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Imperial hybrids in the age of colonialism : Maintaining dominance over and negotiating desire for the native

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FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY
Miami, Florida

**Imperial Hybrids in the Age of Colonialism: Maintaining Dominance Over
and Negotiating Desire for the Native**

**A thesis submitted in partial satisfaction of the
requirements for the degree of
MASTER OF ARTS
IN
ENGLISH**

by

Ronald Bolisay

1998

To: Arthur W. Herriott
College of Arts and Sciences

This thesis, written by Ronald Bolisay, and entitled "Imperial Hybrids in the Age of Colonialism: Maintaining Dominance Over and Negotiating Desire for the Native", having been approved in respect to style and intellectual content, is referred to you for judgement.

We have read this thesis and recommend that it be approved.

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ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

Imperial Hybrids in the Age of Colonialism: Maintaining Dominance Over and Negotiating Desire for the Native

by

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Professor Bruce Harvey, Major Professor

Hybridity is typically formulated in post-colonial theory as a means of resistance, subversion, or liberatory strategy in the hands of the present-day post-colonial subject or theorist. This project, however, demonstrates hybridity as a means of securing dominance and maintaining control when wielded by the imperialist in Cooper's *Last of the Mohicans* (1826), Kipling's *Kim* (1901), and Burroughs' *Tarzan of the Apes* (1914). The strategic deployment of hybridity in these texts also serves as an opportunity to negotiate the ambivalence and desire for the native that slips out of that hybrid space-- not necessarily sexual desire that flows between two polarized bodies, but rather, triangulated through other mediating terms such as class, nationality or manliness. Across these novels, the location of the native shifts, until it settles within the white body itself in *Tarzan*. Desire for the native, then, is returned to the white body in a narcissistic circle of self-glorification.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. INTRODUCTION	1
II. Eradicating the Native Through Violent Desire in <i>The Last of the Mohicans</i>	6
III. The Secret Pleasure of Going Native Altogether Diffused and Defused in <i>Kim</i>	35
IV. Denying the Native in the Desirable White Body in <i>Tarzan of the Apes</i>	59
V. Conclusion	97
Works Cited	100

-I-

Introduction

Hybridity, as it has been most recently formulated in post-colonial theory, is typically employed as a powerful tool of resistance, subversion or liberatory strategy. An effective means of escaping binaries such as Self/Other, East/West, centre/periphery, it carries, like deconstruction, tremendous conceptual and explanatory power. In his essay “Interrogating Identity” (1990), Homi Bhabha elaborates upon these deconstructive properties of hybridity:

Cultures come to be represented by virtue of the process of iteration and translation through which their meanings are variously addressed to-- *through*-- an Other. This erases any essentialist claims for the inherent authenticity or purity of cultures which, when inscribed in the naturalistic sign of symbolic consciousness frequently become political arguments for the hierarchy and ascendancy of powerful cultures [italics in text]. (58)

Amrohini J. Sahay, in a review of Bhabha’s *Location of Culture*, in which “Interrogating Identity” is reprinted, encapsulates more simply: “the binary of colonizer/colonized is no longer understood as existing in a hierarchical relation, but, rather, as in a relation of (Derridean) supplementarity” (228). With such leveling and equalizing power, hybridity is often used by the post-colonial theorist to dismantle imperial edifices of authority that rely upon the fixity of identities and roles such as colonizer/colonized, civilized/savage to preserve the uneven distribution of power between them: “as with all supplemental relations the ‘identity’ of the first term (colonizer) is destabilized and rendered undecidable through demonstration of the fact that it is actually inclusive of its ‘other’ (colonized)” (228). This conceptual subversion can then be expanded outward so that the hybrid space becomes a site of strategic resistance: “the power of cultural (colonial) hybrids lies in their capacity to manipulate the ‘in-between space,’ ‘the Third Space of enunciations,’ or the interstice’ ” writes Patricia Geesey in a critical argument that utilizes Bhabha’s theories (2).

