

literature succeeds, the field will be forced to redefine itself in light of the challenges the French texts will pose to existing conceptions. The study of Native American cultures at the time of colonial contact will be encouraged to consider the rhetorical and literary patterns followed by the writers who provide the documentary information.

CHAPTER 2



John Smith and Samuel de Champlain

Founding Fathers and Their Indian Relations

The careers of John Smith and Samuel de Champlain, popular “founding fathers” of the French and English colonies in North America, are so uncannily similar that they invite comparison, and such a comparison offers a good point of departure for an attempt to integrate the study of colonial American literature in the two languages. More than merely the leaders of initial seventeenth-century colonies in Virginia and Quebec, each man, through his extensive historical and promotional writing, succeeded in identifying his own fate with that of the colony to the point where the former nearly subsumes the latter. Despite the existence of many narratives by other colonists such as William Strachey, Edward Maria Wingfield, George Percy, and Henry Spelman,¹ Smith’s narratives have become central to the history of the Virginia colony up to the 1622 “Massacre,” “the slandered Smith becomes, in his own writings, the best synecdoche for slandered Virginia.”² Or, as Wayne Franklin puts it, still more portentously, Smith “embodies in his own condition the ruin of a colonial ideal” (188). Champlain’s story,

which has fewer competing narrators for the history of his colony than does Smith, similarly becomes the story of Quebec up through the brief conquest by the English under David Kirke in 1629.

Due to the stature of these founding father figures, history and textuality meet and intertwine, and it becomes necessary to analyze not only the historical circumstances in which Smith and Champlain found themselves in America, but also the image that each man sought to create of himself through his writings and the spin that subsequent nationalist histories have given to them. Most important, I believe that both were strongly influenced by Indian leaders whom they faced in battles and power struggles, leaders who contributed to the ideas of authority that Smith and Champlain deployed in the colonies and in their writings, even as they in part misunderstood these native adversaries. Much as Lahontan learned from the natives about alternatives to French society and dramatized this education in the dialogue with Adario, Smith and Champlain learned from Indian leaders about how power could be maintained in America. And just as Adario is a projected representation of Lahontan's acquired "Indian" values, Smith and Champlain's foes are alter egos of the leaders who write about them. The first half of this chapter examines the two men's historical reputations, which have complicated the reception of their texts even more than Lahontan's. The second half turns to an analysis of episodes and illustrations from their books that reveal the impact of the Native American leaders, particularly Smith's great rival, Powhatan.

The French had attempted to settle at Quebec in the sixteenth century, and the English Roanoke colony of 1587 had mysteriously vanished in the area southeast of Jamestown. Samuel de Champlain and John Smith, therefore, have the mystique of founders because their colonies were the first of each nation that survived continuously to the present, but also because they published so much about their efforts. Smith published more writing about America than any previous Englishman; Champlain's collected works are comparable only to Lescarbot among French colonial writers of the early seventeenth century. Moreover, there are striking similarities in the form of the publications of Captain Smith and Captain Champlain (as he is called in the title of

the 1620 edition of his third book). Smith published three accounts of Virginia, each longer than the previous one and incorporating more geographic, ethnographic, and historical material around his own explorations: *The True Relation of such occurrences and accidents of noate as hath hapned in Virginia since the first planting of that Collony. . .* (1608), *A Map of Virginia* (1612), and *The Generall Historie of Virginia, New England, and the Summer Isles* (1624). *A Map*, as explained in its full title, is comprised of "A Description of the countrey, the Commodities, People, Government and Religion" and a second part, "The Proceedings of those Colonies, since their first departure from England, with the discourses, Orationes, and relations of the Savages." Thus Smith conceived this book in the hybrid generic model so common in colonial literature—divided between a historical narrative and a description of land, flora, fauna, and native peoples. Yet only this one of all Smith's publications followed that form.

Champlain also published three increasingly lengthy travel narratives, and his works are also unusual for not explicitly dividing description from narrative. The first, *Des Sauvages, ou Voyage de Samuel Champlain, de Brouage, fait en la France nouvelle* (1603) [On the "Sauvages," or Voyage of Samuel Champlain, of Brouage, Made in the New France], is a brief, spare account of that same summer's trip to the St. Lawrence and includes a short ethnographic section. *Les Voyages du Sieur de Champlain Xaintongeois* (1613) [The Voyages of Mr. Champlain of Xaintonge] (these two titles include the names of Champlain's hometown and region in western France near La Rochelle) covers the establishment of the Port Royal colony on the Bay of Fundy and explorations of the New England coast in 1604–7, and then the founding of Quebec, battles with the Iroquois, and the establishment on a firm footing of the fur trade during the years 1608–11. In 1619 he published *Les Voyages et Descouvertes du Sieur de Champlain* [The Voyages and Discoveries of Mr. Champlain], narrating further adventures in the Great Lakes area, battles with the Hurons against the Iroquois, and the beginnings of missionary work among the Indians. Champlain's first three books are contiguous, not overlapping like Smith's. However, his final work, *Les Voyages de la Nouvelle France Occidentale* (1632) [The Voyages of Western

New France], resembles Smith's *Generall Historie* (as well as Lescarbot's and Sagard's histories) in that Champlain compiles accounts by earlier French voyagers to North America since Cartier, reprises his own previous accounts in condensed form, and continues the story of the colony down to the date of publication.

Both were men of well-to-do but not noble families who rose to positions of power through their colonial service. Both acquired training in war and seamanship before setting out for North America. Champlain fought against the Spanish in the 1590s, then commanded Spanish West Indian trade vessels around the turn of the century. Smith was shipwrecked in the Mediterranean, fought in Transylvania, was captured by the Turks, enslaved in Tartary, and escaped to travel overland across Russia and Europe back to England. Each man's account of his early adventures has been received with skepticism by historians. Champlain's *Brief discours des choses plus remarquables que Samuel de Champlain de Brouage a reconneues aux Indes occidentales au voyage qu'il en a fait en icelles en l'année 1599 et en l'année 1601* [Brief discourse of the most remarkable things that Samuel de Champlain of Brouage encountered in the West Indies on a voyage that he made there in 1599 and 1601] is a fifty-page travel narrative and natural history illustrated with sixty-two of his drawings. It was not published until 1859, and twentieth-century scholars have questioned its veracity because the log of the Spanish fleet commander under whom Samuel served does not match Champlain's itinerary of the voyage.³ Smith's autobiography, *The True Travels, Adventures, and Observations of Captaine John Smith, in Europe, Asia, Africa, and America, from Anno Domini 1593 to 1629* (1630), repeats again the story of his Jamestown exploits and adds to it an account of his eastern European adventures so amazing that many have doubted its accuracy. Finally, each man published a short navigational primer, Champlain's being included in his 1632 history and Smith's, *An Accidence or the Pathway to Experience: Necessary for All Young Seamen, or Those That Are Desirous to Goe to Sea* and its glossary, *A Sea Grammar, with the Plaine Exposition of Smiths Accidence for Young Sea-men, Enlarged*, published separately in 1626 and 1627.

Though best known for Quebec and Virginia, the paths of the two

adventurers both passed through New England (or "Norumbega," as Champlain called it) in the early 1600s before the Pilgrims and Puritans arrived, and the two may even have stood on the same spot in Plymouth Harbor or "Port St. Louis"—Champlain in July 1605, Smith in August 1614.⁴ The major difference between the two careers is that Champlain remained in command of his colony until his death, whereas Smith lost control of Virginia after only a brief presence. Smith died in England in 1631, Champlain in Quebec on Christmas Day, 1635.

