

Mobility in Early Modern Anglo-American Accounts of Piracy

Alexandra Ganser¹

University of Vienna

1. Introduction

Through the ages and across discourses, pirates have been described as utterly mobile subjects: from political theory to historiography, from philosophy to literary writing. Starting shortly after the turn to the 18th century, texts began Othering the pirate, such as Puritan anti-piracy sermons – showing how this mobility also had effects on how piracy was conceived in economic terms. Both the geographic and socio-economic aspects of mobility are closely entwined in such writings, highlighting how piracy is entangled in the entrepreneurial colonial context of the early modern Atlantic. This chapter sets out to examine how these texts contributed to both a theoretical and a popular understanding of piracy as adventurous, outlaw inconstancy on the one hand and as illegitimate, violent monstrosity on the other. Further, I examine the economic underpinnings of this bipolar conception by drawing attention to their underlying conceptions of legitimate and illegitimate mobility.

Like the pirate's maritime environment, mobility has been a central category, both in a literal and metaphorical sense, through which the figure of the pirate is negotiated and his/her (il)legitimacy debated in narrative discourse. In the mobile world of the Atlantic, the figure of the pirate encompassed traits of all the major characters of that world: the trader, the adventurer, the pilgrim, the slave and the indentured laborer as well as the slave-holder and -trader. In historical discussions of piracy, major anxieties of an increasingly mobile society were voiced. Discourses about legitimate and illegitimate mobility hence appear as a defining aspect in pirate narratives, as piratical mobilities have been cast as both a threat to and as supportive of European colonial expansion and the imperialist project.

Linebaugh & Rediker (2000) have characterized pirate crews of the 18th century as 'motley': a proto-proletariat of multilingual, multiracial, and transnational subjects. Similar to what social historian Eric Hobsbawm (1959) called 'primitive rebels', individuals living on the edges of (mostly rural) societies by robbing and plundering who are celebrated as heroes of popular resistance, pirates embodied the subversive elements from the poorest social strata.

In terms of provenience, the Elizabethan ‘gentlemen pirates’ like Sir Francis Drake were an exception: At the beginning of the 18th century, pirates like William Fly formulated a new self-description using the term to refer to themselves as ‘Gentlemen of Fortune’, (as cited in Mather, 1726, p. 2), his proclamation of transgressing class boundaries. Alexandre Olivier Exquemelin’s *Buccaneers of America* (1678) and many other accounts of former pirates or pirate associates of the early modern Atlantic depicted former sailors from the poorest strata of the Euro-American Atlantic world as they turn into agents of their own fate whose credo was ‘a merry Life and a short one’² and who divided their booty in equal shares before excessively spending, much rather than burying or hoarding, their treasures. These transatlantic writings told their readers, who came mainly from a rising middle class, that there was a world whose riches were available also to subjects sharing their own, lower-class background, but only if definitions of (il)legality in economic undertakings are questioned and the system of the distribution of wealth is altered. The menace of uncontrollable geographical mobility that the pirates signified was closely related to social mobility and discontent with one’s inherited class position.

I propose to use the term MOBility to differentiate between empire-building ship traffic and alternative forms of movement, although these are fluid rather than clear-cut differentiations. Etymologically, the ‘mob’ describes the Latin *populus mobilis*, the ‘moveable’ masses formed by the lower, ‘vulgar’ strata of society. In the early modern era, just as control over people’s mobility was increasingly nationalized (Cresswell, 2006, pp. 12–13), pirates emerged as emblematic of another ‘New World’: ‘the world of Hobbes, Galileo, and Harvey, ... an infinite, restless entanglement of persistent movement’ in which ‘happiness itself was based on the freedom to move’ (p. 14).

2. The Pirate Ship

The sailing ship was the single means of transportation and communication that connected the European, African, and American shores of the Atlantic well into the 19th century. Discursively, it emerged as a conflicted site of articulation for diverse imaginings of and commentary on the social order. Accounts of piracy report that when pirate crews captured a ship, they usually determined the fate of her captain by asking the crew whether it had undergone what was then termed ‘bad usage’ by their officers. The second major act in the capture consisted in renaming the vessel, semantically marking that a different, non-sanctioned

maritime order was to be installed. The importance of renaming signifies the break with what Richard Braithwaite, a supporter of Parliament in the English Civil Wars and Commonwealth period (1640–1660), who had lost a son to Algerian ‘pirates,’ called ‘Hydrarchy’: the strictly regulated maritime social order that reflected and sought to imitate imperial social hierarchies (as cited in Linebaugh & Rediker, 2000, p. 143).³

The vessel’s name was thus turned from a marker of property and/or nationality into a sign of defiance of legality in terms of economic and military activity. The black or red flag, whose icons pointed to *vanitas*, death, and terror, operated in this fashion, too, but alongside their faster, smaller ships (compared to those they attacked). This was also the pirates’ most important weapon: many official ships that would have easily won against pirate crews in battle gave up upon sighting the flag, symbolizing pirate courage and fierceness.

