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Shin Yamashiro

American Sea Literature

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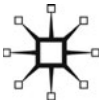

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3. "The Beach as a Neutral Ground: Henry David Thoreau's *Cape Cod* and the Tradition of American Beach Narrative." *Literature and Environment* 4.4 (2001): 22–30.
4. "Introduction: Part III: Freedom and Restraint." *Concentric: Literary and Cultural Studies* 34.1 (2008): 13–16.

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I've saved my deepest gratitude for my family; they are the reason for my work.

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Introduction: On the Sea, By the Sea, Beneath the Sea

Abstract: *"Introduction" explains the main concepts of the "terrestrial" and "oceanic" that the author claims are always predominant in sea literature. By employing these concepts, the author proposes to divide sea literature into three types: on the sea, by the sea, and beneath the sea; thereby, we can better look at American sea literature from the colonial period to the twentieth century, appreciating its historical trends, multifaceted varieties, and everlasting imperatives.*

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On the sea, beneath the sea

In the first few pages of her book *Sea Change: A Message of the Oceans* (1995), published nearly two decades ago, the well-known oceanographer Sylvia A. Earle writes that the ocean "remains for humankind inaccessible and unknown, by and large ignored, overlooked, or simply taken for granted."[1] In comparing the marine sanctuary project and the system of terrestrial national parks, she points out that we need to change our thinking about the ocean and to recognize that unlike the terrestrial, "the ocean is three-dimensional."[2]

In response to Earle's plea to alter our thinking about the ocean, this book has been written in order to establish a different approach to reading sea literature. In particular, the goal here is to find the presence of the *ocean* in American literature, and to explore the features of that presence. The purpose of doing so is to acquaint the reader of this book with a new perspective of "the sea" in literature and to enlist the reader's efforts in establishing the three-dimensionality of the sea by finding features of that view implicit in the selections presented here, with the hope that the reader will ultimately cast off on his or her own voyage of discovery.

Just as our visual of depth (three-dimensionality) is the result of our physical and tactile experiences linked to our binocular vision, our recognition of the "depth" of the oceanic requires a binocular viewing of the ocean through both terrestrial and oceanic lenses. I have approached this task through interpreting the domains I am most familiar with: American Literature and, in the epilogue, the island of Okinawa. That is, an effort will be made here to demonstrate, through the study of American literature, that the oceanic and the terrestrial are intertwined in the depths of our understanding even as we attempt to separate them in our logical thinking.

As an oceanographer who has spent thousands of hours in the oceans around the world, however, Earle calls out with a voice that metaphorically comes from *under* the sea, not only in crying out in defense of the oceans' being slaughtered by the terrestrial interests of industrially driven humans but also in calling for a recognition of the necessity for mutual dependency. Earle strongly believes that marine protection and conservation is best begun by recognizing "the magnitude of our ignorance" and that with more knowledge of the ocean, it may be possible to establish "the needed *sea change* of attitude" to create an enduring ethic.[3]

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Significant to the thesis I present here, a different approach to writing about contemporary maritime issues has been taken by another notable oceanographer, Carl Safina, in his *Song for the Blue Ocean* (1999), a book which, published three years after Earle's, has been acclaimed by reviewers for its passionate voice for global marine conservation. Early in his book, Safina explains, "To plumb the extent of the changes I saw among the oceans' creatures in my home waters, I undertook a journey of discovery beyond the blue horizon."[4] Thus starting from the coast of Maine, Safina traces a journey *across* the oceans to where the bluefin tuna is caught, how quota reductions on the bluefin tuna are negotiated through a process of international meetings, and how in the huge fish market in Tokyo, the bluefin is treated impersonally as a valuable and marketable commodity within the global economy.

Expressed sympathy for the oceanic environment and its ecology is a feature of the writings not only of Earle and Safina, but also of much of current maritime writings, which must at the very least take a cautious approach to the present condition of the oceanic environment. However, in his virulent attack of fishing and the deleterious effect of global marketing, Safina's principal concern appears to be how to construct through marine conservation a better relationship with the oceanic *wild* creatures. Safina's political involvement in protecting fish appears to be grounded on his aesthetic assessment of fish as creatures that are marvelous, beautiful, and most significantly, *wild*. As a result, his strategy is to link the ocean and its conservation with the *terrestrial* wildlife conservation movement. In that attempt, his utilization of terrestrial imagery is best shown when Safina speaks of the bluefin tuna: "Close your eyes. Think fish. Do you envision half a ton of laminated muscle rocketing through the sea as fast as you drive your automobile? Do you envision a peaceful warrior capable of killing you unintentionally with a whack of its tail?"[5] The tuna's immense power is perhaps intentionally likened to American bison, African elephants, or Eurasian wolves, those dominant and powerful *terrestrial* animals that readily inspire intense controversy and anger over their exploitation and conservation.

In striving to establish a new ethic on the ocean, Earle tries to acquaint readers with the striking differences of the world deep within the ocean, a place which remains difficult for most people to experience at first hand. To familiarize terrestrial humans with the underwater environment, Earle both compares and contrasts it with terrestrial environments for the purpose of equalizing the unbalanced values attached to the two

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distinct environments. Similarly, Safina seeks support from readers in his goal to establish a sea ethic, in counterpart to Aldo Leopold's land ethic.

The more interesting point, though, as regards the purpose of the thesis presented in this book of mine, is that Safina's phrases seem to rely heavily on *terrestrial metaphors* that are essentially used like *similes* to connect both terrestrial and oceanic values; Earle, on the other hand, emphasizes how the interior of the ocean is *different* from the terrestrial environment in order to evoke readers' environmental consciousness. Although both Earle and Safina employ terrestrial as well as oceanic values and vocabulary, Earle invites her readers to take a look at what she presents as the unknowable ocean "frontier" and within that context discusses its rich biodiversity. By contrast, the argument and defense presented by Safina is put into a context likened to a voyage *on* and *across* the ocean and the creatures of the sea are drawn in parallel with terrestrial creatures.

The point to understand is that Earle and Safina are essentially contemporaries, publishing their work scarcely three years apart, and tackling the same objectives, yet each using a different voice and taking a different perspective. Nonetheless, both use terrestrial as well as oceanic imagery or orientation. This contrastive inseparability of the oceanic and the terrestrial, as is evident in their writing, is what I wish to identify as an *oscillation* between the terrestrial and the oceanic, a trajectory that I believe is crucial to an encompassing comprehension of what oceanic literature is. Whereas it may be possible to have terrestrial literature that does not reflect awareness, even subconsciously, of the oceanic, it appears to me unlikely that oceanic literature can be written and understood without this persistent, though at times covert, oscillation of the terrestrial and the oceanic.

This discussion of comparisons and contrasts between Earle and Safina is presented here as an introduction to the themes of this book. Earle's narrative is provided to exemplify the *undersea narrative* and Safina's *narrative of the surface of the sea*, both representing some of the significant tropes in sea literature. The distinction between the two needs to be emphasized not just because most studies on maritime discourse in the past have overlooked these rhetorical characteristics that extend our view toward the ocean and its literature into a more diverse and multifaceted genre, but also because articulation of this distinction helps us understand why maritime experiences, despite striking differences, have long been regarded as similar to traversing a plane figure, the view itself being a two-dimensional terrestrial view, much like a painting or landscape with only the constructed illusion of depth.

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It is for this reason that I suggested earlier that one of the aims of this book is to read oceanic literature differently. For that purpose, I would like to group oceanic literature into three topographical orientations: *on the sea*, *beneath the sea*, and *by the sea*; the first two are theoretically divorced of land, but the third category includes the adjacent and inseparable land. It is for this reason, that the first two share an affinity distinct from the category of by-the-sea literature. The value of this three-dimensional perspective is that it enables us to see, first, that sea literature comprises a rich variety of works that deserve our attention, and second, that maritime aesthetics is composed also of terrestrial values, with the interplay and interaction between those aesthetics and values providing the geometry with which we can survey the historical changes in American maritime culture, from the colonial period into the twentieth-century. For these purposes, a number of representative works in each category will be introduced.

By the sea

As Rachel Carson states in her 1955 book *The Edge of the Sea* (1955), "To understand the shore, it is not enough to catalogue its life."[6] Carson's phrase "edge of the sea" is often used interchangeably with "seashore" in her book, though apparently her creative expression encompasses a semantically wider range than is the case with the geographical term "seashore." For that reason, I would like to use *The Edge of the Sea* for examples of my third category of oceanic literature, which I have labeled *by the sea*.

Although quite simply stated by Carson, the edge of the sea is a profoundly metaphorical space. It is an elusive and indefinable boundary for the separation of the sea and the land, or a border area where the land and the sea merge. Personally, I prefer "space" to "place" in describing Carson's *edge* because for her, the beach seems to transcend its physicality to become a sort of abstract extension of land, an area that has significantly deep dimensions. The edge is not only a border between different geological areas; for Carson it also partakes of the mysterious cycle of nature's comings and goings, both in space and time. Carson expresses that duality both geographically and poetically at the same time: "It rises or falls as the glaciers melt or grow, as the floor of sediments, or as the earth's crust along the continental margins warps up or

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down in adjustment to strain and tension."[7] The edge of the sea is an ephemeral space in which we can see the dynamic intersection of history and topography; and yet, perhaps because of such characteristics, people seem reluctant to pay much attention to it. Carson readily embraces such multiple, amorphous qualities, but she is not the only writer to recognize and express this continuously shifting and evolving quality of the domain recognized as the edge of the sea. There are other writers whose works focus on the shore, the beach, and the experience of being alongside the sea.

Like Carson, narrators of *by the sea* experiences are often obsessed with both the physical and the metaphorical features of the "edge" of the ocean. The multifaceted physicality of the shore is replete with narrators' varied and shifting observations. On the other hand, the physicality not uncommonly transcends into abstract or philosophical notions and images. A notable example can be found in Henry David Thoreau's *Cape Cod* (1865), in which nineteenth-century American beach experiences find articulation. However, other works such as those by Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur, Anne Morrow Lindbergh, as well as some twentieth-century surf writing, are also introduced here to show how the space between the terrestrial and the oceanic is expressed in this subgenre. Despite revealing how both sides of the oceanic edge become transient and interactive, the discourse suggests that neither side loses its inherent essence. As the terrestrial and the oceanic continually change form, the complexity of the "edge" accelerates in step with the contemplations of the *by-the-sea* narrators. This endlessly vacillating, oscillating quality is characteristic of the essence of what literature "by the sea" represents.

Just as I have briefly outlined what I imagine a three-dimensional approach to sea literature might look like, the writing of this book is being undertaken in order to show how we can read sea literature in ways that we have not as yet attempted. Another crucial purpose of this book is to demonstrate that sea literature today is significantly different from, and much more varied than, what it was in the nineteenth century, the period which many scholars consider to have been the heyday of this genre. My argument, however, does indeed tend to focus on pre-twentieth century American maritime culture and literature, but that is because there have been few scholarly attempts to recapitulate the genre, particularly after the decline of nineteenth-century American sea literature.

As already indicated, in reading sea literature as a whole, not just in by-the-sea narratives, we continually confront an oscillation between

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the terrestrial and the oceanic. It is precisely this trajectory that I believe provides the defining features of sea literature. My emphasis on the oscillation observed between the oceanic and the terrestrial does not, however, mean that there is always a clear-cut and constant analogy of this kind in sea literature. It is rather due to in part the very nature of human relations with both the aquatic and the terrestrial environments, and the cultural productions derived from those interactions.

For some readers, this may not be a surprisingly new way of looking at sea literature because it may seem to them quite obvious that writing about the sea would also, necessarily, make reference to terrestrial matters, and vice versa. However, that point of view of easy acceptance and recognition of "the obvious" is only retroactively assumed, as historical documents can easily show: it was a costly endeavor to persuade some people that the world was not flat, and that the sun did not spin about the earth. As optical illusions often demonstrate, once the presence of something is recognized, it is sometimes difficult to retrieve its absence.

The aim of my reading of sea literature is to analyze in detail the manner in which interactions between the terrestrial and the oceanic are at work in sea literature. In doing so, since this view doesn't take the oceanic presence in sea literature for granted, it becomes possible to recognize various types of sea literature that have not yet been documented by literary scholars. For example, I intend to examine how the Puritans' terrestrial wilderness experience is a conflation of both oceanic and the terrestrial imagery fit to their historical situation. Additionally, I hope that consideration of oceanic elements in an early African slave narrative will expose some of the brutal nature of the slaves' trans-Atlantic experiences. In other words, a detailed investigation of how oceanic and terrestrial elements are conflated in a number of early American colonial experiences makes possible a reevaluation of the means, the degree, and the effect of such a conflation of the terrestrial and the oceanic in literature and discourse of a later time.

The terrestrial and the oceanic in American literature are not only conflated, however. They also collide. One example alone exposes this. Underwater narratives penned at the time when humans first risked experiencing new types of environmental activities vividly portray the awesomeness of that unworldly experience. William Beebe witnessed grotesque, deep-water organisms that he was at a loss to describe verbally, as if to suggest that terrestrial aesthetics could not at that time properly capture the underwater aquatic environment and its bewilderingly

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unfamiliar organisms. In most early underwater narratives, writers often regard the terrestrial and the oceanic as irreconcilable. Hence, we oftentimes encounter narrators' observations emphasizing profound contrasts between the terrestrial and the oceanic: "[U]nderwater my body seemed to have new properties," as Stephen Harrigan writes in *Water and Light: A Diver's Journey to a Coral Reef* (1992): It "had, for the first time, a grace of movement."[8]

The oceanic is oftentimes resistant to the terrestrial in coastal sea literature. This collision of the terrestrial and the oceanic constitutes one of the vivid rhetorical features of both coastal and underwater narratives. In most surf narratives, for example, surfers often live like modern hermits, distancing themselves from urban society, and their prose also seems to antagonize land-based ways of life. The terrestrial, in this sense, can be interpreted as various values and codes of living that are in opposition to those of the oceanic. For Anne Morrow Lindbergh, the collision might be perceived as a male-dominated value system that women have to resist; Rachel Carson, on the other hand, might find expression through scientific description of coastal erosion or redistribution of sediments caused by waves, and then elaborate further such geographical phenomena within her oceanic aesthetics.

Even such a quick look into the variety of interactions between the terrestrial and the oceanic will show, as I contend, that sea literature has been read, in the past, from a view that generally looks at the ocean as though it were a vast yet flat, palpable, two-dimensional space dominated by the narratives of voyages and explorations by ships. Indeed, discussion of sea literature often seems to mean only that literature fundamentally concerned with fishing, seafaring, and maritime issues. Not only has sea literature been conceived of as being generically as literature, to use my term, "on the sea," but also examples of American literature have been studied and analyzed within that framework. As I indicated earlier, I suspect this tendency is probably derived from our terrestrial inclination in literature, a view that tends to look at ocean activities as undertaken on a plane figure, similar to our typical and familiar activities on land. It is of course inevitable for humans, as terrestrial beings, to apply terrestrial values and prejudices. I am not, therefore, suggesting that we should do away with our terrestrial desires; rather, by advocating a confrontation with the subconscious features of our desires, I wish to contribute to our better understanding of American literature and its multiple associations with the maritime environment.

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In the tradition of American literature and its scholarship, I have referred to our terrestrial tendencies as "terrestrial desire." However, I argue that a "sea change" of attitude and a shift of focus toward "desire of the oceanic" can enable us to appreciate better not only sea literature but also literature in general and the dual effect of literature to maintain and to change human nature. I therefore propose that, as a test case, we use my three-dimensional approach to explore sea literature as a whole, traversing American history and culture from its beginnings up through the twentieth century, so that we can come to recognize how American experiences, memories, and vision have changed.

The terrestrial and the oceanic

The terrestrial and the oceanic, the terms that I have used to explain the preliminary yet central theme of the book need to be clarified. Gray Kroll similarly explains, in his *America's Ocean Wilderness: A Cultural History of Twentieth-Century* (2008), that the oceanic environment serves as the last frontier; he argues that the oceanic frontier, like its predecessor on the terrestrial, was culturally consumed as a commodity, scientifically studied, and materially exploited. Thus far, as is shown in the way I have repeatedly used the terms, the oscillation of both the terrestrial and the oceanic can be regarded as two distinct elements that constitute maritime aesthetics. While my approach might appear to be similar to Kroll's thesis, it differs from his in that I attempt to focus on the interrelationship between the terrestrial and the oceanic. The terrestrial comprises values, experiences, expressions, or imaginations related to land; likewise, the oceanic pertains to the seas. Sometimes conceived of as antonyms for each other, the terrestrial and the oceanic may remind us of similarly paired counterparts, such as land and sea, physicality and spirituality, concrete and abstract, or body and spirit, to list a few. I have come to believe, though, that the terrestrial and the oceanic are not simply dichotomous but rather constituent of each other. Both the terrestrial and the oceanic internalize each other to some extent, so sometimes both look as though they are complemented by each other and by their own reflection. I am certainly aware that the distinction between the terrestrial and the oceanic remains vague; but I hope to sharpen that distinction through providing additional explanations in the following chapters using textual analysis to expose both terrestrial and oceanic elements in American literature.

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My reading of sea literature, especially concerning the overarching changes in traditions from the colonial period to the late twentieth century, can be allied with the latest tendencies in the rapidly evolving fields of ecocriticism and environmental humanities. In her *Bodily Natures: Science, Environment, and the Material Self* (2010), Stacy Alaimo presents a broad survey regarding how an analysis into toxic discourse enables us to see "trans-corporality," a theoretical concept that "the human is always intermeshed with the more-than-human world," a view that "underlines the extent to which the substance of the human is ultimately inseparable from 'the environment' "[9] Serenella Iovino's and Serpil Oppermann's 2012 article in *ISLE: Interdisciplinary Studies in Literature and Environment* entitled "Theorizing Material Ecocriticism: A Diptych" discusses a "material turn" in environmental humanities surveying various philosophical inquiries into the relationships between matters and meanings in such a way that material expressions cannot be separated from any literary, cultural, and social interpretations. In the same issue of *ISLE* (19.2), Alaimo also contributed an article titled "States of Suspension: Trans-corporeality at Sea" in which she examines "two different modes of linking terrestrial humans with marine creatures: origin stories that culminate in aquatic evolutionary histories and contemporary transcorporeal tracings that dramatize the far-flung effects of human practices and the strange agencies of banal objects."[10] In the context of ecocriticism, or to put it in a broader, overarching term, environmental humanities, my focus on the oscillation between the oceanic and the terrestrial is also associated with this line of a "new" material direction, a direction that aims to focus on elemental aspects of the environment that resonate with environmental aesthetics as well as with environmental problems.

In what follows, then, I wish to join this vigorous dialogue on "new materialism" by adding some unnoticed examples in sea narratives, finding the materiality in the liquid environment while elaborating upon some of the unique and yet problematic tendencies in the marine environment. I will take the materiality of both the terrestrial and the oceanic seriously to reevaluate sea literature. My 3-D approach is inevitable not only because it helps us see how the maritime environment has been conceived of vis-à-vis the terrestrial environment but also because it reveals how traditional views toward maritime history and culture have seen them as plane figures, lacking consideration of the ocean as a watery, unsegmented space.

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By looking for various oscillations between the oceanic and the terrestrial, I hope to expose a way to appreciate how American literature in the twentieth-first century might look. Reading sea literature will also help us see in part how immanent environmental problems today should be understood. Global warming, ocean acidification, marine pollution, and issues of endangered marine species, to name a few, have already been recognized as issues interconnected with the terrestrial environmental, especially for undertaking remediation measures. In our exploration of sea literature, we can unearth America's terrestrial desire, predominant in American culture and observable in all American literature and cultural activities. Inversely, in literature predominantly concerning land-based experiences, we can recognize that the oceanic elements that are present are not merely literary devices, nor setting, nor metaphorical expressions, but are rather to be seen as direct elements or indirect remnants that compose American experiences in general.

Though it is my hope that this book will help us appreciate sea literature more comprehensively, my ultimate hope is that this book will give readers insight into becoming aware that what they can observe and envision will increase and expand when they begin to view sea literature in a new light. Sea literature thus reminds us that we are no more separated from the oceanic than is the terrestrial. We are one.

Notes

1 Sylvia A. Earle. *Sea Change: A Message of the Oceans*. New York: Ballantine Books, 1995. (xvi). Print.
2 Ibid. (310).
3 Ibid. (327).
4 Carl Safina. *Song for the Blue Ocean*. New York: Holt Paperbacks, 1999. (xiv). Print.
5 Ibid. (9).
6 Rachel Carson. *The Edge of the Sea*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1955. (vii). Print.
7 Ibid. (1).
8 Stephen Harrigan. *Water and Light: A Diver's Journey to a Coral Reef*. New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1992. (9). Print.
9 Stacy Alaimo. *Bodily Natures: Science, Environment, and the Material Self*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2010. (2). Print.
10 Stacy Alaimo. "States of Suspension: Trans-corporeality at Sea." *ISLE: Interdisciplinary Studies in Literature and Environment* 19.3 (2012): 476–493. (478).

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1

American Sea Literature—*on* the Sea

Abstract: *This chapter gives an outline of the study of sea literature in the past, arguing that the traditional maritime literary studies and maritime cultural history haven't looked at the oceanic environment as a whole, which resulted in too much an emphasis on fishing, trading, voyages, explorations on the ocean. Such a slant view to maritime activities might have to do with: first, humans' existence as terrestrial beings, who have tended to look at the ocean as a plane figure; and second, the view that the land (terrestrial) and the sea (oceanic) are rigidly separated and opposed. As a new way to better look at sea literature, the author reinterprets some representative sea literature by finding how we can find oceanic experience embedded in some of the terrestrial experience. The authors to be mainly discussed are William Bradford, Olaudah Equiano, Washington Irving, Richard Henry Dana, Jr., Joshua Slocum, and Peter Matthiessen.*

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> [T]he ocean which, although surrounding this earth, the home of the human race, with the ebb and flow of its tides, can be neither seized nor inclosed; nay, which rather possesse the earth than is by it possessed.[1]
>
> Hugo Grotius. *The Freedom of the Seas*

Sea literature on the sea

When people speak of sea literature, they often have in mind maritime literature that concerns fishing, shipwrecks, voyages of exploration or emigration, commercial transport, or naval wartime vessels. Today, within that narrow framework, sea literature is either anachronistic or scarcely exists for the reason that most of those maritime activities have dwindled away or have radically changed. For instance, except for commercial fishermen, or for islanders who routinely commute across the waters, or for funded researchers and explorers and accompanying journalists, the idea of travelling by boat or ship has come to mean a luxurious cruise or the recreational activities of the wealthy, such as sport fishing and yacht racing, or perhaps the smuggling of prohibited substances and illegal immigrants. In recent decades, maritime trade has become the global business of mass transport, human labor having been reduced by usage of enormous tankers and specialized container-transporting cargo ships. Military waterborne craft have undergone even greater changes, much of which is kept under wraps. The spread and dominance of time-saving and cost-effective commercial aviation for transport of both humans and commodities has altered people's attitudes toward the ocean, especially the people of urban, industrialized nations. Except for people living in areas vulnerable to typhoons and tsunamis, or to engulfment by waves of tourists, even the oceans' contribution to weather and rainfall appears to be of scarce interest. With all those issues cast aside, for many people the oceans of today appear to have value primarily for recreation and tourism, for providing food and mineral resources, and for disposal of unwanted substances.

But such a radical alteration of people's attitude does not mean that there is no longer a place for the ocean in literature and culture. On the contrary, precisely because of these fundamental changes in the roles and interrelationships of the ocean and human society, there is an even

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greater need for literary studies to probe into what sea literature has meant in the past, what it means today, and what it can mean for our future.

School teachers and librarians, if asked about British and American literature of the sea, are likely to offer the names of Daniel Defoe, James Fenimore Cooper, Charles Dickens, Robert Louis Stevenson, Herman Melville, Jack London, and perhaps Joseph Conrad or, more recently, Patrick O'Brian. It is a telling note that many of these names are now associated with "children's literature." Nonetheless, there are newer generations who have written about maritime activities either in the late nineteenth or throughout the twentieth century, writers such as William Warner (*Beautiful Swimmers*), Sena Jeter Naslund (*Ahab's Wife: Or, The Star-Gazer*), Linda Greenlaw (*The Hungry Ocean: A Swordboat Captain's Journey*), Antonio Benítez-Rojo (*A View from the Mangrove*), Thomas Farber (*On Water*), Peter Nichols (*Sea Change: Alone across the Atlantic in a Wooden Boat*), to name but a few. Despite the brevity of this list, these newer books—collectively called "modern sea literature"—present a variety of maritime experiences. But I suspect that to do full justice to the authors, even this more recent sea literature is most beneficially read with a recognition and understanding of the extent to which our modern maritime experiences have changed from what was commonly understood before the advent of the twentieth century.

What is required is a new approach to sea literature. This chapter approaches the task by looking first at maritime activities undertaken on the surface of the ocean as well as by examining what constitutes important tropes of this genre of sea literature from the colonial period through the twentieth century.

In fact, the study of sea literature—or sometimes interchangeably called "maritime literature" throughout the book—has tended to focus on voyages, fishing, expeditions, migration, or related maritime issues such as storms, mutinies, piracy, and naval wars, all of which are based on activities conducted on or affecting the surface of the ocean, or else they are stories about ships and seamen. For example, there are relatively fewer analyses of beachcombing, diving, and submarine explorations, activities that are distinctively associated with the oceanic environment.

While our ways to interact with the oceanic environment today are different from the "traditional" maritime experiences of the past—some of which are either long gone or have given way to more modern versions—what we imagine when we think of the ocean and maritime

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issues seems to remain encapsulated in the older literature. A question to be pursued in this study presented here, therefore, is why our maritime experiences and imagination remain afloat in seas that are no longer so threateningly unfamiliar, that no longer have the kind of grandeur and allure of preflight imagination. In pondering such a question, I shall present below how maritime imagination has been conceptualized and represented in both maritime history and literature; while doing so, I will not only historically trace some of the representative works on the sea but attempt to find a new way to look at both old and new types of sea literature by using the concepts of the terrestrial and the oceanic.

Historical and cultural contexts

The outline of the study of sea literature

There are some persistent difficulties in a genealogical study of the ocean. According to Christopher L. Connery, some of the problems derive from "western modes of knowing." It may be "presumptuous," Connery argues, "to imagine that westerners can simply will themselves into another way of being and thinking, one where the ocean will be fully divested of its absolute exteriority, and where the conceptual limitations of both place and space have been superseded."[2] Or, as Ulrich Kinzel similarly claims, "The situation of the maritime, modern subject is combined with the scientific problem of mapping something—the ocean—which does not—in the form of landmarks, coastline, etc.—yield to any visible shape or trace. It seems as if writing the ocean can only claim a virtual reality."[3] For Connery and Kinzel, the concept of the oceanic as opposed to the terrestrial presents some conceptual difficulties while it reveals how terrestriality is predominant in the western civilization. Connery also finds that "[t]he cyber-body, de-materialized, networked, and connected, is the latest version of earth knowing that supersedes the sea."[4] The earth and our experience on land are often considered imagined through terrestriality: such as space, place, nations, borders, geography, and so on.

While I agree with Kinzel and Connery, who regard the terrestrial tendency as an important ideological base of the western civilization, I will suggest that not just the terrestrial but the terrestrial and the oceanic "both" still have played important roles in our society in general. In this sense, I would slightly modify Connery's view that the terrestrial

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tendency is no longer centralized in our society now; I will look into American literature and culture in detail to delineate how both the terrestrial and the oceanic constitute each other, though sometimes they look competing and contrasted.

Just like Connery looks at the oceanic presence in our society today, many will share the view that contemporary maritime culture is different from what it was, for example, in the nineteenth century. In his *Modernity at Sea: Melville, Marx, Conrad in Crisis* (2002), Cesare Casarino uses sea literature at the turn of nineteenth to twentieth centuries to theoretically study modernism's production of crisis figured through a ship as Foucauldian "heterotopia," a figurative utopia critically represented in culture. In sea novels, Casarino thinks that we can observe modernity as crisis because the ship, its labors are centered on body as well as developed through brotherhood, captures a transition from mercantile to industrial capitalism as something new and inconceivable. Casarino's argument would be very helpful not merely to analyze how literary discourse responded to cultural and economic transitions at the turn of century but to see there is a plentiful possibility for literary theory in sea literature. By arguing that maritime fiction in the turn of century captures and polemicizes modernism's notions of spaces and crisis; however, Casarino, like many others who study maritime literature, frames his arguments in a view that the terrestrial influenced the oceanic in the way that modernism was facilitated by the terrestrial industrial revolution. In his view, the terrestrial precedes the oceanic in terms of material production and progress because the focus lies in the late-nineteenth-century global economy where maritime mercantile economy was considered declined.