Smith and Champlain were not only the greatest leaders and leading writers of their respective colonies; each was also a first-rate cartographer. Their works provide not merely exploration narrative but maps and guides to the parts of North America known to Europeans in the early seventeenth century. They reach beyond the linear knowledge of the empiricist traveler toward a two-dimensional representation and control of the land surface that was the basis of colonial domination. Reading *A Map of Virginia* or *The Description of New England* entails reading the text and examining the map. And this verbal/visual intertext involves not only maps but also images: Powhatan on his throne and the classicized Susquehannock warrior (adapted from John White via Theodor deBry) on the 1612 map of Virginia, and the five scenes of Indian life and of Smith's heroic battles with Opechancanough and with the Paspehegh chief in the tableau published with the *Generall Historie* (fig. 1). Champlain was an even more accurate and assiduous map maker and had been employed as a cartographer on his Caribbean voyages and on his first trip to Canada in 1603. His large-scale 1612 map of New France shows both Lake Ontario and Niagara Falls, based on his Indian informants' information, and the future Lake Champlain, the Gulf of St. Lawrence, and the New England coast from his own exploration. It was likely a source for Smith's map of New England. As Thoreau noted in *Cape Cod*: "Most of the maps of this coast made for a long time after betray their indebtedness to Champlain. He was a skilful navigator, a man of science, and geographer to the King of France" (1009). Thoreau also claimed that Smith and Champlain were the only visitors who correctly described Cape Cod as a sandy, barren place, rather than as a densely wooded land with fertile soil.

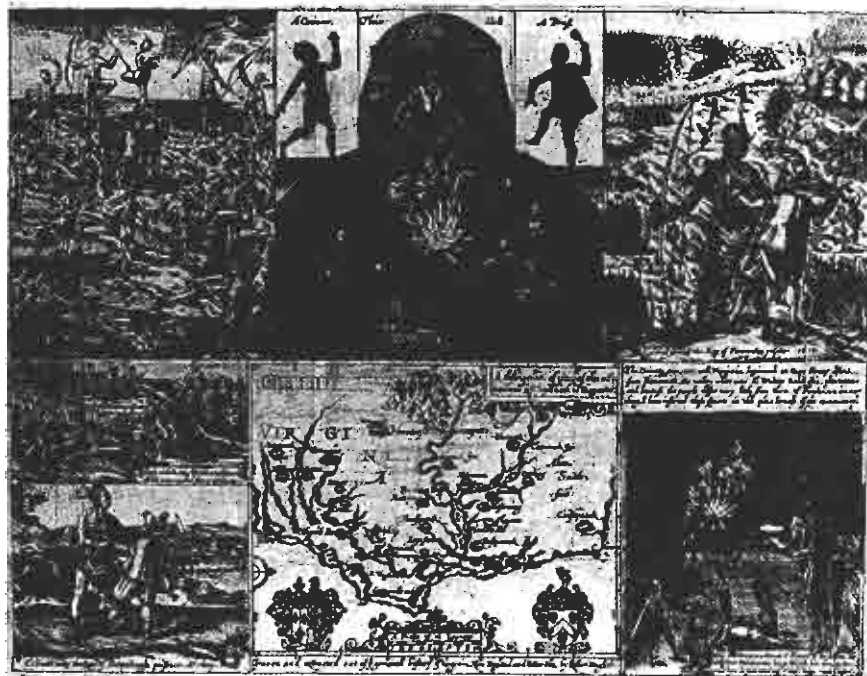


FIGURE 1. John Smith, Map of "Ould Virginia," from the *Generall Historie*, 1624. Top right panel has the caption, "C. Smith taketh the King of Pamaunkee prisoner, 1608." Bottom left has the caption, "C. Smith takes the King of Paspashegh prisoner, 1609." Top left shows "Their triumph about him" and below that, "C. Smith bound to a tree to be shott to death, 1607." Bottom right reads: "King Powhatan commands C. Smith to be slayne, his daughter Pokahontas begs his life his thankfullness and how he subjected 39 of their kings." The illustration was done by Robert Vaughn, who copied the Indian scenes from Theodor deBry's *Virginia* of 1590. (Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University)

Smith's books feature illustrations printed alongside the maps, but Champlain integrates images of events into the cartographic representation at the place where they occurred. The harbor charts he drew during his coastal explorations of Norumbega and Quebec show, in miniature, Indian dwellings, fields, and fishing weirs; they employ a legend of letters to indicate the site of anchorages, warring places, and skirmishes between the French explorers and the natives (note the letters of the legend in the canoes and by the two slain Mohawks in fig. 2). These

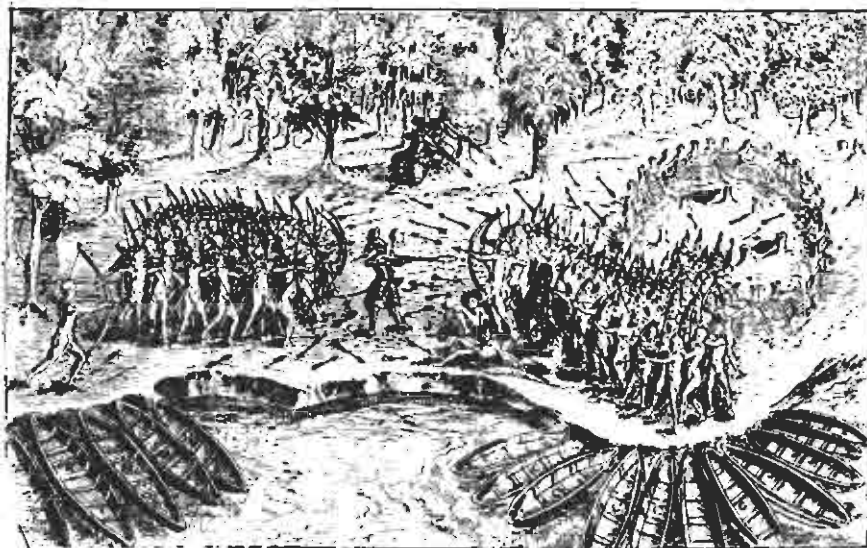


FIGURE 2. Samuel de Champlain, "Deffaite des Yroquois" [defeat of the Iroquois], from *Les Voyages du Sieur de Champlain*, 1613. (From the copy in the Rare Book Collection, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill)

charts are astonishingly accurate—one can locate the harbors by shape alone, claims mariner and historian Samuel Eliot Morison in his biography of Champlain. In addition to these charts, Champlain drew several illustrations of battles in which he participated, in a naive yet clear style. The juxtaposition of map and picture without regard to scale was common at the time, but Champlain is distinctive for creating a narrative storyboard effect by combining map and description, image and narration to complete a discursive mastery of the land and its inhabitants.⁵ It has been suggested that his skill at ethnographic observation may derive from his first career: "From an anthropologist's point of view his chief merit was his ability to observe detail, which perhaps reflects his training as a cartographer."⁶