It was in this process of physical and symbolic appropriation that the ship turned into a vehicle of unsanctioned mobility and social order. This exposed what Heller-Roazen (2012) calls the legal ‘fiction of the territoriality of the ship’ that considered ‘that which is, in fact, in motion and at sea ... as if it were, by law, immobile and inseparable from the land’ (p.127). In *The Many-Headed Hydra* (2000), Linebaugh & Rediker draw on the mythological Hydra, the sea-monster that grew two new heads for each one that Hercules cut off, in order to reinterpret that hydrarchy. They argue that, ‘within imperial hydrarchy grew a different hydrarchy, one that was both proletarian and oppositional’ (p. 153). This alternative social order ‘from below deck,’ valued seafaring abilities and group solidarity higher than social class, color, nation, or heredity (Bolster, 1997). Such communities – though often short-lived – were based on values like fraternity, justice, or equality according to these critics, values that led Williams (1987) to see a continuity between piracy and the American struggle for independence (p. 247). Yet, the relation between hegemony and resistance is hardly as clear-cut in literary articulations of piracy. The ship and the sea emerge as the main spaces in which hegemonic and anti-hegemonic mobilities take effect. As both the ship and the sea are spaces characterized by fluidity and mobility, they were appropriate stages for discursively enacting the dynamics of oppression and resistance.

While the illegitimate pirate ship embodied the promise of resistance, seafaring life in general was often compared to being in jail. Samuel Johnson observed that the ship was like a prison and characterized sea laborers as the most miserable among workers (as cited in Rediker, 2004,

p. 43).⁴ While the ships of the Merchant Marine and the Royal Navy functioned as imperial moving ‘machine[s]’ (Rediker, 1987, p. 44) in which sailors were reduced to ‘hands’ that set it into and kept it in motion, pirate ships turned the spatial insulation and isolation of the ship into an asset (p. 27).

The double nature of the pirate ship, mirroring colonial relations while simultaneously inverting them in critical moments, can certainly be read as a site outlawed by a dominant order that labels it ‘piratical’. This placed the enslaved or otherwise colonized subject, whose economic and military actions are unsanctioned, into a realm of illegitimacy and disenfranchisement. Unlike the prison, however, the pirate ship can function as a mobile inversion of dominant social relations and hence is also a site of social experimentation and potential empowerment.

It should be noted that these are the very qualities that induced Michel Foucault to call the ship an instance of heterotopia: that is, a territorialized site of an inverse spatial order. Critics such as Edward Casey or David Harvey, certainly have a point when emphasizing that there is no conceptual basis in Foucault for the association of the heterotope with liberatory and emancipatory spaces. From their perspective, even the pirate ship is not beyond the grasp of dominant practice. This correction is crucial, as it grasps the dynamism and instability of experimental social spaces whose inversion of the dominant order is always already marked by that order. Without colonialism, without slavery, without political and economic disenfranchisement, no piracy; and yet, piracy also became a trope to criticize and counter colonialism and slavery.

The pirate ship can then be seen as a site resulting from a crisis of legitimacy within the mercantilist colonial Atlantic. This ship usually emerged because of mutiny or theft, a vessel that is only a temporary, short-lived, and transitional home for the deviant and the subaltern and often simultaneously served diverse colonial projects. The ship is a place home to maritime subjects in the waters of various colonization projects, subjects illegalized in an ostracization from humanity that both mirrored and inverted Atlantic power relations.

