Encounters with Native Americans in Early Colonial Georgia

The Salzburger Emigrants and Their Reports on Interactions with Indigenous Peoples

Fabia Weisser
Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München

Abstract

In the 1730s, a group of religiously persecuted Salzburgers found refuge in the newly established colony of Georgia. Two pastors, Johann Martin Boltzius and Israel Christian Gronau, accompanied the men, women, and children on their way to the New World. Between 1733 and 1760, the pastors composed letters and diary entries about the challenges in adapting to their new home, which they named Ebenezer. A significant portion of the descriptions of their new "Heimat" includes encounters with indigenous peoples. The Salzburgers and their Native American neighbors not only exchanged commodities and gifts but also interacted through acts of kindness and charity. The Austrian emigrants' leader, Boltzius, also sought to teach indigenous peoples—whom he frequently portrayed as wild pagans yet intrinsically good people—about Christianity. The Salzburgers' accounts of their encounters with Native Americans, described in a collection of diary entries and letters known as the *Detailed Reports*, reveal the many difficulties they faced in cross-cultural interactions, including language barriers and essential cultural and religious differences that elevated a sense of distrust and resentment between both groups. As the political circumstances in America's Southeast changed, so did the descriptions of Native Americans by the pastors.

Article

In 1731, a small group of Lutheran Salzburgers from Austria were expelled from their home due to religious persecution by Catholic bishop Leopold Anton Eleutherius Freiherr von Firmian and found refuge in the newly established colony of Georgia. In the New World, the Salzburgers and their spiritual guides, pastors Johann Martin Boltzius and Israel Christian Gronau, were confronted with a foreign and unknown environment as well as a novel group of people. In this new land, the Salzburgers established their settlement, which they named Ebenezer. The settlers frequently encountered their indigenous neighbors but faced challenges in cross-cultural communication and the establishment of diplomatic relationships. The relationship between colonial and tribal authorities, as well as interactions between the Salzburger colonists and their indigenous neighbors, are an essential part of the history of Ebenezer. The Ebenezer community benefited from diplomatic relationships with authorities in the Old World and local indigenous clans. The

interactions between the Salzburgers and the indigenous community were driven by curiosity and initially had peaceful foundations, which were bolstered by treaties forged between colonial authorities and indigenous chiefs, but cultural misunderstandings contributed to strife between the groups. The *Detailed Reports,* a collection of diary entries and letters composed by Boltzius and Gronau, reveal the many encounters of the Ebenezer community with indigenous peoples and provide remarkable insights into the emigrants' challenges in the New World.[1]

This article explores two key questions: What was the nature of the encounters between the Salzburgers and the local Native American peoples? How did Boltzius—who composed the vast majority of the *Detailed Reports*—depict indigenous peoples? While the conventions between Georgia's founder, James Edward Oglethorpe, and the Yamacraw chief, Tomochichi, are important, my work focuses on the nature of Boltzius's reports on interactions with the Salzburgers' Native American neighbors, including the Yuchee, Creek, and Cherokee. To explore the nature of the encounters of these groups, I examine the key topics of trade, gift exchanges, and accounts of kindness in the *Detailed Reports* but also outline accounts of troublesome behavior. The diary entries and letters speak of friendship and cooperation but also frequently describe the Native Americans as "others" who were "crude and daring" and "aroused … pity because they [knew] nothing of the great love of God."[2] The encounters were often marked by distrust, and the language barrier between Boltzius and the Native Americans may have been one of the most important reasons for misunderstandings and suspiciousness. Religion and the missionary desire also remained an incessant matter, even though a successful conversion of Native Americans was never recorded in the *Detailed Reports.* Through a close analysis of the *Detailed Reports,* this article reveals how Boltzius's depictions of Native Americans and his accounts of pity, anger, and fear for the seemingly poor, ungodly souls served to construct and strengthen the Salzburgers' identity as Christian and "civilized" settlers.

The Salzburgers Prior to Migration

In his study of Ebenezer, historian James Van Horn Melton observes that there is an imbalance in scholarly analyses of the Salzburgers in their "Heimat" and in the new Georgia settlement, with most existing scholarship focusing on the Salzburgers' lives in British

[1] The original, the *Ausführliche Nachricht von den Saltzburgischen Emigranten, Die sich in America niedergelassen haben. Worin, Nebst einem Historischen Vorbericht von dem ersten und anderen Transport derselben, Die Reise-Diaria Des Königlichen Groß-Britannischen Commissarii und Der beyden Salzburgischen Prediger/ wie auch Eine Beschreibung von Georgien imgleichen verschiedene hierzu gehörige Briefe erhalten* (Augsburg: Francke Stiftung Halle, 1735), was first published by Augsburger Pietist Samuel Urlsperger as an edition of all of Boltzius's and Gronau's letters and diary entries, intended for the German-speaking audience at home. A former professor of German and Comparative Literature at the University of Maryland, George Fenwick Jones published eighteen volumes of the English edition between 1968 and 1995. The English editions serve as the underlying sources for this research.

[2] *Detailed Reports on the Salzburger Emigrants Who Settled in America…Edited by Samuel Urlsperger*, ed. and trans. George Fenwick Jones et al. (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1972), 3:220. *Detailed Reports on the Salzburger Emigrants Who Settled in America…Edited by Samuel Urlsperger*, ed. and trans. George Fenwick Jones et al. (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1969), 2:29.

America.[3] Melton's work on the Salzburgers is remarkable for its strong focus on the Central European context of the exiles' journey to the New World. The work of Melton has shown the importance of understanding the European context of the Salzburgers' migration especially in regard to religious struggles the exiles had experienced in their alpine home.[4] Protestantism spread in Salzburg and its surrounding territories in the 1520s. According to Melton, Protestant ideas originally stemmed from Gastein miners who were temporarily employed in Saxony's Erzgebirge and brought the reformed religion back with them.[5] Many of the miners kept their Protestant beliefs private and outwardly pretended to be Catholics.[6] With the decline of the miners' economic importance due to increasing production costs and the decreasing value of precious metals, the rumors about "Geheimprotestanten" (secret protestants), which Salzburg's archbishop was aware of, resulted in a strong rise of religious prosecutions in the late seventeenth century until the 1730s.[7] Yet many continued to practice their religion by singing Protestant hymns and reading Protestant books for which Geschwandel and a group of seventeen other men were arrested for in 1726.[8]