This neat complementary relationship between ethnography and ethnological illustrations can be problematic, however. Because all we have are the engravings in the books, we cannot with certainty attribute the illustrations to the hand of Champlain or of Smith. Comparisons reveal that the engravers of each had recourse to the popular deBry engravings

published in the *America* series in the 1590s. For Smith's *Generall Historie*, for example, the engraver took an image from John White's depictions of Indian customs reproduced in the deBry volume, which included Harriot's *A Briefe and True Report* (fig. 3), and inserted Smith into the scene (fig. 1, upper left panel). Although White had represented "A Religious Dance" and the caption in deBry suggests that it is a summertime fertility festival, after Smith is grafted onto the scene it becomes a savage dance of triumph held to intimidate a captive. The dancers who carried leafy branches and gourd rattles in the original now hold bows and arrows and clubs. In the White/deBry version the three figures in the center of the circle are "three of the most beautiful virgins," whereas Smith and two captors replace them in the Smith version. The "tall posts carved into faces resembling those of veiled nuns," as the caption describes them, disappear from Smith's illustration, replaced by the tree to which the captain is bound in the image at the bottom of the frame. This manipulated and manipulative image has been used to perpetuate the idea of American Indians as savage captors and torturers, for it has been adapted several times in illustrations for volumes of captivity narratives, such as John Frost's.⁷ The substitution of the captive Smith for the beautiful virgins might be seen as the converse of Smith's insertion of the story of the virgin Pocahontas, who saves him from death in the account of his captivity in the 1624 *Generall Historie*, but is not mentioned in either earlier version. These are just two examples of a pattern whereby Smith's self-possession and autobiographical independence are revealed to be a ruse, an impression created by the manipulation of many other individuals, both allies and rivals, whose words and representations are recast and focused on Smith himself. In *The Proceedings of the English Colonie* and its later version in the third book of the *Generall Historie*, Smith collected or simply attributed short testimonial and narrative accounts from other colonists that tell of his exploits from an "objective" but rarely critical third-person perspective. These attributions differ slightly in the two versions and in at least one instance cannot be accurate (1:214, note 10). In Champlain, we will see an inverse process: his illustrations and narratives placed him as if in the eye of a hurricane, deflecting attention and blame onto surrounding figures so as to leave Champlain as a stable yet self-effacing center.



FIGURE 3. "The dances at their great feasts," from Theodor deBry's illustrated edition of Thomas Harriot's *A Briefe and True Report of the New Found Land of Virginia*, published in Frankfurt in 1590. The engraving was done from a watercolor by John White. (National Library of Canada, NL-19255)

Many students of American literature and history have a basic familiarity with John Smith and an impression of him that almost certainly includes notions like egocentric, ambitious, industrious, ruthless, and self-congratulating. Perhaps this will change in light of the highly inaccurate portrait of him as the hero of the animated Disney feature *Pocahontas*. The popular historical image of Champlain is virtually the opposite: modest, patient, a negotiator who put the success of his colony ahead of his own fame and fortune. These two men, whose career paths, historical significance, and bibliographies are so uncannily similar, are perceived to have personalities that are polar opposites. Yet, of course, these personalities are only the artifacts of the two contrasting strategies of representation. In his images Champlain did not try to dominate the scene; rather, he worked subtly and avoided leaving the impression that his narratives were constructed to promote his own interests in the colonial project. Smith, on the other hand, wrote mostly from England

and tried repeatedly to present himself as the man whose skills were essential to the success of upcoming colonization projects. I wish to argue that the leadership style each portrayed in accounts of his activities in America was largely a consequence of his conception of the Indian leaders who treated with and fought against him. Each projected an ideal of independence and self-possession; each claimed that the success of the colony lay on his shoulders, but this only concealed the influence of his Native American counterpart. Moreover, each presented himself as a commander of the same type as this counterpart, when in fact his situation was quite different.

Champlain's style was better suited to the economic basis of the Quebec colony than was Smith's to Virginia. New France was built on the fur trade, an activity that required good relations with Indians who killed the beavers and carried the pelts great distances to market. Champlain, although he often clashed with fur-trading interests, nevertheless built an initial base of trust with the Montagnais and Hurons, which ensured safe passage for French traders. Champlain held on to his leadership for more than twenty years because he facilitated the most profitable way to exploit Quebec's resources, whereas Smith's downfall can be attributed to his unorthodox economic vision, which resisted tobacco, the product that proved to be foundational for Virginia. Though a Native American plant, tobacco required no cooperation from the Indians, only their land. Smith's success at winning concessions from Powhatan was no longer valuable once the colony could feed and defend itself from the natives beyond the "fall-line." That Smith, like King James, was hostile toward tobacco and feared that Virginia might be too dependent on it partly explains why he never was able to return to the colony to reclaim his leadership. John Rolfe, who had taken Pocahontas for his wife, took up the "tawny weed" also; he imported seeds from South America to improve quality, and the market in tobacco boomed. Smith complained in *The True Travels* that in Virginia "everie one is so aplyed to his labour about Tobacco and Corne, which doth yeeld them such a profit, they never regard any food from the Salvages; nor have they any trade or conference with them, but upon meere accidents and defiances" (3:216). The skills that Smith used to save the colony in its first

years were no longer deemed important. John Seelye has cast Smith as a scorned prophet, writing that the rejection of "The authoritarian, fortress-dominated colony that was Smith's ideal" in favor of a tobacco monoculture was a mistake, because "By the end of the century Virginians had converted the Indian weed and Indian rivers to an economy of waste, one requiring a system that depended on the labor of slaves" (86–87). Smith's ideas for profitable colonial industries also fell on deaf ears in New England. In the *Description of New England*, Smith had imagined that the northern Anglo-American colony would thrive on the fisheries of the George's Bank, but the fur trade proved to be more profitable than fishing for the Plymouth colony.⁸

Arguably, Smith and Champlain also represent the colonial genesis of minority cultures and literatures within postcolonial nations, Champlain of French Canada and Smith of the Old South. But attitudes toward Champlain do not divide along regional or language lines, and his status as a founding father is not limited to Francophone Canada, though it is not pervasive. In his biography of Champlain, Morris Bishop made a frank appeal for his subject as Canada's national hero: "This book is, in some small way, an act of admiration and love. The author's chief hope is that it may arouse in others an answering admiration and love for the founder and father of Canada, the patron of her spirit, her Hero" (x). Canadian historians Marcel Trudel and Narcisse-E. Dionne also celebrate Champlain, though others such as Bruce Trigger are more critical.⁹ In any case, judging by the number of places named for him, Champlain is less of a hero in Quebec than is Jacques Cartier, the first Frenchman to attempt to colonize Canada.

Smith's reputation, on the other hand, has long been tied to sectional interests. In 1867 Henry Adams published an essay in the *North American Review* accusing Smith of fabricating the tale of Pocahontas saving his life.¹⁰ This was the culmination of extensive research designed to discredit the South and aid the Union war effort. John Gorham Palfrey, author of a five-volume *History of New England* (1858–92), invited Adams to write the essay because it "would attract as much attention, and probably break as much glass, as any other stone that could be thrown by a beginner,"¹¹ and Adams in a letter to Palfrey admitted that

he was writing a piece of propaganda, "a rear attack, on the Virginia aristocracy, who will be utterly gravelled by it if it is successful" (1:287-88). There was a great deal at stake, for "By the mid-nineteenth century Captain John Smith was as well known to Americans as any figure from American history, save, possibly, George Washington."¹² Smith's reputation suffered from this and from the 1890 work of Lewis L. Kropf, who claimed that the Transylvanian adventures in the *True Travels* were also fabricated. Laura Polyani Striker in 1953 and Philip Barbour in the 1980s have recuperated Smith's autobiography as fact, and since then, American academic opinion has been again divided on largely regional lines. Northerners, among them Francis Jennings, Gary B. Nash, and Karen Kupperman, have denounced Smith's treatment of the Indians (though all agree that the worst abuses occurred in the aftermath of the 1622 massacre at Jamestown, long after Smith's departure). Defenders of Smith include his editor and biographer Philip Barbour and J. Leo Lemay, author of the most recent book-length study of Smith, which makes a case for his hero status as strongly as Bishop does for Champlain. It would be unfair to attribute this to anti-Yankee chauvinism, however. Southerners understandably embrace Smith as a Virginia counterweight to the long-standing dominance of New England Puritan literature in the Early American field.