3. The Puritan Anti-Piracy Sermon

The Puritan anti-piracy sermon is one early modern site of enunciation in which the interrelatedness of discourses of mobility and legitimacy comes to the fore via the ways pirates

are linked to unruly movement. The sermons conflate social and geographical mobility significantly also with regard to Puritan migration, including the transatlantic recruitment of immigrants for settling the backcountry in the relatively peaceful decades after 1713 (Conforti, 2006, pp. 133-37). Published between 1704 and 1726, Cotton Mather's anti-piratical execution sermons functioned as didactical instructions for actual pirates to repent, for sailors to be deterred, and for his congregation to extol piracy as sinful and spiritually destructive. In this way, the pirate execution sermon promoted law and order, imposing 'structure on socially disruptive experiences' and 'negating the misrule inherent in unlawful action' (Williams, 1993, xi). In practice, Mather frequently tended to pirates sentenced to death in order to lead them to redemption and save them from hell. Daniel Williams (1987) sees Mather's anti-piratical activities as a response to the tendency of New England sailors to turn pirate, and, to 'counter this tendency, [Mather] sought to make special examples of all condemned pirates in Boston jails' (p. 235).

Metaphors of mobility and shipwreck inform most of Mather's anti-piratical sermons. This range of verbal imagery can be linked to both the 'life is a journey' metaphor of the Scriptures and the 'departure of God' rhetoric, which, together with metaphors of sickness, deprivation, and loss, was used by an earlier generation of Puritans responding to generational conflict and spiritual crisis (Elliott, 1975, p. 99). Yet the journey across the Atlantic was of course also the foundational experience for the Puritan project in the New World; John Winthrop's 'City upon a Hill' speech aboard the *Arbella* as well as Danforth's 'errand into the wilderness' have been seen as the basis for its mythology (Wharton, p. 45). Reflecting also the increase in the seafaring trade after 1640, the language of the journey and of seafaring was an important resource for Puritan preachers, even though the colonists themselves hardly had a seafaring background (McElroy, 1935, pp. 331-33). For the Puritans, the space of the Atlantic was symbolically loaded, as successful voyages were seen in the framework of what Udo Hebel calls a Puritan 'providential hermeneutics' (p. 17): as a 'sign of providential protection, of spiritual, later patriotic, fitness', making 'sacred what was otherwise secular space' (Wharton, pp. 47, 52), while shipwreck and piracy were framed as signs of a fall from grace. The Atlantic scenario thus became the Puritan 'trial by water' (Wharton, p. 52; also Hebel, 2004, pp. 15-16).⁵

In accordance with this symbolism, Mather (1723) conceives of sinners as ‘pursueth by Evil’ and ‘Runawayes’ (p. 19) in his *Useful Remarks*; they are ‘Fugitives when they leave that Master’, Jesus Christ (p. 20). These metaphors also express the ideal of spiritual steadfastness that is Mather’s concern in his endeavor to renew New England’s covenant with God. Mather’s third-generation Puritan outlook somewhat paradoxically seems to return to earlier lamentations of aberrance and transgression in these sermons, which often contain elaborate lists of sins and failures. The increasing bitterness of Mather’s rhetoric, gradually approaching that of his father Increase, points to a significant cultural shift (Bosco, p. 170). Mather’s anti-piratical execution sermons as well as other sermons directed explicitly at sailors addressed the condition of the New England covenant and the future spiritual estate of the young; they sought to guide an increasingly transnational tribe of seafarers in the Puritan spirit, but that spirit continued to lose its powerful grip on the colony at the turn of the century.

Of course, the genre per se afforded the threat of damnation and the admonition to repent, and Mather and others routinely used the ‘[d]ying words of a Malefactor’ (Mather 1704, p. 42) in closing. Yet his earlier sermons also emphasize the glory of a God whose benevolence could be reached by sincere repentance, even if that repentance came as late as minutes before the actual execution. The appearance of a benevolent and merciful rather than fearful deity aligns the younger Mather with the spiritual shifts of the late 17th century from pessimist visions of impending doom to a more optimistic millenarian version of New England’s destiny (Elliott, 1975, pp. 177–78). Mather’s work on piracy, even though it turned increasingly bitter, resonated with his introduction of the ‘new theme of national salvation’ (p. 191) into Puritan discourse, comparing New England favorably with the rest of the world and warning the community of repeating old-world mistakes. This is exemplified by the fact that the choice of condemned criminals to demonstrate the steps to salvation was unique to American Puritans (Williams, 1986, p. 831).

