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BREAD AND ARSENIC: CITIZENSHIP FROM THE BOTTOM UP IN GEORGIAN LONDON

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Jonas Hanway died on September 5, 1786. For his services to Britain, he was laid to rest under an elaborate memorial in Westminster Abbey, the first to honor a man for his philanthropy.[1] Hanway was best known for his Marine Society, which rehabilitated street urchins and trained them for careers at sea, thus at a single stroke reducing crime and helping the perpetually undermanned Royal Navy. His funeral procession was preceded by 25 well-dressed Marine Society boys bearing colored flags, a fitting tribute to Hanway's four decades of commitment to Britain's "nursery of seamen" in an era of nearly continuous warfare with France. This issue remained important to Hanway in his old age; in 1784, he expressed concern about the skilled maritime laborers lost with the independence of the thirteen American colonies.[2] Yet Jonas Hanway spent the last months of his life directing a new philanthropic project which ran contrary to the stated objectives of the Marine Society. Hanway's Committee for the Relief of the Black Poor began by providing outdoor relief to London mendicants—about half of whom had sea experience, either in the Royal Navy or the British merchant fleet—but ultimately Hanway advocated a resettlement project as the best form of "relief." With the financial backing of the British government, several hundred of the Black Poor were shipped to Sierra Leone, a hazardous new settlement on the west coast of Africa, where most of them died within two years of arrival.[3] Why did Hanway—who built his reputation around the principle that Britain could not afford to waste a single person—throw away these trained seamen and war veterans? Hanway's first biographer, his devoted longtime assistant John Pugh, had an answer. Writing in 1787, Pugh described the Committee's work as a charitable endeavor but also as a way of preventing the "unnatural connections between black persons and white; the disagreeable consequences of which make their appearance but too frequently in our streets."[4]

In *Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707–1837*, Linda Colley advanced what is now a famous argument: A British identity was available to a wide variety of marginalized or insecure groups who proved their patriotism—and found empowerment—through their contributions to the nation's war effort. She showcases an 1822 painting by Sir David Wilkie,"Chelsea Pensioners Reading the Gazette of the Battle of Waterloo" which portrays—in Colley's words—"a mass British patriotism transcending the boundaries of class, ethnicity, occupation, sex, and age." Wilkie's carefully contrived representation of Britons sharing a moment of imperial pride included a black soldier, along with identifiably English, Scottish, Irish, and Welsh veterans.[5] Colley's critics have suggested that this putative "big tent" was really a cover for empire and little-Englandism, re-

warding conformity and collaboration at the expense of outsiders (notably Irish Catholics).[6] However, recent scholarship has actually taken the Colley thesis beyond where she ventured herself, addressing the appeal of Britishness to Irish Catholics and Francophone Canadians.[7] The reward for patriotic service was a rough-and-ready inclusiveness around the edges of the conveniently undefined category of "Briton." In recent years, a number of historians and literary critics have followed Colley's lead; the conventional wisdom today seems to be that Britishness was about behavior, not birthplace or bloodline.[8]

If this is true, a *black war hero* should not have been a contradiction in terms. Yet if Britishness was so permeable and malleable, how do we explain Jonas Hanway's evident double standard? In this article, I will demonstrate that the Sierra Leone resettlement project reveals important weaknesses in the "big tent" position. However, one area where Colley's model seems quite apt is the way that Britishness was improvised or articulated from the bottom up, by a variety of competing, self-interested agents. A merchant, Jonas Hanway, used a private charity to impose racial labels and offer the government a set of ready-made administrative presumptions about where the Black Poor belonged. When the Committee's tactics turned ugly, it was the Black Poor who voted with their feet, refusing to embark and thus making an implicit claim to membership in the nation. They did not disappear; indeed, the success of street entertainers like Joseph Johnson, who sang patriotic songs in the streets of London with a model ship bound to his head, shows that Britishness was not beyond their reach.

John Torpey, an historian of border controls, has complained about recent academic writing that discusses identities "in purely subjective terms, without reference to the ways in which identities are anchored in law and policy."[9] Answering Torpey's challenge is not so easy for students of Britain and its empire, which had no legal category of citizenship in this period, or for quite some time afterwards. Indeed, scholars who focus on on the written law and bureaucratic practice can (and do) overlook figures like Jonas Hanway or Joseph Johnson, who were engaged in what might be called citizenship from the bottom up.[10] The battle over Britishness was intense precisely because the term was used as a proxy for claims to civic membership and the rights that went with it. I will call this "street citizenship," meaning community recognition of who you are, where you belong, what is expected of you, and what you can expect in return. Like the Stamp Act protestors in the 1760s, individuals like Joseph Johnson predicated their relationship to state power on their claim to Britishness.[11] The stakes, then, were very high, and the playing field was wide open; the late eighteenth century has been aptly described as a period of "transitional multiplicity and confusion."[12] Which vision of Britishness would triumph, one that distinguished difference or one that affirmed identity?

Improvising Race

Winthrop Jordan's monumental *White Over Black: American Attitudes Toward the Negro, 1550–1812* has remained a major reference point in the historiography of race since its publication in 1968.[13] As one would expect of a book that exceeded 600 pages and covered several centuries, *White Over Black* was a complex and nuanced work. Nevertheless, one consistent theme in Jordan's book

was the importance of skin color as an index of human difference. The earliest English travellers to Africa chose to call Africans "black" people, an exaggerated description and one that—according to Jordan—served sixteenth-century English speakers as a kind of shorthand summary of other alleged African traits: dirt, sin, savagery, and paganism. Jordan concluded that "Englishmen found blackness in human beings a peculiar and important point of difference," and while this was not the sole difference that interested them, "the importance of the Negro's savagery was muted by the Negro's color. Englishmen could go a long way toward expressing their sense of being different from Negroes merely by calling them black."[14] The popularity of certain biblical quotations about the indelible nature of skin color ("can't wash an Ethiop white") and belief in the Curse of Ham were part of this larger pattern. According to Jordan, "If [the Negro's] appearance, his racial characteristics, meant nothing to the English settlers, it is difficult to see how slavery based on race ever emerged, how the concept of complexion as the mark of slavery ever entered the colonists' minds."[15]

Passages like this explain why *White Over Black* is sometimes taken to present racism as an unproblematic concept, a timeless aspect of human nature that preceded, and caused, slavery.[16] This is not an adequate summary of Jordan's position. He did distinguish, though not always in a clear and consistent way, between inarticulate color prejudice and a fully developed racist ideology. He did not present the 1550s as the end of the story; for Jordan, race was always under construction, and his discussion of the eighteenth century accounted for roughly five sixths of his book. He showed that multiple factors, including psychological and economic motives, shaped legal practice and scientific speculation. For example, when eighteenth-century anatomists began to arrange human bodies, or body parts, in hierarchies of perfection, Jordan argued that *slavery* "was a crucial factor making for the burial of the Negro at the bottom of mankind."[17] In other words, the category of race was tailored to fit social requirements, rather than the other way around. Similarly, *White Over Black* documented a widespread belief in North America and Europe that black skin correlated with a large penis size, but he proposed that the attribution of high sexual capacity (and rapacity) to black males was the fantasy of guilty white males who fearfully projected their own aggressions onto the black male body.[18] He also made an effort to avoid anachronistic readings of key terms, observing that even in Thomas Jefferson's day, the word "race" still had no precise meaning, and its deployment conveyed hesitancy or equivocation, rather than an appeal to accepted hierarchies of human difference.[19]