All defenders and some detractors of Smith acknowledge him as a prototypical American hero: proud, self-reliant, and disdainful of class privilege. Smith deserves the credit he receives as a founder of American pioneer ideology, as one can sense in this passage from *A Description of New England*: "Who can desire more content, that hath small meanes; or but only his merit to advance his fortune, than to tread, and plant that ground hee hath purchased by the hazard of his life?" (1:343). The issue of Smith's character and his status as a model American should arise not only from the question of whether or not he was a liar, whether or not a brutal imperialist, but also from his role among the jealous, greedy, and class-riven Jamestown colonists, and the way in which his texts recount and enact his strategies to maintain power there. Like the Revolutionary Founding Fathers for whom he serves as a typological forebear, Smith is a *political* model. The Virginia texts demonstrate the turbulence of a

democratic society sensitive to public opinion and demagogic leadership. In the "starving time" of 1609, just after Smith's departure, martial law was imposed to quell mutinies in fractious Jamestown. Smith himself was first brought ashore in Virginia as a prisoner and later threatened by Gabriel Archer with hanging, only to rally his supporters and defeat John Ratcliffe in the election for president of the council. He was always sensitive of his public image, not only among his readers but also among the other colonists. His rugged individualism was constructed, in part, from the reports of his exploits ostensibly written by others. The Captain Smith persona was and is created through these reports much like the image of a politician in American democracy, at least since the propagandistic campaign biographies of the Jacksonian era. Yet Smith biographers and critics rarely discuss the issue of why he chose to construct his texts in this way, or whether his subordinates Anas Todkill, Thomas Studley, William Phettiplace, and others really did write the chapters attributed to them, and if so, at whose request.¹³ Smith shows not only the idealistic side of American democracy, but its less attractive, contentious side as well. As Hannah Arendt has written: "the well-known arguments of the Founding Fathers against democratic government hardly ever mention its egalitarian character; the objection to it was that ancient history and theory had proved the 'turbulent' nature of democracy, its instability" (225). The first years of the Virginia colony form part of this turbulent history just as Roman history does, and Smith's status as a founding father represents not only his contempt for class privilege but also his cunning political technique, an aggressive, despotic style that mirrors his image of his adversary Powhatan.

Compared with Smith, Champlain projects an image of a colony in serene consensus, a small, close-knit group that submitted to a benevolent ruler. Champlain was not the leader of a colony until 1608 (the same year Smith was elected president of the council), and ever after that he was obliged to enforce fur trade monopolies granted by the Crown to La Rochelle merchants the de Caen brothers and to the Company of the Hundred Associates. Smith wrote his *True Travells* and most of his other works in the third person, grammatically reflecting attention on himself. By contrast, in his early texts Champlain disguises his subordinate

status by effacing both himself and his commanders from his discourse. *Des Sauvages* is related mostly in the first person plural, and Champlain's name never appears after the title page.¹⁴ Where the first person singular pronoun does appear in this brief text, Champlain is not narrating his exploits but giving his impressions of the Indians. After 1618 Champlain gave up exploration, and in his 1632 work he presents himself more like Smith, as the man on whom the fate of the colony depended. Still, in reading his works one is struck by this independent yet self-effacing style, which suppresses politics as it hides the author's subjectivity and turns one's attention away from the colonists and toward the Indians.

Along with the economic, the historiographic, and the political contrasts between Smith and Champlain there is, of course, religion. It is tempting to equate Champlain's secure leadership of the colony of New France to the authority of Catholicism in the French court and colonies, and to equate Smith's fractious power struggles in Virginia to separatist strife in seventeenth-century England. However, one must consider the political and religious aspects of the colonies separately before comparing them. In 1615 Champlain chose the Recollets from his hometown of Brouage to accompany him to Quebec, and this order, which included Gabriel Sagard, was the dominant religious presence until 1625, when Champlain acquiesced to the Jesuits' request to begin missions in Canada. Huguenots (and some Catholic fur traders) were opposed to Champlain not because they wanted a role as missionaries in his colony, but because they opposed the colony altogether. Huguenots owned many of the fishing and trading vessels that frequented the St. Lawrence, and their business, trading directly with the Indians at the shore, proceeded just fine without the additional expenses of the royal mandate to bring new settlers to Champlain's colony. The de Caen brothers, who were granted the trading concession in 1621, had strong Protestant ties and did little to support Champlain. Protestant traders were able to flout the ban against their faith that was instituted in 1627, so if they felt a real threat, it was an economic not a religious one.

Smith too was caught between the religious factions in the colonies. Though he was less patrician and more self-disciplined than a stereo-

typical Virginia Cavalier such as William Byrd II, he was not a Puritan. As is clear in his pamphlet *New Englands Trials* (1622), Smith was enthusiastic about the Plymouth colonists' prospects not because he supported their religious goals, but simply because he thought they were well situated and well organized to exploit the potential wealth of the coastal cod fisheries. Smith offered his services to the Plymouth colonists and was rejected, probably because he was an Anglican who did not share their separatist views.

We have still failed to account for the contrasting images of Smith and Champlain's personalities and Indian policies. The "national character" explanation reduced to the difference between tobacco and the fur trade. Regional chauvinism and the political structure of text and colony explained the uncertain status of Smith and Champlain as "founding fathers." And although both leaders faced opposition from members of antagonistic religious sects, they were essentially secular in their motives and actions. The fourth axis of cultural difference, and the most suggestive, was that between the Indian nations among whom Smith and Champlain traveled and their respective leadership. Here again, geographic influences were important. The native nations around Quebec and Jamestown were all Algonquian peoples, but the different climates had produced different subsistence strategies and demographic patterns. The rich agricultural potential of Virginia allowed for a relatively dense and stable population that supported Powhatan's opulence and enabled him to consolidate an "empire" of tribute nations, a situation Smith described: "his will is a law and must bee obeyed; not only as a king but as halfe a God they esteem him" (1:174).¹⁵ In Quebec, the Algonquians relied more on hunting and trade for their subsistence; each winter they dispersed in small groups of a few families each to hunt moose, beavers, and other game. No despotic rule over a large population was possible, and in any case Champlain traversed a region far larger than the Chesapeake area as he traveled up the St. Lawrence and Ottawa Rivers and around Lake Ontario.