About the oceanic roles in the formation of modernity, there is a view that the oceanic economy was not always posterior to the terrestrial. Daniel Headrick, in *The Tentacles of Progress: Technology Transfer in the Age of Imperialism, 1850–1940* (1988), examines the way the transfer of the Western technology to European colonies didn't initiate the industrial revolution in those countries, but caused the traditional economies in the colonial regions to remain underdeveloped. In Headrick's view, the oceanic mediates the terrestrial, complementing the terrestrial development, and it sheds light on the connection between the terrestrial and the oceanic emphasizing the oceanic contribution to the development of modern capitalistic global economy and accompanying European imperialism.

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For a more comprehensive look at the oceanic space, Philip Steinberg, for example, argues that the history of the ocean in *The Social Construction of the Ocean* (2001) ought to be distinguished in three ocean space: "a non-territorial 'Indian Ocean' construction in which the sea is constructed as an asocial space between societies, a highly territorial 'Micronesian' construction in which the sea is perceived and managed as an extension of land-space, and a complex 'Mediterranean' construction in which the sea is defined as non-possessible but nonetheless a legitimate arena for expressing and contesting social power."[5] Steinberg's categorization alerts us to a hasty generalization of the ocean as a homogenized entity based on a position that the oceanic environment as social construction. Indeed, one of the difficulties concerning conceptualizing the ocean derives from its vastness that covers about 70 % of the surface of the Earth, connecting all the continents and islands. The ocean serves to various kinds of maritime activities with multiple purposes depending on diverse political regime designed in the past. Like the industrial age, for example, when most economic activities increasingly focused on production and consumption for the benefits of colonial powers, the deep sea, in Stenberg's words, "became defined as a great void, idealized as outside society, a wild space of nature that was antithetical to the social places on land that could be planned, controlled, and developed."[6] It is safe to say that my approach to sea literature has a lot in common with Steinberg in that the oceanic is based on the relationships between human activities and the marine environment. In my argument, by focusing on both pre and postindustrial periods, I shall look at more in detail on how the oceanic presence has changed and survived.

Although I don't point to any further conceptual frameworks, I believe these kinds of almost endless history of human activities on/in/by the oceans in part constitutes what we have difficulty making of it. Like Connery who is cautious about how we approach the ocean, I would like to look at the ocean very carefully with an emphasis on its relationship with the terrestrial. Like Casarino and Steinberg, I carefully treat maritime discourse as an important critical approach to reflect on our presupposed understanding about society, culture, and history. Just as I briefly pointed out, there are some critics who regard the ocean as a subordinate entity to the terrestrial, while others consider it a medium comprising the global economy. And there is a position that separately views the oceanic as an independent space through which we can understand diverse maritime activities depending on regions.

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To reiterate, my approach to this long-studied binary concept of the terrestrial and the oceanic is that both of them are, though it seems radically opposed in meaning, constituent of each other. The oceanic element of sea literature ought to be captured through its interactions with the terrestrial, and I shall begin the study of sea literature by asking this most fundamental question with a special emphasis on sea: Where is the ocean in sea literature? I shall attempt to answer this question by shedding light on the oceanic element in what is generally considered terrestrial experiences. If we can find some oceanic element in terrestrial experience, then, the general notion of the oceanic (or terrestrial as well) will become worthy of revaluation. Then I would like to ask my reader to join me in finding the oceanic presence in our surroundings and experiences, thereby we can prepare for a reinterpretation of American sea literature and its history.

Conflated wilderness: the terrestrial and the oceanic

Since the publication of Roderick Nash's classic *Wilderness and the American Mind* (1967), the studies of wilderness have been one of the most important topics in the studies of American culture and history. But my argument here is that, in the study of American wilderness, oceanic experiences and aesthetics are less emphasized than the terrestrial. Wilderness is generally defined as uncultivated or undeveloped land where humans are absent, but it also designates the sea or outer space.[7] Bearing both metaphorical meanings and actual presence, wilderness experiences cannot be separated from American colonial experiences where the Puritan settlers conceived their mission as God's will to cultivate and to break the evil. As Max Oelschlaeger's *The Idea of Wilderness* (1993) discusses, the concept of wilderness derives from the Anglo-Saxon word in which human culture depends upon a mainly agricultural economy. Only because it derived from the agrarian culture, we don't necessarily have to limit the discussion of wilderness to terrestrial experiences simply because, logically speaking, the definition itself does not exclude the oceanic environment. Even if the concept of wilderness is based on agricultural experiences on the terrestrial, the definitive traits such as the "absence of humans," "uncultivated," and "undeveloped" ring true to the oceanic. The terrestrial wilderness definition cannot seem inapplicable when it comes to the notion of how to conquer "howling wilderness" becomes an obstacle for the settlement.

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Part of my thesis was already indicated in Thomas Philbrick's *James Fenimore Cooper and the Development of American Sea Fiction* (1961), the first book that exclusively expands the application of wilderness concept to the reading of James Fenimore Cooper's sea fictions. The author James Fenimore Cooper himself has been an iconic figure in American culture whose characters Natty Bumppo or Chingachgook represent the American wilderness and frontier experiences; however, Philbrick argues that Cooper is, first and foremost, the author of American sea literature, in which Cooper is successful in depicting American "oceanic" wilderness and quasi-frontier experiences in the ocean's vastness and limitless features. Suggesting both terrestrial and oceanic experiences and aesthetics to be important part of Cooper's work, Philbrick further emphasizes how the tradition of sea literature composes an important part of the American maritime literary history, which, according to him, is culminated by *Moby-Dick*. In the following passage, I shall attempt to reinforce Philbrick's attempt to read maritime experience as a basis of American literature while presenting a different approach to conceptualize the terrestrial, the oceanic, and American sea literature, respectively.

William Bradford: imagined oceanic in the terrestrial

Let me try to re-read the often-quoted passage from William Bradford as an example of Puritan's wilderness on the ocean as a test case.

> Being thus arrived in a good harbor and brought safe to land, they fell upon their knees and blessed the God of heaven, who had brought them over the vast and furious ocean, and delivered them from all the perils and miseries thereof, againe to set their feete on the firme and stable earth, their proper element.[sic][8]

In his *Of Plymouth Plantation*, Bradford rarely refers to the ocean during his voyage to the New World. Here, too, the description of the ocean itself remains minor; nonetheless, the ocean is "vast and furious," full of "perils and miseries," all of which are closely associated with terrestrial wilderness experiences in general. It is implied that the oceanic environment is apart from and antagonistic to human life, and therefore, the Puritans' safe arrival at Cape Cod in this passage is positively described as "their feete on the firme [sic] and stable earth, their proper element." Being "firme and stable," the earth is considered a "proper element," and it follows that the terrestrial environment is where they ought to belong. In fact, during the early stage of colonial development, settlers

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depended on fish for foodstuff to consume as well as commercial products to export.[9] Perhaps, wanting to persuade people on board to settle in Plymouth—not in the colony of Virginia where the *Mayflower* initially planned to arrive, Bradford must have wished to justify the land to be chosen.

Whatever reasons Bradford had, the material reality of the terrestrial in his narrative is verbally emphasized, and yet, it seems more important that the materiality itself would haven't been so enhanced without their experience full of "perils and miseries" on the ocean and the contrast between the terrestrial and the oceanic experience. The terrestrial and the oceanic here constitute some essential part of the Pilgrims' experience in which both of them reinforce each other to secure each of the elements. Thus the narrative goes on as follows:

> But hear I cannot but stay and make a pause, and stand half amazed at this poore peoples presente condition; and so I thinke will the reader too, when he well considers the same. Being thus passed the vast ocean, and a sea of troubles before in their preparation (as may be remembered by that which wente before), they had now no friends to wellcome them, nor inns to entertaine or refresh their weatherbeaten bodies, no houses or much less townes to repaire too, to seeke for succor [sic].[10]

In this quote, too, Bradford describes that people are "weatherbeaten" in a miserable condition after "a sea of troubles." The combination of "sea" and "trouble"—though it is conventional use—seems aptly employed in the way that it even functions as a metaphor describing the hardship of an oceanic transportation across the Atlantic. If the wilderness experience or even frontier experience are essential part of the American civilization, then, the early Pilgrims' experiences on the ocean should not be ignored.

Admitting the early Pilgrims' journeys remain partial experience in a larger framework of migration experience during the Great Migration Period in the 1630s, the case is a good example to show how an oceanic migration constitutes some important part of colonial experience in America. As Bradford's brief account shows, the Pilgrims' journeys to the New World were full of perils, but the voyage was perceived in part as a passage to revelation and confirmed their providential views. David Cressy finds the first generation of the Puritan emigrants to New England to be an important part of the American colonial history. He writes: "No wonder that New England sermonists employed such

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evocative maritime imagery; no wonder that the Puritan memorialists presented the first comers to New England as heroes who had braved a troublesome sea."[11] Cressy characterizes the trans-Atlantic voyage for the Puritans in the 1630s in mainly three ways: religious (in reinforcing the God's Providence), social (reforming sense of community), novel (maritime experiences on the ship full of wonders and awe—thereby reinforce the God's providence). Although these characteristics may be applicable to other voyagers, Cressy concludes: "the New England Puritans were unique in supplying a coherent framework for interpreting, remembering, and giving significance to their ocean passage."[12]

Building upon Cressy's characterizations, I would like to suggest further that what characterizes oceanic experience in Puritans' experience on the surface of the ocean, or Puritans' experiences in, what is best captured in Cressy's phrase, the "floating regime." Cressy writes: "Although social relationships on board continued to reflect the established modulations of degree, rank, and status—that is, servants continued to obey their masters, artisans deferred to yeomen, and tradesmen still acknowledged the superiority of gentlemen—the special circumstances of the floating regime conspired to diminish traditional attributes of social status."[13] The "special circumstances" of the maritime environment creates the "floating regime," which may be safe to find synonymous to Michel Foucault's "heterotopia"—the concept referring to "a kind of effectively enacted utopia in which the real sites, all the other real sites that can be found within the culture, are simultaneously represented, contested, and inverted"[14] Foucault also refers to the boat—though in a suppositional way—as a "floating piece of space, a place without a place."[15]

Sailors are often referred to as "seamen" as opposed to landmen. Acknowledged as a different type of people, seamen are often characterized by the early colonists as "profane" or "blasphemous," people who are destined to be smitten by the God. For others, too, sailors are more or less characterized as uneducated, rudimental, violent, or outlawish.[16] One thing in common is that seamen are a different type of people who have different codes of values compared to landmen.[17] Taking cue from Foucault, seamen can be considered the people living in the "heterotopia," or a "floating piece of space, a place without a place," sailors represent terrestrial values that are contested and inverted. Considering all the modern values, for example, natural laws cannot be validated on the ocean space, which is exactly what Hugo Grotius argued on treatise on free trade long time ago. The property rights cannot be claimed in a

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floating place where terrestrial values seem invalidated at a moment of its application.

In such a chaotic or disordered space in terrestrial sense, however, maritime heterotopia is not so much chaotic as ordered and disciplined. As Foucault mentions in associating heterotopia with the Puritan community in colonial America, a rational or hierarchical order is at work, and it is also true for a ship as heterotopia. This is exactly an inevitable theme in studying sea novels in the nineteenth century, through such topics as the representations of sea captains, hierarchical orders within the ship, brotherhood among shipmates.[18] In this respect, the oscillation between the terrestrial and the oceanic should be remembered because, just like the Puritan society in which unique and rigid codes of values are required, the oceanic space is characterized as chaotic while social orders and hierarchical relationship are imposed to maintain the human life upon the ocean. John Winthrop also writes in the beginning of his lecture in "A Model of Christian Charity": "God Almighty in his most holy and wise providence hath so disposed of the condition of mankind, as in all times some must be rich, some poor, some high and eminent in power and dignity, others mean and in subjection."[19] To build a "City upon a Hill," John Winthrop expresses this famous invocation said to have been delivered on the ship, many take it for granted that he refers to terrestrial plantation projects to be unfold; and yet the "City upon a Hill" cannot be separated from oceanic experiences and imaginations that most of the early colonial settlers go through.[20] Likewise, it is this permeated oceanic element into American literary expressions that I shall further explicate so as to reexamine terrestrial desires that formed its literary traditions.

Olaudah Equiano: terrestrialized oceanic

As I have studied, early colonists, particularly the Pilgrims' and Puritans' narratives on their voyages and colonial lives provide a new approach to find the oceanic presence in the terrestrial experience as well as terrestrial elements in the oceanic experiences. However, focusing only on wilderness might exclude other kinds of aesthetics on, and relationships with, the oceans. To elaborate upon this potential shortcoming, let me briefly look at Olaudah Equiano's narrative. Equiano was one of 3 million Africans shipped across the Atlantic in British ships in the course of the eighteenth century,[21] or one of 50,000 Africans carried to the

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New World in 1756.[22] As Equiano was sold and transported from one place to another, one of the biggest astonishments expressed was at the sight of the ocean and the Brinish ship. Equiano writes, "The first object which saluted my eyes when I arrived on the coast was the sea, and a slave ship, which was then riding at anchor, and waiting for its cargo." This astonishment, however, soon changes into "terror." He continues, "I was immediately handled and tossed up to see if I were sound by some of the crew; and I was now persuaded that I had gotten into a world of bad spirits, and that they were going to kill me."[23] His astonishment is "soon converted into terror" on board where he was like other slaves at that time inspected. He is "soon put down under the decks, and there I received such a salutation in my nostrils as I had never experienced in my life."[24] In his narrative, the readers are soon introduced into the interior of the ship full of cruelty, "with the loathsomeness of the stench, and crying together." Then Equiano further describes:

> I became so sick and low that I was not able to eat, nor had I the least desire to taste any thing. I now wished for the last friend, death, to relieve me; but soon, to my grief, two of the white men offered me eatables; and, on my refusing to eat, one of them held me fast by the hands, and laid me across I think the windlass, and tied my feet, while the other flogged me severely.[25]

For Equiano, oceanic experience is confined to the inside of what he refers to the "hollow place"—the slave ship—where, like other abducted Africans, chained or tied with the windlass. Under the decks, however, there are so full of "loathsomeness of the stench, and crying together" that Equiano had a hard time becoming able to eat. The description of the oceanic environment is very limited not only because Equiano had never seen the ocean before but because his oceanic experience is confined to the hostile interior of the slave ship. All the more for the deprived seascape forces us to imagine what the voyage experience was like for millions of slaves like him.

> I had never experienced anything of this kind before; and although, not being used to the water, I naturally feared that element the first time I saw it, yet nevertheless, could I have got over the nettings, I would have jumped over the side, but I could not; and, besides, the crew used to watch us very closely who were not chained down to the decks, lest we should leap into the water: and I have seen some of these poor African prisoners most severely cut for attempting to do so, and hourly whipped for not eating. This indeed was often the case with myself.[26]

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Unlike Bradford, who reconfirms in his narrative the terrestrial element after the oceanic experience, Equiano expresses his surprise at the "element" of the water after his eleven years of life in the Nigerian village of Isseke. As soon as the element of the water is recognized, however, it converted into an image of freedom from the slave ship. For Africans like him, the element of water constitutes the oceanic, which further translates into a place to seek freedom, but it only would have been so at the cost of their lives. In fact, there is a description in which his countrymen choose death in the ocean:

> [T]wo of my wearied country men who were chained together (I was near them at the time), preferring death to such a life of misery, somehow made through the nettings and jumped into the sea; immediately another quite dejected fellow, who, on account of his illness, was suffered to be out of irons, also followed their examples.[27]

What may at first seem an obvious lack of the oceanic becomes less so when we start conceptualizing what constitute the surface of the ocean experiences and its interference with literature.

Of course one can argue that Equiano's maritime experience must be gone through terrestrialization because it was written not at the time of, but after, his experience as a slave. What I pointed out as maritime references in Equiano's narrative can be interpreted as something created through his terrestrial experience and imagination—and in this sense, all maritime writing can considered terrestrialized when we read them. Or it may be safe to say that all maritime experience cannot avoid terrestrialization at the time of verbalization for language itself is in essence more terrestrial than oceanic. But I reiterate that this is exactly what I have emphasized in reading not only Equiano but all maritime narratives as the conflated terrestrial and oceanic. It is not until we grant the ambiguous relations and structures of the terrestrial and the oceanic that we can grasp the movements of black people as a means to analyze, in Paul Gilroy's term, the "Black Atlantic" in more detail. In his 1993 book, he writes: "The history of the black Atlantic since then, continually crisscrossed by the movements of black people—not only as commodities but engaged in various struggles toward emancipation, autonomy, and citizenship—provides a means to reexamine the problems of nationality, location, identity, and historical memory."[28] While Gilroy emphasizes the roles of the ocean and the ship to obtain a more comprehensive look at the history of slavery, my reading of Equiano will complement what

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Gilroy doesn't show in reading Equiano because Gilroy focuses on the memories of slavery figuratively seen in terrestrial experience such as music, identity, and nationality. With Gilroy I agree that the ocean plays a significant role in slave narratives; but I suggest that slave narratives on the surface of the ocean should be examined as a means to look at how slave narratives can be read in the context of sea literature in general in order to analyze what slave experience was like, without relying too much on the assumption that slave system is operated on land, not on the ocean.

The oceanic in the American colonial economy

The potential wealth of New England for early colonists was, in an English adventurer John Smith's view, fishing, which further to be developed into whaling industry flourished during the eighteenth and mid-nineteenth century. Smith writes: "The maine Staple, from hence to bee extracted for the present to produce the rest, is fish; which however it may seeme a mean and base commoditie: yet who will but truly take the pains and consider the sequell, I thinke will allow it well worth the labour [sic]."[29] The producers of goods for foreign trade, shipbuilders, people engaged in trade on and off shore, all process and conditions were important in shaping the American maritime culture. Thus the increasing numbers of navigations between America and other countries also involve interactions between the terrestrial and the oceanic in that navigations required terrestrial resources from goods to trade and ships to transports.

According to K. Jack Bauer, the exploitation of the New England forest took place when the colonial America established a maritime-based economy during seventeenth century, and early colonists cut trees for fuel, used timber for lumber, and shipbuilding. Bauer writes:

> Colonial vessels were not only small but were quickly and cheaply put together. In 1700, American builders produced about 4,000 tons of shipping at approximately 60 percent of the cost of building in European yards. At the end of the colonial period, 1769–71, American yards averaged about 35,000 tons a year at price around £3–4 per ton while British builders could not operate profitably below £5–7.[30]

Bauer estimates that in the late colonial era, when production averaged about 20,000 tons annually, shipbuilders used between 8 and 10 million board feet per year which translates into "16,000–20,000 trees."[31] A great and valuable foreign commerce was the result of their operations, and

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this, reacting upon the ship-building industry at home, made it an active and prosperous business within a hundred years of the time of the first permanent settlement.[32] Ship-building was one of the most immediate tasks to stabilize the colonial life, and as early as 1640, the colonies began to use larger ships to broaden their carrying trade into areas that made them to gain more profit.[33] During the seventeenth century, while forest products ranged from pine mast, turpentine, pitch, and tar, these resources became part of an emerging system of world trade, animals such as beaver, fox, lynx were trapped for their pelts and traded. In addition to these resources, "inorganic resources were increasingly beginning to be exploited, such as iron ore for guns, spades, and kettles and silicon for glass-making."[34]

If the wilderness experience developed through the colonial activities such as cultivation and settlement, it is also important to note what lies behind the scene. The mercantile economy that supported the colonial life involved maritime activities based on long-distance trade financed by merchant capital; to put it another way, maritime activities were in part fueled by the terrestrial resources and economy that tied continental capitalism together. If the American maritime activities were substantiated by the terrestrial resource that helped the development of the terrestrial economy which further contributed to the western terrestrial expansion, then, the collaboration of the oceanic and the terrestrial constituted the most essential part of American growth in the colonial period. The wilderness and frontier, both of which are the essential American colonial experiences, are not just terrestrial but oceanic.

In the long run, my analyses on Bradford and Equiano in the early American sea literature help us explain sea literature on the surface of the ocean tends to focus on the terrestrial. The early Puritans' cases show that the passage on the ocean is part of Christian experience through which their new life on the new world is confirmed. Equiano's surprise at the ocean indicates where he is kidnapped, and all the more for the lack of the ocean references in the narrative Equiano's maritime experience reinforces the fact that the oceanic is sometimes fragmentally experienced through the interior space of the (slave) ship and his and many others' cruel voyage on the Atlantic. In both narratives the presence of the ocean remains minor in the sense that the ocean presence is minimally verbalized, but that doesn't mean that the ocean has only a petty role to play. Rather, the oceanic and the terrestrial correlate each other to emphasize the place of the oceanic environment at that time when the

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ocean is expressed and represented as a site of terrestrial desire, seems terrestrialized in the sense that the ocean is loaded with terrestrial values as though, without the terrestrial elements such as a ship and land, the ocean couldn't exist.

Oceanic presence in American literature from nineteenth to twentieth century

Washington Irving: "The Voyage" in *The Sketch Book*

"To an American visiting Europe the long voyage he has to make is an excellent preparative," Washington Irving writes in his "The Voyage."[35] A representative American writer who lived at a time when American maritime activities were the central part of American culture, what Irving wrote was full of nautical elements. Unlike Pilgrims, Puritans, or most of African slaves who crossed the Atlantic to America as a first generation of emigrants, Irving wrote as an American whose experience was based on America. Irving continues, "The temporary absence of worldly scenes and employments produces a state of mind peculiarly fitted to receive new and vivid impressions. The *vast space of waters* that separates the hemispheres is like a *blank page in existence*." The oceanic space was constituted by vast water, which at first does not seem contributive to the depiction of seascape. The oceanic is experienced something different from the terrestrial; in other words, his narrative shows that the terrestrial is conceived of as distinct from the oceanic. In the following passage, Irving writes:

> From the moment you lose sight of the land you have left, all is vacancy until you step on the opposite shore, and are launched at once into the *bustle and novelties* of *another world*. [The voyage] makes us conscious of being cast loose from the secure anchorage of settled life and sent adrift upon a *doubtful world*. It interposes a gulph, not merely imaginary, but real, between us and our homes—a gulph subject to tempest and fear and uncertainty, rendering distance palpable and return precarious.[36]

The oceanic is expressed as "another world" or "doubtful world" that alternatively illustrates the terrestrial where most of his previous experience was based. What Bradford described the "firm" element of the earth is now paraphrased as "secure anchorage" of settled life, and the adrift experience on the ocean is also associated with "fear and uncertainty."

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The terrestrial serves now a place of native land where the American nationhood is attached. This is most apparently expressed in the following passage.

> As I saw the last blue line of my native land fade away like a cloud in the horizon, it seemed as if I had closed one volume of the world and its concerns, and had time for meditation before I opened another. *That land, too, now vanishing from my view; which contained all that was most dear to me in life*; what vicissitudes might occur in it—what changes might take place in me, before I wander, whither he may be driven by the uncertain currents of existence; or when he may return; or whether it may ever be his lot to revisit the scenes of his childhood?[37]

Irving's reference to his "native land" reminds us what Benedict Anderson argues it in his *Imagined Communities* that a nation is imagined and socially constructed through modern capitalism and mass media such as newspapers and books. Irving's sense of community is reinforced when he leaves the terrestrial, the native land, which closes "one volume of the world and its concerns." The terrestrial, so it is imagined by Irving, also serves as a base to hold the sense of community, and the oceanic sets the limit of its own nation, separating one and the other. It is also true, then, through the ocean passage, the experience leaving the terrestrial into the oceanic that provokes Irving's sense of belonging to his place.

Moving out of the terrestrial and entering into the oceanic, Irving does realize the native land, which contains "all that [is] most dear to me in life." But it doesn't mean that the boundary between the terrestrial and the oceanic is such a distinctive and separate; rather, the oceanic entails the terrestrial in the sense that as terrestrial beings, humans cannot look at the ocean without imposing terrestrial values on the ocean. "I said that at sea all is vacancy," writes Irving about the seascape, "I should correct the expression. To one given to day-dreaming and fond of losing himself in reveries, a sea voyage is full of subjects for meditation: but then they are the wonders of the deep and of the air, and rather tend to abstract the mind from worldly themes."[38] Full of vocabularies associated with American romantics such as "dreaming" and "reveries," Irving's seascape looks apart from God's providence. Once, "all is vacancy" at sea, now for Irving the oceanic environment is disposed of water and the air, two elements full of romantic ideas; in other words, the ocean cannot avoid projecting his own emotions upon the seascape, which inevitably results in being filled up with terrestrial "worldly

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themes" because he cannot easily leave his terrestrial background upon his setting sail on the ocean.

It is in Irving's works that we begin to see different kinds of the oscillation between the terrestrial and the oceanic, and this is not only because he was always fond of "visiting new scenes, and observing strange characters and manners,"[39] but also because he was born into a time when American culture was based on maritime activities and most of the nineteenth-century American literature were replete with maritime imagination. For example, one of his most famous short stories "Rip Van Winkle" has many references to the Dutch colonies. "Whoever has made a voyage up the Hudson," so the story is told by a maritime perspective, "must remember the Kaatskill Mountain."[40] In the story, Rip met a "company of odd-looking personages" who were dressed in "short doublets," or "jerkins," with "long knives" and "a white sugar-loaf hat, set off with a little red cock's tail."[41] With associations with the old Dutch colonists, these strange people resemble old-fashioned Dutch sailors, who are an important part of the New York folklore history. It is the landscape of New York that is dominantly present in the story, and yet the terrestrial landscape bears oceanic remnants, though its maritime references suggest that the age of voyage is long gone. Perhaps it is partly due to Irving's inclination for history as a writer that makes the American landscape loaded with the antique, just like young American culture yearned for the Old World and its long history.

The oceanic presence in Richard Henry Dana, Jr's *Two Years before the Mast* (1840)

Irving described that "at sea all is vacancy," and he filled reveries and dreaming in the vacant ocean to create his own seascape from the ship. In fact, the ocean was often described as a vacant and blank space to be filled. Evelyn Edson explains, "On the maps these served to fill up embarrassing empty spaces in unknown regions, a custom which went back to Roman times and forward to the sixteenth century, when drawings of ships and sea monsters appeared on the oceans of world maps."[42] It would be interesting to compare Irving's seascape with Richard Henry Dana, Jr, who wrote *Two Years before the Mast*, in which we can see a process through which to fill the vacant seascape by adding more realities of the surface of the ocean. If we can say that Irving's seascape—or most early nineteenth-century American seascape on the sea—is more

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terrestrial than the oceanic, late nineteenth century seascape can be characterized as more oceanic incorporating increasing knowledge and experience of the ocean.

In the early chapters of the novel, being exposed to the unfamiliar oceanic environment, Dana often compares the seascape with inland landscape: "[The sea] lacks the accompaniments of the songs of birds, the awakening hum of humanity, and the glancing of the first beams upon trees, hills, spires, and housetops, to give it life and spirit. There is no scenery."[43] As an amateur seaman, Dana cannot look at the seascape on its own terms, inevitably representing what aesthetic qualities it lacks, that is, such "accompaniments" as "the songs of birds," "the awakening hum of humanity," "the glancing of the first beams upon trees," "hills," "spires," and "housetops." Dana's aesthetic qualities of the seascape are carried from his inland experience, and neither can he discern the elements of seascape nor does he employ aesthetics or a language to represent seascape.

However alien and unfamiliar the oceanic environment may initially be, Dana's seascape importantly shows how he comes to understand how to look at the seascape. The longer his voyage proceeds, the stronger becomes Dana's obsession with providing a factual account of the human interaction with the sea, along with frequent references to meteorological information. For instance, Dana describes the landscape of California: "California extends along nearly the whole of the western coast of Mexico, between the Gulf of California in the south and the Bay of San Francisco on the north, or between the 22nd and 38th degree of north latitude."[44] On Friday September 16, Dana's description is a log-like narrative: "Lat 38° N., lon. 69° 00' W. A fine southwest wind; every hour carrying us nearer in toward the land. All hands at the dog watch, and nothing talked about but our getting in; where we should arrive before Sunday; going to church; how Boston would look…"[45] Here again, Dana's description of the seascape is almost a factual and phenomenological catalogue—a log narrative.