The desire for social stability and the re-affirmation of existing hierarchies is expressed by Mather’s repeated advice that the colonial American subject follow the Calvinist doctrine of predestination not only in religious terms but also in terms of social status. As Mather (1723) has one of his repenting pirates, the infamous William Fly, advise: ‘Stay in your Place & Station Contentedly, & be Thankful to God for all things that happen to you’ (p. 33). This statement conflates social and geographical mobility; in Mather, piracy thus becomes a trope

to set the boundaries of legitimacy in terms of social status, mobility, and subjecthood for an entire community.

In 1700, Mather preached to the sailors of Boston a sermon entitled *The Religious Marriner. A Brief Discourse Tending to Direct the Course of Sea-men in those Points of Religion Which may bring them to the Port, of Eternal Happiness*. In the printed version of this speech the minister uses metaphors of mobility to guide the sailor and lead him on the ‘right course’, a discourse also used in the execution sermons (e.g. Mather, 1717, p. 36). Right in the preface, Mather acknowledges the importance of the site of sailor existence in the formation of collective identity, as he addresses his sermon to a new oceanic collective, a ‘Sea faring-tribe’ (p. 4) the author calls ‘the Waters’ in an explicit parallel to ‘the Grecians’ and ‘the Romans’ (p. 3). In fact, Mather argues that sailors ‘at all times ... bear [Resemblance] unto the Waters, upon which they are now Sailing’; ‘their Living on the Waters Entitles them to this Denomination, just as a Country or City, gives a Denomination to its Inhabitants’ (p. 3). This comparison of course does not lead Mather to treat sailors as subjects of a different country, to different laws and ethical codes; paradoxically, it is the fact that they are at home on the sea rather than land-based that builds the center of his warning, as the influence of the seafaring environment on the sailors’ moral character forms the central topic of this work. This choice can be read as a reaction to the ever-growing seafaring population since the mid-17th century, whose mobility was perceived as a threat to colonial society.

The increasing population of sailors was in dire need of spiritual guidance in Mather’s view. In accordance with his self-fashioned righteousness and megalomaniacal pride, the title page of Mather’s *Religious Marriner* (1700) quotes Matthew 14, 25: ‘Jesus went unto them, walking on the Sea’; Mather positions himself as the savior of a people drawn to sin through seafaring customs—drinking, swearing, adultery and other ‘special vices of the sea’ (p. 14).⁶ In an act of interpellation that, to some extent, *creates* the stereotypical pirate rather than merely reporting him, Mather’s prose characterizes seafaring as ‘riotous living’ and the sea as a ‘school of vice’ (p. 5), an observation that the minister claims to reach back to Plato. Preaching to a specific audience of sailors of New England, the minister warns against ‘those false courses of sin’ (p. 7), emphasizes the sailors’ importance for the Commonwealth under the auspices of a Protestant sense of mission. Other metaphors similarly connote mobility as dangerous, direction as crucial, and settlement on land as preferable: ‘*steer clear of the Sins*’, ‘*Depart from*

Evil (14), ‘don’t go out of the Way, when you Go to Sea’ (p. 19). Admitting the importance of seafaring for the British colonial empire, Mather sees it as a necessary evil:

Truly, ‘Twere much to be advised, That the *Enchantments* of the *Sea*, may not have too strong and quick a Force upon some, to make them rashly leave *Good Callings*, by Which they might competently subsist ashore. I am far from condemning all that leave their *Callings*, and go away to *Sea*; but this we have seen, where one hath *Advanced* himself, more than two have *Ruined* themselves, by doing so. (p. 20)

The representation of pirates as killers who did not distinguish between friend and foe served the official politics of the day that realized plunder was only a minor aspect of the pirate threat. More dangerous to imperial mercantilism was the fact that many sailors of the Royal Navy or the Merchant Marine, coming into contact with pirate crews, did not have to be forced to join them—to the contrary. The attractiveness of piracy for mistreated sailors was the main incentive for the blatant didacticism of Mather’s preaching and the inclusion of speeches by repenting pirates, a feature the execution sermon shares with the jeremiad, geared towards a younger generation that was to be reminded of the importance of the covenant (Bosco, 1978, pp. 168-69); after all, the Puritans were convinced ‘they would be held collectively responsible for the wrongdoing of individual members’ (Cohen, 1993, p. 7). Thus, ministers preaching execution sermons warned young men from a sinful course of life that would lead to certain death on the gallows, but also endanger the entire New England colony. In the sermon *Useful Remarks* (1723), Mather directly addresses the young men and sailors of Rhode Island, exhorting them that death is preferable to changing to the ‘wrong’ side: ‘Rather *Dy*, than go *With*, or do *Like* such Wicked men. *My Son, If such Sinners Entice thee, Consent thou not unto them*. No, Rather *Dy* than do it!’ (p. 22). The narratives annexed and appended to these sermons—speeches and letters dictated or written by the condemned pirates and sometimes ‘*Faithfully Collected, by Another Hand*’ (Mather, 1723, p. 29)—also serve this function (pp. 37, 39, 41), as Mather and his publishers seem to hope for heightened effect. In 1724, Mather’s diary relates what Emory Elliott has called the ‘power of the pulpit’ in one case of piracy.