From out of this manipulation all sorts of new, *liberating*, potentialities emerge. In “The Commitment to Theory” (1989), Bhabha extols the virtues of hybridity:

the theoretical recognition of the split-space of enunciation may open the way to conceptualizing an *international* culture, based not on the exoticism of multiculturalism or the *diversity* of cultures, but on the inscription and articulation of culture's *hybridity*. To that end we should remember that it is the "inter"-- the cutting edge of translation and negotiation, the *in-between* space-- that carries the burden of the meaning of culture. It makes it possible to begin envisaging national, anti-nationalist histories of the "people". And by exploring this Third Space, we may elude the politics of polarity and emerge as the others of our selves [italics in text]. (38-9)

With such possibilities shimmering about it, hybridity, pregnant with promise, has about it an air of newness, the potential to reconfigure post-colonial relations on the critical and political horizon. By taking aspects from each of the halves that make up the hybrid, this newborn thing becomes revolutionary in the context of colonialism:

Such assignments of social differences-- where difference is neither One nor the Other but *something else besides, in-between*-- find their agency in a form of the "future" where the past is not originary, where the present is not simply transitory. It is . . . an interstitial future, that emerges *in-between* the claims of the past and the needs of the present [italics in text]. (219)

The above quote is taken from Bhabha's appropriately titled essay, "How Newness Enters the World" (1994).

In these instances, hybridity is conceived as a conceptual tool available to the present-day post-colonial theorist or subject. Martin F. Manalansan's "(Re)Locating the Gay Filipino: Resistance, Postcolonialism, and Identity" (1993), implies another use for it as well:

People, ideas, and objects are in constant flux in a postmodern world. Perpetual diasporas, mass communication, and mass transportation establish what is called a "global ethnoscape." "Tourists, refugees, exiles, guestworkers, and other moving groups and persons" occupy this terrain in an increasingly unprecedented degree (Appadurai 192). In such a world, space and identity become increasingly problematic (Gupta & Ferguson 6-23). (55)

Hybridity is often times the only means of negotiating the unstable and constantly shifting terrain that identity politics and cultural studies situate themselves upon to elaborate and explore. "We must assume, first of all, that all cultural experience and indeed all cultural forms are historically, radically, quintessentially hybrid . . ." says Edward Said in "Third World Intellectuals and Metropolitan Culture" (1990) (48). It would certainly seem, then,

amidst all this hullabaloo, that hybridity is the theory of the moment. Not just this moment, so fleeting and already past, but all of the moments to come from now on as well within that nebulous temporal space of “the interstitial future.” This may explain why it has this feeling of enduring *presence* about it, of relevance to today: this is what we are, right now, and what we will continue to be in this world where people come and go through mass transportation, immigration and tourism, where television, telecommunications and the Internet connect us all together. Hybridity applies to the world today and can be applied conceptually and materially by the post-colonial theorist or subject to address the multiplicities of identity and questions of culture.

This project, however, takes a rather different approach to hybridity. By relocating it in the colonial past, the historical moment of three particular novels, and elaborating upon its deployment in the hands of the imperialist, hybridity is demonstrated as a means of maintaining authority and control-- quite the opposite of the subversive applications it is put to when wielded by the present-day post-colonial theorist.

James Fenimore Cooper's *The Last of the Mohicans* (1826), Rudyard Kipling's *Kim* (1901) and Edgar Rice Burroughs' *Tarzan of the Apes* (1914) all feature hybrid characters as their protagonists, border dwellers who straddle the realms of race, nation and culture. In this ideologically strategic position they are able to partake of either side-- white vs. Native American, English vs. Indian, aristocratic Anglo-Saxon vs. savage ape/African -- while ultimately retaining the power and privilege of whiteness. Although the use of hybridity creates palpable tension, a space of uncertainty between the binaries of black/white and so on in these texts-- uncertainties such as, where do these characters stand? is their slippery status evidence of degeneration?-- these boundaries eventually reassert themselves by each novel's end. The working through of this ambivalence that hybridity creates is a necessary part of maintaining imperial authority. For if the (colonized) Other already exists in the (colonizing) Self, as post-colonial theories of hybridity rightly point out, then mastery of the Other is simply a matter of mastering the Self-- a reconfirmation of, in fact, a fairly stable colonial identity notwithstanding the shadowy presence of the Other within. This is already achieved in the ideological