Although some portions of *White Over Black* have not aged well (notably the concluding "Note on the Concept of Race," which discussed how twentieth-century biologists had refined and qualified—but retained—the term), overall Jordan's book was ahead of its time. As a retrospective review essay of 1993 observed, how many historians in the late 1960s were squarely addressing themes such as the social construction of reality, the way that categories of race and gender might mutually constitute each other, and the idea of a nation as an imagined community?[20] Still, by today's standards, Jordan did not devote enough attention to black agency; race appeared in *White Over Black* as a top-down imposition, with little or no attention to how people of African descent categorized themselves. Moreover, scholarly interest in the ways that whiteness is an arbi-

trary construction, with a history of its own and variations in usage across time and space, has made Jordan's approach look one-sided in a different way.[21]

The most direct and serious challenge to Jordan, grounded in poststructuralist skepticism about any and all binary oppositions, has been the recent scholarship which questions the emphasis *White Over Black* placed on skin color. In *The Complexion of Race*, Roxann Wheeler argues that "white" vs. "black" fails to capture the multiplicity of human differences that drew the attention of eighteenth-century British writers. According to Wheeler, they drew taxonomies of human variety (or, one might say, discrimination) in terms of religious and cultural differences, while shrugging off physical traits as accidents of climate. Geography books and natural history treatises noted differences of color, along with variations in hair, lips, and body shape, but they devoted much more attention to the diversity of human behavior (clothing, political organization, and consumer habits). Imposing a simple black-white binary opposition obscures our understanding of categories such as "Moor" that indexed cultural but not physical difference. Wheeler concludes that xenophobia and ethnocentrism were major forces in eighteenth-century Britain, but racism was not.[22]

A new book by Dror Wahrman, a wide-ranging study entitled *The Making of the Modern Self*, endorses Wheeler's position and takes it a step further, documenting a number of cases in which dark pigment was attributed not to nature, but to *culture*. Many accounts of the "Hottentots" or Khoikhoi of South Africa related how the children were greased when young to make them blacker, a trait that was supposedly passed on to subsequent generations by some mysterious process.[23] A sarcastic pamphleteer, complaining of legislation that he claimed would bestow special privileges on the Jews, recommended a three-week regimen of walnut oil to transform his readers into "compleat Olive Beauties."[24] According to Wahrman, examples like these show how eighteenth-century writers could be extremely color-conscious, and color-prejudiced, yet construe race—to the extent that the concept even existed—as essentially performative.

Wheeler and Wahrman agree that the term "race" was rarely used in its modern biological-determinist sense for most of the eighteenth century. As Wheeler puts it, the "minor racial ideologies" in circulation were "colonial constructions" that had little impact outside of the slave societies in the Americas until some time in the 1770s or later. This is not, in itself, a particularly novel claim; a quarter of a century ago Douglas Lorimer wrote in *Colour, Class, and the Victorians* that in Britain, a *black gentleman* was not considered a contradiction in terms until well into the 1800s. Furthermore, Jordan anticipated his critics in identifying the last quarter of the eighteenth century as the crucial transformative period. *White Over Black* argued that new ideologies of race were invented to defend against egalitarianism and revolution: "The thrust of antislavery was apt to generate a counterthrust of biological inequality."[25] This is quite similar to Dror Wahrman's overall argument in *Making of the Modern Self* that in an age of revolution, conservatives sought refuge in "natural" dichotomies of gender, race and class which—in many cases—they themselves had not taken very seriously a few years earlier.

Where, then, is the novelty in this new scholarship and what are its implications for our consideration of street citizenship? Wahrman has shown that Jordan may have misread authors who used color as an index of difference; he notes

that whites darkened after years in Indian captivity, and the Polynesian islander Omai grew whiter as he acculturated to European norms.[26] As a student of literature, Wheeler is more concerned with texts than with quotidian experience, but she does advance the proposition that "Britons treated blacks in Britain often in the same way that they treated Catholics, Jews, Scots, and the French."[27] This is an odd way to evoke toleration, considering the vicious slurs and physical assaults directed at these particular groups on the streets of eighteenth-century London, but Wheeler's essential point is that there was a standard of religious and cultural orthodoxy and an individual could expect a warm or cold reception in proportion to how closely s/he approximated to that standard. If this analysis is correct, then our anachronistic emphasis on race-based hierarchies has distracted us from more influential hierarchies based on technology and commercial development which—unlike biological determinism—presumed that all human beings could eventually attain enlightened prosperity.

One thing that Jordan and his recent critics have in common is a reliance upon sources written by, and for, experts and elites. Wahrman and Wheeler each rely heavily upon a small group of texts for their discussion of race; even Jordan's more comprehensive study was dominated by intellectuals such as Thomas Jefferson. It is helpful to recall the fate of Michel Foucault's famous contention that the category of "homosexual" did not predate the 1890s because that is when the sexologists coined the term. The desire to avoid anachronism is laudable, but social historians such as Randolph Trumbach, who uncovered the eighteenth-century molly houses (and their persecutors), have since shown that Foucault's insights—though valuable—were far from the last word on the subject.[28] This implies that it may be time to look beyond the eighteenth-century "theorists" of race and inquire more closely into the "practitioners" of race.[29]

In the following section, I argue that the name that the Committee for the Relief of the Black Poor chose for itself is significant. If, in so doing, they were improvising or imposing a racial category which did not yet have general acceptance, that should not make their efforts any less interesting—or less important—in our eyes.

Naming the Black Poor

The decision to push for resettlement was not self-evident. Most of the individuals who constituted the so-called Black Poor problem were British subjects, originating in the American or Asian territories, who had come to London after serving on merchant ships or in the Royal Navy. Pamphlets regularly appeared lamenting Britain's anemic "nursery of seamen" and suggesting ways to foster this skilled population and keep them nearby, and handy, in the event of war.[30] What motivated the Committee to sort out a "black" subset of maritime workers and then try to ship them far from Britain?

Historians have often characterized London's "Black Poor" of 1786 as American loyalists. In fact, the Black Poor were a diverse group that had little in common except the Committee's attention. The Committee professed an interest in aiding "Blacks, Descendants of Africans, and People of Color &c"; this vague mandate included London's long-standing free black population as well as the brand-new arrivals from North America.[31] In practice, the Committee

targeted dark-skinned indigents and showed remarkably little interest in their origin, occupation, or prospects. The Black Poor were simply defined by their common "black" color, and their presence in London was treated as an aberration in need of correction.

Lascar seamen were the original catalyst for the Committee's formation. With origins throughout the lands bordering the Indian Ocean, from Mozambique to Malaya, Lascars had been employed by the East India Company for centuries. Although their presence was officially unwelcome on voyages west of the Cape of Good Hope, an increasing number of lascar crews, as well as "black servants" of Indian origin, appeared in London. The East India Company did its best to disavow any of its former employees that ended up as indigents. By the early 1780s, complaints had begun to mount; the Committee picked up where the pamphleteers and angry newspaper correspondents left off.[32] It is striking that the Committee found a way to broaden its scope so quickly. It began with plans to aid friendless Asians who spoke no English but lumped them together with native Londoners; it confounded these groups, in turn, with the new American arrivals, who were free dark-skinned men but otherwise had little in common with the rest. Ultimately all three groups—Asians included—would be "repatriated" to Africa. By naming itself, the Committee had already labelled its beneficiaries and begun to close off other possibilities for their future.