Mather’s interest in piracy can also be found in his diary, which informs us of the context for his anti-piratical preaching. The first reference to piracy occurs in 1696, in a jeremiad-like list of grievances and failures of the colonies: ‘Some that have belonged unto this Countrey, have

perpetrated very detestable Pyracies, in other Parts of the World' (1957, p. 215). Because piracy transcends the local, Mather likewise transcends his usual focus on New England society and the purity of the colonial community, linking 'this Countrey' to 'other Parts of the World', although the use of the present perfect tense makes it clear the pirates no longer belong to the imagined community of Mather's New England.⁷ By the turn of the 17th to the 18th century, Mather had started to visit condemned criminals awaiting their execution in the Boston jail. In 1699, he mentions the 'great number of Pyrates' he encountered in one of these visits; he 'went and pray'd with them, and preach'd to them' (Mather, 1957, p. 299), using Jeremiah 2, 26 ('The Thief is ashamed, when hee [sic] is found'); another such occasion is mentioned for early 1700, again making use of Jeremiah (17, 11: 'He gets Riches and not by right; leaves them in the midst of his Dayes, and in his End shal be a Fool', p. 331).

Although Mather uses religious discourse throughout his sermons, and appeals to the conscience of criminals, piracy is thus condemned as *both* a religious and secular crime. Mather is more than a religious preacher; he also fortifies and installs in his audience, which usually comprised between 550 and 850 people (Minnick, 1968, p. 79), obedience to worldly laws as the 'Justice of Heaven' (p. 25) is brought about on the Boston execution dock. In yet another list of sins, Sabbath breaking, drunkenness, swearing and cursing (Mather, 1704, p. 32), adultery (p. 34), and thievery (p. 36) are chosen because they are most closely associated with the seafaring life and piracy, itself listed as a subcategory of thievery. Mather's direct address of the pirates in the second part of *Faithful warnings to prevent fearful judgments: Uttered in a brief discourse, occasioned, by a tragical spectacle, in a number of miserables under a sentence of death for piracy* (1707) again reveals his astonishment upon the absence of fear of death and celestial punishment: 'Be assured O Sinners, you have no Reason to be Merry or Easy, or Sleepy, in a state of Sin. You behave your selves, as if nothing were Amiss. What? When there is Evil pursuing of you!' (pp. 28-29).

Judging from the increase of anti-piratical sermons after 1713, Puritan ministers like Mather seem to have felt that the growing commercialism of New England threatened the moral integrity of their congregations and therefore appropriated the language of trade and exchange to ward off economic cooperation with pirates. The sermon form, 'the sole form of legitimate public address' (Brown, 1989, p. 34), was frequently used for such 'ritual application[s] of theology to community-building and to the tasks and trials of everyday life', as Daniel Boorstin

noted (p. 12). Tackling an increasing commercialism, Mather explains the Puritan covenant with God itself in the language of trade as ‘*A Contract or Compact*’ (p. 27) in *The Converted Sinner* (1724), and Jesus Christ is cast as a ‘*Debtor to the Law* for us’ (p. 42). The religious discourse of the anti-piracy sermon is thus not one of anti-commercialism, but instead attempts to remind New Englanders of their duties as commercial agents and subjects.

In the same vein, we can read Mather’s construction of piracy as a result of idleness in his *Useful Remarks* (1723): ‘They that would not *behold the way of the Vineyards*, nor take to any way of Honesty & Industry, for Living ashore, have gone to make their Depredations on the *Waters*; But how has their *Portion been Cursed in the Earth*; and what a *Remarkable Curse* of GOD, has been upon them?’ (p. 22).⁸ Piracy, as the more sinful version of seafaring, is perceived as the economic opposite of honest labor, and the labor of sailors at sea the more sinful version of work in the biblical vineyard, a metaphor for work ashore. Rather than seeing piracy as the expression of resistance to the widespread abuse of sailors by maritime authority and the mercantilist system of profit and gain, it is defined by its accumulative ethics of exploitation.