These factual descriptions are paralleled to the protagonist's transformation from a young, amateur seaman to an experienced, veteran of the sea. On Sunday, August 28, for instance, the journal entry begins: "lat. 12° N. The Trade-wind clouds had been in sight for a day or two previously, and we expected to take the trades every hour."[46] Typically, in later chapters, an everyday account begins by the record of latitudes and longitudes, and his descriptions of weather are increasingly recorded

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in detail. Earlier descriptions of the sea as unknown and limitless are replaced by Dana's accurate descriptions of latitudes and longitudes, and each day, he tells us exactly where he is sailing on the sea. If we look at Dana's descriptions of storms, we can better understand how he has become a keener observer of seascape:

> A huge mist capped with black clouds came driving towards us, extending over that quarter of the horizon, and covering the stars, which shone brightly in the other part of the heavens. It came upon us at once with a blast, and a shower of hail and rain, which almost took out breath from us. The hardiest was obliged to turn his back. We let the halyards run, and fortunately were not taken aback the little vessel "paid off" from the wind, and ran on for some time directly before, tearing through the water with everything flying.[47]

This is the first encounter with the storm for Dana, and he felt it was so powerful that "I thought it something serious, but an older sailor would have thought nothing of it."[48] In describing how the storm approached with black clouds, and how it was with "a blast" and "a shower of hail and rain," and also how the crew handled the ship, one might get an impression that Dana is very meticulous how the storm appears. But if we compare this depiction of the storm with one that appears later, we can better understand how Dana has changed.

This is the entry on Saturday, the 14th of November: "The wind seemed to come with a spite, an edge to it, which threatened to scrape us off the yards. The mere force of the wind was greater than I had ever seen it before; but darkness, cold, and wet are the worst part of a storm, to a sailor."[49] Being accustomed to the task on the ship, he is not able to depict the storm both realistically and literally, and it is certainly done so not in the way he used to do in the earlier examples. The storm depicted here looks more dramatic and violent, simply because of Dana's personification of it. It is with a "spite" to threaten sailors off the ship emphasizing how harsh and antagonistic this catastrophic storm is. Being more real to his response, this storm is more than a metrological fact but driving force to construct his narrative.

What we have seen in Dana's seascape is that analyzing the oceanic presence and its interactions with the terrestrial help us understand what constitutes sea literature on the surface of the sea. As I have already pointed out, finding the oscillation of the terrestrial and the oceanic leads us to broadening the possibility of interpreting some of the essential aspects of the work. In the case of the Puritan narrative in

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the context of wilderness or frontier narratives, for example, I showed that the oceanic presence is embedded in their terrestrial aesthetics and experiences. For my reading of Equiano, I pointed out that the lack of tangible existence of the oceanic made us startlingly aware of the nature of the Black Atlantic experience. Irving's romantic tendency is best captured in his descriptions of the oceanic, through which we saw that Irving's seascape is no less than literary trope; in it, his identity or his yearning for home; in other words, the desire for the terrestrial is predominant. We can see drastic transitions in Dana's seascape from the precedent literary maritime experience. As a seaman, Dana accounts for the inside of the ship, documenting what seamen do in the system of seafaring both technically and personally; in fact Dana became a lawyer who advocated seamen's right later in his life. As such, Dana's seascape comes to show how everything written about seafaring has changed and still is changing, which is shown in the process of transforming himself into a professional seaman, undergone alongside changing seascape. I don't plan to study, for example, *Moby-Dick*, a sea novel considered a masterpiece by many because I believe *Moby-Dick* is built upon more elements (both terrestrial and oceanic) to be discussed than I can commit for this particular book.[50] Instead, I shall proceed to what are considered masterpieces after *Moby-Dick*: *Sailing Alone around the World* and *Fur Tortuga*, through which we may view what have changed since *Two Years before the Mast* in the representations of seascape.

Joshua Slocum's *Sailing Alone around the World* (1900) and recreational oceanic

Published in 1900, when the American industrial progress was increasingly expanding and the nineteenth-century maritime culture was drastically changed, Joshua Slocum's *Sailing Alone around the World* is about the process of building the ship by himself, his encounters with native people in foreign countries, and his solitary voyage itself. However it is a monumental book not just because of its navigational achievement indicated in the title, but also because of its content and structure through which to view how the role of the oceanic can be differently observed. When he was about to embark on his historic circumnavigation, Joshua Slocum was already a fifty-one-year-old man who retired from about a thirty-year career as a professional seaman. Slocum's account of *Sailing Alone* begins by describing the process of rebuilding of the *Spray*. Using hand tools and a steam box for bending wood, he cut tough oak tree

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that stood near his house, and ordered a shipment of yellow pine for planking.

Although he gives readers accounts of where he is on the ocean, and where he is heading for, Slocum is honest to talk about his bitter solitude on the ship and shows his struggle to deal with it. For instance, in chapter III, he writes: "The loneliness of my state wore off when the gale was high and I found much work to do. When fine weather returned, then came the sense of solitude, which I could not shake off."[51] Or when he slept, "he dreamed that [he] was alone . . . The feeling never left me."[52] His use of "solitude" or "loneliness" is especially recurrent when he was on South Pacific, the Indian Ocean, and the Atlantic, where he has to spend a long time being alone. To deal with his solitude, for instance, he speaks to an imaginary person. In chapter III, there is a scene where Slocum watches "the smiling full moon" rise out of the sea: " 'Good morning, sir,' I cried; 'I'm glad to see you,' Many a long talk since then I have had with the man in the moon; he had my confidence on the voyage."[53] In another occasion, Slocum cries to an imaginary man at the helm from his cabin, "How does she head, there?" and again, "Is she on her course?"[54] In another scene, sailing the area where Columbus wrote in his book, Slocum imagines that one of Columbus's crew in the *Pinta* comes to talk to him on board. Also there are several scenes in which he refers to his shipmate from Boston: that is, a family of spiders which happens to be on board since he left Boston. Accordingly, Slocum's book gives us an impression of an adventurous and solitary, and yet enjoyable, voyage throughout the book, and it follows that his voyage in the book seems to be far from cruel difficulties and realities of hardship on the sea.

However, it is also legitimate to assume that Slocum must not have always spent his thirty-eight months' voyage imagining his company or contemplating his solitude.[55] He actually devotes pages and pages to describe various places he visited along the way—in Gibraltar, Australia, and South Africa, to name a few—where he was received for many times as a celebrity. Also he often encounters the commercial ships such as the *Java*, the *Collingwood*, the Chilean gunboat *Huemel*, or the *Racer*. In addition, Slocum mentions: "I employed the time in reading and writing, or in whatever I found to do about the rigging and the sails to keep them all in order."[56] Thus, it is true that, most of the time, he has to manage his time and labor to navigate because he is the captain and the only crew at the same time. I speculate further that the physical reality of navigation often keeps Slocum from indulging in a romantic

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solitude that he shows when he deals with being alone; however, as an autobiography—experiencing and writing his own actions, thoughts and imaginations—Slocum's personal narrative obscures some of the reality of physical experience on the ocean by emphasizing some of his particular impressions throughout his voyage.

This speculation is reinforced by the comparative reading of what Slocum's son—Victor Slocum—writes about Slocum's voyage in the biography. By creating the biography from Slocum's actual log on the voyage, Victor Slocum's accounts of the voyage are predominantly factual; but on the other hand, Slocum's own account of his voyage tends to be reflective and romantic. This comparison is well illustrated in the beginning of the voyage when Slocum often elaborates his solitude in *Sailing Alone*. Victor Slocum writes follows:

> The wind was fair and he crowded on all sail in order to lose no time passing the track of liners which were a menace at night to small sailing vessels with oil-burning lights only. For them he always had his flare ready for self-protection. A dense fog set in for days. He could almost sit on it.[57]

Whereas, Joshua Slocum's corresponding scene appears differently:

> About midnight the fog shut down again denser than ever before. One could almost "stand on it." It continued so for a number of days, the wind is increasing to a gale. The waves rose high, but I had a good ship. Sill, in the dismal fog I felt myself drifting into *loneliness*, an insect on a straw in the midst of the elements. I lashed the helm, and my vessel held her course, and while she sailed I slept.[58] (emphasis added)

Obviously, based on his father's log, Victor Slocum's description eliminates what Slocum would have felt or thought in the scene. Perhaps more purposefully, Victor Slocum tries to present us with a context for what Slocum is then facing through almost a log-like narrative itself. On the contrary, Slocum's own creation of the same scene is used to change his descriptive narrative to more personal reflection on it. More interesting aspect of this comparison is to notice what Slocum excludes: "his flare" which is ready for self-protection. Being alerted to pirates and native people who might attack him in the dense fog surrounding him, Slocum's sense of solitude is agitated by not merely the romantic idea of being alone but rather the fear and the dismal atmosphere brought by the fog. Hiding the flare from him in the book, Slocum in this particular scene is at the same time a character manipulated and created by himself; as a result of hiding the flare, Slocum in *Sailing Alone* is represented

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as a more romantic man than he is in the biography. This split between Slocum as a person and Slocum as a character in the book is not a contentious argument whether autobiographies should necessarily be true or not; but rather, this is an interesting scene in which our general definition of autobiography—that is, all the author, the narrator, and the protagonist are identical—is challenged. Of course it is true that both Slocum in *Sailing Alone* and the biography are real in the sense that we cannot suspect the author's subjective reflections on the voyage. In this case, the speculation regarding why Slocum represents himself as such is more interesting. And one possible answer is that, as I suggested earlier, he wants to illuminate his particular impression hovering around the voyage: solitude. As a result, Slocum's account on his voyage is likely to romanticize his loneliness, by which he may obscure his physical realities on the ship such as labors and fears.

Slocum never says exactly when and why he decided to sail around the world alone in the book. Partly because Slocum does not mention his proposes or motivation, he gives readers an impression as if he had just wanted to sail alone around the world. However, readers will be perplexed when they encounter what he wrote in later on the book:

> I felt a contentment in knowing that the *Spray* had encircled the globe, and even as an adventure alone I was in no way discouraged as to its utility, and said to myself, "Let what will happen, the voyage is now on record." A period was made.[59]

Robert Foulke's phrases "record breaking" and "racing" are pertinent to explain Slocum's motivation as well as his influence on the generations after him. Of course, Slocum does not mention in detail in the book that he tries to make a record or racing with anybody. But he reveals that he thinks about the "practical" value of this adventure. Not only does he know he is the only one who can succeed in sailing alone around the world, but he also shows his concern about the record that he is about to establish. In Victor Slocum's biography, there is no description of Slocum's proposals; it is simply taken for granted that Slocum sailed except Victor Slocum's putting it: "He was in high spirits and ready for the coming adventure."[60] For Victor Slocum, father Slocum has to be the "America's best known sailor"; in a way, Victor Slocum reinforces the context that Slocum sets up in the book.

Most revealingly, Walter Magnes Teller found from Slocum's actual letters that, when Slocum was about to start sailing, Slocum said that "this

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would be his last trip, that he hoped to make enough money from it to buy a farm upon his return and settle down with his wife and children."[61] This is another moment where a multiple Slocum is split; a character Slocum as a skilled but lonely sailor in *Sailing Alone* is one thing, and the reality of Slocum's life is another. In *Sailing Alone*, Slocum seems to hide deliberately the reason he decided to sail alone. Slocum's actual letters that sent by him on the voyage reveal further. When he reached Westport, Nova Scotia, in the middle of May, he writes to the publisher, Roberts Brothers:

> Will you please give me some hint of how much the first of my experiences was disliked if the worst is known? I find no want of interest where I come to keep alive all there is in it. I will as I get along, I think, make it interesting anyhow I shall try—But I have been put to my wit-end to get started right[.] Do please be patient with me and you will find in the end that I shall try to be fully square.[62]

However, Slocum writes about his arrival at Westport without mentioning his contact with the publisher. It is now revealed that Slocum's voyage is not necessarily self-driven but monetary motivated, and his demonstrations of simplicity or self-reliance shown in his own shipbuilding is turned out to be his necessary attempt to make his voyage possible.

It is important to look at the social and historical contexts where Slocum lived. As Frederick Turner suggested, by the end of the nineteenth century, it was declared officially that American frontier was finished. Similarly, Slocum had no interest in seeking the New World nor resource whatsoever. As we can see in *Sailing Alone*, there were already such modern technological influences such as telegraph, steamboats, and photographs, the industrial developments had already occurred throughout the world. Slocum does not mention a growing discussion over race and minority issues, either. Build upon Slocum's personal account of his voyage, without any political and imperialistic reason, *Sailing Alone* is an anachronism in the way that it is out of place in Slocum's time when adventurous navigations were long gone. He was just interested in the sea voyage and sailing the world to test his ability of, what he calls, "seaworthiness" as a captain and shipbuilder along with his monetary necessity. Slocum's voyage is on the one hand a successful adventure with which the reader will associate American political and economic growth; but on the other hand, more privately, Slocum is not a successor of his society in the sense that he had no choice but to guise his voyage as such—because of his monetary reason.

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Furthermore, I want to discuss the split identity of Slocums in terms of the oscillation of the terrestrial and the oceanic so that I can show they play a different role in creating seascape than Dana's. In Dana's seascape we already saw that the terrestrial, all the more for the lack of physical presence at sea, contributed to the creation of Dana's romantic seascape. As Dana's narrative evolves, his seascape becomes more dominated by the oceanic presence while terrestrial aesthetic expressed by romantic seascape dwindle. Slocum's seascape is also filled with romantic seascape in the sense that Slocum, by suppressing his motives behind the adventure as well as by hiding some of his realities on the sea, Slocum in the book can be associated with other heroic protagonists such as Charles Darwin, Robinson Crusoe, and Thomas Cook by whom he was influenced. As a result, *Sailing Alone* is rather based on the stories of the other heroic voyagers as he sees them. Slocum's anachronism or public self in the book, then, is a result of the ways that he deliberately creates himself from the earlier voyagers.

In terms of the oscillation between the terrestrial and the oceanic, this anachronism can be considered that Slocum's seascape substitute what he might have experienced on the sea for what those glorious maritime heroes left as legacy. Like those voyagers, he does not describe his contemporary issues on the terrestrial such as the growing technological progress and concerns for racism because Slocum writes in the similar contexts in which the earlier voyagers lived; in other words, he has to do so because those previous seascape he knew was long gone at the turn of the century. Nonetheless, discussing his anachronism in terms of his indebtedness to earlier voyagers is not to say that Slocum is completely soaked in the earlier voyagers' contexts. Slocum is distinguished in such a way that he does that by himself with different aims and purposes from earlier voyagers: that is to say, more private reasons for the monetary based record breaking and racing. For his private motivation, whether it is monetary or record-making proposes, Slocum's *Sailing Alone* adds a new type of oceanic experience and values in the tradition of American sea literature.

Far Tortuga (1975) and twentieth-century American maritime fiction

Peter Matthiessen's *Far Tortuga* shows seascape in the context of twentieth-century American literature that further carries on Dana's realism as a seaman. This novel is about a sea turtle fishing voyage off

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the coast of Nicaragua. "Tortuga" is the Spanish word for sea turtle, and in this book, it also refers to a cay where green turtles are found. The story starts at dawn, in the harbor of Georgetown, Grand Cayman Island the sixty-foot schooner *Lillias Eden* is preparing to get under way for the turtling. Like Ahab in *Moby-Dick*, the dominant captain Raib Avers's recklessness and authoritative search for turtles leads all crews to endangering their lives, which reminds readers of *Moby-Dick*. It was 1975 when Matthiessen worked the beach of the Grand Caymen Island where the novel is set. Motivated partly by the impulse of representing what had been lost in the Grand Caymen island, including wildlife and traditional ways of fishery, Matthiessen sets out to write a book of the turtle and turtle fishery in the Caribbean. However, without describing the actions, characters, and aims of the book, Matthiessen moves "away from the conventional realism," and creates the silence of the wild; for instance, that is a constant presence in the book.[63] It is true that what we can perceive in the seascape is "moods of the winds, spray, skies, waves, birds, and turtles." As Rebecca Raglon states, what he wanted to do is to "examine the experience again," not to "reproduce it," but "to find a way to direct the reader to an apprehension of the unblinking heart of reality."[64] In reference to "reality," Raglon probably means the reality of world or all existence in general. But in my reading of *Far Tortuga*, I wish to focus on the reality of the oceanic in arguing that Matthiessen's *Far Tortuga* is a work that aims to extract oceanic elements from maritime environment in order to record and affirm its presence before it's gone. As an activist who long advocated human rights and the natural environment, Matthiessen is always attentive to values and existence at risk. Likewise I hope to suggest that *Far Tortuga* shows us some of the departures from precedent maritime literature, in reference to in particular seascape representations.

Like modernist poems, *Far Tortuga* opens the book up to white space, "more air around works," and some pages have only one or two words, and small sentences "sail across the page like flying fish"[65]:

> Daybreak.
> At Windward Passage, four hundred miles due east,
> the sun is rising. Wind east-northeast, thirty-eight
> knots, with gusts to forty-five: a gale.
> Black waves, wind-feathered. White birds, dark birds.
> The trade winds freshen at first light, and the sea
> rises in long ridge, rolling west.[66]

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Each sentence pictures some natural phenomena; there is a list of literal things such as the sun, wind, waves, and birds. All the things are so descriptive that readers cannot easily find the author's psychological projection just as we saw in Dana's seascape. But the similarity is that Matthiessen's seascape captures the movements of weather, as is shown in sentences such as "the sun is rising" and "The trade winds freshen at first light, and the sea rises in ling right, rolling west." In an interview in *Paris Review*, Matthiessen mentions in this regard that he was moved by the stark quality of the Caribbean voyage that he made before: "everything worn bare by wind and sea—the reefs, the faded schooner, the turtle men themselves—everything so pared down and so simple that metaphors, stream-of-consciousness, even such ordinary conventions of the novel as 'he said' or 'hethought,' seemed intrusive, even offensive, and a great impediment, besides."[67]

Thus, what we can see in seascape in *Far Tortuga* is in part Matthiessen's attempt to recreate what he considers the reality of seascape from the perspectives of the Caribbean turtlers. As Dana's later realistic representation of seascape shows, there is basically nothing but the narrator's impressions about the oceanic environment. What Matthiessen then achieves is the seascape in which only meteorological facts and characters—not only including humans and animals, but also the sun, winds, and waves—exist on their own terms, serving to the seascape as part of the reality. The narrative in *Far Tortuga* also reminds us of a log narrative, which focuses on meteorological facts and navigational information, but, not by using the reality of the oceanic environment as metaphors and similes, but by letting them just be in seascape. In fact, it is very interesting to notice how the characters in *Far Tortuga* see the meteorological phenomena in relation to turtling and their ways of life. Raib, the captain of the *Lilas Eden*, for instance, understands weather in terms of navigation and turtling:

> When de sun's goin down on de horizon, a turtler must look out to de sunset. Supposin you havin a red sunset, and when you look back into de east, you see red above de blue. Well, dat is good weather: moderate weather or calm. Blue above de red means blusterous weather, prob'ly squally or plenty of breeze, and if you see it real gray, dat means blueserous weather, too. Red evenin sky and underneath is dark—well, dat is good red weather.[68]

The passage shows that meteorological facts and phenomena are interpreted by seamen in the context of their ways of living on the ocean.

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The seascape in *Far Tortuga* appears not merely as realistic meteorological phenomena but also as pragmatic text through which to discern how to find and catch turtles. As if it were a symbiotic seascape, the meteorological phenomena become interconnected with the characters' lives and turtling; fishing is a vulnerable business in the sense that it is in great deal subject to the weather. Seamen have to be able to read acutely the weather on the ocean in order to obtain a beneficial outcome; also important is that Raib's seascape is composed not by navigational terms but by simpler words such as colors—blue, red, gray. His use of vernacular language seems to provide us with a perspective through which to view his seascape, that is, the one that is more rural and regional than urban, and more based on hands-on experience than scientific knowledge. As Bert Bender argues, he is also "an 'everyman' captain driven onto the rocks of circumstance by the Darwinian biological reality that has sustained him; by the cutting winds that blow constantly through the novel," "by the forces of 'progress,'" and "by time—the wild sun itself."[69]

By employing the term "symbiotic," however, I don't mean that the overall seascape in *Far Tortuga* shows peaceful or harmonious relationship between humans and the physical nature. It is difficult to be unaware of biblical and paradisiacal implications throughout the novel that overshadow all characters' fate. As I suggested earlier, the characters' earthy relationship with the oceanic environment is doomed, and the ship, "*Lilas Eden*"—as if to indicate a biblical connotation—is also doomed. This overall implication of paradise loss is the most important motif in all of Matthiessen's work,[70] but especially in this novel, it is interesting to see how a catastrophic storm plays a crucial role to indicate how this paradisiacal harmony is going to begin to collapse:

> The Captain nods.
>
> One telltale thing for a hurricane, you feel de wind putting toward de north or de northwest. Course dere are regular northwest storms, but dat is in de winter time. Usually from July, August, September, October, anytime dat wind goes to de north, dere trouble comin.
>
> Yah, mon. A north wind in September, mon, you better not stop dere askin questions, cause dat is hurricane.[71]

And few pages later, by referring to the storm, it becomes an omen of their doomed life.

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> Nice weather, y'know, but a heavy roll of sea, and down around sout'-ou'west was awful coward overcast, all from de horizon, a very heavy-lookin mass of sky. So I told de fellas dat could be was a hurricane approachin, cause de barometer was fallin in de time of her risin, and we would try to scud along to de northward, Cuba way—[72]

It is a popular trope in sea literature in general that storms play a decisive role in the story. Biblical use of storms in the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century American sea literature are used to show God providence while, as in the case of the nineteenth-century writer Richard Henry Dana, Jr., storms are more than images or metaphors; there appear actual catastrophic natural phenomenon that gives significant impacts on the characters. In *Far Tortuga*, storms remain a menace on the ocean; however, storms don't overturn the story this time. Instead, the real catastrophic ending comes later in the story when all crews except Speedy are killed in the shipwreck in an attempt to escape from the Jamaicans. On their way to run, the ship hits the rock in the "bleak ocean."

Natural and human interactions compose here the catastrophic ending. Although it is a man-made calamity in the sense that most of the crew are killed because the Jamaicans take the crew into custody and they accidentally hit the rock on the ocean, overall oceanic presence in this book is described as something bare, impersonal, and untamed. It is the rock in the dark ocean that wrecked the ship and forced the crew's death. The storm is now another literary device to suggest the crew is doomed as if to suggest that real catastrophe is in essence man-made. Or, it may be safe to state that the ill-fate of the crew is initially man-made, and natural phenomena give it a form of catastrophe. Of course I don't mean that Matthiessen is the first writer who makes this literary turn of storm representations from earlier examples, but rather I would like to suggest that he has done it in the most radical way in depicting the oceanic environment and people living there.

Discussing Matthiessen's seascape in this way leads us to a consideration of *Far Tortuga* in the context of the oscillation between the terrestrial and the oceanic in the sense that there seems to be more of the oceanic presence than the terrestrial. As I quoted earlier, Matthiessen was struck by the seascape "everything worn bare by wind and sea," and the seascape in *Far Tortuga* is crafted to recreate such a scene. In it, for example, we see that there are a few verbal ornaments that elaborate the scenery except that characters' actions, feelings, or thoughts are embedded into

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the scene. The following scene appears in the beginning of the book when they sail in the estuary through the river:

> The water freshens; the river margins turn a livid green. High on the banks are huge trunks of mahogany from the inland forest.
>
> fish ripples
>
> a white egret, transfixed
>
> slow circling hawks, inland
>
> passing rain [sic].[73]

The silence of the scene is effectively described by the sporadic actions of fish, egret, and hawks in the water. The "huge trunks of mahogany from the inland forest" indicates a possible reference to the previous conversation in which they talk about the long disappeared forest and animals that populated here long time ago. Human presence and their destructive influence upon the maritime ecosystem are possibly ascribed in the scene where everything described in this scene seems so laconic that we can also pass without interpreting further details. The terrestrial here can also be interpreted as human presence floating on the sea, just like marine debris on the ocean associated with contemporary human consumption.[74]

The lack of verbal representations of the ocean contributes to the effect of visual representations such as space between the lines, graphic descriptions of time and day, and a ship diagram. In fact, just as we see in Dana's *Two Year before the Mast*, the oceanic often influences verbal representations; it makes language minimal while changing sentence structures. In Dana's cases, his sentences increasingly become log-like narrative. Or, it may be possible to interpret Slocum's double identity derived from the fact that, realizing his own narrative transformed by the oceanic, Slocum attempted to modify the narrative and also emphasized some of his particular impressions throughout his voyage. In other words, Slocum's narrative struggles with the oceanic influence, forcing to change his language. *Far Tortuga* is, then, perhaps a book that is willing to succumb to the oceanic.

Presented in this chapter was an outline of the study of the sea literature of the past, particularly with concern given to American literature. It was claimed here that the view generally presented by traditional maritime literary studies and maritime cultural history is identifiably an *on-the-sea* perspective. The result of that restrictive perspective is a failure to consider the oceanic environment as a whole. It was claimed here that

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this deficient perception of maritime activities as being limited to fishing, trading, voyages, and explorations *on* or across the ocean might be the consequence of humans' fundamentally land-based experiences and perspective, causing writers to represent the ocean as a flat, plane figure. A further explanation was in the persistence of the view that the land (terrestrial) and the sea (oceanic) are rigidly separated and essentially in opposition, and yet both were presented as being *beneath* the passage of man, who attempts to dominate, control, and possess the lands and seas *over* which he crosses.

In order to address this limitation of perception, it is also valuable to recognize the ambiguity contained in this chapter title. The prepositional phrase "on the sea" can be interpreted as locative, but it could also be understood as meaning literature "about" the sea. For this reason, it becomes especially valuable to reconsider sea literature through a search for and recognition of oceanic experiences embedded within the articulation of terrestrial experience. This exploration of the oceanic implicit in the terrestrial, and vice versa, was undertaken here in the context of discussing a number of representative literary works.

Notes

1 Hugo Grotius. *The Freedom of the Seas: or, The Right Which Belongs to Dutch to Take Part in the East Indian Trade: A Dissertation by Hugo Grotius;* Translated with a Revision of the Latin Text of 1633 by Ralph Van Deman Magoffin; Edited with an Introductory Note by James Brown Scott. London: Oxford University Press, 1916. (37). Print.
2 Christopher Connery. "There was No More Sea: The Supersession of the Ocean, from the Bible to Cyberspace." *Journal of Historical Geography* 32 (2006): 494–511. (509).
3 Ulrick Knzel. "Orientation as a Paradigm of Maritime Modernity." *Fictions of the Sea: Critical Perspectives on the Ocean in British Literature and Culture*. Ed. Bernhard Klein. Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2002. (29).
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7 Roderick Nash. *Wilderness and the American Mind*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1967. (2–3).

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8 William Bradford. *Of Plymouth Plantation: 1620–1647*. Intro. By Samuel Eliot Morison. New York: Knopf, 1966. (61). Print.
9 Ronald E. Seavoy, *An Economic History of the United States: from 1607 to the Present*. New York : Routledge, 2006. (35).
10 Bradford, *Of Plymouth Plantation: 1620–1647* (61).
11 David Cressy. "The Vast and Furious Ocean: The Passage to Puritan New England." *The New England Quarterly* 57. 4 (1984): 511–532. (511).
12 Ibid. (532).
13 Ibid. (513).
14 Michel Foucault. "Of Other Spaces: Utopias and Heterotopias." 1967. http://web.mit.edu/allanmc/www/foucault1.pdf (3). May 29, 2014.
15 Ibid. (9).
16 Peter Linebaugh and Marcus Rediker. *The Many-Headed Hydra: Sailors, Slaves, Commoners, and the Hidden History of the Revolutionary Atlantic*. Boston: Beacon Press, 2000; Marcus Rediker. *Villains of All Nations: Atlantic Pirates in the Golden Age*. Boston : Beacon Press, 2004.
17 In this respect, C.L.R. James in his *Mariners, Renegades & Castaways: The Story of Herman Melville and the World We Live In* (Dartmouth College, 2001) presents a reading of *Moby-Dick* as a allegory of modernism just passed, and he interprets the *Pequod*'s crews as industrial exploited workers. His interpretation of maritime experience succeeds in analyzing how the oceanic environment symbolizes the terrestrial industrialism extending its power over maritime activities; however, because James doesn't distinguish the terrestrial and the oceanic industrialism, the more successful his monograph is, the less persuasive it seems why *Moby-Dick* has to be maritime fiction in order to critique growing industrialism.
18 For discussions over the roles of sea captain and disciplines on the ship in the nineteenth century, see James Fenimore Cooper's *The Pilot* and *The Red Rover*; Herman Melville's *White Jacket*, besides Richard Henry Dana, Jr.'s *Two Years before the Mast*.
19 John Winthrop. "A Model of Christian Charity." Massachusetts Historical Society Collections, 3rd edn.
20 Hugh J. Dawson claims in his "John Winthrop's Rite of Passage: The Origin of the 'Christian Charitie' Discourse" in *Early American Literature* (Volume 26, 1991) that his "Model of Christian Charity" sermon was wrote not on the *Arbella* but before his departure to America, and the Puritan belief of "brotherly affection" seems to have something in common. There is in fact a large difference between the Puritan community and maritime community formed on the ship notwithstanding; one is religious and the other is practical.
21 James Walvin. *An African's Life: the Life and Times of Olaudah Equiano, 1745–1797*. Washington, D.C.: Cassell, 1998. (16).