For the most part, this contrast between Smith and Champlain must be drawn out of their own writings and the colonial history around them, but Champlain is also represented in Native Americans' own

history. At the beginning of his autobiography, Black Hawk, the Sauk leader famous for his defiance of U.S. troops in Illinois territory in 1831–32, recounts a history of the encounter of his ancestors with a French explorer in the lower St. Lawrence who, though unnamed, could well be Champlain. Although it is also difficult to identify this encounter in Champlain's narratives, it resembles several episodes. According to Black Hawk, the Great Spirit appeared in dreams to both the French leader and to Black Hawk's great-grandfather, foretelling the arrival of a white man on the banks of a great river and designating him as a father to the Sauk. The Frenchman used his wealth of trade goods to anoint Na-na-ma-kee, a younger son of a chief, as his chosen leader, awarding him clothing, guns, cooking pots, and a medal such as English colonists commonly gave native leaders in the eighteenth century. What most strongly suggests that this Frenchman is Champlain is that he uses trade to establish a position of trust and backs it up with promises: "having given them a large quantity of goods, as presents, and every other thing necessary for their comfort, he set sail for France, after promising to meet them again, at the same place after the twelfth moon" (44).

Already we can see a contrast between the self-conscious authority in Smith's Virginia, codified in councils and elections and jealous of its prerogatives, and a leadership in Quebec that presented itself as based on exchanges and mutual recognition with local Amerindian leaders. Smith and Champlain were formed in the images we have of them, the images created in their texts, by the influence of local Indians. The way each saw himself was a function of his impression of the Indian leaders who were his counterparts. This is not a direct reflection, however, but a process of misinterpretation. Smith fashioned himself after Powhatan and Opechancanough and imagined that he should become a leader in their style, when in fact his authority in the Jamestown colony was more democratic, in the good and bad senses, than despotic like the Powhatan he portrayed, and thus his psychological doubling with the two chiefs did not help him to maintain his control. Smith felt that he resisted and outwitted Powhatan, but it may have been Powhatan who controlled and created Smith in ways neither could be conscious of, given the enormous cultural difference between them. John Seelye appears to

share this view when he writes of "a paradoxical dimension" in Smith's texts: "For Powhatan did nothing to Captain Smith that was not a reversal of what Smith intended for him, the Indian King, like his River, merely reflecting back the Captain's own countenance" (78). Ethnohistorians have suggested that Powhatan sought to use the English colonists to support his dominance in the region, or, what may amount to the same thing, that he offered to protect them in exchange for a steady supply of metal tools.¹⁶ As pointed out in Chapter 1, Powhatan successfully enforced a monopoly on European trade goods; William Strachey wrote that "He doth by keeping us from trading with them monopolize all the Copper brought into Virginia by the English" (107). Champlain dealt with a series of less powerful regional chiefs in Quebec and fashioned himself a leadership style based on consensus and negotiation, such as he tried to achieve among the several tribes. If Champlain's style was more successful than Smith's (though he did make many mistakes), it was because he had fewer challengers to his authority, but also because the Indian leaders he dealt with held political positions that more closely resembled his own—a commander of small resources caught amid many powerful forces.

Smith internalized what he perceived as Powhatan's great power and cunning, but he did not revere him as a king. Smith was not a nobleman and complained in his writings that the power and privilege given to the gentlemen at Jamestown were unjust because they were not supported by practical skills or hard work. His image of Powhatan is in part a legitimation of his own claim to a power that transcends English class hierarchy. Christopher Newport, Smith's commander on the voyage to Virginia, did regard Powhatan as a king, and the differences between the two men's images of Powhatan demonstrate both the degree to which the ethnocentric gaze created an Indian that responded to the perspective of the observer and the opportunities that Powhatan had to learn how best to deal with each. Smith's second meeting with Powhatan (the first after his captivity) occurs when Newport sets out "to perfourme this strange discovery, but more strange coronation" (1:234; 2:181) of Powhatan and his kingdom.¹⁷ Newport hoped to secure the allegiance and protection of Powhatan by conferring on him a European legitimation of

his rule. Smith, as the president, argued against this project as a waste of time and supplies, but the council overruled him. Smith went to invite Powhatan to his own coronation, but Powhatan refused to come to the English fort, though he acknowledged his status as king: "If your king have sent me presents, I also am a king, and this my land, 8 daies I will stay to receive them. Your father is to come to me, not I to him, nor yet to your fort, neither will I bite at such a baite" (1:236; 2:183). Smith passed this message to Newport, who arrived with gifts to carry out a coronation ceremony. It was, according to Smith's reporter Anas Todkill, a farce: "But a fowle trouble there was to make him kneele to receive his crowne, he, neither knowing the majestie, nor meaning of a Crowne, nor bending of the knee, indured so many perswasions, examples, and instructions, as tired them all" (1:237; 2:184). Newport attempted to anglicize Powhatan, and to make him a tributary to the English king, by giving him a bed, basin, and cloak, much as Champlain acknowledged Na-na-ma-kee with gifts, but with quite different results. Champlain (if it was he) altered the Sauk power structure and improved his own status; Newport sought to cause Powhatan's power and his own to reinforce one another, to exchange ideals of monarchy, but he failed to communicate and failed to reap any benefit. Smith saw in Powhatan the cunning and skill by which he distanced himself from the dupe Newport and that he needed to outwit Newport, Ratcliffe, and Wingfield and gain control of the colony. His image of Powhatan was best summarized by the Indian Weraskoyack, who at the opening of the following chapter of *The Proceedings* says, "Captaine Smith, you shall finde Powhatan to use you kindly, but trust him not, and bee sure hee hath no opportunitie to seaze on your armes, for hee hath sent for you only to cut your throats" (1:244; 2:193). It was Powhatan's Machiavelian cunning more than his despotic rule that served as an effective model for Smith, and it was in the subsequent episode, the one Weraskoyack was warning about, that Smith and Powhatan emerged as psychological doubles, equally resourceful, egotistical, and suspicious.

Much of the scene at Werowocomoco is a dialogue between Smith and Powhatan and is therefore one of the most memorable and dramatic parts of Smith's writings. However, the reader should not imagine that

this dialogue is a transcription of an actual conversation. There is no evidence that Smith in his two years in Virginia, including the three weeks in captivity, learned to speak Powhatan's dialect of Algonquian with such fluency as the dialogue displays. We should read the dialogue as a construction by Smith and/or Anas Todkill, even if one of the English *truchements* who did speak the native language well—Thomas Savage or Henry Spelman—was present to serve as an interpreter. The two voices are alter egos that converge on the same fears and desires; each recognizes in the other the desperate determination he has in himself. Powhatan drives a hard bargain for corn, asking forty swords for forty bushels. Smith is equally determined to either get a better price or simply steal the food. Powhatan has come to understand the threat Smith poses, a threat identical to the one that Smith heard from Weraskoyack: "for many doe informe me, your comming is not for trade, but to invade my people, and possesse my Country" (2:195; 1:247). Yet Powhatan also knows how necessary he is to the English: "what will it availle you," he asks, "to destroy them that provide you food? what can you get by war, when we can hide our provision and flie to the woodes, whereby you must famish by wronging us your friends" (1:247; 2:196). Smith needs Powhatan because he knows the English look to him as the only man who can deal with the Indian leader and because only Powhatan can summon the delivery of such large amounts of food. The enemies are bound to one another by common interests. Smith calls Powhatan his father, Powhatan pleads to Smith as his friend, but the conference is, we learn, merely a stalling tactic to enable Powhatan's men to prepare to attack Smith, kill him, and then flee, and for Smith's men to break the ice that blocks their barge from reaching the shore where they can attack Powhatan. The confrontation in the Virginia winter is a seventeenth-century cold war, where each side views itself through the frame of the threat posed by the other, and an ideology of polar opposition conceals many similarities between the two.