The ambiguous legacies of slavery—an institution entering its final years in Britain—played a decisive role in shaping the Committee's attitudes. Black male slaves had been a coveted status symbol in Britain since the mid-seventeenth century. Dressed in livery, they were a common accoutrement of ladies and gentlemen of rank, but also accompanied sea captains and colonial officials. Since female servants did not often appear in public, few black women were brought to Britain. There are no good statistics on Britain's total black population in the eighteenth century, but most historians favor a total of 10,000 before the American Revolution, concentrated in London and the western port cities such as Bristol. Manumission, escape, and migration meant that Britain's black population included a significant number of free men and women practicing diverse occupations such as sailor, cook, and musician. There were not, evidently, black churches or neighborhoods in London, although there was some concentration in the "sailortown" districts of the East End. Norma Myers, who has conducted the most detailed studies of parish and court records, describes a population that typically intermingled, and intermarried, with the white poor rather than forming enclaves of its own.[33]

Slavery had not gone unchallenged, but the various court rulings and legal opinions on the subject never settled the question conclusively, and slaveowners continued to behave as they liked. With the rise of the abolitionist movement, however, slaves found enthusiastic and well-organized allies ready to defend their rights in the courts. The most famous trial of this kind, the Somerset case of 1772, resulted in Lord Mansfield's controversial ruling that a master could not force a slave to leave Britain without the slave's consent. Historians continue to debate the full implications of Mansfield's ruling, but to a great extent Britain's black population was self-emancipating, demanding wages from their owners or seizing opportunities to escape into the anonymity of the big cities. Popular beliefs that baptism, marriage, or simply presence on British soil

made a slave free meant that many people outside the free black community stood ready to help runaways.[34]

Just as Britain had become a slaveowning society without a formal recognition of slaves' status in law, emancipation took place "by the back door," without any provision for the future status of former slaves. Were free blacks British? Was their continued presence in Britain unremarkable, or offensive? What impact would a large, sophisticated free black population in the metropolis have on the future of the slaveowning colonies in the Caribbean? Would intermarriage be tolerated? The Committee's attentiveness to the fate of those they named the "Black Poor" should be seen in this larger context.

At the very moment when Britain was beginning its troubled transition to a society without slaves, American independence caused an increase in the black population of London and other major cities. Thousands of slaves had seized the opportunities posed by the Revolutionary War to flee their owners and join the British forces, where they were employed as laborers and sometimes as combatants. Blacks who had served with the British forces were understandably eager to leave a country where they might be punished for their wartime activities or claimed as someone's runaway slave. A large proportion of the 100,000 people who left the newly independent United States after 1783 were black. Many of them were still enslaved and accompanied their white loyalist owners to the nearby British possessions of Jamaica and the Bahamas; however, the black loyalists who were already free or who successfully evaded their former masters dispersed across the Atlantic world. The abrupt arrival of thousands of additional free blacks could only highlight—and expedite—the decline of slavery in Britain.[35]

The members of the Committee for the Relief of the Black Poor generally had strong abolitionist beliefs. Henry Thornton, for instance, was a prominent member of the "Clapham Sect" of Evangelicals; he saw the fate of free blacks in the context of the global fight against slavery. The earliest pronouncements of the Committee concern fundraising efforts to meet the immediate needs of the indigents in the streets. It is therefore not surprising that the Committee constituted itself as a group of philanthropically-minded London businessmen who were wealthy enough to contribute substantial sums to the cause themselves. John Julius Angerstein, the financier whose private art collection later formed the nucleus of Britain's National Gallery, is a good example. In contrast, Granville Sharp, the most prominent British abolitionist of the day, had no seat on the Committee, despite his great interest in the issues involved. The Chairman of the Committee during its crucial early months was Jonas Hanway, a merchant and author best known for his philanthropic projects.[36]

The Committee's first relief effort (January 1786) was the distribution of free loaves of bread; later it offered accomodation at two inns, the White Raven in Mile End and the Yorkshire Stingo in Marylebone. The scope of the Black Poor problem continued to surprise the Committee. The offer of food and shelter drew increasing numbers of impoverished blacks to the White Raven and the Yorkshire Stingo. Corporals were selected from among the Black Poor to help keep order and to serve as intermediaries on the Committee's behalf. In June, there were eight corporals and over 200 people on relief; by September, however, the number had risen to 25 corporals and 659 on relief.[37] There appeared to

be no end in sight. The Committee became frustrated with the scope of the enterprise: "As these People are dispersed throughout the Kingdom we suppose they could not be collected in less than 3 Years . . . "[38]

From the beginning, the Committee looked for a comprehensive solution to the Black Poor problem it had invented, rather than addressing the needs of one individual at a time. The smooth transition from aiding lascars to aiding "blacks" in general is an example of this undifferentiated approach. The best way to help the lascars would have been to put pressure on their former employer, the East India Company; the obvious way to assist naval veterans was to help them prove their service records and thereby qualify for benefits such as Greenwich Hospital. The Committee did finally contact the EIC and the Navy Board, but it did not do so until after it had been active for over seven months. Likewise, although the Committee provided some assistance (such as clothing) for individuals who had found jobs on their own, there is no evidence that the Committee made any systematic effort to match up the skills of individual blacks with available jobs in London.

This is not to belittle the challenges facing the Committee, which were considerable. Not the least of these challenges was to define just *who* they were helping and *where* such people belonged. Were they British or foreign? Were they the flotsam of an embarrassing American defeat or the heroes of the glorious Royal Navy? In light of the background of the newest black immigrants, it is surprising that Hanway and his colleagues did not style themselves the "Committee for the Relief of Black Loyalists." This tightly-focused mission might have been easier to fulfill, and such a name would surely have helped them raise more funds from the public. Of course, labelling even a portion of London's black population as loyalists, rather than as mendicants, might have implied that they were a part of the British nation and had every right to stay in Britain. The Committee chose to resettle the Black Poor abroad, rather than articulating a reason—and devising a financially sustainable plan—for letting them stay in Britain. The following section will examine the motivations of Jonas Hanway, who as chairman during its formative months, led the Committee down this path. Hanway saw the Committee's philanthropic efforts to remove this "problem" from the London streets as a natural complement to his own conception of Britishness. For Hanway, behavior, birthplace, and bloodline were interdependent; outside infusions threatened the well-being of all three.

Removing the Black Poor

James Walvin has described Jonas Hanway as "an Anglican philanthropist whose efforts for the dispossessed ranged far and wide."[39] This does not quite capture the man. Hanway's reputation had been built on the shrewd combination of compassionate action and carefully calculated social policy, or what he himself called "political humanity." His philanthropy was founded on the pre-Malthusian premise that human beings constituted the wealth of nations and therefore a wise society would boost the birthrate, reduce child mortality, foster orphans, and so on. This was particularly necessary in light of Britain's life-or-death struggle with its populous neighbor, France. Hanway's Marine Society, which turned orphans into sailors, was only the most famous of his numerous

projects and proposals. The Marine Society offered an alternative to the press gang, a violent and socially divisive method of conscription which the perpetually under-manned Royal Navy used (and abused) in every war. Hanway belonged to a generation of philanthropic thinkers whose willingness to contemplate creative and daring solutions—including an expanded role for government that anticipated the welfare state—has impressed historians.

The author of the only monograph on the Committee for the Relief of the Black Poor, Stephen Braidwood, described the Sierra Leone plan as "an attempt to build a new life overseas for people who in Britain faced only continuing unemployment, poverty, and beggary." However, Hanway did not advocate deporting the urban poor; he believed that they could (and must) be rehabilitated. According to Braidwood, "the number of vacancies for seamen must have been tiny" compared to the numbers of American loyalists arriving in London, and " 'job creation' is in any case a twentieth century concept," but Hanway knew better than anyone that the moment Britain was at war again, there would be a dire shortage of trained seamen. After the end of the Seven Years War, he had worked hard to ensure that the Marine Society did not cease its operations—for precisely this reason. As noted earlier, his response to the peace of 1783 was identical.[40] Hanway should have approached the Black Poor from this perspective. Of the 250 people who applied to the Committee for relief in January 1786, 100 stated that they had served as seamen in the Royal Navy. Of the eight Corporals designated by the Committee to represent the Black Poor in June, three had come to Britain in the employ of the Royal Navy and two others had worked as ship's stewards.[41] With this in mind, how do we explain Hanway's evident disinterest in the Black Poor's past service to the nation and their potential future contribution to Britain's military potential?