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34 Carolyn Merchant. *American Environmental History: An Introduction*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2007. (12). Print.
35 Washington Irving. "The Voyage." *The Sketch Book*. Leipzig: Bernhard Tauchnitz, 1843. (15). Print.
36 Ibid. (15).
37 Ibid. (16).
38 Ibid. (16).
39 Ibid. (11).
40 Ibid. (43).
41 Ibid. (52).
42 Evelyn Edson. *Mapping Time and Space: How Medieval Mapmakers Viewed Their World*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998. (16). Print.
43 Richard Henry Dana, Jr. *Two Years before the Mast: A Personal Narrative of Life at Sea*. 1840. New York: Penguin, 1981. (14). Print.
44 Ibid. (55).
45 Ibid. (333).
46 Ibid. (320).
47 Ibid. (63).
48 Ibid. (64).

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49 Ibid. (291).
50 For a comprehensive study on sea fiction subsequent to *Moby-Dick*, see Bert Bender's *Sea-Brothers: The Tradition of American Sea Fiction from Moby-Dick to the Present* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1990).
51 Joshua Slocum. *Sailing Alone around the World*. 1900. New York: Sheridan House, 1995. (27). Print.
52 Ibid. (105).
53 Ibid. (26).
54 Ibid. (27).
55 This is a discussion first elaborated in Bert Bender's "Joshua Slocum and the Reality of Solitude" (*ATQ: American Transcendental Quarterly* (1992): 59–71), but I wish to put it in the context of the terrestrial and the oceanic oscillation.
56 Slocum, *Sailing Alone around the World*, (56).
57 Ibid. (303).
58 Ibid. (26).
59 Ibid. (262).
60 Victor Slocum. *Capt. Joshua Slocum: The Life and Voyages of America's Best Known Sailor*. New York: Sheridan House, 1950. (302). Print.
61 Walter Magnes Teller. *The Voyages of Joshua Slocum*. New Brunswick and New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1958. (201). Print.
62 Ibid. (202).
63 George Plimpton. "The Craft of Fiction in *Far Tortuga*." *The Paris Review* 60 (1974): (79–80).
64 Rebecca Raglon. "Fact and Fiction: The Development of Ecological Form in Peter Matthiessen's *Far Tortuga*." *Critique: Studies in Contemporary Fiction* 35 (1994): 245–59.
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66 Peter Matthiessen. *Far Tortuga*. New York: Bantam, 1975. (4). Print.
67 Ibid. (340).
68 Ibid. (53).
69 Bert Bender. *Sea-Brothers: The Tradition of American Sea Fiction from Moby-Dick to the Present*. Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1988. (218). Print.
70 For example, Matthiessen's later novels such as *Shadow Country* (2008) revolves around a tragic and violent life of Edgar J. Watson, who seems to represent in many ways the relationship between American culture and the natural environment. Or his first book of non-fiction *Wildlife in America* (1959) accounts a wide variety of the American natural life as well as its depletion.
71 Matthiessen, *Far Tortuga*, (216).

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72 Ibid. (255).
73 Ibid. (139).
74 In fact, there are many books deal with marine debris, oceanic pollution in terms of globalization in late twentieth-century sea literature. For example, United Nations Environment Program has published extensive reports on the topic such as *Marine Litter: A Global Challenge* (Nairobi: UNEP, 2009), *UNEP Year Book 2011: Emerging Issues in Our Global Environment* (Nairobi: UNEP, 2011), *The Ocean of Life: The Fate of Man and the Sea* (New York: Penguin Books, 2013).

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2

American Sea Literature—*by* the Sea

Abstract: *This chapter summarizes some important tropes in American sea literature by the sea. Narrators by the sea are often obsessed with both physical and metaphorical features of the "edge" of the ocean. The multifaceted physicality of the shore is replete with narrators' observations on the beach; on the other hand, the physicality transcends into some abstract notions and images. A notable example would be Henry David Thoreau and his* Cape Cod *(1865), in which he observes the nineteenth-century American beach experiences, but Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur, Rachel Carson, Anne Morrow Lindbergh, Henry Beston, and some twentieth-century surf writings will also be introduced to show how the space between the terrestrial and the oceanic is expressed in this subgenre, while analyzing how both sides of oceanic edge become transient and interactive, but never lose their inherent essence.*

Yamashiro, Shin. *American Sea Literature: Seascapes, Beach Narratives, and Underwater Explorations*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014.
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> And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear: and it was so. And God called the dry land Earth; and the gathering together of the waters called he Seas:"[1]
>
> Holy Bible

Oceanic presence by the sea

In considering a variety of approaches to perceptions of the sea, and "sea literature," I have identified the works of Rachel Carson as being a prime example of literature expressing a *by*-the-sea perspective. But in this study of mine, which purports to cover a range of literary works, with focus on *American* literature, it would be remiss not to include the *Bible*, in particular because the technological breakthroughs that made the Gutenburg Press possible, with consequent changes in the distribution of literacy. Technological, economic, and political changes, along with the translation of the Bible into the European vernaculars, led to the Europeans' peopling of the Americas, especially with the fundamentally protestant-based transplants that settled the New England coastal areas. Those Bible-bearing Protestants became the foundation of American literature. Therefore, it is meaningful to give consideration to the early presentation of the sea in the first book of the Bible, the book of Genesis, which begins with an account of the origin of life.

As far as we can tell by the artistic expression of humans, there has always been concern for the fundamental opposition, and intersection, of the oceanic and terrestrial. Acquaintance with ancient mythologies and creation myths carried by oral tradition reveals the persistence of this concern, and this concern has been at the core of humans' range of artistic expression and persists today in music, myths, movies, the arts, economics and politics.

The Bible by the ocean

The epigraph above is cited in order to shed light on the oscillation between the oceanic and the terrestrial in sea literature. It indicates that God first gathered the waters under the heavens; as a result, "dry land" appears. Then, the "dry land" is named "Earth," before the gathered water is named "Seas." In terms of the order of appearance, the seas seem to be

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prior to the Earth; however, when it comes to the order of naming, the seas become posterior to the land Earth.

In fact, what follows in the book of Genesis seems to be more focused on the terrestrial than the aquatic, bringing forth vegetation, four seasons, a day and night. It remains so, however, only before God creates animals.

> And God said,
> Let the waters bring forth abundantly
> the moving creature that hath life,
> and fowl that may fly above the earth
> in the open firmament of heaven.
> And God created great whales,
> and every living creature that moveth,
> which the waters brought forth abundantly,
> after their kind,
> and every winged fowl after his kind:
> and God saw that it was good.
> And God blessed them,
> saying,
> Be fruitful, and multiply,
> and fill the waters in the sea,
> and let fowl multiply in the earth.
> And the evening and the morning
> were the fifth day.
>
> And God said,
> Let the earth bring forth
> the living creature after his kind,
> cattle, and creeping things,
> and beast of the earth after his kind:
> and it was so.
> And God made the beast of the earth after his kind, and cattle after their kind, and every thing that creepeth upon the earth after his kinds: and God saw that it was good.[2]

The interesting thing, though, is that the "great whales" or "great sea monsters" are created with other living creatures that move. Not only do the sea creatures appear prior to the terrestrial animals, but the "sea monsters" come into being in the description. The sudden appearance of the great whales seems conspicuous for it is still in the initial stage of the world creation and there is no terrestrial counterpart.[3] As explained in the *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible*, sea monsters are also

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symbolized elements because there is "a strong association between the destructive power of the sea and other realms of destruction."[4]

In the early part of the book of Genesis, there are relatively frequent references to the ocean, and we can see the oceans play substantial roles. It is so also because the oceans and the land are, if not rigidly symmetrical, more likely contrasted. Many biblical scholars also point out this narrative tendency in the Bible, explaining that order and chaos are the most important themes for which the supremacy of God is prescribed, and that the sea and the land are respectively assigned each role to differentiate order and chaos.[5]

The great whales, often times referred to as sea monsters, are probably associated with the destructive power of the sea, and its constant threat to people too, because storms and shipwrecks are inseparable from sea voyages and related maritime experiences, although the Bible does not refer to any kind of death in the early part of Genesis, which is the most productive part of the biblical narrative. The sea monsters might be indicative of an interpretation of the sea monster as an antagonist to the protagonist God, although there is no physical combat between the two in Genesis. Or, as the *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible* examines in "Sea," sea monsters embody the shapelessness of the seas as we can hardly see a clear distinction between these forms. Water can be "associated with the shapelessness of the serpent, which particulates in the ambivalence of both sea and water."[6] In fact, the descriptions in the Book of Genesis 1:25 and onward shift toward more detailed process of creation on the Earth, and the presence of the ocean increasingly become minimal. Where are the sea monsters? An answer to this question is to be sought in the following question: Where has sea literature gone after its high time in the nineteenth century? I intend to come back to the former question in answering the latter question in throughout this book by examining how the relationship between the terrestrial and the oceanic changes.

My purpose here is not to present the Judeo-Christian origin of maritime sources, however. This sort of genealogical analysis is interesting notwithstanding, the more important point to comprehensive understanding of the relationship between the oceanic and the terrestrial is to note again that there is not so much a rigid and clear-cut contrast between the two but more ambient interplay between the ocean and the land (earth). Likewise, I hope to examine how some of the popular key concepts in the studies of American literature are embedded with

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terrestrial aesthetics or values. I will also try to expand these concepts by applying oceanic perspective to them, and by doing so, I wish to suggest that literary studies need to incorporate oceanic perspectives into its practices, but also I hope to introduce some important literary works that require our attention.

Oceanic elements in colonial America

Oceanic elements in Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur

Letters from an American Farmer was published in London in 1782 by Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur. As a surveyor and merchant, Crèvecoeur not only extensively traveled colonial North America, but rented and bought land, settled, and farmed. The book was meant, tells the farmer Mr. F. B., not for a book full of "the style of the learned, the reflections of the patriot, the discussions of the politician, the curious observations of the naturalist, the pleasing garb of the man of taste" but a book to find the "spontaneous impressions" of a "cultivator of the earth," a man who can follow only "the line which Nature has herself traced for me."[7] According to Thomas Philbrick, the book is organized around "three widely separated and sharply differing areas of settlement: the villages and farms of the middle colonies, the maritime communities of Nantucket and Martha's Vineyard, and the plantation society of South Carolina."[8] About one-third of *Letters from an American Famer* is dedicated to a description of Nantucket and Martha's Vineyard, an account viewed from the farmer. Philbrick argues that such a "lengthy, detailed account of Nantucket and Martha's Vineyard is meant for providing two topics of immediate interest to the European reader: "Quakerism and the Yankee whale fishery."[9] Philbrick further argues that these two topics play an important role in emphasizing that "the picturesque peculiarities of Nantucket and Martha's Vineyard are the basic principles on which their society is grounded, principles which make the islands a model for the right ordering of any human community."[10] Philbrick's reading is based on the premise that a book must have a coherent theme organically supported by its components, and it certainly serves its purpose. But my reading is that if this book is structured as letters, then, each letter does not have to be thematically interconnected. Just as the farmer announced in the introduction, all the letters are the spontaneous impressions of a

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"cultivator of the earth" who can follow "only the line which Nature has herself traced for me."[11]

It becomes interesting to me to present Philbrick's inquiry in this way: Why is the impression of the "cultivator of the earth" full of the oceanic images? As we have seen in the surface of the narrative, the terrestrial and the oceanic appear as though both intervene each other in, for example, what Bradford refers to as "firme and stable earth, their proper element." As the title suggests, the entire book must be full of terrestrial images and themes; if the oceanic plays an important role, what would it be like?

> *[M]y eyes* were involuntarily directed to the horizontal line of that watery surface, which is ever in motion and ever threatening destruction to these shores. *My ears* were stunned with the roar of its waves rolling one over the other, as if impelled by a superior force to overwhelm the spot on which I stood. *My nostrils* involuntarily inhaled the saline vapours which arose from the dispersed particles of the foaming billows or from the weeds scattered on the shores. *My mind* suggested a thousand vague reflections, pleasing in the hour of their spontaneous birth, but now half forgotten, and all indistinct; and who is the landman that can behold without *affright so singular an element*. . . .[12]

In the quote, the Farmer John sees, hears, and smells the "watery surface" full of destructive power shown against the shores, and the Farmer's imagination revolves around "its spontaneous birth." The power of waves are the most visible manifestation of power of the sea, and yet the sublime power of the sea can be assessed only by sight, smell, hearing, and imagination, but not touch. While, for Bradford, touching the earth evokes the untouched ocean, for the Farmer John, experiencing the untouchable oceanic power is done by using other senses plus imagination. The terrestrial is perceived through the oceanic element, and in this sense, the terrestrial existence is dependent upon the oceanic. This is exactly paraphrased in the continuing sentence: "Which by its impetuosity seems to be destroyer of this poor planet, yet at particular times accumulates the scattered fragments and produces islands and continents fit for men to dwell on!"[13] If this is what Crèvecoeur finds, where he finds it is my next inquiry, an inquiry on the edge of the ocean.

Crèvecoeur's passage continues as follows:

> Who can observe the regular vicissitudes of its waters without astonishment, now swelling themselves in order to penetrate through every river

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> and opening and thereby facilitate navigation, at other times retiring from the shores to permit man to *collect that variety of shell-fish which is the support of the poor*? Who can see the storms of wind, blowing sometimes with an impetuosity sufficiently strong even to move the earth, without feeling himself affected beyond the sphere of common ideas? Can this wind which but a few days ago refreshed our American fields and cooled us in the shade be the *same element* which now and then so powerfully convulses the waters of the sea, dismasts vessels, causes so *many shipwrecks and such extensive desolations*? How diminutive does a man appear to himself when filled with these thoughts, and standing as I did on the verge of the ocean![14]

The "poor" people who collect shell-fish to support their lives rely on the sea shore, and yet the nurturing ocean has another face to destroy human artifacts. Beachcombing wasn't yet recognized as a recreational activity but a way of making a living, and the shoreline provides a space in-between land and ocean, where we can see another aspect of colonial life in Nantucket. Being both constructive and destructive, the beach here presents us with an ambivalent role of the ocean that stimulates the Farmer's imagination "filled with these thoughts," while "on the verge of the ocean." Just as Rachel Carson's narrative demonstrates, the oceanic and the terrestrial collide and cooperate with each other to create the edge of the ocean as a special space. The "verge of the ocean" is the center of emphasis in this excerpt, and people and culture that live and survive here are, for Crèvecoeur, the next focus of my analysis.

In colonial America, there were greater opportunities for the acquisition of land, and of both free wage and maritime labor. Between 80 and 90% of the American population worked in agriculture throughout the eighteenth century. Some seamen retained the option of retiring from the wage labor market until the 1740s and 1750s, when land became more difficult to acquire.[15] American seamen, therefore, seem to have been less permanent members of the brotherhood of the deep.[16] Crèvecoeur writes: "Those who live near the sea feed more on fish than on flesh and often encounter that *boisterous element*. This renders them more bold and enterprising: this leads them to neglect the confined occupations of the land."[17] As opposed to the discussion over "wilderness" and the "frontier myth," the ocean here plays a defining role to determine what people were, and the farmer's supposed perspective in *Letters from an American Farmer* looks more oceanic than terrestrial. Described as "boisterous,"

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the characteristics of Americans here can be both terrestrial and oceanic. In the following passage, Crèvecoeur continues:

> The sea inspires them with a love traffic, a desire of transporting produce from one place to another; and leads them to a variety of resources which supply the place of labour. Those who inhabit the middle settlements, by far the most numerous, must be very different; the simple cultivation of the earth purifies them, but the indulgences of the government, the soft remonstrances of religion, the rank of independent freeholders, must necessarily inspire them with sentiments very little known in Europe among a people of the same class.[18]

Finding the "middle settlement" in the community living by the ocean, Crèvecoeur captures what characterizes the space between the terrestrial and the oceanic, which eventually leads to his idea about what is an American, who is referred to in the above quote as people whose sentiments are "very little known in Europe."

Leo Marx argues that Crèvecoeur finds the "main features of the idyllic Virgilian landscape in this idealized picture of America."[19] While I agree with Marx that Crèvecoeur considers American landscape a "peaceful, lovely, classless, bountiful pasture,"[20] I also showed that the material presence of America is full of the oceanic element. Of course one can defend Marx in that he is studying American landscape, but this is also the point I have argued. The terrestrial element in landscape tends to be overstated, but the oceanic element is also important to capture what the American experience really was; on the beach, we can see the oceanic elements add an extra dimension that problematizes the dominant terrestrial discourse. Without the oceanic experience and aesthetic, we cannot fully understand the American terrestrial experience that is in part dependent on the oceanic for its everlasting existence.

The emergence of literary beach

Henry David Thoreau's *Cape Cod* (1865)

"The sea-shore is a sort of neutral ground," Henry David Thoreau writes in *Cape Cod*: it is a "most advantageous point from which to contemplate this world."[21] To most readers, this may echo his voice in *Walden*, in which the narrator speculates on the relationship between people and nature and suggests the value of living on the "advantageous" edge

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of civilization and wilderness. Although *Cape Cod* has not received as much critical attention as *Walden*, it is an important book through which to view not only Thoreau's similar perspectives that connect his other works such as *Walden*, *A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers* (1849), and *The Maine Woods* (1864) but some tropes that can be seen in other American books about the beach. Being on a the Cape Cod beach, Thoreau stands on a "neutral ground" to look at the physical aspects of the beach where both terrestrial and aquatic terrains meet, and he contemplates metaphorical interactions between its place, history, and the social life of people in Cape Cod in the late nineteenth century.

Thoreau's initial account of the beach appears in the first chapter "The Shipwreck," but what he sees there are not the topographical aspects of the beach but rather coffins, bodies, and people collecting the corpses from the wreck of the *St. John*, in which 145 lives were lost off the coast of Cape Cod. Thoreau writes about the body of a girl who "had intended to go out to service in some American family" and "to which some rags still adhered, with a string, half concealed by the flesh, about its swollen neck" so that "the cone and muscle were exposed, but quite bloodless,—merely red and white,—with wide-open and staring eyes, yet lusterless, dead-light: or like the cabin windows of a stranded vessel, filled with sand."[22] Although Thoreau sees many bodies cast up on the beaches throughout the book, this description is noteworthy because it shows Thoreau's point of view as an avid observer, stunningly describing the dead bodies without any sentimentalism. At first, the center of the description is the presence of the bodies, and then, the narrator looks at a crowd's attitude toward the bodies on the beach and says: "I witnessed no signs of grief, but there was a sober dispatch of business which was affecting."[23] The narrator's less-sympathetic representation of the objects on the beach continues to drive the narrative in the book, but what is more interesting is how the beach is viewed and represented. Just as shown in the previous quote, the descriptions move from the object on the beach, the crowd (what is adjacent to the objects), and thoughts about the scene as a whole (the narrator's observations). On the margins of both land and sea, Thoreau is intrigued by the bodies on the beach that no longer belong to the place where those people intended to reach, or the place where they came from. The bodies seem to diminish their identities and bear similar neutrality as the narrator finds it because they mediate both the New and Old worlds as well as both terrestrial and oceanic life.

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In the following passage, the narrator's attention moves toward the local men with carts who are busily collecting seaweed that the storm cast up in the midst of the crowd surrounding those bodies. Thoreau watches those men: "[they were] often obliged to separate fragments of clothing from it, and they might at any moment have found a human body under it."[24] Initially focusing on the bodies on the beach, and people's indifferent attitudes toward the bodies, death, and ship-wrecks, the narrator goes on to write that this shipwreck does not provide a "visible vibration in the fabric of society,"[25] and his description moves from the bodies and the people surrounding them, to the society in which those people live. Such a centrifugal viewpoint initiated from the objects on the beach structures its narrative on the beach through the entire book, and such a viewpoint also embodies a "neutral" standpoint in the sense that the narrative itself doesn't seem to present any particular emotions or engage with any particular issues that Thoreau might otherwise do in other book such as *Walden*.

Another example can be found in the scene when the narrator sees a huge blackfish carcass, whose popular or scientific name is "to be found in a report on our mammalia [sic],—a catalogues of the productions of our land and water."[26] By watching the fishermen cut the blackfish and strip off the blubber, the narrator gives a historical account of whaling in Cape Cod. Modern readers who are familiar with Thoreau's image as a proto-ecologist/conservationist might feel frustrated when the description of the blackfish extends to the way people do away the carcass on the beach after they took what they wanted, but the narrator comments nothing but "Walking on the beach was out of the question on account of the stench."[27] While in fact mentioning that "this state has risen and thriven by its fisheries,"[28] the narrator fragmentally refers to the scenes of the dead fish or the inhabitants of Cape Cod's life but doesn't develop it into a larger issue. As a result, the topics presented on the beach appear to be peripheral, disengaged with any particular thoughts, culture, or even place. The neutral ground perhaps means a medium between the different terrains or worlds, but also suggests the beach's existence as a marginal space where everything is disengaged. In fact, after people "towed [the carcasses] out and sink them,"[29] even with such as stench, blood, and blubber that do not belong to anywhere—they just erase the origin of their existence, and just float on the beach.

If everything is peripheral and disengaged in *Cape Cod*, there is also a topic that continues engaging Thoreau through all of his works. This is

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found when the narrator's speculation turns to how cruel and powerful the force of the sea is: "I was even more surprised at the power of the waves, exhibited on this scattered fragments, than I had been at the sight of the smaller fragments before. The largest timbers and iron braces were broken superfluously, and I was that no material could withstand the power of the waves."[30] The force of the waves attract Thoreau because they are associated with the idea of the "wild" that he is always preoccupied with. As I pointed out, Thoreau is sympathetic neither to the bodies nor to the people working with them; the narrator sees "no sign of grief, but there was a sober dispatch [sic] of business which was affecting" because "they would watch there many days and nights for the sea to give up its dead, and their imaginations and sympathies would supply the place of mourners far away, who as yet knew not of the wreck."[31] And finally, "I sympathized rather with the winds and waves, as if to toss and mangle these poor human bodies was the order of the day" and also adds: "It is the individual and private that demands our sympathy."[32] John Lowney finds Thoreau's vision throughout *Cape Cod* "bleak proto-naturalistic" that "makes the affirmation of the sublime a more desperate, and hence more necessary, act for Thoreau."[33] Suggesting that its digressive rhetorical tendency comes more from Thoreau's narrative strategy to "unsettle conventional expectation of aesthetic travel narrative than his adaptation of the popular travel account during the nineteenth century, Lowney emphasizes Thoreau's descriptions on "wreckers" and suggests that *Cape Cod* aims to further critique "commercialist, expansionist ideology."[34] I find Lowney's use of the term "bleak proto-naturalistic" very useful to characterize Thoreau's voice in this work because, as I have indicated so far, the narrative in *Cape Cod* is controlled by the Cape Cod shore, the neutral ground as if to imply environmental determinism in literary naturalism. Contrary to Lowney, however, I interpret that Thoreau's bleak view is attributed not so much to his deliberately contentious look at American culture and society but to the beach narrative that he employs. The beach is "most advantageous" as I quoted earlier because he can contemplate this world, and I add, too, because the beach is such a place that writers before and after him also demonstrate similar tropes on the beach.

Thoreau's inclination to the bleakness, in addition to ugliness and barrenness of Cape Cod is also because, as Robert Richardson, Jr., argues, "*Cape Cod* starts where 'Ktaadn' left off." Richardson, Jr., goes on to explain: "This is nature in her most savage aspect, indifferent or hostile

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to human life."[35] Sustaining his interest in the wild throughout his books, Thoreau finds its clues on the beach, in which he can confront the direct power of the ocean and waves it creates by finding the objects cast up there. "it is a wild, rank place," Thoreau writes about Cape Cod, "and there is no flattery in it."[36] It was a time when "one might see a hundred schooners of the mackerel fleet at once, a time before the Cape Cod Canal, when all ships between Boston and points south had to do the exposed and dangerous outside route."[37] This is why Thoreau's findings range from the human deaths, dead whales, wrecks that reflect the historical context, but what he discovers is that the beach is the place that enables him to look at those objects, to elaborate upon their implications to society. The narrative inevitably becomes digressive because Thoreau walks along the beach; but it is also focused and organized in the sense that the narrative develops as he walks while each topic is centrifugally developed from what he finds along the beach.

Modern beach: Henry Beston's *The Outermost House* (1928)

Henry Beston's *The Outermost House* is often compared with Thoreau for its themes and narrative structure, although Beston himself didn't seem to like such a comparison.[38] In *The Outermost House*, Beston sets his narrative in Cape Cod and studies the place's natural history, spending a year living on Eastham Beach. Like Thoreau, Beston is attentive to various aspects of the beach such as birds, wrecks, the sounds of the waves, fish, surfmen, and his neighbors.

Beston writes in "The Beach," the first chapter of the book as follows: "East and ahead of the coast of North America, some thirty miles and more from the inner shores of Massachusetts, there stands in the open Atlantic the last fragment of an ancient and vanished land."[39] Standing at the Cape Cod beach, both the ocean, the land, and the interaction between the two are described here. The land is however partly vanished in the open ocean. We can see in Beston's first line of the book already an indication of the trope of the beach narrative. "For twenty miles this last and outer beach faces the ever hostile ocean in the form of a great eroded cliff of earth and clay," Beston continues, "the undulations and levels of whose rim now stand a hundred, now a hundred and fifty feet above the tides. Worn by the breakers and the rains, disintegrated by the wind, it still stands bold."[40] The primary emphasis here seems at first

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the terrestrial beach enduring the destructive power of the oceanic. In fact, Beston describes "the sea here gives battle to the land."[41] Contrary to the previous passage where the terrestrial is the focus, the agent in this description can be the ocean which acts against the terrestrial earth. But again in the following passage, the point of view changes to the earth who "struggles for her own, calling to her defence [sic] her energies and her creations, bidding her plants steal down upon the beach, and holding the frontier sands in a net of grass and roots which the storms wash free.[42] As Allan D. Burns explicates what constitute Beston's lyric exposition of the Cape Cod landscape, the most notable feature in the description is Beston's use of rhyme such as "calling," "bidding," and "holding," which seems to correspond with the rolling sounds of the waves on the beach.[43] But it seems to me an equally notable aspect in Beston's prose is its emphasis on the materiality of the beach.

An interesting difference from Thoreau is that, in Beston's time, Cape Cod has become more commercialized when compared with Thoreau's time. Beston sees the Coast Guard crews almost everyday on the beach, and there is also a description of the scene in which he has to drive a car to get his drinking water. In "Lanterns on the Beach," for example, Beston finds a shipwreck on the beach, and writes about how people deal with it. Unlike Thoreau, however, Beston is more sympathetic in writing about them. Cape Codders, Beston writes, "have often been humorously reproached for their attitude toward wrecks." For Beston, a wreck is something given by nature. In fact, he continues, "public opinion on the Cape is decidedly against such a practice, for it offends the local sense of decency."[44] Beston does not see local people collecting the bodies, nor does he not find a "sober dispatch of business which was affecting," as Thoreau did. For Beston, the wreckers no longer exist; they have now been replaced by surfmen who enjoy riding the waves, or the Coast Guard crews who watch and rescue people off shore. Claiming that Cape Codders are decent, Beston seems more involved with the local community than the traveler Thoreau.

It is important to note that the Cape Cod beach in the late nineteenth century had already started transforming into a resort place, and Thoreau is also aware of an emerging beach culture in Cape Cod. In "The Shipwreck," Thoreau acutely touches on this: "On Nantucket beach I counted a dozen chaises from the public-house. From time to time the riders turned their houses toward the sea, standing in the water for the coolness,—and I saw the value of beaches to cities for the sea breeze

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and the bath."[45] Also, Thoreau foresees the future of Cape Cod when he writes: "The time must come when this coast will be a place of resort for those New-Englanders who really wish to visit the sea-side."[46] Beston's Cape Cod beach narrative can be contextualized in Thoreauvian nature writing since *Walden*,[47] but I would argue that it can be in the context of the beach narrative in which not only Thoreau but other writers who write about the beach create a body of work that has its focus on the neutral ground between the terrestrial and the oceanic, and profound contemplations derived from the objects on the beach.