Pirates embodied the threat of illegitimate class mobility from the lower strata of the Atlantic world. ‘Gentlemen pirates’ were an historical exception in terms of provenience, but William Fly and others used the term to formulate a new self-representation, demonstrating their pride to have transgressed class barriers.

4. Illegitimate Mobility and Contemporary Piracy

How do contemporary representations of piracy (dis)continue such representations of pirates as embodying a threat of mobility by subjects immobilized by prevalent unequal power relations? For example, representations of Somali pirates (as in the film *Captain Phillips*, based on Richard Phillips’ (2010/2013) account of his capture by and ultimate defeat of Somali pirates, *A Captain’s Duty*) ask for a postcolonial critique regarding the relation of mobile and immobile subjects in an unequally globalized world. Somali pirates are presented in the discourse of terrorism in these celebratory, heroic US-American narratives; indeed, many scholars (e.g. Chomsky, 1986; Heller-Roazen, 2009; Schillings, 2011) have commented on the semantic continuities between the *hostis humani generis*, the classical conception of the pirate as the enemy of all humankind that deeply influenced early modern legal thought, and the contemporary terrorist. International law historian Michael Kempe names the international

terrorist as the semantic successor to the pirate because of his/her similarity in terms of uncontrollable mobility: ‘When terrorists today are called “nuovi pirati”, it is undoubtedly the spatial elusiveness, the non-localizable presence in space that invites this comparison’ (Kempe, 2008, p. 397)—space now no longer being limited, as for the classical theorists, to the sea (‘allowing unpredictable spatial behavior such as occasional appearance and instant attack’, p. 398).⁹

The outrageousness of the Somali pirates suggested by *Captain Phillips* is that they immobilize the US protagonist and his business ventures, a professional in the mobile world of late capitalist, transnational corporate maritime industries (whose overfishing is what has produced the Somali ‘pirates’ mobility in the first place). Beyond the sea, so-called data pirates are likewise defined by their illegalized navigations in virtual space, often also characterized by ‘occasional appearance and instant attack’ (the Swedish filesharing platform The Pirate Bay is perhaps the best-known example in this context). As we see discourses about legitimate and illegitimate mobility defining the pirate well into the 21st century, the early modern example can hopefully help us address the socio-economic causes, rather than merely the consequences, of contemporary ‘pirates’.

References

- Anderson, B. (2006). *Imagined Communities* (2nd ed.). London: Verso.
- Armitage, D. (2001). The Red Atlantic. Review of P. Linebaugh & M. Rediker, *The Many-Headed Hydra*. *Reviews in American History*, 29: 479-486.
- Bey, H. (2003). *T.A.Z.: The Temporary Autonomous Zone, Ontological Anarchy, Poetic Terrorism* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Autonomedia.
- Bolster, W. J. (1997). *Black Jacks: African American Seamen in the Age of Sail*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Boorstin, D. (1958). *The Americans: The Colonial Experience*. New York, NY: Random House.
- Bosco, R. A. (1978). Lectures at the Pillory: The Early American Execution Sermon. *American Quarterly*, 30.3: 156-176.
- Brown, R. D. (1989). *Knowledge Is Power: The Diffusion of Information in Early America, 1700-1865*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Captain Phillips* (2013). Dir. Paul Greengrass. Columbia Pictures.
- Casey, E. S. (1997). *The Fate of Place: A Philosophical History*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Chomsky, N. (1986). *Pirates and Emperors: International Terrorism in the Real World*. New York, NY: Claremont.
- Cohen, D. A. (1993). *Pillars of Salt, Monuments of Grace: New England Crime Literature and the Origins of American Popular Culture, 1674-1860*. Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press.

