I would like to discuss a statue in London which, like many things in London, is visible and yet generally unread, monument to a hazy or forgotten history: prominently placed in front of Christopher Wren’s St. Paul’s Cathedral, completed in 1711, is an 1886 replica of a statue of Queen Anne made in 1712 but revealed in July 1713. For almost a year it stood covered in wooden hoarding, so that it could be unveiled following a Public Thanksgiving service in St. Paul’s celebrating the Treaty of Utrecht and the end of the costly War of the Spanish Succession. Queen Anne herself could not attend this celebration due to her gout. Britain gained Gibraltar and Minorca through the Treaty, as well as Newfoundland, the area around Hudson’s Bay, and Acadia, and this is the first-ever outdoor monument to connect Britain with its empire beyond Europe. It also speaks to an important period in the self-imagining of Britain: the Acts of Union in 1707 joined Scotland and England, creating a new, layered sense of ‘Britishness’; the Bank of England was formed in 1694 to fund the war against France but gave shape to modern financial institutions; the South Sea Company was formed in 1711, which would lead to the first major stock market collapse; and the rise of the public sphere in London coffeehouses, as well as the proliferation of the print trade and the rise of the novel, brought the imagination in close proximity with these developments. Indeed, the rise of finance and public credit seem to be particularly formative to early novels and the narrative imagination, especially the economic fictions of Daniel Defoe such as *Robinson Crusoe* and *Moll Flanders*. St. Paul’s Churchyard, incidentally, had been the center of the London book trade for almost 150 years at the point when this statue was unveiled. Interestingly, part of the reason that this statue was replaced in 1886 was due to the heavy damage that multiple attacks had upon it; at least two reputed ‘lunatics’ attacked it in the mid-1700s, and one, who attacked all four figures, ripped off the arms of the Queen and was found running with the orb in his hand, was a lascar, a South Asian sailor from the East India Company.

In the statue’s present, restored form, Anne looks severely upwards and to her right, orb and sceptre in hand. Her back is to the church; as one critic wrote, in words later scrawled across the base of the statue in yet another act of defacement in the eighteenth century, “Brandy-faced Nan, who was left in the lurch/ With her face to the gin-shop- her back to the church.” Around her are four allegorical female figures: France, Brittania, Ireland, and America. Britain, of course, did not rule France at the time, nor America for that matter, but British monarchs claimed dominion over the French up to the French Revolution, after which it didn’t seem viable or prudent to claim monarchical rule. But these statues supporting the Queen represent the fantasy of an empire in an act of becoming.

Of these four figures, the one I would like to focus on is this figure of America, a mixed bag of savage significations. She is depicted as the allegorical figure of America had often been seen in paintings and illustrations, topless and with a feathered headdress, bow and arrow in hand. She is both innocent and menacing, with her Edenic nakedness balanced by her weapons and, most troublingly, by the severed head of a European beneath her foot. While this Indigenous American is allegorical, and her headdress and straw garments actually reflect Brazil’s Indigenous people encountered by the Portuguese much earlier rather than those of much colder climates in North America, at the same time there are important contexts to its inclusion that are tied to an emergent Britain as a global trading force. She represents the geographic and resource gains of the Treaty of Utrecht, but, as the evidence of the grisly decapitation of a European man suggests, also far more ambivalent cultural gains.

“Indians” were fresh in the minds of Londoners at the time of this statue’s construction. In 1710, three years prior to its unveiling, four representatives of the Haudenassaunee or Iroquois Confederacy visited London on a diplomatic mission from North America and had an audience with Queen Anne. These so-called “Four Indian Kings” had their portraits painted, were followed around as they visited the sights of London, including Bedlam, and were discussed by the writers of the day in both high and low brow press (which had proliferated since the development of trade publishing in 1680). This visit was remembered throughout the eighteenth century and was a truly ‘multimedia’ event of its day, even spawning merchandise in the form of mezzotints which could be hung up in everyday people’s homes. It also provided British people with a self-imaginary of themselves as a wealthy, cosmopolitan nation, hosting such dignitaries from a far-away land and benevolently giving them aid.