In Beston's narrative, one of the most conspicuous themes is that he draws on various changes on the beach such as the seasonal changes, birds seasonal migrations, or changes of the shapes of the beaches. Likewise, Beston's overall narrative suggests that Cape Cod will continue to change further. For Beston, the dialectic power of winds, tides, and waters that create transformation or change is manifest on the beach, and the beach serves as a metaphorical and physical place through which to register different ways of awareness.

Scientific beach: Rachel Carson

Rachel Carson writes about the beach in *The Edge of the Sea* (1955): "The edge of the sea is a strange and beautiful place."[48] Carson is an admirer of Henry Beston, and she indicates that she read *The Outermost House* many times.[49] We can assume that *The Edge of the Sea* might have been influenced by Beston. In her series of books on the sea, *Under the Sea Wind* (1941), *The Edge of the Sea*, *The Sea Around Us* (1951), Carson gives us scientific accounts of the beach and the ocean, but she also examines the edge of the sea (the beach) as a biologically fertile and metaphorically rich place.

Carson's idea of the "edge" is similar to Thoreau's idea of the "neutral ground," though Carson employs it in more scientific and metaphorical ways. "The shore has a dual nature," Carson writes in *The Edge of the Sea*, "changing with the swing of tides, belonging now to the land, now to the sea."[50] The oscillation between the terrestrial and the oceanic on the beach is now paraphrased "an ancient world, for as long as there has been an earth and sea there has been this place of the meeting of land and water."[51] Carson also writes that the beach is a place for the evolution of lives; the beach, or the edge of the sea and land, is where the creation and development of life interact. Thus, "In my thoughts of the shore, one place stands apart for its revelation of exquisite beauty. It is a pool

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hidden within a cave that one can visit only rarely and briefly when the lowest of the year's low tides fall below it, and perhaps from that very fact it acquires some of its special beauty."[52] The beauty of the beach lies not only in the fecundity or complex and diverse lives living in such a meeting place between the terrestrial and the oceanic, but in its temporal transient features that are subject to the tidal moves and weather changes. In fact, the beach is not just a temporal space but an ambiguous—in the sense that by the edge of the ocean, neither the terrestrial nor oceanic can be stable. Carson writes: "Looking out over the cove I felt a strong sense of the interchangeability of land and sea in this marginal world of the shore, and of the links between the life of the two. There was also an awareness of the past and of the continuing flow of time obliterating much that had gone before, as the sea had that morning washed away the tracks of the bird."[53] Though the shore is a "marginal world," this is a place where one existence can turn into another; or, this is a place where one existence is interdependently connected with another. Once described as neutral ground by Thoreau, the beach here can be translated into symbols related to shifting identities or becoming identities. The following passage supports what I have pointed out so far:

> For the differences I sense in this particular instant of time that is mine are but the differences of a moment, determined by our place in the stream of time and in the long rhythms of the sea. Once this rocky coast beneath me was a plain of sand; then the sea rose and found a new shore line [sic]. And again in some shadowy future the surf will have ground these rocks to sand and will have returned the coast to its earlier state. And so in my mind's eye these coastal forms merge and blend in a shifting, kaleidoscopic pattern in which there is no finality, no ultimate and fixed reality—earth becoming fluid as the sea itself.[54]

A "plain of sand" turns into the rocky coast; the rocks then will change into sand. Just as constantly changing its forms, the endless metamorphosis of the coast is likened to the sea, its fluidity as well as its transformation in perpetuity. Then, it would be misleading that Carson's edge of the sea is not as neutral as Thoreau might have meant in his book. While the edge of the ocean literally designates the place in-between the terrestrial and the oceanic, Carson's image seems more oceanic than the terrestrial, as her phrasing suggests.

Commenting on Carson's use of the land-and-sea imagery, Mary A. McCay writes: "Carson returns to the cyclic metaphors she used so poetically in her first book. It is the constant ebb and flow of the tide,

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the rising and falling of the sea, that is a constant in the life of the earth. It is not human activity that endures, but natural cycles."[55] It is generally correct to observe that Carson often uses a metaphor associated with interconnectedness, which, as many argue, can be translated into her ecological and ecofeminist standpoints.[56] But at closer look, Carson's descriptions of the interplay between the terrestrial and the oceanic often lean toward the oceanic. In this respect, Carol B. Gartner points out that the relationship reflected most often in Carson's imagery is that of the land and the sea,[57] while the shifting borders of land and sea are also the focus in Carson's first book *Under the Sea-Wind*. "'[I]t was hard to say where water ended and land began.' But the sea always seems dominant."[58] The final paragraphs make the relationship explicit: "And as the eels lay offshore . . . waiting for the time when they should enter the waters of the land, the sea, too, lay restless, awaiting the time when once again "the places of its cities and towns would belong to the sea."[59]

Although there are different degrees to which Carson focuses on the ocean imagery depending on her sea books, it is my reading that, in the context of sea literature, the oscillation between the oceanic and the terrestrial has been so predominant a theme that the use of the land-and-sea imagery is not necessarily unique to Carson's work, let alone her inclination toward the ocean image. However, it seems important to note that Carson vehemently emphasizes the omnipresence of the oceanic in our everyday lives, and this can be seen in the following passage: "Many of the natural wonders of the earth owe their existence to the fact that once the sea crept over the land, laid down its deposits of sediments, and then withdrew."[60] While oscillating between the oceanic and the terrestrial, Carson seems to make us realize not only our oceanic inclination recorded in the biological memory of humans but also that oceanic dominance will prevail again. Carson writes: "He cannot control or change the ocean as, in his brief tenancy of earth, he had subdued and plundered the continents. In the artificial world of his cities and towns, he often forgets the true nature of his planet and the long vistas of its history, in which the existence of *the race of men has occupied a mere moment of time*."[61] This view can be seen as apocalyptic, just as her *Silent Spring* (1962) can often be read with a glimmer of hope surrounded by diminishing present and future lives. It is interesting to note further that the view is based on her critique toward "subdued and plundered" conditions of the terrestrial world, and that in the following passage, she even implies that the terrestrial world is doomed and the oceanic replace

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it. "And then, as never on land, he knows the truth that his world is a water world, a plant dominated by its covering mantle of ocean, in which the continents are but transient intrusions of land above the surface of the all-encircling sea."[62]

When Carson contemplates the oceanic dominance or forgotten oceanic past in human history, the following passage from *The Edge of the Sea* will reaffirm the trope of the edge of the sea narrative:

> I have seen hundreds of ghost crabs in other settings, but suddenly I was filled with the odd sensation that for the first time I knew the creature in its own world—that I understood, as never before, the essence of its being. In that moment time was suspended; the world to which I belonged did not exist and I might have been an onlooker from outer space.[63]

One may be reminded of a famous passage from Ralph Waldo Emerson's *Nature* on a "transparent eyeball." The passage goes: "Standing on the bare ground, —my head bathed by the blithe air, and uplifted into infinite space, —all mean egotism vanishes. I become a transparent eyeball; I am nothing; I see all; the currents of the Universal Being circulate through me; I am part or particle of God." Or, Henry Beston's acute awareness on the beach is also a useful reference to similar rhetorical performance that I have surveyed through Crèvecoeur and Thoreau. Walking along the edge of the oceanic and the terrestrial, the narrator on the beach finds an object that transcends into a more abstract, metaphorical speculation, producing a continuing oscillation of the oceanic and the terrestrial. In Carson's narrative, the predominant theme lies in the oceanic, its aesthetics and omnipresence, while describing the terrestrial as something unstable and even disappearing. This observation can also be seen in the following quote:

> Far in the interior of the Florida Everglades I have wondered at the feeling of the sea that came to me—wondered until I realized that here were the same flatness, the same immense spaces, the same dominance of the sky and its moving, changing clouds: wondered until I remembered that the hard rocky floor on which I stood, its flatness interrupted by upthrust [sic] masses of jagged coral rock, had been only recently constructed by the busy architects of the coral reefs under a warm sea. Now the rock is thinly covered with grass and water; but everywhere is the feeling that the land has formed only the thinnest veneer over the underlying platform of the sea, that at any moment the process might be reversed and the sea reclaim its own.[64]

Carson is not standing on the beach, however. Being inland, Carson here finds the traces of the oceanic in the terrestrial, sensing the former

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presence of the sea. While presenting terrestrial descriptions such as mass rock, flatness, or land, Carson provides us with the views of the omnipresent ocean. But as I have already shown, the view gradually turns into the one that the oceanic gain prominence over the terrestrial. Throughout Carson's sea books, the dominant presence of the oceanic remains scientific accounts and it becomes less metaphorical.

Although many critics interpret Carson's works as that of feminist and ecofeminist, most of them consider Carson's organic descriptions of ecosystem—often paraphrased as interconnectedness—as its rationale, I believe Carson's subversive message can be most vividly imagined in her use of the land-and-sea imagery. While both the oceanic and the terrestrial often times are contrasted and compared in sea literature, Carson's passionate descriptions of the oceanic over the terrestrial enable us to see what might otherwise have been perceived as mere oceanographic accounts as something more than they seem literally to do.

Anne Morrow Lindbergh's *Gift from the Sea* (1955)

While the ocean is wild and even violent, Carson's work also shows us that it can also be beautiful and subversive. In this respect, Anne Morrow Lindbergh's *Gift from the Sea* uses beachcombing as a way to express her feminist perspective. "I began these pages for myself," writes Lindbergh, "in order to think out my own particular patter of living, my own individual balance of life, work and human relationships."[65] Lindbergh tells us that her book is meant for a returning gift from the sea for those who share similar concerns, problems, and desires.

The first chapter "The Beach" begins: "The beach is not the place to work; to read, write or think."[66] The passage presents quite a contrast to the one by Thoreau's "voracious" or by Carson's "strange" and "beautiful." As Kasia Boddy surveys the beach representations in modern literature, here we only find the absence of "revulsion, wonder and the rest was also noted by those who regretted the passing of another traditional figure—solitary sea-watcher, uninterested in the sand or rocks, but move to a 'sort of delightful horror' by the crashing waves or inspired by their 'heartless immensity' to 'deep, earnest thinking.'"[67] In this view, we can also recapitulate Carson's sea literature as a work of modern literature for their subversive oceanic roles. In Carson, we can find many physical descriptions of the beach; and yet, the physicality of the beach turns into Carson's speculative narrative. So overall the narrative in Carson can

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be looked as though it is centrifugally structured around objects on the beach. Lindbergh's narrative does not develop like Carson's; she first uses "shells" to initiate her prose; then she sifts the shell's image to "house" as is shown in the following passage:

> It involves not only the butcher, the banker, the candlestickmaker but countless other experts to keep my modern house with it modern "simplification" (electricity, plumbing, refrigerator, gas-stove, oil-burner, dishwasher, radios, car, and numerous other labor-saving devices) functioning properly.[68]

Then, the shell-as-a-house image turns into a speculation on women's lived life: "What circus act we women perform every day of our lives. It puts the trapeze artist to shame. Look at us. We run a tight rope daily, balancing a pile of books on the head. Baby-carriage, parasol, kitchen chair, still under control. Steady now!"[69] As this passage gradually shows, Lindbergh's beach becomes political in the sense that the beach becomes associated with women, society, and relationships between the two. The narratives goes on: "Yet, the problem is particularly and essentially woman's. Distraction is, always has been, and probably always will be, inherent in woman's life."[70] Just as I have already indicated, the metaphorical shifts finally lead to women's life:

> I am very fond of the oyster shell. It is humble and awkward and ugly. It is slate-colored and unsymmetrical. Its form is not primarily beautiful but functional. I make fun of its knobbiness. Sometimes I resent its burdens and excrescences. But its tireless adaptability and tenacity draw my astonished admiration and sometimes even my tears. And it is comfortable in its familiarity, its homeliness, like old garden gloves which have moulded [sic] themselves perfectly to the shape of the hand. I do not like to put it down. I will not want to leave it. But is it the permanent symbol of marriage?[71]

Although in feminist writings the confines such as room and house are often metaphorically expressed to likewise unjustly confined social space of women, Lindberg uses beachcombing as a way to express her retreat from culturally and socially imposed roles as a mother, wife, and woman. Then the beach here is a space where she can search "outward simplicity" and "inner integrity" for "fuller integrity"[72] and relieve herself by reminding her that "each cycle of the wave is valid; each cycle of a relationship is valid."[73] It may be possible to interpret the beach here as a marginal space in the hegemonic discourse and society, the same space perhaps where her contemporary Rachel Carson also finds her voice.

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In this sense, there is an indication of transformation that is both desired by the beachcomber or rendered by the beach, the indication of this sea-change however is implicit in the representations of the beach. The protagonist's transformation on the beach is what Kasia Body refers to as the "beach rituals" inherent in modernism literature in such works as *The Awakening* and *The Death in Venice*.[74] But I would point out that the trope is always present in the pre-modern or pre-Darwinian American beach narratives. Crèvecoeur, for example, observes the Nantucket farmers with a Romantic eye and praises their ways of life; however, he also writes in a propositional sentence structure that he would think it would be better. The indication of transformation on the beach would be most visible when we consider the beach one of the "contact zones," as Mary Louise Pratt discusses in her 1992 book *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation*. The beach here is a zone to be crossed as Greg Dening uses in *Islands and Beaches: Discourse on a Silent Land* (1980); thus it inevitably becomes an interface of different cultural communities: imperial Europe and non-Europe. Here the beach creates tensions between the visitor and visited, in which either/both of them negotiate the "tensions between their own society's values and hierarchies, now rendered unintelligible, and the values and hierarchies of the society within which they must operate to survive or to profit."[75]

Surf writing and the elements of resistance

Surf culture and surf writing

Henry Beston's reference to the "surfmen" in the 1930s increasingly gained cultural prominence in the U.S. during the 1950s, but it wouldn't have been possible without the development of the beach as a recreational and commercial place for the general public. The novel *Gidget, the Little Girl with Big Ideas* was written by the screenwriter Frederick Kohner in 1957. *Gidget* was based on his daughter Kathy called "Gidget" in the novel and her experiences among the Malibu surf culture at the age of 15. The Southern California surf culture had already been a visible form of American popular culture since the 1930s[76]; however, it was not until the release of the movie version of *Gidget* in 1959 that the surf culture became more than marine sport or recreation. Surfing had generated a lot of momentum by 1959—new boards, wetsuits, competition, surfer-produced films, and later on surf magazines. There appeared a genre

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called surf music played by Dick Dale and The Beach Boys in the 1950s to 1960s, whose music style influenced not just surfers but also the general public.

After the movie *Gidget*, there were many similar titles that featured wave riding and beach culture such as *Barefoot Adventure* (1960), *Surfing Hollow Days* (1961), *Beach Party* (1963), *The Endless Summer* (1966), and *The Big Wednesday* (1978).[77] Through these cultural representations of beach culture, we inevitably confront how body representations had become a commercial spectacle. Though the beach seemed a secluded coastal space for Carson and Lindbergh, we also realize that it is not just things on the beach such as shells, waves, sand, and marine creatures that attract our attention to the beach, but that the beach itself has become a cultural space to watch. It may be considered close to an act of voyeurism in modern society. The viewer and the viewed are mutually involved in such a way that we have been familiar with in popular TV reality programs.

"The surfer's almost perpetual state of semi-nudity—not just in the water, but on the beach and sidewalks, while driving, at the corner store, the market, the laundromat—wasn't exactly scandalous," Matt Warshaw writes in *The History of Surfing*, "but it struck many as perhaps a too-literal example of rude good health" and an "inducement to sex (bikinis were getting smaller, too), which added to the public's growing discomfort with the sport."[78] In-between culture (terrestrial) and nature (oceanic), the beach embodies dual features, and the body—generally considered natural—is now consumed, but it is acceptable because the beach is also culturally constructed. Thus, there may be ample possibilities that we can find (male) voyeurism impulse in Carson's and Lindbergh's narratives, if not so tangible in the structure of *Gidget*, which was written in the way that the father materializes his daughter's personal communication. Body politics and sexuality conferred in the beach culture are important themes to be further explored notwithstanding.[79] I cannot devote myself to analyzing each of these cultural representations of the surf culture for preset purposes. Instead, in the context of my treatment of American literature by the sea, l shall proceed to point out some of the trope of the surf culture so as to how we can contextualize it in the tradition of the American maritime culture.

One of the most conspicuous aspects of the surfers is explained by John Fiske who discusses the Australian surf culture in his 1983 article titled "Surfalism and Sandiotics: The Beach in Oz Culture surfalism." In

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it, he characterized the cultural meanings of the beach as follows: "The beach and the surf are worked on by the culture so that their overflowing meanings are controlled and legitimized. The beach, physically and conceptually closer to the city, is completely colonized."[80] In finding multifaceted meanings on the beach, his semiotic observation is similar to mine, and he continues speculating on surfing as a sort of interference to the terrestrial mainstream culture in the following passage:

> The surf still shows elements of resistance to this imposition of meaning by a culturally dominant class in their own interests. The potential for subversion is still there, because physically and conceptually, the surf is nearer nature, further from the city. The potentially subversive meaning of the surf derives from this chain of concepts—the body, nature, the signifier, pleasure and therefore desire seen as articulating an alternative, threatening way of making sense to the one proposed by the official culture. The subversion lies in the denial of control or power as socially constituted.[81]

Fiske finds "elements of resistance" in surfing because he considers surfing an example of counter-culture that opposes the mainstream. In elaborating upon such subversive aspects of the surf, for example, Fisk discusses that the languages the surfer uses are radically opposed to the mainstream in emphasizing sensations that evolve around the body. The sentences the surfers use in expressing their experience on the wave tend to be fragmented in such a way that they perform through their bodies rather than explain and verbalize their concepts and ideas through words. The surfer symbolizes resistance to society not just because of their lifestyle but because their use of body-centered discourse. Fiske argues that they do so in trying to break free from the "control of society."[82] In fact, it is an often-noted characteristic of surfers that they are often represented as bums or hippies during the 1950s, a time when younger people began to disregard growing consumerism and materialism in postwar American society. While educated and intellectual Beat generations look at verbal art forms, surfers try to maneuver on the wave; in other words they use their physical interactions with the waves as a form of artistic expression.[83]

However, as I have studied so far, the "elements of resistance" are not just unique to writings by the surfer who embodies the postmodern identity based on the twentieth-century post-industrial society. The elements of resistance have to do with the space in-between the terrestrial and the oceanic, the place upon which many precedent writers on the beach have already elaborated. Like the Puritans who were awestruck by

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the oceanic wilderness, the surfer in modern society is more preoccupied with the oceanic than the terrestrial; or just like Carson and Lindberg, whose narratives evolved from the oscillation between the terrestrial and the oceanic and eventually transcend into more abstract thoughts, surf narratives are also preoccupied with contemplations about something other than surfing such as how to live.

Thoreauvian influence in surf writing

What seems interesting is that many modern surfers' writings have some affinities with Henry David Thoreau's *Walden*. For example, *West of Jesus: Surfing, Science and the Origins of Belief* writes: "At a time a pair of hurricanes were heavy on the neck of Central America, I went to Mexico to surf. I went because of these things. I went because the stories I told myself had begun to fail."[84] Lawrence Buell discusses Thoreau's influence on modern environmental writings in his *The Environmental Imagination* (1997) in which he uses the phrase the "Thoreavian Pilgrimage" to illustrate how modern environmental consciousness and rhetorical characteristics are indebted to Thoreau's writing as well as his ways of life. Little has ever been written about surf writing in the context of American literary genre, and I will therefore briefly discuss some of the representative books on contemporary surf writing to outline some tropes that both Thoreau and surfers share. The following passages are drawn from *West of Jesus*, *Caught Inside*, and *In Search of Captain Zero*. For the sake of comparison, I juxtapose three quotes side by side.[85]

> The truth of the matter was I went to such places because most people didn't. On a map and in reality, such places are hard to get to and far away. I wanted to be the kind of person who went places hard to get to and far away. I was interested in places that are far away on maps, just as I was interested in places that are far way in reality. I didn't know then, not like I know now, that such places do not always coincide.[86]
>
> I didn't move to the beach to perfect my backside aerial attack (or even just to learn what the hell a backside aerial is, for that matter); I moved because my need to be in the clear, alive water of my California's Pacific, on a real, honest-to-God surfboard, on a daily basis, had been a source of nagging angst since the first time I'd ridden a wave.[87]
>
> I always find the surf lineup a good vintage point from which to objectively review my situation and options. The enlightening perspective out

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> there is partly a result of the inviolate solitude (interlopers are obvious on approach), and partly the effects of an aqueous environment womblike in its security, its easy, pacifying motion, its gently calmative murmur; circumstances that I believe put you in closer touch with the wisdom of the subconscious. And so it is with sadness, depression, angst, call a lowness of spirit what you will. When I hit the water with surfstick, a lift is in the offing, along with a clarification of my thought processes.[88]

Surfers often live near the beach to where they can base their life on surf riding; in addition, for the same reason, they often move where they can get better waves. Their search for good waves or perfect rides simultaneously becomes part of the narrative structure that looks similar to such genres as travel, adventure, spiritual quest, and ethnographical observations on the beach. For example, the first and second quotes above remind us of the chapter "Where I lived, What I lived for" from *Walden* in the way that the narrator repeatedly explains the reason that he went to far-off places to surf. The structure of surf narrative in *Caught Inside* follows the progress of the seasons as Thoreau's *Walden* does. In the third quote *In Search of Captain Zero*, for example, the narrator uses the "surf lineup" to reflect upon his "situation and options," and contemplates the "enlightening perspective" evoked by the "inviolate solitude" while Thoreau often refers to Walden Pond to observe natural history of the community as well as to face what he calls the "essential facts of life." It may be possible to regard this Thoreauvian influence in surf writing as the correlation between the terrestrial and the oceanic in the sense that surf writing adopt Thoreau's motives and rhetoric for verbalizing surf experiences.

The references to *Walden*, whether they are direct or not, can be considered in the context of the oscillation between the terrestrial and the oceanic. Though *Walden* is set in New England, its images and topics are relevant to New England maritime culture. A notable quote from the chapter "Conclusion" in *Walden* would help us remind of how it is filled with a salty atmosphere:

> What was the meaning of that South-Sea Exploring Expedition, with all its parade and expense, but an indirect recognition of the fact that there are continents and seas in the moral world to which every man is an isthmus or an inlet, yet unexplored by him, but that it is easier to sail many thousand miles through cold and storm and cannibals, in a government ship, with five hundred men and boys to assist one, than it is to explore the private sea, the Atlantic and Pacific Ocean of one's being alone.

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Thoreau's reference to the South-Sea Exploring Expedition indicates that his sojourn around Walden and his speculations on the clear, deep water of the pond are no less similar to oceanic explorations.[89] As I will discuss later in Chapter 3, *Walden* is also loaded with underwater images that I suspect were common in the New England culture, and surf writing seems to resonate unabated maritime imagination. It would perchance be possible, if not sheer nonsense, to imagine Thoreau would have enjoyed surfing besides sojourning if he had been introduced.

It follows that we can observe the intertwined cultural forces of American maritime culture, as the tradition of beach narrative has so far underscored. There are varieties of beach experiences; however, we can also find some tropes that seem configured based on the element of the beach, a cultural space between the terrestrial and the oceanic. So far, my study of the beach narrative is dedicated to the outline of its tradition, tropes, and interpretations of some representative works. To conclude, I shall also return to the representations of "wilderness" to illustrate how oceanic wilderness has survived, hoping to shed light on how terrestrial and oceanic aesthetics correlate to create oceanic aesthetics.

Sharks and the beach

The terrestrial vs. the oceanic

Most people may recognize the following passage: "The vibrations [of the water] were stronger now, and the fish recognized the prey.... The fish smelled her now, and the vibrations—erratic and sharp—singled distress. The fish began to circle close to the surface. Its dorsal fin broke water, and its tail, thrashing back and forth, cut the glassy surface with a hiss. A series of tremors shook its body."[90] Just as its dorsal fin appears on the surface of the water, one cannot help feeling the terror of the shark closing up, and looking at its relentless eyes and its massive white jaws wide open.... With this vivid image of the horror coming out from beneath the ocean, and repopularizing the archetypal plot of "men against the unknown (nature)," *Jaws* (1974) has become one of the most important texts on the sea since *Moby-Dick* (1851) and on its powerful predators, sharks.

Few writers have done more to popularize the sea and the shark than Peter Benchley and his *Jaws* (1974). Intrigued by a newspaper article about a fisherman who had caught an over 4500-pound great white shark off the coasts of Long Island, Benchley wrote its account to re-create

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the old theme of "humans-against-the unknown" in nature. By using a white shark instead of a whale, *Jaws* can almost be read as a popular account of *Moby-Dick*, replacing Ishmael with Martin Brody, and Ahab with Quint; with a single survivor clinging to a wrecked boat, the ending is also identical with *Moby-Dick*. But the difference is also important because a shark terrorizes a resort community in *Jaws*, whereas professional seamen chase a whale in *Moby-Dick*. As nature has increasingly been popularized in American society during the 1960s and 1970s, and environmental consciousness also has grown among people. Along with the movie's success, Benchley's account of the relentless, wild creature reminded people of the vivid horror coming out from the ocean.

But I shall treat sharks in literature as a way to examine sea literature in reference to beach experience that still evokes our sense of horror and wild nature. In fact, the shark representation can be traced further back to, for example, colonial America when the colonists strived to survive. Many early American colonists share a view of sharks as a nuisance while they also consumed them as food or fertilizer to support their terrestrial lives. For example, William Wood, a seventeenth-century colonist, writes as follows:

> The shark is a kind of fish as big as a man, some as big as a horse, with three rows of teeth within his mouth, with which he snaps asunder the fisherman's lines if he be not very circumspect. This fish will leap at a man's hand if it be overboard and with his teeth snap off a man's leg or hand if he be aswimming [sic]. These are often taken, being good for nothing but to put on the ground for manuring of land.[91]

Among early settlers, it was common to view any animals and nature from a utilitarian point of view, and sharks are not an exception. J. Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur also refers to sharks in *Letters from an American Farmer* (1782) and describes how people in Nantucket caught "porpoises and sharks by a very ingenious method."[92] Sharks are "useless" because their meat is not tasty and it has strong smell, and they are also something to fight with or conquer if one could in life in the wilderness. Whether we fear them or not, just as other predators on land, sharks continued drawing attention for their powerful image. Although sharks were feared and sometimes hated for their reduced commercial values during those early periods, they were a part of the American experience that contributed to farming as manure and reminded people of wilderness experience that is said to have gone during nineteenth century. It follows,

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then, that sharks can be regarded as the oceanic itself. If the essence of the oceanic is its features that are antagonistic and inconceivable to the terrestrial values, there is no more perfect image than sharks. Their presence continued to both menace and awe people.

In Ernest Hemingway's *The Old Man and the Sea* (1952), after a battle with a fish, Santiago finally catches a huge marlin; however, sharks appear in the story and eat the marlin, which was lashed to the side of the boat. In the story, Santiago and the marlin are collectively referred to as "they" as if to imply the old man and the fish constitute as a whole, and the sharks, as villains, are represented as the "others." "They were hateful sharks," Santiago remarks, "bad smelling, scavengers as well as killers, and when they are hungry they would bite at an oar or the rudder of a boat."[93] As villains, the sharks are represented as antagonists who oppose the protagonists. The sharks are primitive, savage, and hungry, and in Hemingway's novel, the sharks again fall into the role of an archetypal enemy that must be conquered.

Sharks may be able to maintain their traditional values as long as they are far from the beach, where the terrestrial and the oceanic values can coexist. In fact, while the sharks are still generally perceived as villains in twentieth-century American literature, they are also commodities, too, as in this a brief description of the shark factory: "Those who had caught sharks had taken them to the shark factory on the other side of the cove where they were hoisted on a block and tackle, their livers removed, their fins cut off and their hides skinned out and their flesh cut into strips for salting."[94] This is what James Dickey elaborates upon in his "The Sharks Parlor" (1965). As a narrative poem, it gives us realistic scenes of butchering sharks. The speaker of the poem recollects his boyhood experience when he went shark-fishing from his family's summer cottage, which he calls "Cumberland Sound." One of the memorable scenes has to do with butchering sharks: "Out from the boat sat in a new radiance in the pond of blood in / the sea / Waiting for fins waiting to spill our guts also into the glowing water."[95] The shark here is cut in pieces, and the pieces of the shark are materialistically described. It is possible to interpret that, in the scene of the bloodshed, butchered sharks function as "rite of passage" in which the boy has to go through. The shark, which was once a symbol of untamed nature, has brutally transformed into lifeless material pieces, and we can view it as an example of modern society where, as Bill McKibben's 1989 book *The End of Nature* argues, a "certain set of human ideas about the world and our place in it"[96] has changed and was washed away.