In the early 1750s—before he became famous as the friend of orphans, chimney sweeps, and unwed mothers—Hanway first became a public figure as the author of pamphlets opposing Jewish naturalization.[42] His writings on this seemingly narrow and technical issue include many wide-ranging comments on social problems and the policies best suited to address them. For Hanway, the key to a strong Britain was not to bring in foreigners but to nurture and redeem the weaker elements in the existing population. Part of his argument against the Jews was that they lacked experience as soldiers or sailors, but he voiced a deeper concern that Jews would never fight well for Britain because they would never really think of themselves as British. Indeed, rather than assimilating to British norms, Jewish immigrants would undermine the foundations of Britain's greatness, which Hanway defined as Protestantism and political liberty.[43] He predicted that Jewish immigrants would further fragment a country "already too much disposed to *party* and *faction*," adding in another pamphlet that Jewish naturalization "appears to me to constitute as *unnatural a mixture* in the body *politic*, as *bread* and *arsenic* in the *human* body; and therefore such a mixture could produce no happiness, but, on the contrary, dishonor and reproach."[44] Hanway's charitable projects—such as the Marine Society—and his efforts to expel "foreign" elements from Britain were two sides of the same coin. Indeed, his early writings show that the original impetus for the Marine Society was Hanway's desire to translate his anti-immigrant rhetoric into nativist philanthropy.

In raising the issue of nativism, I do not intend to revert to Folarin Shyl-

lon's position that there is a fundamental continuity between the "deportation" initiatives of the Committee in the 1780s and Enoch Powell's anti-immigrant diatribes in the 1960s. Proposing a timeless, changeless nativism—or racism—that transcends history is inadvisable. However, in its effort to avoid reifying an artificial black-white binary opposition, the recent scholarship on the Black Poor offers a false choice in its place: either the Committee's activities were all motivated by racism, or they were "simply" philanthropic. Stephen Braidwood is insistent and repetitive in his message that the Committee had Christian and charitable motives, as if racism and Christianity were necessarily mutually exclusive. In a similar vein, James Walvin has written that "[a]mong the men who formed the committee to relieve the black poor, the most powerful influence was a Christian determination to see the establishment of a Christian beachhead on the African coast."[45] These historians are ignoring one of the chief tenets of eighteenth-century philanthropy—the belief that humane actions could serve many purposes at once.[46]

Consider James Oglethorpe's Georgia colony, whose sturdy yeomen were intended to guard South Carolina's Spanish flank. Prohibiting slavery deprived Spain of a potential fifth column inside the new colony; banning liquor was meant to ensure that the frontiersmen would remain vigilant. Was Georgia a wholesome, egalitarian utopia or an expedient way to harden the soft underbelly of the Southern colonies? It was intended to be both.[47] Jonas Hanway, like Oglethorpe, practiced a hard-edged humanitarianism that was not ashamed of its mixed motives; indeed, it celebrated them. Hanway's twentieth-century biographers have emphasized his ambitious, pioneering projects without illuminating the connection between his xenophobia and his passionate conviction that the white Protestant poor could, and must, be redeemed. Astonishingly, both modern biographies omit the Black Poor episode entirely, obscuring the continuity between the first and last acts of Hanway's public life.[48] The *Morning Post* interpreted the Sierra Leone plan as an effort to safeguard the purity of the national bloodline, although the Committee had made no public statement to that effect.[49] For his contemporaries, Hanway's presence at the helm may have been sufficient to send that message. The resettlement project has often been represented as a partnership between blacks and whites, but we should not assume that everyone involved perceived the project in the same way. Hanway cooperated with the Black Poor when their agenda matched his, but his record—and subsequently that of his successor, the banker Samuel Hoare, Jr.—was marked by impatience and arrogance when the objects of the Committee's charity were slow to leave the country as instructed.

It is true that the possibility of relocating the Black Poor overseas was originally broached by the Black Poor themselves, within weeks of the Committee's foundation. Some of the sailors, naturally, suggested that they be sent to sea; others, disillusioned with life in London, asked to return to their places of origin in North America and the Caribbean. The Committee assisted some of these people, but the fate of most of the Black Poor remained unresolved.[50] The idea of assisting them in emigrating to Nova Scotia—where many loyalists (white and black) had already been settled—seemed appealing, but the supply of private funds was drying up and by April, the Committee turned to the government for support. It was at this point that Henry Smeathman, an eccentric botanist with

experience in West Africa, came forward with the plan to resettle the Black Poor in Sierra Leone.[51]

This solitary traveller's words carried considerable authority because very little information about Africa was available in London at this time. Britain had no colonies on the continent in the 1780s; the only permanent British presence was a string of forts which supported the activities of the slave trade. A planned convict settlement in Africa had to be abandoned when it was discovered that the barely habitable Namib Desert covered the entire coastline of the prospective colony. In the absence of competing (and cautionary) versions of African realities, Sierra Leone looked like a blank slate ready to be inscribed with whatever enlightened project might occur to the Committee.[52] Ironically, one of the chief attractions of Sierra Leone for prospective black settlers may well have been its distance from all forms of established authority—including the fantasies of armchair philanthropists.[53] One point of agreement between the abolitionists on the Committee and Londoners of African descent such as Olaudah Equiano was the notion that a "Back to Africa" movement had both personal and political significance: a fitting end to the turmoil of displacement and slavery, as well as a chance to change the future of the continent. Equiano was heavily involved in the resettlement project (after the Committee asked him "to go with the black poor to Africa," an ambiguous compliment) and was eventually appointed by the Crown as Commissary of Provisions and Stores for the expedition.[54]

At this early stage, resettlement had some real support among the Black Poor. Eight of their deputies proclaimed that the Sierra Leone plan marked "the fairest and most just Agreement that ever was made between White and Black people."[55] This moment of harmony did not last long, however. The choice between poverty on the streets of London and the hazards of life in an unknown and possibly inhospitable new settlement was not an appealing one. Repatriating Africans made a kind of sense, but as Ottobah Cugoano put it, "can it be readily conceived that [the British] government would establish a free colony for them nearly on the spot [where] it supports its forts and garrisons, to ensnare, merchandize, and to carry others into captivity and slavery[?]"[56] The Black Poor demanded guns to defend themselves from slavers, and a written guarantee that they were not being sold back into slavery. In June, Jonas Hanway lectured the Black Poor about their lack of trust, but the demand for a document that each settler could carry on their person continued to resurface.[57]

Smeathman's unexpected and sudden death in early July 1786 cast new doubts on the Sierra Leone project. The Committee, faced with the loss of its only Africa expert, began to consider alternate destinations for the Black Poor. Their contact at the Treasury, George Rose, concurred, remarking: "whether the Blacks and People of Colour are first to Africa or to any Part of his Majesty's Dominions where they may get honest bread in freedom it would be equally agreeable to their Lordships."[58] Over the summer, the Committee considered a series of possibilities: the Bahamas, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Gambia. In August, Hanway tried to persuade a gathering of the Black Poor that no African destination would be safe, but his warnings about slavers must have seemed strange given his fervent endorsement of Sierra Leone just a few months earlier. The Committee grew impatient, remarking that "this Knotty Business . . . [has] al-

ready trained out to a tedious length" and abandoned the search for alternate destinations.[59] Ultimately, in establishing Sierra Leone, the Committee would execute a resettlement plan that had lost most of its support among its supposed beneficiaries.