Champlain met and interacted with so many Indian leaders in his wide travels in Canada that there is no one who stands out as his counterpart or double, unless Na-na-ma-kee can be regarded as a synthesis of them all. The Micmac chief Membertou, leader of a band that lived near

Port Royal, plays a major role as an ally of the French in Champlain's Acadian narrative and is even more important in the 1616 Acadian memoir of the Jesuit Pierre Biard. On the St. Lawrence, however, Champlain tried to befriend each chief he met as a means of gaining assistance in his effort to penetrate farther west and north toward other nations and richer beaver hunting. One example of this process is the meeting with the Algoumequin sagamore Tessoüat at the Ile des Allumettes, near the site of modern Ottawa, in 1613.¹⁸ The two did have more than a passing acquaintance, for it seems that Tessoüat had met Champlain far downstream at Tadoussac on his first visit to Canada in 1603, and when he sees him again is "tout estonné de me voir, & nous dit qu'il pensoit que je fusse un songe, & qu'il ne croyoit pas ce qu'il voyoit" (2:278) [much astonished at seeing me, telling us he thought I was a ghost, and that he could not believe his eyes].¹⁹ Champlain, as is his usual tactic with the nations he passes through, offers a promise and asks a favor in return: "je leur fis entendte par mon Truchement que le subject de mon voyage n'estoit autre que pour les asseuter de mon affection, & du desir que j'avois de les assister en leurs guerres, comme j'avois auparavant fait" (2:283) [I explained to them through my interpreter, that the object of my journey was none other than to assure them of my affection, and of my desire to aid in their wars, as I had done previously]. Though he admits that the previous year he had not fulfilled his promise to go to war against the Iroquois, he nevertheless reiterates the promise and makes a request: "que je desirois voir une nation distant de 6 journées d'eux, nommée Nebicerini [Nipissing], pour les convier aussi à la guerre; & pource je les priay de me donner 4 Canots, avec huict sauvages pour me conduire esdictes terres" (2:284) [that I desired to visit a nation, distant six days' march from them, called the Nebicerini, in order to invite them also to go on the war-path, and that for this purpose I asked them to give me four canoes, with eight Indians to take me to that region].

Champlain, unlike Smith, does mention the interpreter, Thomas, through whom he is able to converse with Tessoüat and his nation. Indeed, the encounter soon focuses not on the two leaders but on a

second *truchement*, Nicolas Vignau, who had spent a previous winter with Tessoüat's people.

Tessoüat at first agrees to provide the four canoes and the guides but then changes his mind and tries to dissuade Champlain from continuing his journey, warning of dangerous rapids and of the sorcery and poisonings that the Nebicerini nation could inflict on him. Tessoüat's true motive, Champlain was probably aware, was to preserve his status as middleman on the Ottawa River trade route, so that he could exact a toll from the Hurons and Ottawas coming downstream and from the French going upstream. As Sagard, when he followed Champlain's route through the Ottawa valley several years later, put it, "ces Epiceriny ne veulent pas mener de François seculiers en leur voyage, non plus que les Montagnais et Hurons n'en veulent point mener au Saguenet, de peur de decouvrir leur bonne et meilleure traite, et le pays où ils vont amasser quantité de pelleteries" (110) [these Epiceriny are not willing to take lay Frenchmen on their journey, any more than the Montagnais and Hurons are willing to take them to the Saguenay, for fear of revealing the rich and most profitable source of their trading and the country to which they go to collect most of their furs (87)]. In this respect, Champlain and Tessoüat are doubled like Smith and Powhatan; each is trying to preserve a monopoly on trade. Champlain's impetus for northern exploration came from Vignau, who had told Champlain that he had traveled upstream and north all the way to Hudson Bay and had seen a captive Englishman, part of Henry Hudson's lost expedition of two years earlier. Champlain worried that the English might threaten the French trade advantage and wished to investigate. But Tessoüat and his people, seeking to prevent Champlain from forging trading relationships with upstream groups, swear that Vignau never went beyond their nation, that he had been lying to Champlain, and they attack the young man and insist that he be killed for his lies. Champlain, though very angry, prevents them from doing so.

The encounter between Smith and Powhatan was based on mutual mistrust, and dialogue was a screen for military maneuvers. The relationship between Champlain and Tessoüat was based on the mutual

trust implied in the performative speech act of a promise. Champlain and Tessoüat exchanged promises, only to break them and seek a new equilibrium based on new promises. Champlain understood and followed Native American customs insofar as he recognized that a leader maintains his power largely through his generosity, creating goodwill obligations with the value of his gifts. Champlain tried to dissimulate on his own broken promises by telling Tessoüat's people "qu je les avois jusques à ce jour estimés hommes, & veritables, & que maintenant ils se monstroyent enfans, & mensongers, & que s'ils ne vouloient effectuer leurs promesses, ils ne me feroient paroistre leur amitié" (2:288) [that till then I had held them to be men and true to their word; but that now they were showing themselves children and liars, and that if they did not wish to keep their promises, they should not pretend to be my friends]. The narrative thus shifts the blame from Champlain, who did not fulfill his promise to go to war against the Iroquois the year before, to Vignau, who promised to lead Champlain to Hudson Bay when in fact he did not know how to get there. Champlain tells Vignau "s'il avoit veu ceste mer, que je luy ferois donner la recompense que je luy avois promise, & s'il ne l'avoit veuë, qu'il eut à me le dire sans me donner d'avantage de peine" (2:290) [that if he had seen this sea, I would have the promised reward given to him, and that if he had not seen it, he must tell me so, without giving me any more worry]. Champlain's text, though it does not collect praise around his heroic figure, is careful to shed blame, to direct it outward and thereby preserve his own credibility.

Let us now turn to the accounts of two battles that are fundamental to the reputations of Smith and Champlain and that are represented in the works of each by an engraving. The battles are perhaps the greatest moment of courage displayed by each of these "founding fathers" and the greatest success in the Indian relations policy pursued by each. Coincidentally, both events took place in the same year, 1609 (New Style, Smith's in January would be 1608 Old Style),²⁰ at a place that would later be made famous once again as a battlefield: Smith's at Pam-aunkee (a Civil War battle site) in January, Champlain's on the lake to which he gave his name, near the site of the future Fort Ticonderoga (site

of pivotal battles in the Seven Years' War) in July. Smith's exploit is described in the ninth chapter of *A Map of Virginia* and of the third book of the *Generall Historie*, Champlain's in the ninth chapter of the second part of *Les Voyages*.