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It follows that sharks are indeed considered the oceanic because the closer they come to the terrestrial such as a beach, the more likely they get secularized, relativized, and consumed by terrestrial values. Just as the history of the beach itself, sharks, as the oceanic are a part of, though often represented as opposed to, the formation of terrestrial values. That does not mean that the oceanic has always been treated badly by the terrestrial, however. Just as negatively described, sharks as well as other fish and marine minerals were used to enrich terrestrial values, which is to say, the terrestrial could have not been able to maintain its values without the oceanic. To illustrate this point further, I shall turn to contemporary marine environmental writing to conclude.

According to Sylvia A. Earle, the National Marine Fisheries Services issued the *First Annual Report on the Status of U.S. Living Marine Resources, Our Living Ocean* in 1991. It is an account that included a vision for reducing overfishing.[97] And a plan for sustained use of wild populations in the sea has gradually appeared. It is scientists and divers who have spent a lot of time looking at the ocean that have mostly contributed to the oceanic environment through their writing because they are more aware of the reality of the ocean and its endangered animals. It is especially true for such a sea creature as the shark. Carl Safina gives some interesting numbers: "Sharks make up only about 1 percent of the world fisheries catch, but that 1 percent is a lot of sharks: forty to seventy *million* or so each year by the late 1990s. Less conservative estimates range up to one hundred million annually. By contrast, sharks kill only ten people each year on average—fewer than are killed by bee stings or even hogs."[98] Peter Benchley also wrote apologetically in *Ocean Planet: Writings and Images of the Sea* (1995):

> Today I could not, for instance, portray the shark as a villain, especially not as a mindless omnivore that attacks boats and human with reckless abandon. We know now, as we didn't then, that the majority of shark attacks on human beings are accidents (often cases of mistaken identity), that a person has a much greater chance of being killed by lightning, bee stings, or feral pigs than by sharks . . . .[99]

Benchley's apology to sharks is a milestone in sea literature. Working as a conservationist, until his death in 2006, Benchley had been a strong advocate of sharks; likewise, literature has just started treating sharks not as a villain, nor a nuisance, but as a member of ecosystems and as an endangered species. Global shark fishing and trade are still going on; in

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addition to the fin trade, people use sharks for skins that can be tanned into valuable leather, for oils, and its cartilage is used to make some medicines.

"The annal of this voracious beach!" Thoreau writes in Cape Cod: "Who could write them, unless it were a shipwrecked sailor?"[100] Thoreau answers this question not by writing about the ocean or sea voyages but by looking at the beach and its powerful aspects that are evoked by the objects cast up there. For him, the ocean is "a wilderness reaching round the globe, wilder than a Bengal jungle, and fuller of monsters, washing the very wharves of our cities and gardens of sea-side residences."[101] Observing such a hostile, savage aspect of the ocean on the beach through which to view his life-long interest in the concept of the wild, Thoreau finds the beach to be the site of the intersection of nature and culture. Or, one may find a similar argument in the historian Greg Dening, who writes in *Mr. Bligh's Bad Language* that history was likely born "on the beaches, marginal spaces between land and sea…where everything is relativized a little, turned around, where tradition is as much invented and handed down, where otherness is both a new discovery and a reflection of something old."[102]

This chapter identified some important tropes in American sea literature categorized here as representative of *by-the-sea* narratives. Narrators of this sort are often obsessed with both the physical and metaphorical features of the "edge" of the ocean. The narrators' observations of the beach or the shoreline reveal an awareness of the multifaceted physicality of the shore itself. Moreover, this physicality not uncommonly transcends into abstract notions and images. All the writings about the beach revealed shared features in their presentation of the space between, and shared by, the terrestrial and the oceanic. Analysis revealed that although both sides of the oceanic "edge" become transient and interactive, neither side loses its inherent essence. Nonetheless, the terrestrial and the oceanic endlessly persist in changing form and texture as the complexity of the "edge" accelerates along with the philosophical contemplations and meanderings of the narrators of *by* the sea experiences.

Notes

1 *Holy Bible*. Oxford Edition, the Washburn College Bible. New York: Oxford University Press, 1979. (Gen. 1:9–10). Print.

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2 *Holy Bible* (Gen: I: 21–25).
3 In fact, sea monsters would frequently appear on the sea maps from sixteenth through the late nineteenth century, but they disappear as terrestrial information became more necessary to facilitate terrestrial economy and its expansion.
4 "Sea." *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible*. Ed. Karel van der Toorn, Bob Becking, Pieter W. van der Horst. Leiden; New York: E.J. Brill, 1995. Print.
5 A notable example would be Carl Schmitt, a German philosopher and political theorist who wrote *Land and Sea*, trans. Simona Draghici (Plutarch Press, 1997; o riginal publication 1954). Schmitt's *Political Theology: Four Chapters on the Concept of Sovereignty*, trans. George D. Schwab (MIT Press, 1985) would be another example adapted intro political theory and territorial sovereignty.
6 "Sea." *Dictionary of Deities*.
7 J. Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur. *Letters from an American Farmer and Sketches of Eighteenth-Century America*. Ed. Albert E. Stone. New York: Penguin, 1981. (50). Print.
8 Thomas Philbrick. *St. John de Crèvecoeur*. New York: Twayne Publishers, 1970. (44). Print.
9 Ibid. (49).
10 Ibid. (53).
11 Crèvecoeur, *Letters from an American Farmer and Sketches of Eighteenth-Century America*, (50).
12 Ibid. (163).
13 Ibid. (163).
14 Ibid. (163–164).
15 Franklin, T. Bedford. *A History of Agriculture*. London: G. Bell, 1948. (295–296). Print.
16 Marcus Rediker. *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea: Merchant Seamen, Pirates, and the Anglo-American Maritime World, 1700–1750*. Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987. (296). Print.
17 Crèvecoeur, *Letters from an American Farmer and Sketches of Eighteenth-Century America*, (71).
18 Ibid. (71).
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20 Ibid. (116).
21 Henry David Thoreau. *Walden, and Other Writings*. Ed. William Howarth. New York: Modern Library, 1981. (979). Print.
22 Thoreau, *Walden, and Other Writings*, (853).
23 Ibid. (853).

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24 Ibid. (854).
25 Ibid. (854).
26 Ibid. (951).
27 Ibid. (951).
28 Ibid..
29 Ibid..
30 Ibid. (855).
31 Ibid. (853–857).
32 Ibid. (856–857).
33 John Lowney. "Thoreau's *Cape Cod*: The Unsettling Art of the Wrecker." *American Literature* 64.2 (1992): 239–254. (243).
34 Lowney, "Thoreau's *Cape Cod*: The Unsettling Art of the Wrecker," (239–240).
35 Robert Richardson, Jr. *Henry Thoreau: A Life of the Mind*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986. (202). Print.
36 Thoreau, *Walden, and Other Writings*, (979).
37 Ibid. (202–203).
38 See *Especially Maine: The Natural World of Henry Beston from Cape Cod to the St. Lawrence*. Ed. Elizabeth Coatsworth. Brattleboro, VT: Stephen Greene Press, 1970. (2). Print.
39 Henry Beston. *The Outermost House: A Year of Life on the Great Beach of Cape Cod*. New York: Penguin, 1928. (1). Print.
40 Ibid. (1).
41 Ibid. (2).
42 Ibid. (2).
43 Allan D. Burns. "The Art and Legacy of Henry Beston's *The Outermost House*." *Concord Saunterer* 1999; 7: 236–251.
44 Ibid. (236–251).
45 Thoreau, *Walden, and Other Writings*, (860).
46 Ibid. (1039).
47 Burns, "The Art and Legacy of Henry Beston's *The Outermost House*," 237–251.
48 Carson, *The Edge of the Sea*, (1).
49 Paul Brooks. *The House of Life: Rachel Carson at Work*. Boston: G.K. Hall & Company, 1997. 101. Print.
50 Carson, *The Edge of the Sea*, (1).
51 Ibid. (2).
52 Ibid. (2).
53 Ibid. (6).
54 Ibid. (249–250).
55 Mary A. McCay, *Rachel Carson*. NY: Twayne Publishers, 1993. (46). Print.
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58 Carson, *The Edge of the Sea,* (43).

59 Ibid.

60 Ibid. (102).

61 Ibid. (15).

62 Ibid. (15).

63 Ibid. (5).

64 Ralph Waldo Emerson. *Nature*. 1836. Internet Archive. <http://www.archive.org/details/naturemunroeooemerrich>. (13).

65 Anne Morrow Lindbergh. *Gift from the Sea*. New York: Pantheon, 1955. (9). Print.

66 Ibid. (15).

67 Kasia Boddy. "The Modern Beach." *Critical Quarterly* 49.4 (2007): 21–39. (22). Print.

68 Lindbergh, *Gift from the Sea*, (25).

69 Ibid. (26).

70 Ibid. (28).

71 Ibid. (83).

72 Ibid. (123).

73 Ibid. (110).

74 Body further analyzes thematic treatments of the modern beach in such works as *To the Lighthouse* by Virginia Woolf, *Tender Is the Night* by F. Scott Fitzgerald, and *The Sun Also Rises* by Ernest Hemingway in "The Modern Beach" *Critical Inquiry* 49.4.

75 Michelle Elleray. "Crossing the Beach: A Victorian Tale Adrift in the Pacific." *Victorian Studies: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Social, Political, and Cultural Studies* 47.2 (2005): 164–173.

76 Matt Warshaw. *The History of Surfing*. San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2010. (94–151). Print.

77 Even before *Gidget*, there were some films that featured the beach culture such as *Hawiian Holiday* (1937), *Hawaiian Surfing Movie* (1953), and *From Here to Eternity* (1953) to name a few.

78 Warshaw, *The History of Surfing*, (159).

79 The most recent and in-depth study of surfing culture is done by Krista Comer's *Surfer Girls in the New World Order* (Duke University Press, 2010), which uses surfer girls as a case study to illustrate more complicated relationships between local subcultures and globalism, in addition to insightful analyses on feminism, politics, and environmentalism.

80 Warshaw, *The History of Surfing*, (145).

81 John Fiske. "Surfalism and Sandiotics: The Beach in Oz Culture Surfalism." *Australian Journal of Cultural Studies* 1:2 (1983): 120–149. (145–146),

82 Fiske, "Surfalism and Sandiotics: The Beach in Oz Culture Surfalism," (135).

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83 Warshaw, *The History of Surfing*, (131–133).
84 Steven Kotler. *West of Jesus: Surfing, Science and the Origins of Belief*. New York: Bloomsbury, 2008. (3). Print.
85 There are surf writing anthologies that help us understand how surf culture has been an integral part of western culture, and about the West's colonial relations with the Pacific islands. See *Paper Shredders: An Anthology of Surf Writing* (Ed. Murray G. Thomas and Gary Wright, New York: iUniverse, Inc. 1993), *Pacific Passages: An Anthology of Surf Writing* (Ed. Moser, Patrick, Manoa: University of Hawaii Press, 2008), *Zero Break: A Collection of Surf Writing 1777–2004*. (Ed. Matt Warshaw, New York: Mariner Books, 2004).
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89 For a discussion about *Walden*, particularly about its reference to marine nature, and maritime culture, see Haskell S. Springer's "The Nautical Walden" in *The New England Quarterly* 57.1 (March 1984): 84–97 and Leila Hatch's "Castles of Sand: Thoreau on the Seashore" in http://thoreau.eserver.org/shore.html.
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92 Crèvecoeur, *Letters from an American Farmer and Sketches of Eighteenth-Century America*, (116).
93 Ernest Hemingway. *The Old Man and the Sea*. New York: Scribner's, 1952. (107–108). Print.
94 Ibid. (11).
95 James Dickey. *James Dickey: Poems 1957–1967*. Wesleyan: Wesleyan University Press, 1967. (13–15). Print.
96 Bill McKibben. *The End of Nature*. New York: Anchor Books, 1989. (8). Print.
97 Sylvia A. Earle. *Sea Change: A Message of the Oceans*. New York: Ballantine Books, 1995. (189). Print.
98 Carl Safina. *Song for the Blue Ocean*. New York: Holt Paperbacks, 1999. (401). Print.
99 Peter Benchley. *Ocean Planet: Writings and Images of the Sea*. New York: Harry N Abrams, 1995. (138). Print.
100 Thoreau, *Walden, and Other Writings*, (963).
101 Ibid. (981).
102 (qtd. in Lencek and Bosker xxi). Lenček, Lena and et al. *The Beach: The History of Paradise on Earth*. New York, N.Y.: Viking, 1998. Print.

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3

American Sea Literature—*beneath* the Sea

Abstract: *This chapter introduces a comprehensive history of Euro-American underwater explorations and suggests that some of the important terms to American culture and literature such as wilderness, frontier, technological development, and landscape be equally significant in underwater activities. The author also provides examples interactions we can see between the terrestrial and underwater activities and suggests that American cultural, economical, technological developments have been at work underwater; therefore, paying attention to underwater experiences enables us to better understand how the oceanic and the terrestrial collide and collaborate to create overall American literary experiences and expressions. Some of the representatives underwater literature include Herman Melville's "The Maldive Shark" (1888), William Beebe's* Half Mile Down, *Jacques-Yves Cousteau's* The Silent World, *and Peter Benchley's* The Deep.

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> It was not always dry land where we dwell.[1]
>
> Henry David Thoreau, *Walden*

Sea literature beneath the sea

The American Maritime Legacy gives us a general historical timeline of American oceanic power being divided into four phases: the early stage (the colonial period to 1820), the golden age (1820 to 1860), decline (1860 to 1900), modern development and onwards. Thus it generally follows that the American maritime power was in steady decline after its golden period in the nineteenth century when the American maritime economy looked at its best. This view is widely accepted and probably reasonable in that economical activities might comprise of a fundamental part of history and culture, and yet, the view does not properly reflect how maritime culture played a cardinal role to constitute American culture, let alone how it evolved beneath the ocean. Indeed, if one compares it with, for example, the history of the American merchant fleet, the American oceanic experience looks obsolete and almost gone. According to Andrew Gibson and Arthor Donovan, the U.S. maritime policies are ineffective and not strategically supporting the economic and political future of America as a maritime nation. In *The Abandoned Ocean: A History of United States Maritime Policy*, they pessimistically argue that the future of American maritime power would be bleak; and "in the absence of a truly new departure, of strong leadership and collective commitment to fundamental renovation, extinction is the most likely outcome."[2]

In this chapter, I wish to present the argument that oceanic activities have continued to support American culture by paying attention to its underwater activities during the nineteenth century; in so doing, I am not as pessimistic as Gibson and Donovan, or those who share the view that American maritime activities have diminished. I suspect that such a bleak view toward American maritime activities tends to look at those maritime related activities on the surface of the ocean such as voyages, navigations, and explorations. Thus my analysis in this chapter will extensively be on the diversity of underwater activities there have been up until twentieth-century America and its related areas. I hope to show that American interests in underwater activities were steady and even growing during the nineteenth century, keeping

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pace with European sea powers, and examine what the American underwater activities were like as well as how they contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the American cultural and political currents during the nineteenth century. The first half of my discussion in this chapter will be on the historical outline of American underwater activities from the early to late nineteenth century; the latter part shall deal with selected maritime readings of American literature emphasizing that, while the terrestrial aesthetic seems to surpass as the prime supplier of the American cultural imagination, the oceanic was, if not superior to the terrestrial, a significant source of the American cultural expressions.

Science into the deep: historical contexts

There were several noteworthy scientific explorations examining the interior of the ocean in the nineteenth century: the British geographer James Rennell's vast survey on the Atlantic, Charles Darwin's coral reef research conducted during the HMS *Beagle* voyage in the 1830s, and Matthew Fontaine Maury's oceanographic research. In terms of underwater research, James Cook's *Challenger* Expedition 1872–1876 was considered the first extensive expedition concerning the depth of oceans, along with their biology, geology, and chemistry. In the twentieth century, American underwater activities increasingly expanded for the exploitation of marine resources in such a way that they almost seemed to coincide with the development of American terrestrial frontier experiences. Gray Kroll pertinently mentions in his *America's Ocean Wilderness: A Cultural History of Twentieth-Century* that oceanographic explorations for oceanic wilderness and frontier have some affinities, and he argues that the oceanic explorations were facilitated as an extension of terrestrial wilderness. My argument in this chapter will resonate with Kroll's thesis, but with many different examples; I shall look at some general trends of American underwater activities in giving more details of how commercial, scientific, military, and recreational activities help us gain a more comprehensive understanding of American maritime culture and history. This ocean frontier thesis is also what Nathaniel Philbrick, or Thomas Philbrick before him, illustrates in *Sea of Glory: America's Voyage of Discovery, The U.S. Exploring Expedition, 1838–1842*. "America's first frontier was not the west," Nathaniel Philbrick writes, "it was the sea."[3] While

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my argument has supported that statement, I would add in particular that America's deep sea has been its ever-lasting frontier, having been used to define as well as to revitalize American culture.

In her *Fathoming the Ocean*, Helen M. Rozwadowski states that nineteenth-century underwater experiences played a crucial role in American culture and history and it was transnational in that, in the case of a trans-Atlantic telegraph cable that she specifically draws on, a collaboration between Britain and America. Rozwadowski refers to such major scientific expeditions as Charles Darwin's *Beagle* voyage, Thomas Huxley's *Rattlesnake*, and the United States Exploring Expeditions and states that those underwater scientific inquiries "remained a vital part of serious natural history and an essential ingredient in the foreign policy of these premier maritime nations."[4] It is true that in the middle of the nineteenth century there were many scientific studies concerning the ocean that brought much more attention to it; the ocean had become not merely a navigational or two-dimensional passage that connects continents but a place where commercial, political, scientific interests intersected because the ocean itself became an object to be pursued. The oceanic had increasingly drawn epistemological interests to enquire as to "what is the oceanic," and such a question as this led to the emergence of oceanography as a science concerning the marine environment.

Oceanography emerged as a bulk of scientific knowledge necessary for building a more competitive modern nation with the publication of Matthew Fontaine Maury's *Physical Geography of the Sea* in 1855. *Physical Geography of the Sea* explains how the oceanic environment is conceived of as a complicated system, influenced by meteorology, currents, and winds. Maury writes: "Properly to appreciate the various offices which the winds and waves perform, we must regard nature as a whole, for all the departments thereof are intimately connected."[5] Likewise Maury urges his readers to look at the ocean as a whole for it involves several scientific approaches; however, as his phrase "geography of the ocean" indicates, it is interesting to note that his interdisciplinary approach to the ocean is both terrestrial and oceanic in the sense that he tries to apply terrestrial and geographical vocabulary into the representation of the oceanic environment. Maury writes:

> [I]n undertaking to explore the physical geography of the sea, I have found myself standing side by side with the geologist on the land, and with him far away from the sea-shore, engaged in considering some of the phenomena

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> which the inland basins of the earth—those immense indentations on its surface that have no sea-drainage—present for contemplation and study.[6]

If geography can be defined as the study of the physical features of the earth, Maury tries his geographical approach to describe the oceanic environment by relying on the "geologist on the land." By collaborating with the geologist, Maury attempts to illustrate the interactions between the terrestrial and the oceanic, with a more emphatic focus on how the terrestrial influences the oceanic, not the other way around. Compared to modern oceanography, his approach to the oceanic looks at how weather, currents, tides, temperature, and the depths of water determines the course of navigation, or the two-dimensional experience on the surface of the ocean. Maury does so by collecting and studying the logs and charts from previous navigations, and in his introduction of *Physical Geography of the Sea*, he accounts:

> On those charts all the tracks that could be collected at that time from the old sea-journals were projected, and one was surprised to see how they cut up and divided the ocean off into great turnpike-looking thoroughfares. There was the road to China; it, and the road to South America, to the Pacific around Cape Horn, to the East around the Cape of Good Hope, and to Australia, were one and the same until the navigator had left the North, crossed the equator, and passed over into the South Atlantic. Here there was, in this great highway, a fork to the right, leading to the ports of Brazil. A little farther on you came to another on the left; it was the road by which the Cape of Good Hope was to be doubled. There was no finger-board or other visible sign to guide the wayfarer, but, nevertheless, all turned off at the same place. None missed it.[7]

His references to "great turnpike-looking thoroughfares" and the "road to China" indicate that oceanic travel was then regarded as equivalent as the ones on the terrestrial. Although there was no "finger-board" or "other visible sign," there aren't people who were lost on the surface, and this leads to his observation as to what determines oceanic navigations. The view toward the ocean may not be so clear in his approach; however, Maury is nonetheless one of the more important pioneers of modern oceanography for his comprehensive approach to marine sciences. In his view toward the oceanic environment, we can observe how the terrestrial, the oceanic, and their interactions were composed in the environmental imaginations of the nineteenth century. Just like the term "ecology" was used for the first time to describe a branch of biology combined with other scientific branches such as earth science by the German scientist

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Ernst Haeckel in the 1860s, or Alexander von Humboldt further back in the history. A new type of science often involves other disciplines as it evolves, as in the development of oceanography or marine science, just as Maury indicates, emerging in such a way that terrestrial science was used to compare and contrast to comprehend what was still unknown.

Science and technology into the deep

Likewise, most underwater activities at first show us that they are terrestrially represented in terms of aesthetics and epistemology. I shall look at some of the articles about commercial underwater developments, especially about the production of submarine devices. Unlike the terrestrial frontier, however, there is again a question concerning whether the maritime frontier is ideologically opposed to, or, latently constituent of, the terrestrial frontier during the nineteenth century. One of the prominent features of nineteenth-century underwater development is that submarine construction involved many European maritime powers, and we can regard the interior of the ocean as the maritime frontier, in which, like the terrestrial frontier, people dream of and seek out successful opportunities on new terrain. For example, the first transatlantic cable was laid in 1858 by Cyrus W. Field with the support of England while the first American-owned transatlantic cables were laid by Mr. Jay Gould in 1881.

> The total cable mileage owned or controlled by American companies today is 70,943; British companies own or control 128,976 miles and 23,855 miles are owned and controlled by that American interests own and control no small amount of the world's total length of privately owned cables, and I think that the enterprise of the American companies in laying such a great mileage of cables without financial support or guarantee from the Government is to be commended and it might be pointed out here that this system of American cables was developed by keen aggressive competition between the American companies, backed in great measure by American capital.[8]

The use of the phrase "American capital" is indicative of emerging American capitalism vis-à-vis European counterparts during the late nineteenth century, and, as Rozwadowski puts it, the nation's interest in submarine telegraphy inspired international competition over the capital underwater. American underwater experiences must have been a significant part of American culture, especially, during the nineteenth

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century, but such cultural and national identification was possible through other foreign powers who tried to secure the mastery of the seas. Scientific explorations underwater cannot be isolated from the cultural and societal developments of America because they illustrate that American culture and history were not necessarily born out of planned international collaborations based on generosity; rather, the underwater served as an internationally competitive milieu where Western powers competed, kept an eye on each other's inventions and progress, and incidentally this sometimes resulted in collaborations. This sort of collaborative and yet competitive relation through oceanic activities needs to be emphasized because, unlike terrestrial territory and national conflicts, political or cultural, maritime interactions looked invisible. In the following passage, I shall present some other less discussed aspects of maritime culture.

The Journal of the Franklin Institute of the State of Pennsylvania, a scientific periodical started in 1826, reports on numerous new inventions related to underwater activities such as diving helmets or diving bells, both in Britain and America. The fact that most activities using diving helmets and diving bells in the early- to mid-nineteenth century were for salvaging wrecked ships shows that (not just submarine telegraph), salvage, scientific inquiry, and technological invention can be studied as cross-cultural underwater activities. The following extract, from the article titled "Report on Mr. L. Norcross's Diving Apparatus" describes new inventions such as the diving apparatus:

> The diving apparatus consists of a [d]ress of the cloth coated with gum elastic, so as to be entirely cylindric shape, while exposed to the pressure of the water.... In regard to the novelty of the invention of mr. Norcross [sic], the committee are not so fully informed as in relation to its efficacy. Similar devices have been applied in conjunction with, and without, the diving bell; and in one case of a successful experiment in England, that of Mr. Bell, at Yarmouth, the material of the dress, and the general features of the apparatus, were similar to the corresponding parts as used by Mr. Norcross.[9]

Though the details of the invention remain unclear, the article suggests that the use of the diving bell was then becoming obsolete because the diving apparatus was somehow expected to improve the "efficacy" of underwater activities.[10] In fact, as early as 1830s, a "diving dress," an equivalent to a modern diving suit, was already being used in New York, and the following article shows that the invention was made by a man

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called Mr. Charles Condert, a machinist who was employed in a factory in Brooklyn, though ended with fatality:

> In the docks adjoining the work-shop, he repeatedly descended in it, in from sixteen to twenty feet water. While thus engaged, in August, 1832, he fell a victim to his enterprise. The air in the reservoir had become expended, or, from some accident (probably by his falling,) it had escaped, as the tube that conveyed the air from the reservoir to the interior of the dress, was found broken, when hauled up. He was, of course, instantly suffocated.[11]

Scientific inquiry and technological development underwater were often accompanied by the ultimate cost, just as Condert fell victim in his project, and it is also a recurrent image that maritime salvage inevitably entails death in itself. It goes without saying that the oceanic in human history is inseparable from fatality, and any cultural interventions into the oceanic can be seen as an attempt to resist fatality, or, an attempt to secure life in the context of the reality of death. The advances in technology made it possible for humans to submerge further into water, therefore, most underwater experiences show a sense of accomplishment, the accomplishment of human knowledge and arts that keep humans away from fatalities in the oceanic. This leads to what I call the recurrent theme of the "Rapture of the Deep," which I will extensively examine later in underwater narratives, but for now let me further delineate how underwater activities developed throughout the nineteenth century as well as how people involved have responded to the unknown terrain of the deep. The following extract from the *Franklin Institute* indicates another accomplishment of underwater technology associated with modern deep-ocean technology.

> One of the most remarkable experiments of modern times was performed last week by [a] Dr. Payerne, at that excellent experimental school, the Polytechnic Institute, Regent [S]treet. Dr. P. descended in the great diving bell of that establishment, in his ordinary dress, and remained there for the space of three hours without any communication whatever with the upper air, and apparently without having been in the slightest degree affected or inconvenienced by his long submersion. "Living under Water without communication with the Atmosphere. Dr. Payerne's Experiment"[12]

Just like earlier underwater experiments, the article reports that Payerne paved the way to the possibility of living underwater, and the narrative involves a feeling of accomplishment. The result of Payerne's experiment and entrepreneurship were used for the construction, repair, or inspection

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of bridges underwater, and the significance of the experiment is also indicated in the duration of underwater activities. But the article also has to do with the intersections of the terrestrial and the oceanic. While diving equipment such as bells and helmets were used for salvage and scientific exploration, they were used as a means to terrestrialize the oceanic, to facilitate terrestrial transportation. Terrestrialization, in scientific terms, is a process or phenomenon of a plant being adapted to terrestrial conditions; however, I use it here to illustrate how humans as terrestrial beings increasingly become active in the interior of the ocean for seeking more resources, territory, and opportunities for various activities.

Growing terrestrial, dwindling oceanic

As early as 1825, the U.S. Congress passed a law that "prohibits the carrying of wrecked goods found on the coast to any foreign place, and required all such goods to be brought to some port of entry in the United States."[13] The law indicates the U.S. terrestrial expansionism as well as its control over Florida permeated underwater, and the article refers to the presence of pirates and wreckers, whose activities barely appear on the surface of the American cultural history.[14]

On the other hand, however, this is also the time when the American terrestrial territory increasingly expanded with the introduction of railroad. The frontier was claimed by historians such as Frederick Jackson Turner to have diminished by the end of the nineteenth-century; however, this assertion would be invalid because American frontier activities were not limited to two-dimensional but rather to three-dimensional space, including the interior of the ocean. I shall discuss this terrestrial aspect of frontier thesis later by using more specific examples. During the late-nineteenth century, not only whaling but coastal fisheries in the United States were a vital food source, an important industry for supporting a growing population.[15] During the 1870s, there were a large number of European immigrants who were a central part of American Industrialism. Fishes were transported by railroad to big cities such as New York to feed the growing population. The fact that shipping, the term some decades ago must have meant the oceanic transportation of goods or commodities by ship, was made by railroad after the completion of the Transcontinental Railroad in 1869 is interesting to speculate how the means of mass transportation had been shifting both physically, verbally, and conceptually.