The driving forces that led to the expulsion were Archbishop Leopold Anton von Firmian and his chancellor, Hieronimus Cristani di Rallo, who was appointed in 1731. Starting in 1728, Firmian asked for the help of Jesuit missionaries to combat the secretly Protestant believers throughout alpine Salzburg and restore the Catholic faith.[9] In 1731, Protestants from Pongau addressed their oppression to the *Corpus Evangelicorum* in Regensburg, citing the archbishop's violation of the Peace of Westphalia (1648) and asking for intervention, for the end of prosecutions and the allowance to emigrate.[10] Such a request was considered a rebellious and potentially dangerous threat to the Salzburg government. After the Pongau Protestants heard of a planned investigation in their territory, they held a famous meeting in Schwarzach where they strengthened their shared decisiveness by dipping their fingers into a vessel of salt and then licking it ("Salzlecken").[11] The house-searches, specifically for Lutheran books, conducted by the Jesuits resulted in the spread of arrests and punishments, yet they also strengthened the loyalty of Protestants to their faith.[12] After the

[3] James Van Horn Melton, *Religion, Community, and Slavery on the Colonial Southern Frontier* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 9. Melton points to Charlotte E. Haver, who put a stronger focus on the European context yet also without a thorough analysis of individuals lives prior to their migration. See Charlotte E. Haver, *Von Salzburger nach Amerika. Mobilität und Kultur einer Gruppe religiöser Emigranten im 18. Jahrhundert* (Paderborn: Verlag Ferdinand Schöningh, 2011).
[4] Melton stresses the overlap of three worlds when analyzing the Salzburgers' history: "One was the local alpine world they brought with them, a world still dominated by the confessional struggles of an earlier age. The second was a Pietist world, one they entered when Boltzius became their pastor … The third, finally was the 'entangled' Atlantic world of the Georgia colony and its British sponsors." See Melton, *Religion, Community, and Slavery*, 12.
[5] Melton, *Religion, Community, and Slavery*, 20.
[6] Melton, *Religion, Community, and Slavery*, 22.
[7] Melton, *Religion, Community, and Slavery*, 22.
[8] Melton, *Religion, Community, and Slavery*, 54.
[9] Melton, *Religion, Community, and Slavery*, 61.
[10] Melton, *Religion, Community, and Slavery*, 61 and 74.
[11] Melton, *Religion, Community, and Slavery*, 75.
[12] Melton, *Religion, Community, and Slavery*, 74.

announcement of the Edict of Expulsion of Protestants by Archbishop Firmian in October 1731, more and more Protestants left their home to live in exile.

Those who later found refuge in the New World made their way through Central Europe towards England. The Salzburgers found support in Augsburg, which at that time was the center of South German Pietism, and specifically from Augsburg's senior Lutheran pastor Samuel Urlsperger, himself an expelled Protestant from Styria.[13] Urlsperger represented an important tie between Europe and America. He was involved in a network with the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge (SPCK), an organization that participated in the establishment of the new Georgia colony, and August Herrmann Francke, the leader of the Halle Pietists. Halle Pietists devoted themselves to charity and established an orphanage and also had an enormous variety of commercial sectors, such as a manufacturing plant for pharmaceuticals and a printing office.[14] Both Johann Martin Boltzius and Israel Christian Gronau were Halle Pietists. Not much is known about the two reverends before their migration to Georgia. According to Melton, the pastors were former teachers at the Pietist Latin School in Halle and were chosen by Urlsperger to accompany the Salzburgers on their journey to the New World.[15] Gronau served as Boltzius's assistant.[16] To help achieve the collective goal of spreading faith, the SPCK supplied the ship *Purrysburg* on which the first exiles traveled to the New World.[17] The close relations between Samuel Urlsperger in Augsburg, August Hermann Francke in Halle, and the SPCK also explain potential collective efforts in global missionary work. Urlsperger furthermore first published in Germany the conditions for emigration to Georgia by the Trustees, a governing group responsible for the establishment of the Georgia colony under King George II of England.[18] These collective efforts aided the Salzburger settlers and were instrumental in the establishment of the settlement.

Language Barrier and Efforts of Conversion

Johann Martin Boltzius served as a link between benefactors in the Old World and the community of Salzburgers in Ebenezer. He also acted as a liaison between Native peoples and colonial authorities, specifically Oglethorpe, the founder of the Georgia colony. It is of great importance to analyze the Halle Pietist background of Boltzius and his fellow pastor Gronau, who were sent from Halle to accompany the Salzburgers and met them in Rotterdam, since Pietist ideas about missionary activity in the eighteenth century were essential to Boltzius in regard to potential conversion efforts of Native American peoples.[19] According to historian Hermann Wellenreuther, missionaries who were sent to America from Halle believed that conversion of non-Christians could only be achieved through a long process, involving the acquisition of Christian self-awareness, which would then

[13] Melton, *Religion, Community, and Slavery*, 99f.
[14] Melton, *Religion, Community, and Slavery*, 101. Helmut Obst, *August Hermann Francke und die Franckeschen Stiftungen in Halle* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2002), 57.
[15] See James Van Horn Melton, "From Alpine Miner to Low-Country Yeoman: The Transatlantic Worlds of a Georgia Salzburger 1893 – 1761," *Past & Present,* no. 201 (2008): 97–140, here p. 118.
[16] See *Detailed Reports,* 2:xi.
[17] Melton, "From Alpine Miner to Low-Country Yeoman," 118.
[18] Haver, *Von Salzburger nach Amerika*, 66.
[19] Haver, *Von Salzburger nach Amerika,* 75.

replace pagan beliefs and ideally result in baptism.[20] To further this process, the Halle clergymen especially focused on instruction in catechism.[21] While Wellenreuther points to a broader context of Halle missionary activities, Wolfgang Flügel's work provides a more focused study of Ebenezer and similarly argues that the Ebenezer pastors very well had missionary intentions and aimed at the conversion of Native Americans.[22] Charlotte Haver supports Flügel's statement by pointing out that Boltzius wished to enlarge the kingdom of God through the conversion of indigenous peoples and the pastors' many references to the desirous conversion of tribal people.[23]

Boltzius's diaries suggest that he was interested in spreading Christianity among the local peoples. It is, however, reasonable to conclude that the remarks in this regard aimed to distinguish them from the indigenous populations and also were potentially part of the pastors' efforts to show their loyalty to Halle in the reports, as well as expounding the putative problem of Native Americans as pagans. Furthermore, historian Julie Ann Sweet argues that European clergymen often "approached conversion expecting complete submission to every aspect of their society, not just religion."[24] Sweet's argument suggests the conversion to Christianity served as a means to assimilate indigenous peoples into European society.

