: Technology, the Body, and Science on the Anglo-American Frontier, 1500-1676* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001)

84. Williams, *The Natural and Civil History of Vermont*, 172.

85. Belknap, *The History of New-Hampshire*, vol. III, 83.

86. For the ways in which early revolutionary histories functioned as tools for building collective national identity see Peter Messer, *Stories of Independence: Identity, Ideology, and History in Eighteenth-Century America* (Northern Illinois University Press, 2005). See also Douglass Adair, *Fame and the Founding Fathers* (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1998); H. Trevor Colbourn, *The Lamp of Experience: Whig History and the Intellectual Origins of the American Revolution* (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1998).

87. Williams, *Natural and Civil History of Vermont*, 173. Interestingly, Jedidiah Morse did not mention Indian historians. Morse, *The History of America*, 66.

88. Pagden, *European Encounters*, 120.

89. Williams, *Natural and Civil History of Vermont*, 173; see also Pagden, *European Encounters*, 136.

90. Sheehan, "Paradise and the Noble Savage," 349.

91. Morse, *The History of America*, 49; The author was evidently unaware of the social constructability of time, which implies that our division of time into seconds, minutes, hours, weeks, months and years is anything but an "obvious computation." For the social construction of time see Anthony F. Aveni, *Empires of Time: Calendars, Clocks and Cultures* (Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 2002).

92. Morse, *The History of America*, 18. This harsh conclusion stood in contrast to Morse's earlier position, that Indians' presentism should be ascribed "to their state of society," not to an immanent defect.

93. *Ibid*, 130.

94. Morse, *The History of America*, 18.

95. Perhaps because Divine Right theories did not de-legitimize history but rather derived their legitimacy from it. Thus, for example, the most strenuous of Divine Rightists, Robert Filmer, heavily engaged and lineage in his *Patriarcha*, for gaining legitimacy and asserting the historical high ground.

96. Berkhofer, "White Conceptions of Indians," 528.

97. The genre of natural history reached its ascendancy in the mid-eighteenth century but was still vigorous by its end. Contemporaries understood natural history to consist

of "a broad area of scientific inquiry circumscribing the present-day disciplines of meteorology, geology, botany, zoology and ethnology." Hence, any natural object, a class that Native Americans as indigenous people fell under, was under the scope and scrutiny of natural history. But not in natural histories that were interested in "civil history," and thus in the Revolution, as well. Pamela Regis, *Describing Early America*, xi.

98. Carver, *Travels*, 93.

99. Benjamin Smith Barton, *New views of the origin of the tribes and nations of America* (Philadelphia: John Bioren, 1797), xii.

100. Silas Wood, *Thoughts on the State of American Indians* (New York: 1794), 7.

101. Carver, *Travels*, 124.

102. Conn, *History's Shadow*, 14-15.

103. Barton, *Views*, xv.

104. *Ibid.*, xxvi, xxviii, xcii, xci-xcii. Such remarkable logic foretold many of the modern structuralist sensibilities which trace the core of truth in mythologies. Pamela Regis reminds us that even those natural histories that represented Indians as having an origin, such as those we have just seen, represented an origin that was still a subject of conjecture. The Natives' present existence was described in those tracts in the manners-and-customs account. However, "the time in between" Natives' origin and the present was "simply a blank." Regis, *Describing Early America*, 37.

105. Carver, *Travels*, 127-8.

106. For the debates over the question of the degenerating effects of America see Lee Alan Dugatkin, *Mr. Jefferson and the Giant Moose: Natural History in Early America* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2009).

107. For important studies of the early American and revolutionary histories see Lester H. Cohen, *The Revolutionary Histories: Contemporary Narratives of the American Revolution* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1980), and Messer, *Stories of Independence*.

108. Morse, *The History of America*, 116. David Ramsay, for example, asserted that "no portion of modern, or perhaps ancient history, more worthy of the attention of readers at large," and Mercy Otis Warren concurred that the Revolution ought to be "marked in the annals of time, as one of the most extraordinary eras in the history of man." David Ramsay, *The History of the American Revolution* (1793), 2 vols. (New York: Russell and Russell, 1968), 1: iv; Mercy Otis Warren, *History of the Rise, Progress, and Termination of the American Revolution*, 2 vols. Ed. Lester Cohen (Indianapolis: Liberty Press, 1988).

109. Shalev, *Rome on Western Shores*, 188-216.

110. William C. Dowling, "Forward," in David Humphreys, *An Essay on the Life of the Honourable Majot-General Israel Putnam* (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 2000), xvi.

111. For the development of modern historicism in America see Dorothy Ross, "Historical Consciousness in Nineteenth-Century America," *American Historical Review* 89 (1984), 909-928.

112. Berkhofer, "White Conceptions of Indians," 526. See also Pearce, *Savagism and Civilization*. David Theo Goldberg, *The Racial State* (Malden, Mass.: Blackwell, 2002), 18.

113. Thus, James Adair, an Englishman who published his well known *History of the American Indians* in 1776, and definitely had no stake in the American national project, not only argued that Indians "must know their own traditions best" and should thus be trusted upon claiming that they "came over the Mississippi" in a time immemorial, but

also elaborated on Indians "Manner of Counting Time," comparing their methods to those of the ancient Hebrews. James Adair, *The History of American Indians* (London: E. and C. Dilly, 1775), quote on 194; see also 74-80.

114. Eve Kornfeld points out that when historical consciousness was attributed to an Indian by a nationalist Euro-American author (such as Philip Freneau), the fictive character's outlook "completely lack[s] a Creek perspective," thus becoming more an "object-in-nature rather than a conscious historical subject." Kornfeld, "Encountering 'the Other,'" 294.

115. Daniel K. Richter, "'Believing That Many of the Red People Suffer Much for the Want of Food': Hunting, Agriculture, and a Quaker Construction of Indianness in the Early Republic," *Journal of the Early Republic* 19.4 (1999), 601-628, see 602-3.

116. Ross, "Historical Consciousness in Nineteenth-Century America," 915.

117. Daniel A. Segal, "'Western Civ.' and the Staging of History in American Higher Education," *The American Historical Review* 105.3 (2000), 770-805.

118. For the juxtaposition of temporality and authenticity see Wells, "Why[,] These Children Are Not Really Indians," 15 and *passim*.

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