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It was in 1864 when George Perkins Marsh published *Man and Nature; or Physical Geography as Modified by Human Action*, a book later revised in 1874 as *The Earth as Modified by Human Action* acclaimed by modern environmental historians as the first American book on ecology as a science. In it, Marsh chronicles the ways people transformed their land and how animals and plants were affected by human actions. Marsh also refers to land reclamation projects in the Netherlands to support an ever-increasing population:

> Man, as we have seen, has done much to revolutionize the solid surface of the globe, and to change the distribution and proportions, if not the essential character, of the organisms which inhabit the land and even the water. Besides the influence thus exerted upon the life which peoples the sea, his action upon the land has involved a certain amount of indirect encroachment upon the territorial jurisdiction of the ocean.[16]

Marsh's ecological approach is attributed to his view toward the environment in which organisms are affected by and interact with each other. And Marsh is relevant to my analysis because, as is shown in the passage, he also refers to what I call terrestrialization as a "certain amount of indirect encroachment upon the territorial jurisdiction of the ocean."

In response to such a rapidly growing population, urbanization, and industrialization that intensified on land, there was environmental concern about the increasing scarcity of fish. In fact, scientists in European countries were already concerned about the dwindling fisheries even before the *Challenger* expeditions were made in 1870s, caused by progressively larger harvests by commercial fishermen.[17] According to Frank Egerton, a "desire to improve the techniques of fish raising and stocking, rather than a broad view of fisheries management, led to the founding of the American Fish Culturist Association in 1870."[18] Also, the Commissioner of Fish and Fisheries was established in 1871 in response to such an environmental concern. It reports: "A few years ago, in view of the enormous abundance of fish originally existing in the sea, the suggestion of a possible failure would have been considered idle; and the fisheries of a future exhaustion."[19] It also indicates that petitions were presented in 1869–1870 asking that a law to be passed prohibiting the use of fixed apparatus for capturing fish in both Massachusetts and Rhode Island, and such environmental concern was widespread and persistent. Then, scientific research on the fish population was conducted and the general conclusion states that there were decreases in the number of edible fish

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in New England within the past few years because of the increasing use of traps and the amount of fish captured being far larger than before. Commissioner Spencer F. Baird in the report also suggests prohibiting or restricting the use of traps and setting weight catch limitations.

The fishery report further describes how fish were used not only for food but also as a resource to support other terrestrial industries. "The discovery, too, that fish can be made to supply a valuable oil by boiling and pressing, and that the residue, as well as the uncooked fish, furnish a valuable manure, to be applied either directly or after special preparation, has constituted an additional source of consumption on a very large scale.[20,21]

Throughout the nineteenth century, oceanic transportation would become less visible in American cultural representations; that by no means indicates that oceanic transportation was completely replaced with the terrestrial; rather terrestrial and oceanic transportations complemented each other. We can find the following passage in *Northern Pacific Railroad: Sketch of History: Delineations of the Divisions of its Trans-Continental Line* (1882):

> The official report of the expedition [of 1853, 1854, and 1855] confirmed the truly national character of such an enterprise as the Northern Pacific, brought prominently into view its advantages in respect to distances as a route of travel and commerce, its greater proximity to Asia, its shorter distance between great water lines, its greater proximity to Europe, and the fact that it was much the shortest and most direct route between Asia and Europe.[22]

Ocean transportation was conceived here of as an extension of the terrestrial "highway" experience that contributed to American expansionism growing into the Asian market. Adding to that, as "the shortest and most direct route between Asia and Europe," the Northern Pacific project didn't just transit America to Asia and Europe but extended its terrestrial transportation over the ocean and paved its "shortest and most direct" way. The term "trans-continental," which may have been meant to cross over the North American continent, can be understood that the transportation was imagined as both terrestrial and oceanic, connecting all of America, Europe, Asia, and all terrestrial and oceanic routes. *Great Trans-Continental Railroad Guide* writes: "[W]e will observe that an incalculable wealth of trade has been opened; that the East and West are not connected by a route over which the vast trade of China,

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Japan and the Orient must flow in its transit eastward."[23] Henry Nash Smith studied American frontier history and illustrates the notion of a geographical highway in American cultural history in his 1978 book *Virgin Land: The American West as Symbol and Myth*. While based on Frederick Jackson Turner's thesis on the American frontier as a driving cultural force, *Virgin Land* relies too much on a terrestrial highway by which the expanding territoriality permeates the nineteenth-century American culture. No less important is that of the oceanic which has played a significant part of American expansionism, often trivialized in favor of an extensively terrestrial enterprise. As I have documented, the ideas of the American frontier is by no means limited to terrestrial activities but three dimensional, dispersed in all directions; in addition, as is the case in the development of the American transcontinental railroad, the terrestrial and oceanic experiences and imagination sometimes intertwined and collaborated each other to contribute to American expansionism both within America and abroad.

Undersea intersections: military, technology, recreation

According to *The Report on the Condition of the Sea Fisheries of the South Coast of New England in 1871 and 1872* issued by the United States Commission of Fish and Fisheries, the importance of the American fisheries cannot be exaggerated:

> whether we consider the amount of wholesome food which they yield, the pecuniary value of their products, the number of men and boys for whom they furnish profitable occupation, the stimulus to ship and boat building which they supply, and, not the least of all, their service as a school for seamen, from which the merchant-marine, as well as the Navy of the country, derive their most important recruits.[24]

Besides food, the fish products were cherished as valuable oil and manure to contribute to the terrestrial infrastructure, and the oceanic resources had occupied an important part of the developments in industry and agriculture in America.[25] It follows then that oceanic resources contributed to the terrestrial development; and therefore we cannot separate American frontier activities experienced through industrial development and urbanization. To illustrate American underwater activities that contributed to the growing nation, let me turn to American military involvement and its historical development, activities that few scholars have yet presented in connection with American cultural development in general.

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In America, David Brusnell's *American Turtle* participated in military activities in 1776 and in 1789. Robert F. Fulton built a submarine named the *Nautilus* and an underwater explosive device called "torpedo." Most of the submarines developed during this early period were one way or another devised for military purposes to attack enemies or defend the nation. In the case of America, it was no accident that both the *American Turtle* and the *Nautilus* were exclusively used for military purposes. During the Civil War, for example, various underwater military activities—such as clearing underwater obstacles, played a substantial role for both the Union and Confederacy.[26] Commercial underwater activities were possible during the Industrial Revolution in America, characterized as being more efficient in utilizing energy such as steam and electricity, which helped expand transportation to a broader and faster level.

In 1895, according to the underwater exploration historian Robert F. Marx, the U.S. Navy asked John Holland to build an electrically powered submarine similar to the *Gymnote*, an electrically powered French submarine. Although this project failed, Holland also started the Electric Boat Company which, among other things many years later, built the world's first nuclear-powered submarine, the *Nautilus*, launched in 1955.[27] Actively used during the American Civil War in the 1860s, submarines continued to be developed and submarine technology soon became widely available for commercial use. Simon Lake, another giant who leads modern submarine development along with John Holland, explains what a modern submarine boat was:

> A modern submarine vessel is a complex mechanism capable of being navigated on the surface of the water just as is any boat, but with the added faculty of disappearing at will beneath the surface, and of being operated beneath the surface in any desired direction at any desired depth. Some submarines are able to wheel along the bottom itself, and are also provided with diving compartments from which members of the crew, encasted in diving suites, may readily leave and re-enter the vessel during its submergence.[28]

The emergence of what Simon Lake considered "modern" submarines provided not merely faster and more efficient navigation but a resource that would rationalize making the deep ocean a competitive place for national security as well as industrial development. The military values of the submarine would be characterized as "invisibility" and "efficiency" contrasted with navigation on the surface and the terrestrial transportation, all of which are also indicated in Lake's phrases such as "added faculty of disappearing at will" beneath the surface and maneuverability

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in "any desired direction at any desired depth." In politics, these benefits have affinity with patriotism and nationalism, as indicated by the father of submarine battle Robert Fulton below:

> [a]ll my reflections have led me to believe that this application of it [the use of the mines placed by submarines] will in a few years put a stop to maritime wars, give that liberty on the seas which has been long and anxiously desired by every good man, and secure to America that liberty of commerce, tranquility, and independence which will enable her citizens to apply their mental and corporeal faculties to useful and humane pursuits, to the improvement of our country, and the happiness of the whole people.[29]

The emergence of "modern" submarines, with their efficiency and invisibility, were to be tied with the building of twentieth-century American nationalism that led to the outbreak of World War I. In this sense, although Fulton wanted his inventions to "put a stop to maritime wars," in fact resulted in increasing maritime conflicts in the twentieth century. Indeed, the United States joined World War I in 1917 in partial response to German U-boat attacks on the liner RMS *Lusitania*. Simon Lake built the *Protector*, which was eventually sold to Russia to join battle in the Russo-Japanese War while "other Lake subs were supplied to Austria and Germany."[30] The military use of submarine vessels are also connected to their commercial use. For example, the Submarine Explorer was built by the engineer and Civil War veteran Julius H. Kroehl in 1865. The Sub Marine Explorer was used by Kroehl for the Pacific Pearl Company. Kroehl's submarine, for example, the *Explorer* was found on San Telmo, an island off Panama, after it had been briefly used for pearl and oyster hunting. It is very interesting to see this transition of the adaptation of submarine technology from the political and military to commercial purposes as it seems to show how the oceanic space becomes at the same time commoditized and increasingly globalized; for another example of commoditization underneath the ocean, let's look at some representations of underwater seascape.

The emergence of undersea recreation

The following seascape is self-proclaimed as the first underwater seascape painting drawn by Ransonnet-Villez: "The beauty of the submarine scenery is perhaps nowhere greater than in moderate depth and far more sketches, than I have been able to take here, would not be sufficient to give more than an imperfect idea of its great variety." Ransonnet-Villez

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further elaborates how the colors of the underwater scenery is distinctive in comparison with that of the terrestrial:

> The general effect of this species of scenery in respect to colour is of course very different from that resulting from the appearance of our own landscapes, the prevailing hue under water being a more or less bluish or yellowish green, by which the colours of the objects are very much altered, particularly when situated at some distance. Red appears always dull and is impossible to be distinguished at a short distance. Yellow and even blue are changed, except in the foreground, into a somewhat of a greenish hue, while green itself is of an astonishing brilliancy and even becomes comparatively brighter at a remote distance. White also remains visible, when far removed from the eye, but then thoroughly assumes the green hue of the water.[31]

Although this book was not written by an American, this submarine scenery is preliminary to my discussion of its features. The submarine scenery, drawn underwater by using a diving bell, is characterized by its colors being distinctly different from the "appearance of our own landscapes." The descriptions of the colors are not clearly expressed as "bluish or yellowish green," and the colors of underwater objects are also "much altered" as if to suggest that terrestrial aesthetics is not compatible with the representation of the deep. Some might wonder why this submarine scenery is filled with the descriptions of colors such as blue, yellow, and green, though each color is not clearly captured. It is because the depth of water influences how much the sunlight can penetrate into the water: the deeper, the less colorful. Similar color descriptions appear in the following passage as well: "Bright colours assume to a certain extent the greenish hue of the sea, whereas darke ones present an opposite effect. The shades and dark coloured objects (green ones excepted) gradually present a more or less reddish or brownish tinge, which is always complementary to that of the water."[32] To put it another way, the less colorful underwater scenery makes it distinguishable from the terrestrial environment; as a result, the color descriptions, for its lack of depth and variety, become more tangible in the descriptions of underwater scenery.

The descriptions of the underwater scenery might look static and unlively, though the colors are emphatic. It is partly because diving bells were used not for travelling underwater but chiefly "for the recovery of goods from sunken vessels, and for the examination of the beds of rivers, when works have been there required for piers and bridges.[33] Here, the submarine environment was more likely to be explored and exploited

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than to be appreciated. This view would also be recurred from an oceanic account in the following passage in the same book:

> It is quite certain that the Ocean is spread over a surface very much resembling in form that of the land. There are mountains, valleys, plains, hills, ridges, precipices, caverns, and grottoes below water, as well as above. Many islands with which the Ocean is studded are plainly mountain tops, which the water has not covered. The unfathomable places are, no doubt, valleys or fissures, or deeply sunken plains; whilst the shoals and shallows near shore are but the approaches to those eminences which, rising above the water, we call "the land."[34]

Compared and contrasted, both terrestrial and oceanic are again employed to verbalize what persists as an unfamiliar submarine environment; and yet, noteworthy aspects of this description include that the submarine environment is geographically contoured "resembling in form that of the land." From the early- to late-nineteenth century, descriptions of the submarine environment increasingly became diversified. The more various the forms of underwater activities became, the more diverse and active the representations would appear.

Underwater activities that were presented earlier from nineteenth-century American periodicals indicate America's vigorous interest in recreational activities including marine sports, and it was 1819 that one of the most successful of these was launched by John Stuart Skinner with *American Farmer*, whose main focus tended to be agriculture, but it also included some articles on recreational sports. There was also William T. Porter's *The Spirit of the Times*, a newspaper whose coverage ranged from social issues to the arts and recreational sports. *The Sportsman's Gazetteer and General Guide* (1877) by Charles Hallock, published in 1877, includes a chapter titled "Game Fish of North America," which provides not only a list of North American game fish, but miscellaneous information ranging from the natural history of fish and their habitats to instructions for bait. As the increasing appearance of these publications further indicates that sports fishing had become a popular pastime, the terrestrial wilderness experience had become more accessible with transportation via trains or steamers to and from the cities and lodges in hotels along the way. For example, in *American Turf Register*, there was an article supposedly submitted by one of the readers, titled "Aquatic Sports" in 1830. The article refers to a fishing trip near Fort McHenry. After a brief summary about the fish caught by the author, it goes on to write: "I wish some

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abler correspondent would take up in detail the various advantages and pleasures derived from fly-fishing, about which very little is known, and the art of which cannot be taken from 'Sir Issak'—the fish and climate of England differing, in some respects, from this country."[35] The reference to Sir Isaak Walton—who is widely known for his 1653 book *The Complete Angler*—reminds us of the trans-Atlantic cultural interactions between the U.S. and Britain, and its indication of the need for "American fly-fishing" to some "brethren of the rod" implies further that such a local fishing expedition might have been conceived as a "heroic" masculine activity evoking an exhilaration equivalent to earlier explorations into the deep woods and oceans.

Domesticated undersea: home aquarium and underwater scenery

Let me reintroduce another quote on submarine scenery described in the nineteenth century:

> I wished to illustrate by my views from the Indian Ocean the wonderful account which Darwin gives of the formation of coral-banks & islands in his most extraordinary geological works. I have tried therefore to make these views as correct as possible, especially with regard to their characteristic features. The fish were sketched while alive, in their favourite positions, as their shape and colouring is generally altered immediately after death.[36]

This is a description by Eugen Ransonnet-Villez, an Austrian diplomat who spent some time in Ceylon. Ransonnet-Villez's color descriptions of the "submarine scenery" was included in his 1867 book *Sketches of the Inhabitants, Animal Life and Vegetation in the Lowlands and High Mountains of Ceylon, as Well as the Submarine Scenery near the Coast, Taken in a Diving Bell*. Using a diving bell, Ransonnet-Villez marvels at the beauty, ponders on the unfathomable depth, and feels incapable of verbalizing what he sees. Although human activities in the ocean have been recorded in literature all over the world, there have been few, if any, scholarly examinations of what they are like. And, in analyzing the following passage, I would like to point out that this is the most important trope of underwater narratives especially concerning the experience of diving. As I have already shown, nineteenth-century explorations into the depths of the ocean were possible through various means: diving bells, diving suits, and submarine vessels. In the process of underwater explorations and

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related activities, however, it is important to note that the underwater space is also commoditized, domesticated, and terrestrialized. To look at this process, I shall show in more detail how underwater scenery is represented.

If American aquatic sports had emerged in the nineteenth-century as in a form of outdoor sports such as recreational fishing, it is crucial to note that maritime culture had entered American homes as well. Just like many other cultural activities such as aquariums, especially the home varieties that came to America in the 1850s via such notable aquarists from Britain as H. Noel Humphreys and Philip Henry Gosse. As a form of a hobby for the middle-class, the home aquarium served as domestic recreation that made the underwater view accessible to people who could otherwise not appreciate it without the use of submersible technology. According to Judith Hamera, whose *Parlor Ponds: The Cultural Work of the American Home Aquarium, 1850–1970* extensively studied the cultural history of Anglo-American home aquariums that emerged in the middle of the nineteenth century, the home aquarium "reassured the viewer of the power of technology and individual to miniaturize water worlds for private consumption, even as the artifice itself served as a reminder of the highly circumscribed nature of that power."[37]

As Hamera points out, the view of the underwater had become something people could purchase not for substantial needs for living but for satisfying people's leisure time. However, the consumption of the underwater scenery enabled people to come and see the ocean with technological methods and scientific knowledge. Arthur M. Edwards, a notable aquarist, wrote accordingly: "An Aquarium should be constructed on such principles that it will be, to a certain extent, a world in miniature, being self-supporting, self-renovating and, in fact, nature on a small scale removed into our parlor."[38] Granted that owning and maintaining domestic submarine scenery was made possible with technological and scientific developments, it seems important to note that the submarine environment here is again terrestrialized in the sense that it's part of terrestrial properties. Recreating an aquatic environment at home which was expected to be "self-supporting" and "self-renovating" is to suggest a rejuvenation of the lost paradise in the biblical sense. Terrestrializing the oceanic here involves, borrowing Hamera's terms, "controlling" and "consuming," but ironically what the act of terrestrializing meant is that people were increasingly losing contact with nature, which once had an undeniably powerful and tangible presence. Gaining does not always

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mean to add up what we have had, rather gaining a miniature controllable aquatic environment might also echo a eulogy in the sense that we are trying to compensate and substitute what had been lost from the oceanic.

While underwater experiences were enjoyed by some experts such as scientists and engineers, the introduction of the home aquarium enabled the general public to experience a quasi-underwater environment. This is exactly the goal that was shared by the first aquarists:

> The aquarium has been to many a child, and grown person as well, the first incentive to awaken love for nature, particularly among those living in the larger cities, whose opportunities for out-of-door observations are necessarily very much limited. [. . .] The one great principle of the aquarium is to bring about *a balance of life*, *plant and animal*, amid natural surroundings.[39]

As is indicated in the passage, the love for nature is for "those living in the larger cities"; and it seems the outdoor experience had become increasingly more relevant with the growth of urbanization. Terrestrial development made it necessary for the general public to gain access to nature, which further suggests that the ocean and its interior are considered to have remained natural while the terrestrial environment was lost.

Although a home aquarium is a form of terrestrialization, thereby I might have emphasized too much about the influence it has brought about. Being set in the terrestrial environment, the home aquarium did contribute to a general understanding of the oceanic and its interior, at least it was meant to be so. "The inhabitants of the deep sea have hitherto been almost inaccessible to such observation as this: and hence exceedingly little has been accumulated of their Biography," Philip Henry Gosse, an English naturalist who popularized the home aquarium, wrote in *The Aquarium: An Unveiling of the Wonders of the Deep Sea* (1857).[40] "Whether a scheme so elaborate was really attempted I know not," Gosse continues:

> I should anticipate feeble results from it. The Marine Aquarium, however, bids fair to supply the required opportunities, and to make us acquainted with the strange creatures of the sea, without diving to gaze on them. In this volume I offer to the world a small earnest, just the first-fruits, of what may be looked for in increased knowledge of natural history from this invention.[41]

Gosse's view of nature leaned toward theology, but it is evident here that his ambition is to have the general public gain knowledge of natural

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history, through which we can view how scientific knowledge contributed to submarine scenery and its aesthetics. Gosse writes in his 1855 book:

> In general it is the marine animals that form the main source of interest, everything else being merely accessory to these. Many of the sea-plants, "weeds" though they are called, are indeed very beautiful; the elegant forms of some, the delicate muslin-like tracery of others, the plumose lightness of more, "fine as silkworm's thread," and the beautiful play of colours, red and green, which a well-stocked Aquarium displays, as the light is transmitted through their pellucid substance, may claim for these objects more than an indirect attention. Still it is true, in most cases, they are preserved because they cannot be dispensed with.[42]

Sea-plants or "weeds" were seen as important components of the underwater seascape because they exhibited "the beautiful play of colours, red and green." However Seaweed was regarded as more than providing "direct attention" because it also supplies a balance of oxygen and carbon dioxide. As a form of controllable nature, the introduction of the home aquarium can be considered as a variation of terrestrialization of the oceanic because the aquarium had become an ornamental complement of the terrestrial, the interior landscape of the American home; and yet, the home aquarium didn't completely lose its oceanic essence because the aquarium is looked upon as an "important component of the underwater seascape" for the unique colors it presents, and the inside of the tank remains separate from the outer terrestrial world. Compared with the earlier quoted description of underwater scenery viewed from a submarine by Ransonnet-Villez, it is noteworthy that Gosse likened seaweeds to "muslin-like tracery," the "plumose lightness," or "slikworm's thread" to verbalize their delicate beauty.

If not directly contributing to each other, the popularization of the interior of the ocean can also be seen in Charles Frederic Holder, a American naturalist and angler, as he provides a description of a vertical seascape as he looks down from a boat.

> The vines are sometimes one hundred feet in length, vast cables, with broad crimpled leaves of a dark olive hue, which assume graceful shapes in the tide; and when one peers down into the turquoise water the scene is often a revelation. A new world is opened up, and the real beauties of oceanic or submarine scenery are appreciated. The great leaves are carried by the fitful currents that sweep these islands in every directions. Sometimes they are extended at full length and appear like a horde of green snakes; again they

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> lie upon the surface, listless and drooping, taking myriads of shapes, and forming nooks and corners of great beauty.[43]

Holder is one of the best-known naturalists of the turn of the late-nineteenth and twentieth century, and his books are as wide-ranged as zoology, geography, geology, marine biology, Chinese slavery in America, and sports fishing.[44] For Holder, underwater environment is cherished as an untouched "new world" as if to compare it with the terrestrial frontier that had been declared to have disappeared several decades previously. Unlike "howling wilderness" for the early North American colonists, however, the aquatic scenery is referred to as the "real beauties of oceanic" and at the same time, it is not an object that is just there or to be observed but something to be "appreciated." Watching the natural environment itself can stand as a value to verbalize. The "weeds," as so materialistically described in Gosse's descriptions are now contributed to a revelation of the scene, actively constituting a significant part of the aquatic aesthetics. This is perhaps underwater literary realism; the verisimilitude of the oceanic is supported by scientific knowledge and accumulated underwater experiences since the nineteenth century. The following is another quote from Holder in the same article published in *Scientific American* in 1906.

> The bottom of the sea along this rocky shore is a color scheme of marvelous beauty. Green is the predominating tone, but green in countless shades and expressions. Sometimes a short wiry weed covers the bottom, constantly being waved aside to display other and more attractive colors: weeds in purple and brown, rocks of lavender incrusted with a flaming red sponge, or a mass of pink barnacles from which rises the delicate mauve tracery of their breathing organs. This sea tapestry is constantly in motion, so has the appearance of changing light, shade, and tint, and displaying some new creature to the voyagers of the curious craft with windows looking down into the sea.[45]

Not only is the scenery filled with a vivid hue of underwater colors such as green, purple, brown, red, and pink, but the scene is actually moving, unlike the submarine scenery quoted earlier. It is revealed in the essay that the view is looked through the windows attached to the boat, so we find that the scenery is vertically set.

I have outlined some of the transitions in submarine scenery representations by Anglo-Americans in the hopes of presenting how submarine experiences have constituted some important parts of nineteenth-century American culture as well as how aquatic scenery had come to be appreciated. I have frequently noted that the general history of underwater

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activities had been widespread commercially, scientifically, and recreationally since the late-nineteenth century. Thus it comes as no surprise that both terrestrial and oceanic metaphors are sometimes juxtaposed and contrasted, but oftentimes intermixed. In the following passage, I hope to show how underwater activities permeate literary and cultural expressions.

Submarine imagination in American literature

If we can look at nineteenth-century American literature in light of underwater activities, we will have no difficulty finding underwater references—though they don't always assure us of a direct connection between the authors and their underwater experiences—that help us imagine how literary imagination had responded to increasingly expanding underwater space. In fact, geographical knowledge, formed through measuring, surveying, and sounding both terrestrial and aquatic environments, helped promote the establishment of national identity as well as controlling social organization and economics and oftentimes governance. Geographical knowledge was linked to the methods and practices in the earliest steps of a growing nation. According to Martin Brückner's *The Geographic Revolution in Early America: Maps, Literacy, And National Identity*, the act of surveying helped early British-American colonists position themselves within "a larger human community connected by territorial relations."[46] Thus, colonial activities perform "the rhetorical function of valorizing the individual: by representing the colonial subject through the simultaneous presentation of particular names and geodetic figures, it places the individual inside a land- and map-based economy."[47]

I examined sharks in the previous chapter to illustrate how we can consider them as embodying the oceanic as part of beach experience. I shall briefly reintroduce sharks here to show how, compared to their earlier representations in the mid- and late-nineteenth centuries, they have become more complicated in the sense that they are viewed through biological and zoological points of view, views that are made possible by what I consider a submarine perspective. Herman Melville's "The Maldive Shark" (1888) is a good example to see this change because Melville looks at the shark in more complicated ways than early colonists and naturalists did:

> From his saw-pit of mouth, from his charnel of maw,
> They have nothing of harm to dread,

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> But liquidly glide on his ghastly flank
> Or before his Gorgonian head;
> Or lurk in the port of serrated teeth
> In white triple tiers of glittering gates,
> And there find a haven when peril's abroad,
> An asylum in jaws of the Fates.[48]

Although the shark remains a dreadful, dark creature that has a "saw-pit mouth," "Gorgonian head," and "serrated teeth," it is important to note that the pilot fish swimming around the shark are dependent upon it: "They are friends; and friendly they guide him prey; / Yet never partake of the treat— / Eyes and brains to the dotard lethargic and dull, / Pale ravener of horrible meat." Not only are the pilot fish friends of the shark, but they are also the "eyes and brains" of the shark. As Bert Bender suggests, it is important to see that Melville's attitude toward biology is "in accord with the view historians of science identify as 'natural theology.' "[49] This seemingly "symbiotic" relationship between the shark and the pilot fish is, thus, more like a vision of a biblical passage, a way of reading God's message, than a biological, realistic observation. This relationship is rather Melville's favorite images of "light" and "dark," or "good" and "evil." For Melville, those contrasted images and ideas are a necessary part of the world, and his representation of the shark still depicts them as food; however, it is important to note that the shark here is both the reality and the symbol, just as Moby-Dick is. Though the representation of the sharks as villain remains in Melville's poem, it shows an example of using sharks as a literary, metaphorical device, which would also prevail as a popular trope in twentieth-century American literature.

If we can come to think of this interpretation as being valid then we should ask ourselves whether this quasi-biological representation of sharks would never have been possible without the American submarine experience and imagination accumulated during the nineteenth century. Indeed, Melville also provides some biology of whales in the deep ocean in *Moby-Dick* as well as the going-into-the-depths metaphor as is shown in the following often-quoted passage:

> Let the most absent- minded of men be plunged in his deepest reveries—stand that man on his legs, set his feet a-going, and he will infallibly lead you to water, if water there be in all that region. Should you ever be athirst in the great American desert, try this experiment, if your caravan happen to be supplied with a metaphysical professor. Yes, as every one knows, meditation and water are wedded for ever.[50]

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As is shown in the quote, going down into the depths of thoughts is an immensely used metaphor in Melville's writings, and it is sometimes connected to what is often characterized as a tendency toward romanticism that yearns for an individual relationship with nature or God by imagination rather than rationalization. It was about two decades later that *Twenty Thousand Leagues under the Sea* by the French writer Jules Verne was published in 1870, a most popular submarine novel about Captain Nemo who navigates the submarine vessel *Nautilus*. As we have already seen, underwater explorations including the experimental use of submarine vessels became increasingly popular; thus there is no reason not to think the submarine imagination was at work in Melville's novel. Submarine imagination here is meant to refer to a view into the depths of the ocean, which ultimately affects its work structurally and thematically. Provided here also are examples that enable us to see interactions between the terrestrial and underwater activities. This suggests that American cultural, economic, and technological developments have been at work "under water." Therefore, giving attention to diverse underwater experiences provides us with a better understanding of how the oceanic and the terrestrial collide, intermingle, and collaborate to create American literary experiences and expressions.