Despite these myriad motivations, the *Detailed Reports* also reveal essential problems regarding the efforts to put conversion of the local indigenous peoples into practice. These factors inevitably include the anticipation of encounters with Native Americans, which are to be analyzed in more detail later. The language barrier indubitably represented the most dominant obstacle. The difficulty of communication represents the underlying reason for why the *Detailed Reports* do not report a single instance of conversion of Native Americans by the Salzburger community. Boltzius's wish to learn the language of the local tribe, the Yamacraw, is especially strong in 1734 and 1735, the early years of the Salzburgers' settlement in Old Ebenezer. The pastor continuously repeats his wish to learn the Natives' language to promote Christianity among them; for example, he stated in November 1734: "our ignorance of their language prevents us from showing them the way to eternal life."[25] His efforts were further complicated by the different indigenous languages of the local tribes. Scholar Sean Harvey offers a possible explanation to Boltzius's apparent confusion over the many different languages. Long before European contact, Native Americans used pidgins to ensure inter-tribal communication.[26] Harvey argues that many Europeans expressed confusion over the seemingly constant switching of Native Americans'

---

[20] Hermann Wellenreuther, "Pietismus und Mission. Vom 17. bis zum Beginn des 20. Jahrhunderts," in *Geschichte des Pietismus—Bd. 4: Glaubenswelt und Lebenswelten*, ed. Hartmut Lehmann et. al. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2004), 168–195, here, p. 171.
[21] Wellenreuther, "Pietismus und Mission."
[22] Wolfgang Flügel, *Pastoren aus Halle und ihre Gemeinden in Pennsylvania 1742–1820. Deutsche Lutheraner zwischen Persistenz und Assimilation* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter GmbH, 2019), 87.
[23] Haver, *Von Salzburger nach Amerika*, 106.
[24] Julie Anne Sweet, *Negotiating for Georgia: British-Creek Relations in the Trustees Era, 1733-1752* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2005), 95–96.
[25] *Detailed Reports,* 2:19.
[26] Sean P. Harvey, *Native Tongues: Colonialism and Race from Encounter to the Reservation* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2015), 24.

languages, even of people of the same clan.[27] Given these language difficulties, it is reasonable to assume that in the case of the Salzburgers' encounters with Native Americans, the frequently observed clash of religious beliefs in North American colonial historiography, which often resulted in syncretism or forced conversions, did not take place in this situation. Even if forced conversions and syncretism did not take place, it is possible that different ideologies, specifically Judeo-Christian beliefs of human superiority over nature and Native American mythologies of all life on earth and nature as equipollent, still led to misunderstandings and conflicts.[28]

In addition to Boltzius's difficulties overcoming the language barrier to convert local Native Americans, the Salzburgers faced troubles of their own. Much like other colonies in the New World, the Salzburgers were a settlement of religiously persecuted and needy people. As much as the pastor may have wished to teach indigenous peoples about Christianity, the Salzburgers themselves relied heavily on the support of benefactors in the Old World and were greatly occupied with the efforts for the preservation of Ebenezer. Even though Oglethorpe and other British colonists seemed to have encouraged the pastor to convert locals, Boltzius notes the difficulty of this task, in January 1737:

> The English preacher who has been sent here for the conversion of the heathen has requested the help of some of our people to prepare a piece of land which he has been given by the Indians. However, everybody is so busy with his own work that it seems impossible to take up work for others. As we have noticed, this preacher is most concerned with learning the language of the Indians; it may be said that he has ample time for this, since he has no children other than a single Indian boy whom he instructs in his school.[29]

Even though Boltzius was preoccupied with more pressing matters, his desire to learn the Natives' language does not seem to vanish throughout the composition of his diary. Even in the second to last year of publication of the *Detailed Reports* in 1759, when the relationship between both groups became increasingly hostile, Boltzius states: "May God in the richness of His mercy show ways and means of bringing poor Negroes and Indians, of which there are very many in this colony, to a true knowledge of Himself and His Son … On the side of the Indians and Negroes, the greatest hindrance … is the deficiency and the inability in understanding their languages and expressing spiritual matters."[30] Suggestions related to the accommodation of the indigenous peoples in the latter years mostly stem from those outside the Salzburger community and never came from the pastor himself.

The Diversity of Encounters

---

[27] Harvey, *Native Tongues,* 24.
[28] Willard Hughes Rollings, "Indians and Christianity," in *A Companion to Native American History*, eds. Philip J. Deloria and Neal Salisbury (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), 121–138, here p. 122.
Detailed Reports on the Salzburger Emigrants Who Settled in America…Edited by Samuel Urlsperger, ed. and trans. George Fenwick Jones et al. (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1976), 4:7.
[30] *Detailed Reports on the Salzburger Emigrants Who Settled in America…Edited by Samuel Urlsperger*, ed. and trans. George Fenwick Jones et al. (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1993), 17:46.

Boltzius's descriptions of Native Americans in the *Detailed Reports* repeatedly portray the indigenous neighbors as "crude and daring."[31] The many different encounters between the Salzburgers and the local tribes, however, also depict acts of helpfulness and charity on both sides. This section seeks to shed light on the variety of cross-cultural interactions and the Boltzius's judgements about Native Americans through analyzing selected instances of various encounters, which are based mostly on claims to personal interactions as well as hearsay.

The interactions of the Salzburgers and Native Americans can be categorized by the distinct aims of the many different encounters, such as trade, gift giving, and acts of favors. Cross-cultural interactions between the Salzburgers and their indigenous neighbors oftentimes unavoidably led to misunderstandings and, as can be seen in the later years of the *Detailed Reports,* an increasing animosity between both groups. This animosity may have been fostered by the cultural differences between both groups, as well as political restrictions and the influence of alcohol. Therefore, the encounters, whether they were of social or economic nature, should not be understood as consistent behavioral patterns that always led to the same reactions, as evidenced by Boltzius's remarks.