I do not wish to imply that every white supporter of the Sierra Leone scheme shared Hanway's bigotry, or that every black participant was Hanway's dupe. Olaudah Equiano insisted that the plan was "humane and politic in its design," and perhaps if he had not been fired and removed from the expedition by the intervention of Samuel Hoare, Jr., Equiano would have found some way to help the settlers survive the hardships and dangers of West Africa.[60] Granville Sharp, who made the prescient remark that the true abolition of slavery would come when an African in Britain would enjoy the same rights as a visiting Hungarian or Muscovite, devoted much time to drafting laws for the new "Province of Freedom."[61] Hanway, too, opposed slavery. However, Hanway's vision for Sierra Leone had much in common with later proponents of Liberia as the "solution" for race relations in the antebellum United States. In fact, early colonization advocates such as James Madison took notice of the Committee's activities, and some entered into correspondence with it, anticipating (incorrectly) that slavery in the United States was on its last legs in the 1780s.[62] As Winthrop Jordan observed, talk of emancipation could shade very quickly into talk of separation. What form would the black response take?

Improvising Citizenship

The key to success in the noisy, competitive environment of London street life was to devise some new gimmick to command the attention of passersby. Beggars, entertainers and street sellers deployed trained animals, special clothing, distinctive infirmities, unique "cries," or colorful tales of misfortune, but Joseph Johnson outdid them all: he was the man with a ship on his head. Johnson's elaborate, full-rigged model ship could be spotted bobbing over the heads of a crowd or undulating past ground-floor windows; he had perfected a gently rolling gait which gave "the appearance of sea-motion" to his headdress. Crowds attracted by this spectacle stayed to hear Johnson's rendition of songs such as "The British Seaman's Praise" and "The Wooden Walls of Old England," which conjured up memories of the recently concluded wars with France and appear calculated to stir the patriotism and gratitude of his audience. Johnson himself was no veteran of the Royal Navy—he had lost his leg while serving on a merchant vessel—but his repertoire cast him unmistakably as the voice of British heroism. By 1817, his audience had grown to include a circuit of marketplaces and farming communities within a thirty-mile radius of the metropolis. We read of this beloved singer: "He never fails to gain the farmer's penny."[63]

Jonas Hanway had used the "Black Poor" designation to obscure the contributions of naval veterans in the 1780s, but Johnson's fame—and the ship that was his advertisement and signature—made his individual name, his life choices, and his accomplishments harder to forget, ignore, or erase in this way. His repertoire of patriotic sea songs contextualized the ship and instructed his audience in how to interpret it. Wearing a ship served as a comprehensive statement of who Johnson was, where he was from, what he had done, where he belonged,

and what he could reasonably expect from his community; in short, it established his "street citizenship," as I defined that term earlier. Johnson reminded Londoners that ships were the "Wooden Walls of Old England" that had kept Napoleon at bay. This metaphor could be gendered in a very explicit way—the "walls" had to be "manned" if they were to be of any use; or, in another popular song, the distinction between sailors and ships could be blurred further: "Heart of oak are our ships/ Heart of oak are our men . . . "

This song had originated in an eighteenth-century panic over the timber supply, but the act of planting an oak tree was invested with a greater moral significance than just providing a spare part for some future warship. The "heart of oak," the tree's incorruptible core, figured in "countless eighteenth-century broadsides, pamphlets, ballads, inn signs, and allegorical engravings"; Keith Thomas calls it "an emblem of the British people and as much a national symbol as roast beef."[64] In an imperialist age which was nonetheless acutely aware of Rome's ultimate fate, the oak tree stood for the sturdy, reliable, masculine virtues that made (and kept) nations strong. Joseph Johnson's decision to bind the model ship to his head—to present his body as inseparable from the ship, in contrast to other London sailor-mendicants who mounted model ships on wheels and dragged them through the streets—suggested that Johnson was a sort of tree himself.[65] Ironically, because of the complex of associations evoked by English oak and wooden walls, Johnson's ship can be seen as conveying not a cosmopolitan and transatlantic masculinity, but a peculiarly local and rooted one.

There are hazards in presuming that we have "decoded" the true or solitary meaning of a symbol or a performance.[66] Was Johnson in earnest, or did he maintain a critical distance from his own performance, a "marronage of the heart and mind," as Ian Duffield has claimed for the black convict Thomas Day?[67] How can we be certain that Johnson's audience took his patriotism seriously, when we know that street burlesque such as the mock-election of a boozy plebeian as "Mayor of Garrat" could be received as a validation of existing social and political inequalities? In matters of irony, it is no simple matter for the historian to decide who was laughing (and who got the last laugh).[68] Yet the case of Joseph Johnson illuminates a dimension of black British experience that has not received adequate attention. The Committee, at the peak of its charitable efforts, distributed relief to less than one thousand people—no more than a tenth of Britain's total black population. In the end, most blacks chose to stay in Britain, where they presumably felt they had a future. Stephen Braidwood, Norma Myers, and others have argued that treating the Sierra Leone scheme as a white-sponsored, exclusionist project makes black agency disappear. This insistence on a black-white partnership has, unfortunately, eclipsed another form of black agency: the individuals who affirmed a British identity and voted with their feet by staying in Britain, even when threatened with prison if they failed to board the transports. As I will show in this concluding section, the evidence suggests that this was the more common way in which black agency was exercised. If so, Johnson's street theater has a greater significance; he represented a black British man who was rooted, had earned his place, and had no plans to budge.

The Black Poor had been informed as early as May 1786 that the govern-

ment money had strings attached: by taking it, they were obligating themselves to the resettlement plan. Not long after this, thirty people refused the money, "alledging that they wished for time to consider; others that they were ready to go to their respective Homes in America and the West Indies."[69] In the end, the Committee lowered its expectations: only the 675 people who actually signed the contract with Joseph Irwin (the expedition's leader) in October would be obliged to go to Sierra Leone. As soon as that agreement had been signed, the Committee, as well as the Treasury, showed signs of restlessness about the remaining Black Poor. Should these people be receiving any assistance at all? The government's obligation, and the Committee's mandate, were unclear.[70] The Committee continued to provide relief for all comers in the expectation that some might still decide to join the resettlement plan, but when embarkation began at the end of October, the results were disappointing. Rather than increasing, the number of prospective settlers had *fallen*. By November 22, only 259 people had boarded the transports. Meanwhile, "An Alphabetical List of the Black People who have received the Bounty from Government" enumerated 909 individuals.[71]

By December, the Treasury was prepared to have the laggards taken up as vagrants. A letter from Samuel Hoare, Jr. suggested that the government publicize its intention to round up "all persons of that description who are found begging or lurking about the Streets" after the transports departed.[72] The Committee advertised in the papers, reminding the Black Poor to embark and taking the extreme step of advising the public to cease giving alms to the Black Poor, since this mistaken charity might encourage them to linger. Some newspapers printed stories in January 1787 claiming that the Lord Mayor had given orders for black beggars to be arrested, but there is no further evidence that this ever really happened; Braidwood notes that the numbers on the transports did not register a sharp increase. In the end, 451 persons sailed for Africa in February. Equiano's roster shows that almost a quarter of this total consisted of white women and men linked to the blacks by marriage. Removing intermarried couples would certainly have pleased Hanway, but considering the Committee's vigorous efforts to intimidate the Black Poor themselves into leaving, a final count of 344 must have been very disappointing.[73]

The persistence of a large black population in Britain after 1786 is the best evidence against calling this a deportation program. However, it is worth distinguishing between the intent to deport, and the power to implement deportation. The Committee minutes contain an impatient but plaintive request that the blacks "give a full and ample Declaration where they are to be found that they may be Shipped off without Delay."[74] The Committee lacked the bureaucratic and police apparatus required to seek people out, confine them, and force them to leave; the British government failed to fill this void with new methods of surveillance and coercion. However, the Committee's resettlement efforts mark a turning point. For decades, the status of free blacks in Britain had remained undefined and unregulated. The Sierra Leone scheme was marked by three important departures from that pattern: naming a problem, seeking to build an archive about "black" individuals and where they lived, and financing a project intended to rapidly remove them from the country.