Smith's confrontation with Opechancanough is also preceded by a dialogue that reveals the mutual dependence of the foes: "You know my want, and I your plenty, of which by some meanes I must have part, remember it is fit for kings to keepe their promise" (1:251; 2:200). Whereas Champlain made promises and then deferred them, Smith turns the promise toward his foe and sharpens it with an implied threat. The Powhatans bring some corn, but again the negotiations are a stalling tactic, for "not long after came the king, who with a strained cheerefulnes held us with discourse, what paines he had taken to keepe his promise; til Master Russell brought us in news that we were all betraied: for at least 6. or 700. of well appointed Indians had invironed the house and beset the fields" (1:215; 2:200). In a speech to his men Smith hesitates over a strategy for how to neutralize his counterpart Opechancanough and secure the food they came to trade for: "Should wee beginne with them and surprise the King, we cannot keepe him and defend well our selves. If wee should each kill our man, and so proceed with all in the house; the rest will all fly: then shall wee get no more then the bodies that are slaine, and so starve for victuall" (2:201; 1:251-52). Smith recognizes that he will have to hold Opechancanough hostage to get his "victuall." His solution is to remove the conflict from the scale of two mismatched armies to the individual scale of a contest between two leaders. He challenges Opechancanough to a duel and bets his trade goods against the Indians' corn that he will win. It was Smith's most audacious act, to scorn danger in the face of odds he describes to his men as follows: "As for their fury it is the least danger; for well you know, being alone assaulted with two or three hundred of them, I made them by the helpe of God compound to save my life. And wee are sixteene, and they but seaven hundred at the most" (2:201; 1:252). Smith emphasizes the overwhelming odds to stress his overwhelming strength. If he is equal to three hundred, his fifteen soldiers with guns can handle the other four hun-

dred. In the illustrations surrounding the "Map of Ould Virginia" Smith takes the two chiefs prisoner in single combat, but where he is shown as a prisoner at least half a dozen Indians surround him.

There was a precedent in Smith's experience for this tactic of reducing warfare to individual combat. The *True Travells* includes the story of besieging the Turkish army in the Balkans, when a "Lord Turbashaw [the misnomer contains the word "pasha"] did defie any Captaine, that had the command of a Company, who durst combate with him for his head" (3:172). Smith is chosen by lot and kills Turbashaw, then another Turk named Guralgo, cutting off both heads for trophies. Smith had the Turks' heads emblazoned on his coat of arms and in his exploration of the coast of New England named a group of islands off of Cape Ann the "three Turkes heads" (2:419). The blending of chivalric combat and savage warfare, the display of the loser's head being customary for each, was irresistible for Smith and a key element of the projection of his own rule through that of Powhatan and Opechancanough.

Whether Smith would have triumphed in hand-to-hand combat we cannot know, for he writes that Opechancanough rried to ambush him, asking him to exit his compound to fetch a present, where two hundred bowman were waiting, arrows cocked. Angered by this, Smith, in the scene pictured in the upper right-hand panel of the "Map of Ould Virginia" (fig. 1 above), "in such a rage snatched the King by his long locke in the middest of his men, and with his Pistoll readie bent against his brest. Thus he led the trembling King, neare dead with fear amongst all his people" (2:202; 1:252). The illustration portrays the two levels of conflict: between the sixteen English and seven hundred Pamaunkee, and between Smith himself and Opechancanough. The English have superior firepower in each fight. The group of Englishmen with their rifles, above Smith's pistol on the right-hand side and at the top of the frame, are holding their own against charging Pamaunkee because the majority of the latter just stand by chatting, each holding his idle long bow. These masses, however, are only in the background, awaiting and decorating the outcome of the true contest. Opechancanough dominates the picture, standing facing the viewer in the exact center in a pose that **again appears to have been copied from another one of John White's**

watercolors reproduced by Theodor deBry. Although a dwarf beside his opponent, the feisty Smith has control of the situation. He has his foe by the hair, as is the Indian style of fighting (see Smith's ethnographic account in *A Map of Virginia*, 1:167), and his pistol aimed awkwardly through his own helmet directly at Opechancanough's face, on a line that continues toward the tip of the chief's long bow. Whether due to his actual height relative to Captain Smith's or to the cut-and-paste method of the engraver, Opechancanough's great size is proportional to the scale of his humiliation before his people. Nearly the same poses appear in another frame at the opposite corner of the tableau published in the *Generall Historie*, where Smith conquers Paspehegh with his sword rather than his pistol.²¹

Throughout the episode, all attention is focused on Smith and Opechancanough. In a harangue to the Pamaunkees, while holding his foe by the hair, Smith delivers an ultimatum: "But if you shoot but one Arrow to shed one drop of bloud of any of my men, or steale the least of these Beads, or Copper . . . I will not cease revenge (if once I begin) so long as I can heare where ro finde one of your Nation that will not deny the name of Pamaunk" (2:202; 1:253). This statement of the worthlessness of the savage horde, whereof any number of dead or wounded is just punishment for one drop of English blood, and where one white man claims the power to mete out such vengeance, is the converse of that which drives the plot of Joseph Conrad's *Lord Jim*, where Jim chooses to save his own life rather than assist the eight hundred Muslim pilgrims on the damaged ship. It also evokes the savagist belief that Indian war and vengeance are insatiable, and that therefore the "savages" will respond to no threat less than one of total annihilation. We have seen that Newport imagined Powhatan and Opechancanough to be kings in the European manner, but it is equally true that Smith adopted, in front of the Indians, a persona that he believed to be fittingly savage. Smith is his own best Indian. Every quality of civil and military life that he ascribed to and admired in Powhatan and his people—bravery, cunning, obedience—Smith prized in himself and expected from his subordinates. It is Opechancanough, however, who in hindsight is the best double for **Captain Smith**, because he too, according to many reports,

experienced captivity and used it to represent his power. Just as Smith was captured by the Turks, Opechancanough was captured by Spaniards around 1560 and returned with Jesuits who tried to establish a mission in Virginia. The name Opechancanough or "he whose soul is white" was bestowed on him. He continued to fight the English after Smith's departure and finally was shot in the back in 1646.²²

The illustration of Champlain at the 1609 battle against the Mohawk (fig. 2 above) is, according to one of his biographers, Samuel Eliot Morison, the only portrait that exists of him, and, unlike Smith, he is drawn to the same scale as others in the frame. Champlain's own "army" is made up not of colonists but of Indians, the Montagnais of the Quebec region. The expedition began when two chiefs, Ochasteguin and Yroquet, arrived with a band of two hundred warriors to hold Champlain to one of his promises. Ten moons ago, or the previous summer, he and his commandet du Pont had promised to go to war with them. The Indians had been frustrated by traders who made the same promise with the motive of gaining safe passage to interior villages, where they could trade for pelts at a more advantageous rate. Champlain, with the selfless manner so dear to him, took it on himself to make good the Frenchmen's promise so as to preserve good trade and relations. His ulterior motive, however, was to see the Great Lakes, a possible link to the southern ocean and a route to China. Unfortunately, the Algonquins head south up the Richelieu River, not southwest up the St. Lawrence, and Champlain is disappointed to discover that his boat is halted by rapids: "cela m'affligea, & me donna beaucoup de desplaisir, de m'en retourner sans [a]voir veu un grandicime lac, remply de belles isles, & quantité de beau pays, qui borne le lac, où habitent leur ennemies, comme ils me l'avoient figuré" (2:79) [I was distressed, and I was particularly sorry to return without seeing a very large lake, filled with beautiful islands, and a large, beautiful region near the lake, where they had represented to me their enemies lived]. Nonetheless, he decides to continue with his allies, only two other Frenchmen accompanying him.