It is noteworthy that descriptions of trade with Native Americans in the *Detailed Reports* declined from approximately 1740 onwards. There seem to have been increasing animus towards Native visitors. Boltzius's mood shifts during this time, and even though in previous reports he often did not speak highly of the local tribal people, by 1740 he complained that "dwelling alone in the woods is unsafe, what with thieves, Indians, and other bad folk."[32] The missing volumes of the years 1742 and 1743 make it difficult to provide information about a specific turning point. Yet after this time, the apparent aggravation of the relationship between the Salzburgers and the local tribes seems more pronounced. Many of the pastor's statements in 1744 point at an increasing enmity towards the Yuchi: "[T]he bad-natured Uchee Indians came to our place," as well as towards Native people in general.[33] Reports of thievery become more common in these years. For example, a report by Boltzius on May 31, 1744, states: "So far they have become entirely lawless and unbridled, and the authorities have no power in their hands to restrict them the least bit in their wickedness and excesses. We hear great complaints about the Indians in the country, yet no help can be provided."[34] Here, Boltzius also describes his helplessness over the seemingly savage behavior he depicts. The decline of amicable descriptions of the closest indigenous neighbors may have been furthered by political changes opposing Native American interests. As Joshua Piker points out, with Oglethorpe's departure to England in 1743 (he never returned to Georgia again), complaints by both the

[31] *Detailed Reports,* 3:220.
[32] *Detailed Reports on the Salzburger Emigrants Who Settled in America…Edited by Samuel Urlsperger*, ed. and trans. George Fenwick Jones et al. (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1983), 7:172.
[33] *Detailed Reports on the Salzburger Emigrants Who Settled in America…Edited by Samuel Urlsperger*, ed. and trans. George Fenwick Jones et al. (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1995), 18:23.
[34] *Detailed Reports,* 18:76.

Yuchi and the colonists rose when Georgia officials stopped their protection for Yuchi lands and both groups considered each other intruders.[35]

How strongly cultural misunderstandings influenced a decline in well-disposed depictions of Native Americans in the *Detailed Reports* becomes evident in Boltzius's description of being presented with scalps. On June 1, 1751, he reported: "One of them brought a bundle of scalps which they are accustomed to pull off along with the hair from the enemies they have shot, into my room to show me. However, because I showed my displeasure at that, another … who seems to be the chief of this party, spoke seriously to him, so he packed up his disgusting wares."[36] Although in this passage Boltzius claims to have understood Native American customs of war, his expression of disgust suggests otherwise. Pauline Turner Strong points out that presentations of scalps were frequently used by Native Americans to show allied colonists their loyalty to them.[37] Such descriptions by Boltzius served to portray Native Americans as savage and uncivilized people. As previously mentioned, comparisons like these were common among European settlers, as they served to set clear distinctions between those who considered themselves to be civilized, the colonists, and those who were depicted as seemingly wild peoples.[38]

Commodity Trade

Differences in mores and expectations surrounding trade could also lead to misunderstandings. This section examines the goods traded by the Salzburgers and local indigenous peoples. While it is important to point out which products were of specific interest in a cross-cultural exchange, it is also important to analyze what the trade and exchange of goods meant for colonists on the one hand and Native Americans on the other hand. Conventions of gift-giving and trade for economic purpose often stood in conflict. The *Detailed Reports* indicate the Salzburgers' repeated confusion over the satisfaction of potential gift expectations of indigenous peoples.

The Salzburgers were not involved in large-scale trade alliances, nor did they seek to achieve wealth through trade with Native Americans, as many other settlers attempted to do via the trans-Atlantic deerskin trade. This trade, between Cherokees, Creeks, various other tribes, and colonial powers, was due to an increasing demand of furs in Europe from the 1670s onwards and the primary form of exchange between colonists and Native Americans in the Southeast.[39] Other typical trade items included "metal tools, cotton cloth,

---

[35] Joshua Piker, "To the Backcountry and Back Again," in *Yuchi Indina Histories Before the Removal Era*, eds Jason Baird Jackson (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2012), 189-213, here p. 200.
[36] *Detailed Reports on the Salzburger Emigrants Who Settled in America…Edited by Samuel Urlsperger*, ed. and trans. George Fenwick Jones et al. (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1990), 15:770.
[37] Pauline Turner Strong, "Transforming Outsiders: Captivity, Adoption, And Slavery Reconsidered," in *A Companion to Native American History*, eds. Philip J. Deloria and Neal Salisbury (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), 339–356, here p. 346.
[38] Roy H. Pearce, *Savagism and Civilization: A Study of the Indian and the American Mind* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 5.
[39] Gregory D. Smithers, *Native Southerners: Indigenous History from Origins to Removal* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2019), 66.

guns, ammunition and liquor."[40] While the *Detailed Reports* does not cover all potentially exchanged goods, as the pastors may not always have been informed about all business between tribes and Salzburgers, the *Detailed Reports* suggest that the Natives and Salzburgers often traded meat and produce. Among the items mentioned in the *Detailed Reports* that were traded between the Ebenezer community and tribes are honey, rice, gourds, beans, syrup, bread, beer, and meat.[41] The role of alcohol, specifically rum, is also repeatedly mentioned in Boltzius's diary entries. In her study of the Salzburgers in America, Haver suggests that trading encounters with Native Americans were neutral, meaning they resulted neither in negative nor in positive responses, but in the *Detailed Reports*, it becomes evident that Boltzius not only mentions the exchange of goods but also draws conclusions based on his personal observations of Native Americans.[42] For example, in his entry on January 20, 1737, he reflects: "We again have a few Indian families with us who have brought us fresh meat; but they ask much for it. Among them can be found honorable, good, and kind men who are easy and pleasant to get along with."[43] This statement strongly contradicts Haver's argument and rather highlights that many of the encounters, among them trade as an exchange for goods or favors, often provided the basis for judgements of Native peoples who also spawned amicable feelings on Boltzius's side. As reflected in the Salzburgers' conclusions about the behavior and nature of indigenous peoples, encounters always led to diverse subjective perceptions of the seemingly savage yet intrinsically good Native neighbors. The Salzburgers also provided clothing or favors for Native Americans. For example, on March 4, 1736, Boltzius notes that "an Indian brought a whole deer to our house … His shirt was torn completely and we provided a new one for him."[44] It is not clear whether the shirt was given in exchange for the meat or out of pity and grace of charity. However, it is of specific interest, since in an entry only two days prior on March 2, 1736, Boltzius notes: "[A] few Indians came to our place with one of their chiefs and set out the following day for Savannah to fetch their gifts. To please them, all the men at our place were called together. They had to perform their exercises in the manner of the ordinary militia in Germany for such a long time that it ran over into our prayer hour … In this way Mr. Vat [Jean Vat, a Swiss commissioner responsible for the transport of the Salzburgers to Georgia] wanted to show the Indians that our people were capable of defending themselves in case of emergency. The following night more men than otherwise usual had to stand watch."[45] This quote suggests that the Salzburger community potentially relied on the supply of meat by Native Americans, since they were skilled hunters, but they nonetheless also feared them as a threat to the Ebenezer community. Showing off putative capability to defend themselves also served to show off seemingly civilized fighting skills to the indigenous visitors.