I am not proposing that Hanway's vision of Britishness was the dominant one

in his lifetime. When he compared immigrants to arsenic, or when the novelist Charles Johnstone wrote that amalgamation with Jews and blacks put English "beauty, wit and virtue" at risk, it was a backhanded tribute to the ways in which these groups had already met with widespread acceptance. Hanway felt the need to campaign against Jewish naturalization and against the presence of the Black Poor not because there was a generally accepted definition of "Britishness" that excluded these groups, but because there was no such thing. The magistrate John Fielding expressed concern about the subversive intercourse between free blacks and the London "mob." In 1804, William Cobbett inveighed against the frequency of black-white couplings; in 1805, an American visitor related in shocked tones how a well-dressed black man could walk arm in arm down Oxford Street with a white woman without exciting comment. Historians can debate whether all this indicates apathy or acceptance, but it does suggest that the "Black Poor problem" existed largely in the mind of the Committee.[75]

Following the end of the Napoleonic wars, a new round of panic over indigent seamen once again took on racist overtones. The Admiralty and the Home Office spent years trying to sort out the problems posed by demobilization, including constant complaints from mayors and parishes about down-and-out "foreign" sailors. This diverse population included large contingents from the Baltic and the Caribbean in roughly equal proportion, but the frantic, color-coded language of the Mayor of Bristol is representative:

> a considerable number of Foreign Seamen, and Black men [and] Men of Colour are at present in this City, without employment or any means of maintaining themselves . . . As these Persons can only support themselves by Plunder & Depredations, I have to request the favor of your Lordship's directions how they may be disposed of.[76]

Subjects of the Crown soon found themselves lodged in what were euphemistically known as "Asylum Ships" (floating prisons) on the Thames and elsewhere. Their hammocks were hung next to Swedes and Russians; together these "foreigners" awaited "repatriation." The municipal authorities and the British government followed the path that Jonas Hanway had pioneered in the 1780s: they treated colonial maritime labor as an alien presence rather than as a body of deserving veterans and loyal subjects.

By the 1820s, Britain had become a country that prided itself on its open borders—its refusal to regulate who could enter and how long they might stay. Yet the well-publicized openness to political refugees from Italy and Poland must be balanced against a quiet but vastly more interventionist approach toward seamen from Britain's own colonies. From 1814 to 1823 captains arriving in British ports with "Asiatic sailors" on board had to post bond for each man, to ensure his prompt return to Asia. The Merchant Shipping Act of 1823 replaced bonding with a law that confined Lascars to East India Company boarding houses and threatened those who did not board the next ship home with imprisonment for vagrancy. Beginning in 1832, merchants trading with Africa were put on notice that they would have to post bond if they brought African seamen to Britain. It is evident that although Britishness remained open to creative reinterpretation on the London streets, when nineteenth-century legislators asked themselves who belonged in Britain, who was merely a probationary resident, and who was

an alien and objectionable influence, their "common sense" attitudes had been shaped by precedents laid down by Jonas Hanway in the 1780s.[77]

The late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries were a period of uncertainty and transition; enterprising individuals could seize this opportunity to name themselves and fashion expedient identities. Vincent Carretta captures this neatly in his introduction to Olaudah Equiano's autobiography:

> None of his predecessors asserts his or her identity as a Briton more fully than the way Equiano represents himself in his *Narrative.* African by birth, he is British by acculturation and choice. He can, of course, never be *English,* in the ethnic sense in which that word was used during the period, as his wife is *English.* But he adopts the cultural, political, religious, and social values that enable him to be accepted as *British.*[78]

Our celebration of success stories like Equiano's has diverted attention from the ways in which contradictory visions of Britishness were articulated in this period. If Equiano could die a rich and respected gentleman-author—or Joseph Johnson could flourish as a beloved entertainer and peg-legged war hero—these should be considered victories that were achieved in the face of opposition.

Roxann Wheeler, who deplores binary oppositions, may have exaggerated the contrast between the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. There was an important tradition of an exclusionist and color-coded British identity that nineteenth-century bigots could build upon. That tradition went beyond ethnocentrism to include some serious attention to birthplace and bloodline, even if race was not invoked in a consistent or recognizably modern way. But we can take away much more from this rich and strange world of charities that invent deportation projects and street entertainers who devise sartorial passports. We get a new insight into the vital ambiguity of Britishness, which indeed would have lost much of its rhetorical and political efficacy if it had been defined and written down by anyone. The very real achievements of Jonas Hanway and Joseph Johnson—who are fascinating precisely because they operated outside of a legislative framework—also point to the possibility of a social history of "street citizenship," an approach which recognizes the power of ordinary people to contest and reshape society's assumptions about who people are and who belongs where.

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ENDNOTES

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1. James Stephen Taylor, *Jonas Hanway, Founder of the Marine Society: Charity and Policy in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (London, 1985), 180–1. Hanway's monument can still

be viewed in the Abbey today, behind the racks of folding chairs stacked in front of it. *Sic transit gloria mundi*.

2. Taylor, *Hanway*, 171.

3. Christopher Fyfe, *A History of Sierra Leone* (Oxford, 1962), 13–151.

4. John Pugh, *Remarkable Occurences in the Life of Jonas Hanway, Esq.* (1787), 211.

5. Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707–1837* (New Haven, 1992), 365.

6. The literature responding to Colley is now vast. The most sustained and elaborate critique so far is Kathleen Wilson, *The Island Race: Englishness, Empire and Gender in the Eighteenth Century* (London, 2003).

7. P.A. Buckner, "Making British North America British, 1815–1860," in C.C. Eldridge, ed., *Kith and Kin: Canada, Britain, and the United States from the Revolution to the Cold War* (Cardiff, 1997), 11–44; Stephen Conway, *The British Isles and the War of American Independence* (Oxford, 2000); S. J. Connolly, "Varieties of Britishness: Ireland, Scotland, and Wales in the Hanoverian State," in Alexander Grant and Keith J. Stringer, eds., *Uniting the Kingdom?: The Making of British History* (London, 1995), 193–207.

8. Roxann Wheeler, *The Complexion of Race: Categories of Difference in Eighteenth-Century British Culture* (Philadelphia, 2000); Dror Wahrman, *The Making of the Modern Self: Identity and Culture in Eighteenth-Century England* (New Haven, 2004).

9. John Torpey, *The Invention of the Passport: Surveillance, Citizenship, and the State* (Cambridge, 2000), 13.

10. Rogers Brubaker, *Citizenship and Nationhood in France and Germany* (Cambridge, Mass., 1998); Ann Dummett and Andrew Nichol, *Subjects, Citizens, Aliens and Others: Nationality and Immigration Law* (London, 1990); Andreas Fahrmeir, *Citizens and Aliens: Foreigners and the Law in Britain and the German States, 1789–1870* (New York, 2000).