- Conforti, J. A. (2006). *Saints and Strangers: New England in British North America*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Cresswell, T. (2006). *On the Move: Mobility in the Modern Western World*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Defoe, D. [Captain C. Johnson] (1999). *A General History of the Pyrates*. 1724. M. Schonhorn (Ed.). Mineola, MN: Dover.
- Elliott, E. (1975). *Power and the Pulpit in Puritan New England*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Foucault, M. (1986). Of Other Spaces. (J. Miskowiec, Trans.). *Diacritics*, 1: 22-27.
- Ganser, A. (2012). 'That the Enchantments of the Sea may not have too strong and quick a Force upon some': Seafaring Mobilities in Transatlantic Narratives of Piracy of around 1700. In H. Paul, A. Ganser, & K. Gerund (Ed.), *Pirates, Drifters, Fugitives: Figures of Mobility in American Culture and Beyond* (pp. 31-52). Heidelberg: Winter.
- Gilroy, P. (1993). *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness*. London: Verso.
- Harvey, D. (2009). *Cosmopolitanism and the Geographies of Freedom*. New York, NY: Columbia University Press.
- Hebel, U. (2004). Survival Without Seasickness: Cotton Mather's Miniature Anthology of Sea Deliverance Narratives in *Magnalia Christi Americana*. In K. Benesch, J.-K. Adams, & K. Schmidt (Ed.), *The Sea and the American Imagination* (pp. 15-36). Tübingen: Stauffenburg.
- Heller-Roazen, D. (2009). *The Enemy of All: Piracy and the Law of Nations*. New York, NY: Zone Books.
- Hobsbawm, E. (1963). *Primitive Rebels: Studies in Archaic Forms of Social Movements in the 19th Century* (2nd ed.). Manchester: Manchester University Press.
- Kempe, M. (2008). Seeraub als Broterwerb: Bewaffnete Auseinandersetzungen zwischen Freibeutern und Kauffahrern aus völkerrechtlicher Perspektive. In E. Schmidt (Ed.), *Seeleute und Leben an Bord im Ersten Kolonialzeitalter (15.-18. Jahrhundert)* (pp. 387-412). Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz.
- Linebaugh, P., & Rediker, M. (2000). *The Many-Headed Hydra: Sailors, Slaves, Commoners, and the Hidden History of the Revolutionary Atlantic*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press.
- Marshall, J., & da Rimini, F. (2015). Playstation, Demonoid, and the Orders and Disorders of Pirarchy. *Krisis*, 1. Retrieved from: <http://krisis.eu/playstation-demonoid-and-the-orders-and-disorders-of-pirarchy/>
- Mather, C. (1700). *The Religious Marriner. A Brief Discourse Tending to Direct the Course of Sea-men, In those Points of Religion, Which may bring them to the Port, of Eternal Happiness*. Boston, MA: B. Green, and J. Allen for S. Phillips.
- Mather, C. (1704). *Faithful warnings to prevent fearful judgments: Uttered in a brief discourse, occasioned, by a tragical spectacle, in a number of miserables under a sentence of death for piracy. At Boston in N.E. Jun. 22. 1704*. Boston, MA: T. Green.
- Mather, C. (1709). *The Sailours Companion and Counsellour. An Offer of Considerations for the Tribe of Zebulun; Awakening the Mariner to Think and to Do Those Things that may Render His Voyage Prosperous*. Boston, MA: B. Green, for S. Gerrish.
- Mather, C. (1717). *Instructions to the Living, from the Condition of the Dead: A Brief Relation of Remarkables in the Shipwreck of above One Hundred Pirates, Who were Cast away in the Ship Whido, on the Coast of New-England, April 26. 1717. And in the Death of Six, who after a Fair Trial at Boston, were Convicted & Condemned, Octob. 22. And Executed, Novemb. 15. 1717. With some Account of the Discourse had with them on the way to their Execution. And a Sermon Preached on their Occasion*. Boston, MA: J. Allen for N. Boone.