---

[40] Michael P. Morris, *The Bringing of Wonder: Trade and the Indians of the Southeast, 1700–1783* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1999), 3.
[41] See for example: *Detailed Reports on the Salzburger Emigrants Who Settled in America…Edited by Samuel Urlsperger*, ed. and trans. George Fenwick Jones et al. (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1980), 5:177.
[42] Haver, *Von Salzburger nach Amerika,* 107.
[43] *Detailed Reports,* 4:8.
[44] *Detailed Reports,* 3:67.
[45] *Detailed Reports,* 3:66.

The exchange of goods for money was a rather uncommon practice. In the "Short Report on Georgia and the Indians" by Baron Philipp Georg Friedrich von Reck, printed in the first published volume of the *Detailed Reports*, the commissioner states: "Money or gold they will not take and it is completely unknown to them."[46] Boltzius only once mentions the exchange of goods for money in the *Detailed Reports* in his entry on September 4, 1740. However, the pastor indicated that the Native American woman who was involved in the trade was not part of the tribes that the Salzburgers usually exchanged goods with: "The Indians otherwise are not used to trading in money, but these do it, only they take no other money than English or Spanish silver."[47] This entry is noteworthy because Boltzius describes an argument between a "certain person [who] had dealings with the Indians and bought from them colorful material for a skirt" and the above-mentioned Native American woman who, as Boltzius states, later returned because she regretted the sale and demanded the material back.[48] According to Boltzius, the Salzburger woman "resisted strongly but finally had to acquiesce, because otherwise I would have reported the matter to Savannah."[49] The reason for Boltzius's rigorous intervention was the Act for Maintaining Peace with the Indians in the Province of Georgia, which, according to Sweet, Governor Oglethorpe declared on behalf of the Trustees after he returned from his trip to England in 1736.[50] As Sweet details, colonists who sought to participate in trade with Native Americans first had to purchase a license to do so in Savannah for five pounds and extend the permission once per year. Furthermore, business was only permitted with Native American communities who were at peace with Georgia.[51] It remains unknown whether the trade between the Salzburger and the Native woman was considered illegal by Boltzius for the sake of business with an antagonistic tribe or simply because the Salzburger woman did not possess a license.

While it is reasonable to argue that Boltzius wished the Ebenezer community to follow the laws issued by the Trustees, the question arises how the Salzburgers still continued to exchange commodities with Native Americans after Oglethorpe declared the need for a costly traders' license. The *Detailed Reports* suggest that Boltzius aimed to further distance their interactions with Native Americans as he increasingly described them as a potential threat to the Salzburgers. In his entry on September 11, 1740, only one week after the argument over the purchased cloth, Boltzius states: "Although the few Indians who had been with us for some weeks left a few days ago, today we got all the more of these uninvited guests … The Englishman at Old Ebenezer had to have his corn guarded from these people last night, and hence there is concern here that they will do more harm than the previous ones. This evening I will admonish the congregation not to enter into any trade with these people; for in this way we may be rid of them that much sooner."[52] The

[46] *Detailed Reports on the Salzburger Emigrants Who Settled in America…Edited by Samuel Urlsperger*, ed. and trans. George Fenwick Jones et al. (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1968), 1:135–148.
[47] *Detailed Reports,* 7:229.
[48] *Detailed Reports,* 7:229.
[49] *Detailed Reports,* 7:229.
[50] Sweet, *Negotiating for Georgia,* 97.
[51] Sweet, *Negotiating for Georgia,* 98.
[52] *Detailed Reports,* 7:234.

increasing caution with which Boltzius observed the indigenous visitors may also account for his displeasure with the trade.

The fine line between gift exchanges and commercial trade seemed to not always be unambiguous to the pastor. A quote from December 12, 1741, suggests that Boltzius sometimes was confused over whether to consider something as a gift or trade item: "Today a well-formed and courteous man called on me and offered me a buffalo skin. I do not know whether it is a present or whether I should give him something else for it, because I wish to have no dealings with him in that regard. The Lord Trustees have forbidden all those who have no licentia … on pain of severe punishment, to trade with the Indians … One is rid of them sooner if one has no commercial dealings with them."[53] According to Joseph M. Hall's argument in *Zamumo's Gifts: Indian-European Exchange in the Colonial Southeast*, gifts, in the context of encounters of colonists with Native Americans, were frequently offered without an immediate demand for a compensation in return, but consequently indebted the receiver of the gift.[54] This would suggest that the buffalo skin was a present; however, Boltzius seemed to have felt the obligation to offer something in return. His concern over the lack of a license can therefore be interpreted in two possible ways: a fear of punishment or a lack of understanding of gift-giving customs. While the pastor, according to the passage, was primarily worried about a punishment due to performing illegal acts of trade with Native Americans, the entry in the *Detailed Reports* suggests a general confusion and lack of understanding for when to decode such actions as trade or gift giving. According to Jessica Stern, "[i]n the Southeast there was great overlap between gift goods and commodity goods, despite the fact that people who purchased items had fewer obligations than those who received items as presents."[55] Stern's argument offers an explanation to Boltzius's concern over his indebtedness towards the gift giver and also points at a common confusion over the meaning of offered goods. Furthermore, adding to Boltzius's confusion, Native Americans had different reasons for trade than the colonists. As historian Colin Calloway states, "Trade was a way of cementing alliances, preventing conflict, making and renewing friendships; it was an exchange of gifts hedged around by social and ceremonial considerations."[56] Given these different possibilities, Boltzius was forced into the position of deciphering each exchange as a trade, a gift, or as some other gesture.