11. For the quarrel over labels like "American" and "British" as a proxy for claims of citizenship and rights, see P.J. Marshall, "A Nation Defined by Empire, 1755–1776," in Grant and Stringer, eds. *Uniting the Kingdom?*, 208–222; T.H. Breen, "Ideology and Nationalism on the Eve of the American Revolution: Revisions Once More in Need of Revising," *Journal of American History* 84:1 (June 1997), 13–39; Stephen Conway, "From Fellow-Nationals to Foreigners: British Perceptions of the Americans, circa 1739–1783," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd series, 59:1 (January 2002), 65–100.

12. Wahrman, *Making of the Modern Self*, 87.

13. Winthrop Jordan, *White Over Black: American Attitudes Toward the Negro, 1550–1812* (Chapel Hill, 1968).

14. Jordan, *White Over Black*, 20, 27.

15. Jordan, *White Over Black*, 97.

16. Jordan's antecedents, critics, and defenders are surveyed in Alden T. Vaughan, *Roots of American Racism: Essays on the Colonial Experience* (New York, 1995), 136–176.

17. Jordan, *White Over Black,* 227.

18. Jordan, *White Over Black,* 158–159, 579.

19. Jordan, *White Over Black,* 489.

20. James Campbell and James Oakes, "The Invention of Race: Rereading White Over Black," *Reviews in American History* 21:1 (March 1993), 172–183.

21. Noel Ignatiev, *How the Irish Became White* (New York, 1995); Laura Tabili, "Race is a Relationship, and Not a Thing," *Journal of Social History* 37:1 (2003), 125–130. The constructions of whiteness and blackness uncovered in Peter Linebaugh, *The London Hanged: Crime and Civil Society in the Eighteenth Century* (Cambridge, 1992) and Marcus Rediker and Peter Linebaugh, *The Many-Headed Hydra: Sailors, Slaves, Commoners, and the Hidden History of the Revolutionary Atlantic* (Boston, 2000) are especially pertinent and relate closely to Ignatiev's thesis.

22. Wheeler, *Complexion,* 141, 188. Wheeler is also critiquing earlier scholarship such as Folarin Shyllon, *Black People in Britain, 1555–1833* (London, 1977). She acknowledges important debts to intellectual histories by Clarence Glacken, *Traces on the Rhodian Shore: Nature and Culture in Western Thought from Ancient Times to the End of the Eighteenth Century* (Berkeley, 1967) and Michael Adas, *Machines as the Measure of Men: Science, Technology, and Ideologies of Western Dominance* (Ithaca, 1989). For a critique of Wheeler from an intellectual history perspective, see Benjamin Braude's review of her book in the *William and Mary Quarterly* 59:3 (July 2002), 742–746.

23. Wahrman, *Making of the Modern Self,* 97–98.

24. Wahrman, *Making of the Modern Self,* 95.

25. Jordan, *White Over Black,* 485.

26. Wahrman, *Making of the Modern Self,* 83–86, 122–126.

27. Wheeler, *Complexion,* 259.

28. Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality,* vol. 1: *An Introduction,* trans. Robert Hurley (New York, 1978); Randolph Trumbach, *Sex and the Gender Revolution,* vol. 1: *Heterosexuality and the Third Gender in Enlightenment London* (Chicago, 1998).

29. For some instructive starting points, see: Daniel Statt, *Foreigners and Englishmen: The Controversy over Immigration and Population, 1660–1760* (Newark, DE, 1995); Don Herzog, *Poisoning the Minds of the Lower Orders* (Princeton, 1998), Catherine Hall, "The Rule of Difference: Gender, Class, and Empire in the Making of the 1832 Reform Act," in Ida Blom, Karen Hagemann, Catherine Hall, eds., *Gendered Nations: Nationalisms and Gender Order in the Long Nineteenth Century* (Oxford, 2000), 107–136; Catherine Hall, Keith McClelland, and Jane Rendall, *Defining the Victorian Nation: Class, Race, Gender and the Reform Act of 1867* (Cambridge, 2000).

30. J.S. Bromley, ed. *The Manning of the Royal Navy: Selected Public Documents, 1693–1873* (London, 1974).

31. Public Record Office, T 1/631, Henry Smeathman's petition to the Treasury (17 May 1786).

32. Rozina Visram, *Asians in Britain: 400 Years of History* (London, 2002); Norma Myers, "The Black Poor of London: Initiatives of Eastern Seamen in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries," in Diane Frost, ed., *Ethnic Labour and British Imperial Trade: A History of Ethnic Seafarers in the UK* (London, 1995), 7–21; Shompa Lahiri, "Patterns of Resistance: Indian Seamen in Imperial Britain," in Anne J. Kershen, ed., *Language, Labour and Migration* (Aldershot, UK, 2000), 155–78; Shompa Lahiri, "Contested Relations: the East India Company and Lascars in London," in H.V. Bowen, Margarette Lincoln, and Nigel Rigby, eds., *The Worlds of the East India Company* (Woodbridge, 2002), 169–181. Michael H. Fisher, *Counterflows to Colonialism: Indian Travellers and Settlers in Britain, 1600–1857* (Delhi, 2004).

33. James Walvin, *Black and White: The Negro and English Society, 1555–1945* (London, 1973); Folarin O. Shyllon, *Black Slaves in Britain* (London, 1974) and *Black People in Britain;* Peter Fryer, *Staying Power: The History of Black People in Britain* (London, 1984); Norma Myers, *Reconstructing the Black Past: Blacks in Britain, 1780–1830* (London, 1996); Ian Duffield, "'I Asked How the Vessel Could Go': the Contradictory Experiences of African and African Disapora Mariners and Port Workers in Britain, c. 1750–1850," in Anne J. Kershen, ed., *Language, Labour, and Migration* (Aldershot, UK, 2000), 121–154; W. A. Hart, "Africans in Eighteenth-Century Ireland," *Irish Historical Studies,* 33:129 (2002), 19–32.

34. Walvin, *Black and White,* 56, 64; Seymour Drescher, "Manumission in a Society without Slave Law: Eighteenth Century England," *Slavery and Abolition* 10:3 (December 1989), 85–101; Douglas A. Lorimer, "Black Slaves and English Liberty: A Re-examination of Racial Slavery in England," *Immigrants and Minorities* 3:2 (July 1984), 121–50; William R. Cotter, "The Somerset Case and the Abolition of Slavery in England," *History* 79:255 (February 1994), 31–56.

35. Sylvia R. Frey, *Water from the Rock: Black Resistance in a Revolutionary Age* (Princeton, 1991), 172–205; John W. Pulis, ed., *Moving On: Black Loyalists in the Afro-Atlantic World* (New York, 1999).

36. Stephen J. Braidwood, *Black Poor and White Philanthropists: London's Blacks and the Foundation of the Sierra Leone Settlement, 1786–1791* (Liverpool, 1994), 64–5, 67; *Dictionary of National Biography* s.v. John Julius Angerstein; Standish Meacham, *Henry Thornton of Clapham, 1760–1815* (Cambridge, Mass., 1964).

37. T 1/632, CRBP Minutes, 7 June 1786; T 1/635, account of CRBP spending, late August–early September 1786.

38. T 1/633, CRBP Minutes, 10 July 1786.

39. James Walvin, *An African's Life: The life and Times of Olaudah Equiano, 1745–1797* (London, 1998), 138.

40. Braidwood, *Black Poor,* 70, 270; Taylor, *Hanway,* 73.

41. Walvin, *Black and White,* 51–2, 58, 198; Shyllon, *Black People,* 29, 120; Lorimer, "Black Slaves and English Liberty," 132–3; Braidwood, *Black Poor,* 27, 63, 70; T 1/632, CRBP Minutes of 7 June 1786. For a discussion of why so many African-Americans found seafaring an attractive occupation, see W. Jeffrey Bolster, *Black Jacks: African-American Seamen in the Age of Sail* (Cambridge, Mass., 1997).