- Mather, C. (1723). *Useful Remarks. An Essay upon Remarkables in the Way of wicked Men. A Sermon on the Tragical End, unto which the Way of Twenty-Six Pirates brought them; At New Port on Rhode-Island, July 19, 1723. With an Account of their Speeches, Letters, & Actions, before their Execution.* New London, MA: T. Green.
- Mather, C. (1724). *The Converted Sinner: The Nature of a Conversion to Real and Vital Piety: And the Manner in which it is to be Pray'd & Striv'n for: A Sermon Preached in Boston, May 31, 1724. In the Hearing and at the Desire of certain Pirates, a little before their Execution: To which there is added, A more Private Conference of a Minister with them.* Boston, MA: N. Belknap.
- Mather, C. (1957). *Diary of Cotton Mather.* 2 vols. New York, NY: F. Ungar.
- McElroy, J. W. (1935). Seafaring in Seventeenth-Century New England. *New England Quarterly*, 8.3: 331-64.
- Minnick, W. C. (1968). The New England Execution Sermon, 1639-1800. *Speech Monographs*, 35.1: 77-89.
- Phillips, R., with S. Talty (2013). *A Captain's Duty.* London: Bantam.
- Rediker, M. (1987). *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea: Merchant Seamen, Pirates, and the Anglo-American Maritime World, 1700-1750.* Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press.
- Rediker, M. (2004). The Red Atlantic; or, 'a terrible blast swept over the heaving sea.' (2004). In B. Klein & G. Mackenthun (Ed.), *Sea Changes: Historicizing the Ocean* (pp. 111-130). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Rediker, M. (2004). *Villains of All Nations: Atlantic Pirates in the Golden Age.* Boston, MA: Beacon Press.
- Schillings, S. (2011). The Concept of Hostis Humani Generis in Cultural Translation: Somali Piracy, Discursive Containment, and the Creation of Extralegal Spaces. In *REAL Yearbook of Research in English and American Literature*, 27, 295-313. Spec. Issue States of Emergency—States of Crisis. W. Fluck, K. Motyl, D. E. Pease, & C. Raetzsch (Ed.).
- Stein, R. B. (1972). Seascape and the American Imagination: The Puritan Seventeenth Century. *Early American Literature*, 7.1: 17-37.
- Wharton, D. P. (1992). Hudson's Mermaid: Symbol and Myth in Early American Sea Literature. In K. Z. Derounian-Stodola (Ed.), *Early American Literature and Culture. Essays Honoring Harrison T. Meserole* (pp. 38-56). Newark: U of Delaware P.
- Williams, D. E. (1986). 'Behold a Tragic Scene Strangely Changed into a Theater of Mercy': The Structure and Significance of Criminal Conversion Narratives in Early New England. *American Quarterly*, 38.5: 827-847.
- Williams, D. E. (1987). Puritans and Pirates: A Confrontation between Cotton Mather and William Fly in 1726. *Early American Literature*, 22: 233-251.
- Williams, D. E. (1993). Preface. In D. Williams (Ed.), *Pillars of Salt: An Anthology of Early American Criminal Narratives* (pp. x-xiii). Madison, WI: Madison House Publishers.

¹ The author wishes to acknowledge the following institutions for funding research for this article: the Austrian Science Fund (FWF), the American Antiquarian Society (AAS), and the German Association for American Studies.

² Both phrases are frequently used by pirates such as captain Bartholomew Roberts (see e.g. Defoe [Johnson] p. 235 or p. 244); also Rediker, 1987, p. 148.

³ The concept also echoes more recent theoretical reflections by Marshall and da Rimini, who explore ‘the disorganised political order (“pirarchy”)’ of so-called digital pirates, arguing that pirarchy is a disruptive social swarm formation.

⁴ Compare the descriptions of conditions aboard the Royal Navy and Merchant Marine, characterized by harsh discipline and hard work, low and often unpaid, meager or spoilt supplies, disease, and the constant threat of punishment (Linebaugh & Rediker, p. 102).

⁵ On the 17th century Puritan imagination of the sea, see also Stein.

⁶ Notably, Mather also published *The Sailours Companion and Counsellour. An Offer of Considerations for the Tribe of Zebulun; Awakening the Mariner to Think and to Do Those Things that may Render His Voyage Prosperous* in 1709.

⁷ I use B. Anderson’s term here not in the context of nationalist discourses, but to highlight the imaginary nature of his conception of Puritan society.

⁸ An embedded narrative by a pirate similarly warns the congregation and readership to ‘[t]ake care against Spending your time Idly on the Sabbath Day, in staying at Home, or Walking of any other Diversions’, advising them to rather ‘[d]iligently Frequent your Proper Places of Divine Worship, Respect your Pastors and Teachers, ... and pay the just Deference due to the Rulers, set over you by God’ (Mather, 1717, p. 33).

⁹ In the German original: ‘Wenn heutige Terroristen als “nuovi pirati” bezeichnet werden, dann ist es zweifellos die räumliche Unfaßbarkeit, die nicht-lokalisierbare Raumpräsenz, die hier zum Komparativ wird’; ‘unberechenbares Raumverhalten, nämlich okkasionelles Auftauchen und instantes Zuschlagen, zu ermöglichen’; translation mine.