Gift Exchange

This section analyzes occurrences of gift exchange between indigenous peoples and the Salzburgers as portrayed in the *Detailed Reports.* Analyzing gift exchanges between Native Americans and colonists first requires differentiating between commodities and gifts, since these acts of exchanges differed in regard to social and cross-cultural implications. According to Stern, commodities were chosen by Native Americans, who accepted specific

[53] *Detailed Reports,* 8:528.
[54] Joseph M. Hall Jr., *Zamumo's Gifts: Indian-European Exchange in the Colonial Southeast* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009), 7.
[55] Jessica Yirush Stern, *The Lives in Objects: Native Americans, British Colonists, and Cultures of Labor and Exchange in the Southeast* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2017), 103.
[56] Colin G. Calloway, *New Worlds for All: Indians, Europeans, and the Remaking of Early America,* 2nd edn. (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 2013), 44.

trade items from colonists, which would then enter their community.[57] A second difference is that gifts were often more symbolic and often remained in the same physical state after they were given to the recipient, while commodities were frequently used or reconfigured by the recipient for their own purposes.[58] Furthermore, gifts were used to create social relationships, while at the same time establishing hierarchical structures among groups and individuals.[59]

It certainly is not always feasible to identify the exchange of goods as gifts. As mentioned in the previous section, Boltzius himself seemingly found it difficult to distinguish between gifts and trade.[60] However, in the beginning of the *Detailed Reports*, Boltzius does not predominantly speak of encounters with Native Americans for the sake of trade. Rather, accounts speak of food exchange without the apparent personal commercial gain of either community. The first time Boltzius mentions such an interaction is on April 4, 1733: "The Indians are coming to see us often because now and then they are given some food and drink. They give us many Indian words when we show them the objects which we want to know in their language."[61] According to this entry in the *Detailed Reports,* the Salzburgers seem to have shared their food, without demanding goods in return, in order to learn more about the Natives' language. Stern categorizes gifts of food and clothes as "gifts of hospitality."[62] The attribute of hospitality is what both the Salzburgers and the local indigenous population arguably had in common. It is reasonable to assume that Boltzius sought to show his peaceful intentions to the Native visitors. According to Stern, Native Americans showed hospitality through the offering of food to identify "one party as the outsider and the other as the insider."[63] In an entry from July 26, 1734, Boltzius notes: "Two of the Indians that were here recently came to see me this morning and brought some venison. Doubtless this was to be in return for what they enjoyed at my house not too long ago."[64] The passage shows the pastor's understanding of the venison as a counter-offering for the hospitality he provided, but whether the two indigenous visitors understood the offering of the deer as the return of a gift is uncertain. Given Boltzius's difficulty in determining what constituted a gift and what constituted a commodity exchange, one may question whether the intention of the two indigenous visitors was to mark the Salzburgers as guests and express a peaceful tolerance of the colonists, rather than a counter-offering for his earlier hospitality.

Overall, the accounts in the *Detailed Reports* that may be classified as gift giving frequently centered around food. The earliest account of gift giving by local Native Americans to the Ebenezer community was reported by the preachers on May 2, 1733: "A few days ago an Indian came to the neighborhood of Abercorn in a small boat, with his wife and two children. Because we had done several things for him, this morning he brought us a whole

[57] Stern, *The Lives in Objects,* 135.
[58] Stern, *The Lives in Objects,* 135.
[59] Stern, *The Lives in Objects,* 94.
[60] *Detailed Reports,* 8:528.
[61] *Detailed Reports,* 1:70.
[62] Stern, *The Lives in Objects,* 96.
[63] Stern, *The Lives in Objects,* 97.
[64] *Detailed Reports*, 2:113.

deer so that we could give large pieces to the Salzburgers … Because we gave him, in return for this gift, some rice, bread, brown sugar, and syrup, he came back in the evening with another half of a deer."[65] This account shows how potential misunderstandings regarding different conceptions of gift exchange led to a domino effect of indebtedness. This back-and-forth necessitated repeated exchanges on both sides. Stern refers to this account in the *Detailed Reports* as a gesture of hospitality by the Yuchi and notes how gifts of food by this tribe and by the Yamacraw did not necessarily mean that they accepted the Salzburgers as permanent residents of the land.[66] Her work draws attention to the inherent power dynamics of exchange and gift giving. Stern argues that English colonists, accustomed to social conventions from the Old World, used gifts for two purposes: "individuals declared their superiority over the receiver. But gift giving could also be subversive. By giving a large gift to someone who was considered one's equal or superior, an individual of lower station could aspire to a new and higher position."[67] Stern furthermore argues that, in an attempt to constantly maintain the balance of social hierarchies, colonists were compelled by their own concept of gift giving to offer counter presents to Native Americans "thereby turning dependent relationships into reciprocal relationships."[68]

In the *Detailed Reports* , Boltzius frequently mentions his anger over seemingly uninvited indigenous guests and their demands for gifts. Already in the early years of the Salzburgers' settlement, for example on July 12, 1734, Boltzius noted that a group of Native Americans "asked for and received meat and beans at our place because they had no provisions with them. Some of them do not mind asking the people for anything they may see. Even in my room an Indian was attracted by a number of things."[69] The pastor expressed his apparent indignation over the openly demanding attitude of the visitors. Yet the pastor also acceded to the obligation of handing out what the guests asked for, since he seemingly feared them. This becomes evident, for example, in his entry on October 26, 1736, when Boltzius is visited by "[t]hree robust young Indians" and admits, "[o]ne flatters these savage people greatly to keep them well disposed and friendly; but because of it they become more daring and think that we must treat them as they wish and give them what they demand."[70] This disclosure points at a tense relationship between groups, in which Boltzius feels threatened yet tries to keep a peaceful attitude.