From this point until the moment of the battle, Champlain fills much of ten pages with descriptions of the preparations for war. He describes them in a general sense, as elements of an ethnographic portrait or *mœurs*

des sauvages. For in Champlain's texts, this ethnographic material is not set apart, as Smith does in the "Proceedings" part of *A Map of Virginia*, but spread throughout. This is another way in which Champlain's narrative works constantly to distend the presence of his subjectivity at the center of the text and/or the historical events, to scatter the focus that so obsesses Smith. However, Champlain does participate in these customs as part of his participation in the war effort. He tells of the credence the warriors place in their dreams as auguries of the battle, then recounts a dream in which he saw the Iroquois drowning in the lake. On telling his allies of his dream, "Cela leur apporta une telle creance qu'ils ne douterent plus de ce qui leur devoit advenir pour leur bien" (2:95) [This gave them such confidence that they no longer had any doubt as to the good fortune awaiting them]. Champlain's dream is, in effect, a promise translated into another cultural idiom.

Champlain delighted in describing the customs of the Indians and subtly inserting himself into this vision of their culture. This does not mean that he was a more accurate observer of the Indians than other colonial writers, or that he sought to minimize his impact on their behavior, like an anthropologist doing fieldwork. Champlain did not really respect the customs he engaged in, but he knew the importance of playing along. He scorned the Montagnais' lack of army discipline, particularly their failure to post sentries at night. His view of the battle as beneath the dignity or gravity of European warfare and the mock heroism that presents so casually his own bravery are typical of the French representation of Indian war as I analyze it in Chapter 6. Champlain's description of the battle plan of the Montagnais commander shows a rigid planning and discipline at odds with nearly every other account of Native American warfare I have read, except, interestingly, Smith's, and suggests that Champlain's leadership among his Indian allies may have been more influential than his narrative admits:²³

... les chefs prennent des bastons de la longueur d'un pied autant en nombre qu'ils sont, & signalent par d'autres un peu plus grands, leurs chefs: Puis vont dans le bois & esplanudent une place de 5 ou 6 pieds en quarre, où le chef, comme sergent major, met par ordre tous ces

bastons comme bon luy semble: puis appelle tous ces compagnons, qui viennent tous armez, & leur monstre le rang & ordre qu'ils devront tenir lors qu'ils se battront avec leurs ennemis. (2:88–89)

[... the chiefs take sticks a foot long, one for each man, and indicate by others somewhat longer, their leaders. Then they go into the wood, and level off a place five or six feet square, where the headman, as sergeant-major, arranges all these sticks as to him seems best. Then he calls all his companions, who approach fully armed; and he shows them the rank and order which they are to observe when they fight with the enemy.]

The method of representing people by an equal number of sticks is a Native American form of writing described by many colonial authors including Christopher Columbus, Jean Bernard Bossu, Antoine Le Page du Pratz, John Lawson, and Cadwallader Colden (see Chapter 4 below). That the sticks are used to set out a geometric plan for battle is an innovation unique to Champlain, however. This is an instance where so-called savages, supposedly incapable of abstract thought, nonetheless employ a system of representation that requires a subtle intelligence.

As represented in Champlain's illustration (fig. 2), the battle transpired in a manner similar to European custom. The two armies camped within sight of one another yet waited until the morning to begin fighting. Champlain watched the Iroquois march out of their barricade, then his allies advanced out of the trees: "pour me donner passage ils s'ouvrirent en deux, & me mis à la teste, marchant quelque 20 pas devant, jusqu'à ce que je fusse à quelque 30 pas des ennemis, où aussitot qu'ils m'aperceurent, & firent alte en me contemplant, & moy eux" (2:99) [to make way for me they divided into two groups, and put me ahead some twenty yards, and I marched on until I was within some thirty yards of the enemy, who as soon as they caught sight of me halted and gazed at me and I at them]. The scene unfolds with the solemnity of a duel, yet Champlain does not face off one-on-one against a fearsome savage chief like Opechancanough. He does not tower over his soldiers like a demigod, equal in strength to all of them together, and the soldiers are not loyal colonials but Montagnais and their Algonquin and

Huron allies. Champlain stands in the center of the picture, yet he is tiny, one among many; neither he nor any of his foes dominate the scene as do Smith and Opechancanough. His heroic act is over in one shot, enough to kill two and wound a third of the unnamed Mohawk war chiefs, at which the rest of the army flees. It is clear enough that his gun, which the Iroquois had never before seen, is the true hero of the episode. Champlain is only the agent.

Champlain drew himself at the center of an ostensibly typical Indian battle, yet just as the form of the battle shows signs of Champlain's strategic direction, the representation of it betrays clues that it is not an independent production of Champlain's hand like his harbor charts. Palm trees are shown in the background, which, of course, do not grow on the shores of Lake Champlain. Also, the Indian warriors are depicted naked, though Champlain elsewhere describes the Montagnais as wearing clothes made of pelts and pictures them clad in armor woven from bark (see plate, 3:135). Evidently, the engraver completed the plate for *Les Voyages et Découvertes* based on a sketch by Champlain and filled in some details based on his own preconceptions. François-Marc Gagnon has identified the engraver's model as one of deBry's illustrations for the captivity narrative of Hans Staden, which has palm trees to suit its Brazilian setting and where the canoes are also flat-bottomed, more like dugouts or pirogues common in the south than like birchbark canoes.²⁴ Champlain presents himself as a modest, cooperative leader and as an independent, self-sufficient author and illustrator, but on close examination each of these images is exposed as motivated, and Champlain no longer seems so guileless even next to the self-aggrandizing Smith.

So even the stark contrast between the egotistical Smith and the modest Champlain is an effect of the structure of their narratives and of their motives in relations with the Native Americans. Smith's text is centripetal, gathering and pulling information and attention from all directions toward his persona in the way Powhatan attracted obeisance from a confederacy of surrounding tribes. Champlain's is centrifugal, placing his persona at the center but directing our attention away from him toward the Indians and his French comrades, so that the credit for his knowledge may reflect back on him, while the blame for his broken

promises rests with others. Smith engages in negotiations that conceal threats to take by force what he would ostensibly obtain by trade. For Champlain the process of trade itself, rather than corn, is the fundamental goal, and he achieves it by trading promises of future gifts and assistance. Much as the two individuals may have differed as human characters, it would be wrong to reward Champlain as a bright light of humanity in the shameful history of white relations with the Indians, while condemning Smith for the violent confrontations that took place in Virginia after he left it. Each pursued a policy that made sense in the context of how he understood Native American culture and power and what his colonists needed for their survival; each portrayed himself as a colonial leader in a manner consonant with his image of Native American leadership.

CHAPTER 3



Travel Narrative and Ethnography

Rhetorics of Colonial Writing

The writings of John Smith and Samuel de Champlain are of interest both for their eyewitness narratives of initial European settlement and exploration in parts of North America and for their accounts of American Indian life. In later exploration narratives by the likes of Louis Hennepin and the Baron de Lahontan, John Lawson and Jonathan Carver, these two genres, travel narrative and the description of manners and customs of the Indians, are explicitly marked off from one another, and the relationship between the two becomes a means for the author to assert his knowledge and extend its scope. In these texts two different ways of looking at the American land and native cultures, though in many respects epistemologically incompatible, were brought together in a formal hybrid that persisted for centuries. This hybrid form contained the epistemological contradictions; it organized partial knowledge so as to make it appear complete, and to enable colonials to impose a sense of order and control over the land and the Indians. It functioned as a discourse, in the sense given to the term by Michel Foucault, as an intellectual or theoretical construct that served practical ends in the administration of colonial power. Through this rhetorical bifurcation