Wilderness, frontier, and the American underwater experience

In this vein, we can consider, for example, underwater experience and narratives in the context of the American wilderness. Up until the nineteenth to early twentieth century, human need for the ocean was for the most part confined to food and commerce, followed by warfare and immigration. This is the time when the concept of wilderness becomes increasingly coupled with the American frontier. The main concern about the oceanic environment was that it has been a place from which people acquired food, the ocean floor and the seabed were virtually unknown, and the potential resources of the deep were not fully recognized until the voyage of the *H.M.S. Challenger* during 1873 and 1876. The *Challenger*'s expedition reports showed that deep-sea mineral deposits were substantial and they formed a great potential resource. As a result, the underwater world had suddenly become a competitive place for natural resources, which contributed to what I have mentioned in the survey submarine explorations during the nineteenth century. Moreover,

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as I have indicated earlier, the development of submarine vessels were closely tied with international conflicts such as WWI.

In order to focus on twentieth-century American sea literature beneath the sea, I shall deliberately point to historical events concerning the underwater environment, which leads to our contemplation of an underwater wilderness. In 1945, an important policy proclamation about ocean affairs (No. 2667) was issued by President Harry S. Truman. One of the more important aspects of this proclamation is that it "established a national policy with respect to the natural resources of the subsoil and seabed of the continental shelf"[51] After this proclamation, international discussions over "Who Owns the Ocean?" heated up, and, according to George A. Doumani, the ocean "remained de facto policy for many years to come."[52] This proclamation means American policy descends into the ocean, and it was a national attempt to expand its power into the depths below: and because it inevitably involves hardship and concerning experiences, we can figuratively consider it as an extension of the American wilderness and frontier experiences.

Keeping in mind this background of the first half of the twentieth century, let me introduce the following 1959 quote:

> I stood for a moment in silence, awe-struck at what *Nautilus* had achieved. She had blazed a new submerged northwest passage, vastly decreasing the sea-travel time for nuclear submarines from the Pacific to the Atlantic, one that could be used even if the Panama Canal were closed. When and if nuclear-powered cargo submarines are built, the new route would cut 4,900 miles and thirteen days off the route from Japan to Europe.[53]

This quote is from William Anderson, the commander of the nuclear-powered submarine *Nautilus*. This is the moment when "a new submerged northwest passage" was established from the Pacific to the Atlantic, and in the light of the American frontier experience, Anderson's voice echoes what early American explorers expressed when they opened similar new passages. The ship "blazed" a new "submerged northwest" passage and the west still holds "magnetic" attraction just as Henry David Thoreau writes in his 1862 essay "Walking."

Anderson continues:

> *Nautilus* had opened a new era, completely conquered the vast, inhospitable Arctic. Our instruments were, for the first time, compiling an accurate and broad picture of the Arctic Basin and its approaches. *Nautilus*' achievement was dramatic proof of United States leadership in at least one important

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> branch of science; and it would soon rank alongside or above the Russian sputnik in the minds of millions, Lastly, for the first time in history a ship had actually reached the North Pole. And never had so many men—116—been gathered at the Pole at one time.[54]

Anderson's phrases "conquered" and "inhospitable" remind us of the classic view of the antagonistic relationship: "Nature vs. Human," and this passage also shows that nature or the Arctic wilderness is a target to be conquered. Since the American colonial period, the wilderness continues to be a driving force to form American culture both materialistically and spiritually. Anderson's deep sea exploration narrative is a perfect example to see how "wilderness" survived throughout the twentieth century, navigating the interior of the ocean like a submarine vessel itself.

More interesting is the fact that the nuclear submarine *Nautilus* was then competing with the Soviet Union and their *Sputnik* program during the 1950s. In response to the *Sputnik I* of the Soviet Union, America launched the satellite *Explorer I*; since then, it has been generally accepted that the Cold War accelerated. It might not be a coincidence that Robert Fulton's *Nautilus* was invented at the time of America's struggle for independence against a European maritime power. Partly driven by American cultural/social momentum through the American frontier experience, and at the same time driven by a new geopolitical challenge posed by the Soviet Union, America's westward movement would be rerouted to the interior of the sea. I would like to add further that unprecedented technological innovations during the latter half of the twentieth century advanced development of various forms of manned and robotic activities in the sea, air, and space. American wilderness and frontier experiences should not be limited to the inland and terrestrial perspectives; it should be studied from all directions: land, sea, and space.

William Beebe: *Half Mile Down* (1934)

William Beebe is an American explorer and naturalist. Beebe started his career as a naturalist in the jungle, but with his diving helmet and bathysphere—a steel sphere that permits him to descend into and return from the depths of the ocean—he also became known as a naturalist of the ocean. As a naturalist and explorer, his initial interest in the deep sea was to learn more about the flora and fauna of the environment. Beebe writes in *Half Mile Down*: "Modern oceanographic knowledge of deep-sea fish is comparable to the information of a student of African animals,

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who has trapped a small collection of rats and mice but is still wholly unaware of antelope, elephants, lions, and rhinos."[55] As he mentions here, Beebe extends his research from the terrestrial environment to the oceanic; but interestingly enough, he does so by comparing terrestrial animals with those of the aquatic. Of course, if we ought to recognize something new, we have to resort to the knowledge, experiences, or feelings that we have already been equipped; thus, if Beebe wants to know about the oceanic environment and its organisms, it is natural for him to employ the vocabulary that he had gained in his past experience on the terrestrial, by using such comparisons.

However, as soon as he descends into a whole new terrain, he recognizes that the use of those comparisons were not appropriate enough to describe the underwater environment. Beebe writes:

> We were the first living men to look out at the strange illumination: And it was stranger than any imagination could have conceived. It was of an indefinable translucent blue quite unlike anything I have ever seen in the upper world, and it excited our optic nerves in a most confusing manner. We kept thinking and calling it brilliant, and again and again I picked up a book to read the type, only to find that I could not tell the difference between a black page and a colored plate. I brought all my logic to bear, I put out of mind the excitement of our position in watery space and tried to think sanely of comparative color, and I failed utterly.[56]

While overjoyed with the unfamiliar sight, Beebe uses an adjective "strange" and he seems to recognize some optical differences between the terrestrial and aquatic environments. The visual quality differs in many respects, and one of the differences is that, for example, the deeper you go down, brightness of color diminishes and the occurrence of light scattering increases. Also, it is known that the deeper you descend, the more distorted the colors you see will become. In white light, which consists of all seven colors of light, the red light will be absorbed before others, as it is made up of a very long wavelength; the next is green, and blue is the last one. At the depth of 100 feet, only blue and green light will be visible. Anything red in color at that depth will appear black to our eyes. That is why he says "I picked up a book to read the type, only to find that I could not tell the difference between a black page and a colored plate." When he experiences this, he is at 700 feet; thus it is true that he sees only the blue color, about which he excitedly explains that it is "indefinable translucent blue quite unlike anything I have ever seen in the upper world." This blue color is of course visible only underwater.

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As Beebe initially mentions, he employs comparisons to describe this whole new terrain. In doing so, Beebe tries to make readers share and understand what he sees. Take the blue color for example; he says that it is "different" from the blue color that he was familiar with beforehand; likewise, the underwater blue is also different from the one that his readers already know. In other words, he compares the terrestrial blue and the underwater blue. However, what is more interesting about his descriptions about the underwater environment is that he gradually feels difficulty verbalizing it and later in the book he comes to think that he cannot use comparisons anymore. Remember he wrote in the end of the quote: "I brought all my logic to bear, I put out of mind the excitement of our position in [the] watery place and tries [sic] to think sanely of comparative color, and I failed utterly."

Beebe also writes:

> This is all unscientific; quite worthy of being jeered at by optician and physicist, but there it was. I was excited by the fishes that I was seeing perhaps more than I have ever been by other organisms, but it was only an intensification of my surface and laboratory interest: I have seen strange fluorescence and ultra-violet illumination in the laboratories of physicists. [. . .] I think we both experienced a wholly new kind of mental reception of color impression. I felt I was dealing with something too different to be classified in usual terms.[57]

Despite himself being a leading scientist, Beebe calls this unfamiliar environment "unscientific," and at first he states again that his interest in flora and fauna in the ocean is merely an "intensification" of his previous research on land; thus, the ways Beebe describes the oceanic environment are profoundly regulated by his terrestrial experience. Later on, however, he is increasingly losing his trust in his language, and then, he admits that he is not dealing with "too different to be classified in usual terms." He goes on further, "Yet I find that I must continue to write about it, if only to prove how utterly inadequate language is to translate vividly, feeling and sensations under a condition as unique as submersion at this depth."[58]

Like this, in various places in the book, Beebe often confesses that he becomes inarticulate because he faces many species that have never been named nor classified. The fact that Beebe feels incapable of describing the underwater is understandable not only because, as I mentioned earlier, he tries to compare his terrestrial knowledge and perception with the aquatic, but also because he uses the method of nineteenth-century

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natural science to look at the new terrain of the twentieth century. The Beebe biographer Carol Grant Gould writes:

> Born at the end of the nineteenth century—when Victorian science, with its obsession with collecting and naming every organism, was beginning to shift into the narrow specializations that would characterize the twentieth—Beebe lived to see natural science shift yet again, into a comprehensive field that embraced the whole of life on earth.[59]

Beebe's undersea exploration was in 1934. But as far back as the mid-1800s, diving helmets were used by scientists for research, and an underwater breathing system that enabled humans to swim freely was invented in 1865 by the Frenchmen Benoît Rouquayrol and Lt. Auguste Denayrouze. As a French writer Jules Verne published *Twenty Thousand Leagues under the Sea* in 1870, underwater explorations soon proceeded alongside with aviation explorations, too. By the late nineteenth century, piloted gliding was made possible, and in 1903 the Wright brothers made a successful flight. Later, in the 1930s, Charles and Anne Lindbergh attempted major flights to do research on possible airline routes. In the words of Sylvia A. Earle, science and technology had already helped discover more about life on earth, and facilitate more activities around the world. As a scientist in these shifting times, Beebe's attitude and perceptions tried to catch up with the increasingly expanding new territory.

Toward the end of the book, one of the most memorable descriptions appears.

> Wherever I sink below the last rays of light, similes pour in upon me. Throughout all this account I have consciously rejected the scores of "as ifs" which sprang to mind. The stranger the situation the more does it seem imperative to use comparisons.[60]

Here Beebe seems to come to realize that he cannot use comparisons anymore. He finally shows his determination to discard similes to describe the underwater environment and its organisms. Later on in the passage, he refers to space to further elaborate peculiarities of the water space. which may not be just a figure of speech; indeed, in the 1950s space exploration would be launched and in the 1960s Major Yuri Gagarin would become the first astronaut to experience space travel.

Jacques-Yves Cousteau: *The Silent World* (1950; 1953)

Having already traversed the national boundaries many times in this book, I hope readers don't get confused by my treating the book

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originally published in French. I have already used some narratives that aren't rigidly categorized in American literature to explain American maritime experience and imagination. It is to some extent inevitable for underwater experience to ignore national boundaries for its physical characteristics. At any rate, Cousteau is introduced in this chapter to illustrate an important trope of underwater narrative, and his invention of scuba diving and his influence through documentary films are now so widespread and popular that I believe my discussion of his writing will do more good than harm.

The Silent World is about Cousteau's accounts of his diving experience using a device called "Aqualung." It is "an assembly of three moderate-sized cylinders of compressed air, linked to an air regulator the size of an alarm clock" and "[f]rom the regulator there extended two tubes, joining on a mouthpiece."[61] With this equipment "harnessed to the back, a watertight glass mask over the eyes and nose, and rubber foot fins," Cousteau strived to make his dive into the depths of the sea.[62] Born in 1910 in France, Cousteau and Sylvia A. Earle, whom I will explain later in this discussion, were influenced by William Beebe's achievement and accounts of deep ocean exploration in the 1930s.

Cousteau's Aqualung is now widely known as SCUBA, which stands for "Self-Contained Underwater Breathing Apparatus," and an account of his first attempt of this revolutionary underwater device is written in *The Silent World*. In it, Cousteau describes how the human body is affected in the deep ocean. For example, what he called "rapture of the deep" is now generally known as "nitrogen narcosis," which is a feeling of euphoria that you experience underwater due to the increased amount of pressure and nitrogen. Cousteau writes about his diving companion Frédéric Duma's experience as follows:

> The light does not change color as it usually does underneath a turbid surface. I cannot see clearly. Either the sun is going down quickly or my eyes are weak. I reach the hundred-foot knot. My body doesn't feel weak but I keep panting. The damned rope doesn't hang straight. It slants off into the yellow soup. It slants more and more. I am anxious about that line, but I really feel wonderful. I have a queer feeling of beatitude. I am drunk and carefree. My ears buzz and my mouth tastes bitter. The current staggers me as though I had had too many drinks.[63]

Like this account of how the human body is affected by the undersea world, Cousteau's *The Silent World* is full of physiological experiments under the sea. Unlike Beebe, Cousteau does not feel embarrassed at the

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strangeness of the underwater world or have any difficulty verbalizing it. Fueled by his genuine interests in the ocean, Cousteau attempts various activities to see what humans can and cannot do. In other pages, for example, he also notes decompression illness called the "bends," which happened to his diving companion as well.

Accordingly, Cousteau gives readers a vivid description of his underwater experiences, and *The Silent World* is, in this respect, quite different from other writers of the interior of the ocean. With his joint invention of "Aqualung," Cousteau actually crosses the barrier of the terrestrial and aquatic terrains, and he is quite conscious about this. When he dives into the ocean, for instance, he writes as follows: "I looked into the sea with the same sense of trespass that I have felt on every dive."[64] Cousteau's phrase "trespass" is an indication of how he feels about this sense of crossing the barrier. Then, he excitedly goes on to account his dive:

> A modest canyon opened below, full of dark green weeds, black sea urchins and small flowerlike white algae. Fingerlings browsed in the scene. The sand sloped down into a clear blue infinity. The sun struck so brightly I had to squint. My arms handing at my sides, I kicked the fins languidly and traveled down, gaining speed, watching the beach reeling past. I stopped kicking and the momentum carried me on a fabulous glide. When I stopped, I slowly emptied my lungs and held my breath. The diminished volume of my body decreased the lifting force of water, and I sank dreamily down. I inhaled a great chestful and retained it. I rose toward the surface.[65]

Conveying exhilarating expansiveness of the new realm, this is not only the most beautiful scene in the book, but also a significant one in thinking about the narrative of the underwater. Cousteau looks like a fish, swimming freely inside the water; unlike Beebe, however, he does not resort to figures of speech to depict the underwater environment. As he descends, the seascape passes vertically; his use of his own body such as arms, legs, and lungs tells us also that this is indeed a new realm in which the body glides up and down, depending on how it acts on the "force of water." The way Cousteau maneuvers his body, testing how it moves incomparably to that on the terrestrial, tells us as if the seascape were something we simulate to experience, not just observe.

Similar to Cousteau's diving experience, there were other divers who ventured out into the water and captured the underwater scenery. For example, a film version of *Twenty Thousand Leagues under the Sea* directed by Stuart Paton was released in 1916. In it, the pioneer of underwater film

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J. E. Williamson (John Ernest Williamson) used a device called "photosphere" to record underwater scenes. Williamson made many films that featured underwater themes such as shipwrecks, diving, treasure hunting in *The Submarine Eye*, *A Deep-Sea Tragedy*, *The White Heather*, *Wonders of the Sea*, and *With Williamson beneath the Sea*. Williamson's films show that diving apparatuses including diving bells and submarine vessels that facilitated through World War I were increasingly widespread and became available for the general public for entertainment. In fact, the commercialization and commodification of the underwater experience would increase as is indicated in the following quote: "Some interesting motion pictures and books devoted to submarine research or adventure had appeared during the past decade," says A. Felix Du Pont in his 1940 book *Under Sea with Helmet and Camera: Experiences of an Amateur*, "but the equipment, technique and danger described as seemingly necessary to this pursuit must have discouraged the majority of people who have a desire to feel the thrill of wandering on the sea bottom."[66] Du Pont's reference to "fear" is also an issue that I will analyze in the next section in more detail; in the meantime, I just want to point out that in the early twentieth century, recreational activities pertaining to the submarine environment were already becoming popular, which interestingly enough coincides with the commercialization of the beach. It may be safe to say, therefore, that the oceanic in general was perceived by many to be more accessible in twentieth-century America.

With the aid of technology, both Beebe and Cousteau can go into the depths, and both of them felt overjoyed with the expansiveness of the new realm that no one had ever achieved. Gary Kroll argues in his *America's Ocean Wilderness* that underwater explorers such as Beebe and Cousteau played an important role in spreading the idea of an ocean wilderness by adopting terrestrial values to the ocean. In this respect, I will also treat Cousteau's writing in the context of American sea literature. As I have already shown in maritime activities, it is easy to see how, as we have seen many times, it is inevitable that underwater explorers had to experience the new underwater realm filtered through their preexisting terrestrial values. Submarine scenery is in many ways characterized by a degree of terrestrial aesthetics that have an effect on the perception of the oceanic in the deep. Likewise Beebe's and Cousteau's responses to the underwater experience reflect how both terrestrial and underwater wildernesses have affinities. The important difference is that both twentieth-century explorers—unlike those who

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feel terrified and awestruck by "howling wilderness" in the colonial America—exhilarate as if they could actually become capable of breathing and living under the sea; however, the underwater would not have become accessible without special devices like the bathysphere of Beebe and Aqualung of Cousteau. Because of this, underwater narrative often shows an interesting oscillation between the exhilaration of feeling and physical obstacles or difficulties. Beebe feels excited at the expanding new realm; but on the other hand, he feels incapable of verbalizing the scene. Cousteau shows similar excitement while experiencing various decompression illnesses. Cousteau's phrase "rapture of the deep" is likewise an appropriate one to characterize the underwater experience. People feel rapture or exhilaration of the deep, but also they confront some restraints or obstacles there. The rapture of the deep bears a dual feature of underwater experiences. The oscillation between the exhilaration of feelings and physical restraints, of course, can be considered the oscillation between the terrestrial and the oceanic because the various restraints expressed underwater originated from the fact that humans are terrestrial beings.

The rapture of the deep in twentieth-century American literature

The "rapture of the deep" can be seen in the earlier divers' accounts of their experiences as well.[67] The following is an extract from *Sea Diver: A Quest for History under the Sea*: "For more than an hour I explored this lovely spot, getting tremendous satisfaction out of playing fish. And the fish didn't seem to mind at all this clumsy, strange-looking creature from the world above. They swam about me, snouting out food from the bottom, playing tag with each other, completely oblivious of me."[68] But soon, the narrator overcomes her fear and writes, "With startling suddenness the realization came to me. I was no longer fearful of this strange environment. I was at last at home on the bottom.[69]

The following example is from *Under Sea with Helmet and Camera: Experiences of an Amateur* (1940): "I have not since that experience descended to so great a depth. It produces a feeling of awe. I seemed to be walking through a forbidden land, feeling very helpless, and far from my native element. The surroundings appeared sinister, and I imagined that lurking fores were watching me from their hiding places."[70] While displaying the excitement of descending into the deep, the narrator's sense of helplessness in the oceanic is also due to the fact that it is "far

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from my native element," that is the terrestrial. The narrator goes on to account the first underwater experience as follows:

> When my feet were on the bottom I looked around me. This first experience was thrilling. Objects which I had looked down upon perpendicularly from the surface now stretched before me as on land, but what a marvelous difference! A shimmering light of a pale blue tinge pervaded all. Every object that met the eye was unfamiliar but beautiful.[71]

Amazed at the beautiful sight, submarine scenery here is filled with honest responses to unfamiliar surroundings. Perpendicularly viewed scenery turns now to horizontal, the shift of the perspective at ease is possible because of little gravity in the water. "Marvelous difference!" as the narrator exclaims, the sight of submarine scenery here is more dramatic than the ones we already saw in the nineteenth century. Later in the passage, the narrator goes on to write:

> I move from place to place in order to get a better view of any grouping that attracted me. The shimmering light was caused by the sun's rays being deflected by the ripples on the surface. I turned back reluctantly to my point of descent, and ascended hand over hand quite slowly, as directed.[72]

Maneuvering in the submarine environment seems to have become more smooth and even sunlight filtering through the water makes an unusual effect upon visual representations of the submarine environment.

However, no less important is that the narrator has to ascend and leave the beautiful submarine environment, as "directed." The "rapture of the deep" comes with restraint, as is shown in this scene that the terrestrial is where humans belong, not the oceanic.

> I thought over this experience, and wondered why I had not observed details more closely. In later descents the same failing has been noted. It probably is caused by unfamiliarity with the surroundings, nervousness about the air supply, and fear of unconsciously coming in contact with some harmful animal or plant. Lydia took her turn, but Alice could not be induced to try it. Some people have an attack of claustrophobia when the helmet is place over their heads. These should never try diving; they will get nothing out of it themselves and add nothing to the enjoyment of their companions.[73]

The narrator later speculates about the submarine experience and recounts some "nervousness" and "fear" that arises from difficulties in adjusting to the submarine environment. The book was written when diving was not yet a popular recreational sport, so some may suspect

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that the display of fear and nervousness in the narrative is in fact due to a lack of diving experience and information in public, not resulting from an immature individual. That view is probably not incorrect, but let's look at another diving narrative to see how the rapture of the deep is shared by a more contemporary writer for further comparisons.

The following excerpt is from *The Deep* (1976), a fiction written by Peter Benchley.

> In sea water more than a few feet deep, blood is green. Water filters the light from above, seeming to consume the colors of the spectrum shade by shade. Red is the first to succumb, to disappear. Green lasts longer. But then, below 100 feet, green, too, fades away, leaving blue. In the twilight depths—180, 200 feet, and beyond—blood looks black.[74]

The representation of the color variations underwater, with which I hope we are now readily familiar, is used to enhance an eerie feeling of the submarine. The effect of depth in the representation of colors is explained again, and yet, the narrative moves slowly as if to imitate the motions of a diver. And then, the character appears in the following passage:

> David Sanders sat on the bandy bottom and watched green fluid ooze from the back of a wounded fish. It was a big porgy, with long fanglike teeth; it was at least two feet long, and mottled blue and gray. A crescent of flesh had been gouged from its back—by another fish, perhaps—and blood pulsed from the wound in stringy billows that quickly dissipated in the water. The fish swam erratically, apparently confused by pain or by the scent of its own blood.[75]

In the story, David Sanders and Gail Berke, a couple who enjoy scuba diving near shipwrecks off Bermuda, salvaged an ampule, which turns out to be an ampule from WWII, and they get involved with fatal troubles caused by drugs, treasures, and human greed. The quote above prepares the story in such a way that the wounded fish desperately struggles as blood comes out from it. Compared with Alexis Felix Du Pont cited before Benchley, the diver here seems more experienced, but basically what is described as "nervousness" and "fear" are implicit here, too, but projected onto the wounded fish. The rapture in *The Deep* can be found in their discovery of treasures of a sunken ship, yet again the rapture transforms into fear and death associated with expected troubles involving the treasures. In other words, the fictional discourse in *The Deep* is based on the oceanic qualities that I have examined so far. The only difference would be that fictional discourse attempts to resort

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to the experience and assumptions common to the general public, and it aims to dramatize an event in a way that people can experience in a novel way. Submarine fiction, if we can now conveniently label it so, ought to be analyzed in light of its oceanic presence that influences its structural and thematic elements as well as the general audience's response to the submarine experience and imagination it might evoke throughout the twentieth century and onwards.

Introduced here in this section concerning *under-the-sea* narratives was an overview of the history of Euro-American underwater explorations, with the suggestion that some of the terms significant for understanding American culture and literature—terms such as *wilderness*, *frontier*, landscape, and *technological development*—can be seen as equally significant in the context of underwater activities. Provided here also were examples that enabled us to see interactions between the terrestrial and underwater activities. This suggests that American cultural, economic, and technological developments have been at work "under water." Therefore, giving attention to diverse underwater experiences provides us with a better understanding of how the oceanic and the terrestrial collide, intermingle, and collaborate to create distinctive literary experiences and expressions.

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Epilogue: Rooftop Water Tank

Abstract: *This chapter is a sketch of the author's place, Okinawa, Japan, to reflect upon our general idea of the terrestrial and the oceanic. Just like a water tank on a roof, the ocean looks as though it stands aloof; and yet, the oceanic is omnipresent and vital to our existence. While water is an essential element, an indispensable component of all forms of life, the oceanic and its multifaceted presence cannot be possible without the terrestrial. Water freely changes itself, metamorphosing between and among fluid, solid, and gaseous states, recycling itself between the ocean, sky, and land, and thereby playing a crucial role in our lives. A sense of the extremely precious, even the miraculous nature of water also permeates reflections and expressions in sea literature. In other words, sea literature is like the bulk of water tanks sitting on a roof.*

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When it comes to the ocean today, we cannot avoid relating its overall meaning into the global environmental context. Indeed, it seems easier to combine the global with local issues in the oceanic because, unlike the terrestrial, the oceanic looks as though it stands aloof from visible geographical boundaries, nation states, and sovereignty. All the more for such difficulty in conceptualizing territoriality, the oceanic space has always provided a polemic issue concerning the question of "who owns it?" When a question like this is uttered, however, the question is already answered in a form of claiming: "we own it." We have seen it in an example as old as Grotius's argument over the sovereignty of the ocean or as recent as the dispute between Japan and China over small islands. But I'd like to turn to what I think is the essence of the oceanic by shedding light on its presence, which can be antagonistic according to my classification of the oceanic as a three-dimensional space, and yet, I hope it serves to the purpose of my conclusion to the initial question: "Where is the sea in sea literature?"

"Looks like a big beer keg," exclaimed my friend from the United States as he pointed at a water storage tank on the roof of a house. Water tanks sitting on the roofs of houses are indeed a common part of the Okinawan landscape. The tanks are about one meter in diameter and two meters high, and they do look like beer kegs, but gigantic ones. "Water is precious in Okinawa," I explained. "We have about two meters of precipitation a year, but a small island like this cannot store enough water for 1.5million people. When water reserves are short, we sometimes have water rationing." In fact, in order to maintain a stable water source, about 20% of drinking water is now processed from saltwater.

As a naturally pure substance, water is sacred in many of the world's religions. It is the origin of life, the source of civilization. No form of life can live without it, and ancient creation myths treat water as a necessary component of the cosmos. Water is both a natural resource and a commodity to be bought and sold by businesspersons; thus it can easily become an important political issue. Water inspires our imagination and finds its way into the works of art of every culture, yet when it becomes contaminated or scarce it becomes an instant threat to culture, nature, and life itself.

On the other hand, water also signifies "restraint." Like the water in the beer keg look-alike water tanks, water often serves as a limit. On the other hand we store water in containers because it will disappear if we don't. Yet we keep it in a tank not only to prevent its shape from changing but also

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because it is a limited resource; its "supply" is not inexhaustible but rather radically limited. Having a water storage tank might make one feel he or she can use water whenever they need it, and yet the tank more fundamentally implies limitation and a sense of restraint.

We perhaps see this sense of restraint more than the sense of freedom. Everywhere in the world there are now continuous seasons of drought, and the problems of water reserves and allocation are becoming increasingly complex, the issues increasingly controversial. Like water itself, sea literature treats its subject matters in many forms, as I showed in the three categories of sea literature *on* the sea, *by* the sea, and *beneath* the sea. Just as there is an assortment of shapes and types of water tanks, sea literature also has varieties. Sea literature treats the sea with a broad sweep of styles that range from analytical monograph and cultural critique to personal observation and creative narrative, thus giving readers various textures of the oceanic.

While water is an essential element, an indispensable component of all forms of life, the oceanic and its multifaceted presence cannot be possible without the terrestrial as I have argued throughout the book. Water freely changes form, metamorphosing itself in fluid, solid, and gaseous states, recycling itself between the ocean, sky, and land, and thereby playing a crucial role in our lives. A sense of the extremely precious, even the miraculous nature of water also permeates reflections and expressions in sea literature. In other words, sea literature is like the bulk of water tanks sitting on a roof. Like it or not, either consciously or unconsciously, we attempt to incorporate an essential part of the oceanic into our terrestrial lives, and in so doing, we cannot so much erase its presence but expose its bare existence.

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