According to Stern, settlers often complained about indigenous peoples asking for what appealed to them or—in the eyes of Europeans—crossing boundaries by inviting themselves into someone's home.[71] Stern suggests that "[r]ather than being greedy or immoral, as many colonists assumed, it is possible that this behavior signified that Southeastern Indians were proclaiming these areas as their hûti … [T]he Southeastern Indian practice of demanding items was a means of claiming space, of affirming solidarity,

[65] *Detailed Reports,* 1:81.
[66] Stern, *The Lives in Objects,* 98.
[67] Stern, *The Lives in Objects,* 98.
[68] Stern, *The Lives in Objects,* 98.
[69] *Detailed Reports,* 2:109.
[70] *Detailed Reports,* 3:233 and 234.
[71] Stern, *The Lives in Objects,* 111.

and of establishing political superiority."[72] This would point to the Native Americans' attempt to position themselves hierarchically above the Salzburgers who were relatively new neighbors. Stern's approach thus suggests one explanation for what Boltzius potentially observed as daring and aggressive behavior. Furthermore, in his book *The Bringing of Wonder: Trade and the Indians of the Southeast, 1700–1783,* Michael Morris argues that from a Native American point of view, the sole ability to distribute gifts placed such individuals in a superior position in indigenous societies.[73] Hence the *Detailed Reports* suggest that the seemingly demanding behavior of the local tribes contributed to a continued feeling of discontent on Boltzius's side instead of the development of an understanding about indigenous practices of trade and gift giving. Therefore, even in August 1740, Boltzius still expressed his irritation over the seemingly uninvited indigenous guests: "For a week now, a few Indians have been with us who are not of the best kind. They go into gardens and fields and take whatever suits their fancy; and the people have to put up with it, because they do not like to get too near them."[74] The increasing animosity towards the local tribes peaks in Boltzius's descriptions of the peoples, as, according to the pastor, "they have become entirely lawless and unbridled … A couple of years ago they robbed our gardens, fields, and huts."[75]

In her study of gifts and trade in colonial Georgia, Clare Levenson argues that Native American customs demanded gifts from the colonists for every new agreement.[76] The continuing exchange of gifts, as Levenson points out, was driven by indigenous ideas about the establishment of a reciprocal relationship that was initiated by the first exchanges of gifts between the Georgia settlers and the Native inhabitants for land.[77] On July 25, 1750, Boltzius recalled a ceremony of annual gift giving in the *Detailed Reports*: "Last week, a party of Indians had come to Savannah in order to get the presents which, by order of the king, they receive each year; clothing, blankets, linen, pretty boxes, woven cloth, rifles, powder, lead, axes, knives, and other household items. Instead of showing gratitude to, and affection for, the white people, these Indians first behaved disgracefully in Savannah; and then, take with them from gardens, fields, and paddocks."[78] Even though the Salzburgers were not directly involved in this act of gift exchange, this passage by Boltzius shows that such occasions, whether the pastor witnessed them himself or only based his reports on hearsay, formed a basis for conclusions regarding Native Americans and their behavior. These conclusions were subsequently passed on to the audience in the Old World. The pastor's reports of ungratefulness and even thievish behavior evidently points at a conception of indigenous peoples as savages. The increasing skepticism and animosity with which the pastors characterized their indigenous neighbors seemed to have suppressed

[72] Stern, *The Lives in Objects,* 112.
[73] Morris, *The Bringing of Wonder*, 2.
[74] *Detailed Reports,* 7:223.
[75] *Detailed Reports,* 18:76.
[76] Claire S. Levenson, "The Impact of Gifts and Trade: Georgia Colonists and Yamacraw Indians in the Colonial American Southeast," in *The Political Economy of Empire in the Early Modern World*, eds. Sophus A. Reinert and Pernille Røge (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 147–172, here p. 147.
[77] Levenson, "The Impact of Gifts and Trade," 154.
[78] *Detailed Reports on the Salzburger Emigrants Who Settled in America…Edited by Samuel Urlsperger*, ed. and trans. George Fenwick Jones et al. (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1989), 14:101.

reports of acts like gift giving over time. In the 1740s, Boltzius hardly ever mentions gift exchanges between Salzburgers and Native Americans; rather, he remarks on the official distributions of presents by the Trustees in Savannah. The increasingly cool relationship between the Ebenezer community and their nearest neighbors, the Yuchi, may be explained through Oglethorpe's return to England in 1743 and the Georgia officials ending protection for them.[79] This likely sparked anger amongst the European colonists, and, according to Joshua Piker, also led to complaints about unfriendly behaviors of the settlers on the side of the Yuchi.[80]

Overall, the *Detailed Reports* predominantly noted acts of gift giving in the early years of the Salzburgers' settlement. The increasing skepticism and fear that dominated Boltzius's later descriptions of Native American visitors to Ebenezer, as well as accounts of the distribution in Savannah, may have led to an avoidance of any encounters with indigenous peoples. Boltzius might have also decided to stop reporting about gift giving for unknown reasons.

Accounts of Kindness

Even though the mentioning of gift exchanges between Native Americans and the Ebenezer community declined, favorable accounts can be found throughout the *Detailed Reports*. Boltzius frequently mentioned his own hospitality towards Native Americans who visited the Ebenezer community, even in the later years when fear and defiance seemed to dominate his depictions of the neighbors. For example, in his entry on June 1, 1751, he writes: "When I came home I was told that a party of Uchee Indians had come to our place the day before yesterday and gotten very drunk and had made a lot of noise. Just as they are usually accustomed to stop at my house as often as they come here, they took the opportunity this time also. We gave them some food and drink … because we lie somewhat apart or remote, they will presumably wish to remain here for a while, but this does not please us."[81] In the later years, Boltzius's acts of generosity and respectful hospitality seemed to be designed to avoid possible threats, as he emphasized his disinclination over the visitors. Boltzius's depiction of Native Americans as savages was not a new phenomenon in the later years; quite the contrary. In an entry on October 3, 1736, for example, Boltzius opined: "These people are very crude and daring, and we are as careful as possible not to come too near them."[82] Despite many entries depicting Native Americans as uncivilized, Boltzius also reported multiple accounts of their readiness to help the Salzburgers.

Some noteworthy accounts in which mutual assistance was granted described medical aid. For example, Boltzius stated on November 9, 1737: "An Indian borrowed a lancet from us to bleed a sick old Indian, who has been here for several days."[83] While this passage is the only one that mentions the help provided by the Salzburgers to their Native neighbors in the form of a medical tool, the descriptions of medical assistance provided by Native

[79] Piker, "To the Backcountry and Back Again," 200.
[80] Piker, "To the Backcountry and Back Again," 200.
[81] *Detailed Reports.* 15:69–70.
[82] *Detailed Reports,* 3:220.
[83] *Detailed Reports,* 4:193.