42. For the context of this legislation, see Todd Endelman, *The Jews of Georgian England, 1714–1830* (Philadelphia, 1979).

43. Jonas Hanway, *A Review of the Proposed Naturalization of the Jews* (London, 1753; third edition), 28–9, 30–2, 36–7, 39, 42, 58–9, 68–9, 81, 146–7, 162–3. For the larger European debate about whether Jews could or should be conscripts, see Paul Mendes-Flohr and Jehuda Reinharz, *The Jew in the Modern World: A Documentary History* (Oxford, 1995), 15, 35–6, 40, 43, 49, 115, 130, 145.

44. Hanway, *Review,* 39; *Letters Admonitory and Argumentative* (London, 1753) 22. Italics in the original.

45. Walvin, *African's Life,* 140.

46. For more nuanced views of charity and philanthropists, see Donna Andrew, *Philanthropy and Police: London Charity in the Eighteenth Century* (Princeton, 1989); Mary Lindemann, *Patriots and Paupers: Hamburg, 1712–1830* (Oxford, 1990); David Garrioch, *The Making of Revolutionary Paris* (Berkeley, 2002), 207–236.

47. Phinizy Spalding, *Oglethorpe in America* (Chicago, 1977); Betty Wood, "James Edward Oglethorpe, Race, and Slavery: A Reassessment," in Phinizy Spalding and Harvey H. Jackson, eds., *Oglethorpe in Perspective: Georgia's Founder after Two Hundred Years* (Tuscaloosa, Alabama, 1989), 66–79.

48. In addition to Taylor's work, the other modern biography is John Harold Hutchins, *Jonas Hanway, 1712–1786* (London, 1940).

49. Shyllon, *Black People,* 142 (quoting *Morning Post,* 22 December 1786).

50. Braidwood, *Black Poor,* 70; T 1/631, letters from B. Johnson dated 27 May and 1 June 1786.

51. Braidwood, *Black Poor,* 71–83.

52. Philip D. Curtin, *The Image of Africa: British Ideas and Action, 1780–1850* (Madison, Wisconsin, 1964); Braidwood, *Black Poor,* 11, 15–17, 89; Fyfe, *Sierra Leone,* 16–17, 19, 42–3; Meacham, *Henry Thornton,* 94, 96–7.

53. Alan Atkinson, *The Europeans in Australia: A History,* vol. 1: *The Beginning* (Oxford, 1997), 37–58, 171, 230, 296.

54. Olaudah Equiano, *The Interesting Narrative and Other Writings,* ed. Vincent Carretta (New York, 2003), 226.

55. T 1/632, CRBP minutes of June 7, 1786; see also Quobna Ottobah Cugoano, *Thoughts and Sentiments on the Evil of Slavery and Other Writings,* ed. Vincent Carretta (Penguin, 1999), 104–105.

56. Cugoano, *Thoughts and Sentiments,* 106.

57. T 1/631, CRBP Minutes of 10 May 1786; T 1/632, CRBP Minutes of 7 June 1786.

58. T 1/633, CRBP minutes for 5 July 1786.

59. T 1/633, CRBP minutes for July 5, July 10, July 15, 1786; T 1/634, CRBP minutes for July 26, July 31 (and letters from shipping firms), August 4, 1786, also George Peters' letter of July 31, 1786; T 1/635, CRBP minutes for August 25, 1786; T 1/636, CRBP Minutes for July 28, 1786.

60. Equiano, *Interesting Narrative,* 229.

61. Shyllon, *Black Slaves,* 33.

62. Jordan, *White Over Black,* 549–553.

63. John Thomas Smith, *Vagabondiana, or Anecdotes of Mendicant Wanderers through the Streets of London* (London, 1817), 33.

64. Simon Schama, *Landscape and Memory* (New York, 1995), 163; Keith Thomas, *Man and the Natural World,* (New York, 1983), 220; Colley, *Britons,* 33.

65. Bolster, *Black Jacks,* 65–7, suggests that Johnson's headdress may have had an African symbolism as well, connecting it to "John Canoe" mummers in religious festivals in West Africa and the Caribbean. For other black mendicants who deployed maritime outfits or accessories, see Cruikshank's illustration of the Cadgers in Pierce Egan, *Life in London* (London, 1821), facing 346; see also *Minutes of the Evidence Taken before the Committee . . . to Enquire into the State of Mendicity and Vagrancy in the Metropolis* (London, 1815), 69–71 ("those sailors who may be seen about dragging a ship"), 76–81.

66. See, for example, the debate on the Great Cat Massacre. Robert Darnton, *The Great Cat Massacre and Other Episodes in French Cultural History* (New York: Vintage, 1985), 75–106; Roger Chartier, "Text, Symbols, and Frenchness," *Journal of Modern History* 57 (1985), 682–695; Harold Mah, "Suppressing the Text: The Metaphysics of Ethnographic History in Darnton's Great Cat Massacre," *History Workshop* 31 (Spring 1991), 1–20.

67. Ian Duffield, "Daylight on Convict Lived Experience: The History of a Pious Negro Servant," *Tasmanian Historical Studies* 6:2 (1999), 29–62.

68. John Brewer, "Theater and Counter-Theater in Georgian Politics: The Mock Elections at Garrat," *Radical History Review* 22 (Winter 1979–80), 7–40.

69. T 1/632, CRBP Minutes of 7 June 1786.

70. Braidwood, *Black Poor,* 138; T 1/638, CRBP Minutes of 24 October 1786; also two letters from George Peters to George Rose at the Treasury (same date).

71. Both lists are in T 1/638.

72. T 1/638: letter of 6 December 1786 from Samuel Hoare, Jr. to George Rose at the Treasury.

73. Braidwood, 136–143. Equiano's roster of February 1787 (T 1/643) took pains to note the marital status of the women, although he was less discriminating about ethnicity, identifying people only as "black" or "white." His single largest category was 290 black men. After this came the 63 white women married to black men. The 43 black women were divided into 25 who were apparently single, and the 18 who were married to white men. There were 20 children aboard, 11 black and 9 white; some of the white children shared last names with the white women listed as married to black men. 24 white men

were also on the passenger list, representing a variety of crafts and trades needed in the new settlement. One was simply a "passenger." 4 white women were listed as married to white men, while 7 additional white women were "to be married." Perhaps Equiano took such pains to clarify who was married because rumors that the white women were prostitutes had surfaced even at this early date. This story is dismissed as without foundation by the recent students of the topic. For a summary, see Norma Myers, "In Search of the Invisible: British Black Family and Community, 1780–1830," *Slavery and Abolition* 13:3 (December 1992), 166–7.

74. T 1/632, CRBP minutes 7 June 1786.

75. Fryer, *Staying Power,* 70–1, 155, 161, 200; Ian Duffield, "Skilled Workers or Marginalized Poor? The African Population of the United Kingdom, 1812–1852," in David Killingray, ed., *Africans in Britain* (London, 1994), 49–87.

76. Public Record Office, HO 28/45: 6 November 1816, John Haythorne, Mayor of Bristol, to Lord Sidmouth.

77. Bernard Porter, *The Refugee Question in Mid-Victorian Politics* (Cambridge, 1979); 54 Geo. III c.134; 4 Geo. IV c. 80; 2 & 3 Will. IV c. 84; see also Walvin, *Black and White*, 194, 198.

78. Equiano, *Interesting Narrative*, xviii. Carretta has raised questions about whether Equiano was in fact born in Africa, but that issue is not pertinent here.