This is most apparent in Alexander Pope’s poem ‘Windsor Forest,’ written for Queen Anne in celebration of the Treaty of Utrecht, in the same optimistic spirit of this statue. Near the end of the poem, Pope evokes the recent visit of the Indian Kings while at the same time imagining the Thames as the world’s river when he writes,

The Time shall come, when free as Seas or Wind,

Unbounded Thames shall flow for all Mankind,

Whole Nations enter with each swelling Tyde,

And Seas but join the Regions they divide;

Earth’s distant Ends our Glory shall behold,

And the new World launch forth the seek the Old.

Then Ships of uncouth Form shall stem the Tyde,

And Feather’d People crowd my wealthy Side,

And naked Youths and painted Chiefs admire

Our Speech, our Colour, and our strange Attire!

The Thames stands in for a kind of Whiggish historical progress flowing from commerce between nations. The Indian is the imaginative possibility of a world of non-isolated nations, begging for the clothes and wares of Europe. With this spread of wealth comes liberty, and Pope continues from the earlier lines,

Oh stretch thy reign, fair Peace! from shore to shore,

'Till Conquest cease, and slav'ry be no more;

'Till the freed *Indians* in their native groves

Reap their own fruits, and woo their sable loves,

*Peru* once more a race of Kings behold,

And other *Mexico's* be roof'd with gold.

The Treaty of Utrecht, in Pope’s vision, opened up the possibility of Britain as a global superpower that could free the Indians from Spanish colonial lands. And yet, notwithstanding this apparent concern for enslaved people, perhaps the most important clause in the Treaty was the Asiento. This was the contract that gave a nation, or in some cases a corporation, a full monopoly over the slave trade to Spanish America. The Treaty of Utrecht gave Britain the Asiento for 30 years, allowing them to transport nearly 5000 Africans to the Spanish per year. Thus the “freed *Indians*” in Pope, and the Indian in front of St. Paul’s, efface the enslaved Africans whose bodies were actually instrumentalised by the Treaty.

Another important cultural influence on the statue of the Indian is the story of Inkle and Yarico, which was one of the most popular fictional narratives of the eighteenth century. It was first popularised in 1711, shortly before the statue’s construction, and represents some of the anxieties surrounding the merchant’s world which was becoming increasingly hegemonic in the fiction of the early century. It tells the story of a young merchant adventurer named Thomas Inkle, whose father made sure to instill in his son “an early Love of Gain, by making him a perfect Master of Numbers, and consequently giving him a quick View of Loss and Advantage, and preventing the natural Impulses of his Passions, by Prepossession towards his Interests” (42). His perfectly formed merchant mind, molded for cold calculation, is shipwrecked on the American coast and rescued from the hostile Indigenous people by a beautiful young Indian woman named Yarico. She nurses him to health and brings him gifts, keeping him safely in a secret cave and falling in love with him. Eventually they leave together, and arrive in Barbados. And here is from the 1711 text in the *Spectator*:

Mr. *Thomas Inkle*, now coming into *English* Territories, began seriously to reflect upon his Loss of Time, and to weigh with himself how many Days Interest of his Money he had lost during his Stay with *Yarico*. This Thought made the young Man very pensive, and careful what Account he should be able to give his Friends of his Voyage. Upon which Considerations, the prudent and frugal young Man sold *Yarico* to a *Barbadian* Merchant; notwithstanding that the poor Girl, to incline him to commiserate her Condition, told him that she was with Child by him; But he only made use of that Information, to rise in his Demands upon the Purchaser.

This displacement of slavery from black bodies to an Indian body in this instance, as in Pope, obscures the reality of the transatlantic slave trade (in later editions, Yarico would become a black woman). However, the widespread popularity of this story throughout the century suggests that it represented in part the dangers of the merchant class, and also addressed the deep misgivings many in Britain felt over the expansion of trade and empire. New desires could corrupt the soul, and the financial imagination could deaden one’s humanity. So while the statue at St. Paul’s Cathedral is unmistakably a monument to empire, or at least to a fantasy of an empire to come, the Indian, reflecting menace and subservience, both masks and reflects its deep ambiguities and moral misgivings.