Americans to the Ebenezer community draw upon more astonishing acts of helpfulness. For example, in the pastor's entry on April 11, 1739, one of these inspiring actions was detailed: "A woman here has had a lame foot for a year; and, since nothing seems to work, she has shown the foot to an Indian who showed by his gestures that he wished to help her. He asked for a glass bottle, which he broke, and then shard to a point as for a lance. He then punctured the skin around both swollen ankles, as is done for bleeding; but, when no blood flowed, he sucked it out by mouth, and this caused her some relief."[84] This account shows reciprocal helpfulness between both groups, as well as astonishment over indigenous medical practices that seemed outlandish to the pastor. A much later entry by Boltzius on October 1, 1754, described Native American cures for snakebites: "They make an incision into the wound so that the infected blood can be drawn out quickly and as profusely as possible. Then they hold a flowing ember or some other red hot object close to the wound so as to extract the poison. In this manner, they cured a young man in Old Ebenezer about a year ago."[85] Bloodletting was a common practice among Europeans in the eighteenth century and was believed to cure a variety of diseases.[86] As an example given by historian Jane Merritt suggests, non-Christian Native communities in Pennsylvania adopted bloodletting as medical aid from Moravian settlers.[87] It is unknown whether the indigenous neighbors of the Salzburgers had copied such practices from European settlers or conducted such procedures as part of their own medical care.

In addition to providing medical assistance, the Native Americans also provided physical assistance to the Salzburgers, albeit sporadically. One instance, detailed on July 21, 1741, recalls how Native Americans helped construct the Ebenezer church:

> When I went to the orphanage this evening … I saw, to my great pleasure, three or four young Indians contrary to their habits (for they consider work to be a disgrace) helping the construction workers place the timbers on the almost half constructed church, which was a lot of fun for them. I recalled what I had read yesterday about the building of Solomon's temple, namely, that he used not only born Jews but also strangers and foreigners, as a prefiguration that during the time of the New Testament God would build His holy temple through and among Jews and heathens.[88]

Here, Boltzius draws a connection between his own Christian belief and the Native Americans' readiness to help build the church. It is important to note that accounts like

---

[84] *Detailed Reports on the Salzburger Emigrants Who Settled in America…Edited by Samuel Urlsperger*, ed. and trans. George Fenwick Jones et al. (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1981), 6:66.
[85] *Detailed Reports on the Salzburger Emigrants Who Settled in America…Edited by Samuel Urlsperger*, ed. and trans. George Fenwick Jones et al. (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1991), 16:193-194.
[86] See Jane T. Merritt, "Dreaming of The Savior's Blood: Moravians And The Indian Great Awakening In Pennsylvania," in *American Encounters: Natives And Newcomers From European Contact To Indian Removal, 1500 – 1850*, 2nd edn., eds. Peter C. Mancall and James H. Merrell (New York: Routledge, 2007), 178–200, here p. 194.
[87] Merritt, "Dreaming of The Savior's Blood," 194.
Detailed Reports on the Salzburger Emigrants Who Settled in America…Edited by Samuel Urlsperger, ed. and trans. George Fenwick Jones et al. (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1985), 8:312.

these in the *Detailed Reports* should be acknowledged as exceptions rather than regular occurrences. However, these acts of kindness helped foster a community of coexistence between the Salzburgers and their indigenous neighbors. Boltzius likens the Native Americans' help to the strangers in a biblical reference. While he was seemingly pleased about the offer of help, this example also shows that the pastor nonetheless labeled tribal people as distinct and as outsiders who were to be distinguished from the Christian community of Salzburgers, despite the help they offered. Boltzius therefore assigned characteristics of laziness and paganism to Native Americans. As noted above, Boltzius viewed Native Americans as intrinsically good yet primitive heathens, portraying them as "noble savages."

Other examples of favorable encounters suggest that Boltzius frequently had a benevolent attitude towards Native Americans that was based on Christian charity rather than amicable pleasure. This is reflected in the many accounts of Native Americans who stayed over at Ebenezer. For example, on June 1, 1751, Boltzius's account states: "Just as they are usually accustomed to stop at my house as often as they come here, they took the opportunity this time also … They are in flight from other Indians; and, because we lie somewhat apart or remote, they will presumably wish to remain here for a while, but this does not please us."[89] While Boltzius expressed his displeasure over the visitors, he let them stay, as his entry one day later suggests: "On this Trinity Sunday the Indians behaved quiet and sober."[90] This shows that the pastors' discontent was often driven by concerns over bad behavior and drunkenness. It cannot be determined whether Boltzius let the visitors stay out of fear or if he extended the invitation to stay out of Christian charity. A combination of both may, however, have been possible.

Conclusion

The many challenges in the establishment of the colony of Georgia influenced Boltzius's depictions and understandings of Native American identity. The constructed image of Native Americans in the *Detailed Reports* was not homogeneous, but Boltzius generally described the indigenous peoples as primitive pagans. Even when Boltzius positively portrayed the actions and behavior of Native Americans, he often described them as primitive yet intrinsically good people. Less generous descriptions of Native Americans—especially in the later years—labeled them as hostile savages and noted frequent actions of ungodly and troublesome behavior.

As shown by the preceding examples, the *Detailed Reports* reveal the many difficulties which the Salzburgers and Native Americans faced in cross-cultural interactions. The accounts from Ebenezer exhibit a strong contradiction between the Christian background of the pastors and the—as depicted by Boltzius—savagery of indigenous peoples. Furthermore, the language barrier and essential cultural and religious differences posed problematic preconditions for reciprocal understanding. Even though both groups worked together and helped each other occasionally, the elevated distrust and resentment over

[89] *Detailed Reports,* 15:69–70.
[90] *Detailed Reports,* 15:71.

encounters with Native Americans in the latter year of the *Detailed Reports* show an increasing disparity between both groups.

Ultimately, the language barrier was not overcome. Boltzius's curiosity and efforts at conversions remained secondary to other priorities. As the years progressed and Boltzius's accounts of Native Americans became increasingly hostile, it became clear that his kindness was borne out of his inclination for Christian charity rather than actual friendship. Therefore, the tribes were often described as intrinsically uncivilized and savage, leaving Boltzius willing yet helpless to change their situation for the supposedly better. The pastor apparently identified good in the Native Americans, but he repeatedly bemoaned his inability to teach the indigenous neighbors about God. Cultural misunderstandings and incomprehension of customs during economic and social exchanges, especially those involving gifts, furthered the chasm between the Salzburgers and Native Americans.