superiority that colonizing powers exhibited and inculcated in the colonized in order to justify their rule: science, reason, literature and technology all indicated mastery of themselves and their place in the world, thereby validating their position of dominance. As Abdul R. JanMohamed notes in “The Economy of Manichean Allegory” (1985): “this [logic enables] the European to increase . . . the store of his own moral superiority; it allows him to accumulate ‘surplus morality,’ which is further invested in the denigration of the native, in a self-sustaining cycle” (23). It is also in this sense that hybridity, this time in the subordinated people, operated in favor of colonizing powers, as discussed in Bart Moore-Gilbert’s *Postcolonial Theory* (1997): “the hybrid and multiple nature of the subject social formations was used to legitimate the imposition of central power as a ‘unifying’ force” (194). In each case, the superiority of the colonizing power is sustained-- for JanMohamed, as a means of self-affirming authority that the colonized have no choice but to yield to, and for Moore-Gilbert, as a justification for colonization.

Self-mastery is, of course, more fancied than real as demonstrated not only by psychoanalytic theory and its elaboration of the unconscious, but a whole host of other theories that examine the dynamics of power-- feminist, queer and deconstructionist to name a few. Fissures, faultlines, internal contradictions and instabilities are everywhere uncovered in the structures of the mind, patriarchy and colonialism, but as Moore-Gilbert observes, “history suggests that discourses like imperialism, fascism or homophobia are no less effective for the obvious contradictions and unconscious/affective conflicts that are inscribed in them” (134). Hybridity in these characters may disrupt the rhetoric of white superiority in these texts, but the manner in which it is manipulated preserves imperial dominance and control, therefore restoring white superiority by each novel’s end.

The secondary concern of this project is to examine how desire for the native is negotiated through hybridity. Desire in this sense does not flow, however unequally or one-sided, between two polarized bodies-- nor is it always sexual. Rather, it is triangulated through some other mediating term such as class, nationality or manliness. In *The Last of the Mohicans*, desire for the native is expressed as desire for the violence that results in the encounter with him. *Kim* flirts more overtly with the idea of inter-racial relations-- the presence of half-castes, and “sallow-hued boys” is unavoidable in the title character’s

adventures within colonial India. They are part of the realism that Kipling is so often commended for in rendering India's dazzling array of life. Desire for the native, here, is expressed as desire for the land of India itself. And in *Tarzan of the Apes*, both the white men and women of the novel desire the title character's magnificent body. In his upbringing among the apes, who are linked by social Darwinism to the Africans in the novel, and with the brownness of his skin constantly remarked upon, the native exists in Tarzan's beautiful body as an alluring and manly embodiment of the vitality of primitivism, juxtaposed against the frailty of white modernity and civilization.

In the main characters and the domains that they move about in, war, espionage, exploration and adventure, and in the relationships depicted-- Hawk-eye and Chingachgook, Kim and the Tibetan lama, Tarzan, gloriously self-sufficient-- all of these texts are overwhelmingly male-oriented. A subtle discourse of homoeroticism, or at the very least, homosociability, is discernible in the workings of imperialism within these texts. The location of the "native" that is desired by whites, shifts from the violent encounter with him in Cooper, is distributed throughout the native landscape in Kipling, and directed towards the native *in* the white body itself in Burroughs. This trajectory of desire for the native, directed out of and returned to the sanctity and perfection of the white body, works similarly to JanMohamed's self-sustaining cycle of European superiority and the mastery of the Self that both contribute to the maintenance of imperial authority. For if the expression of this desire for the native eventually becomes self-directed across these novels, then the ambivalence created by it, any undermining of imperial authority or the superiority of whiteness, is subsumed within the ultimate confirmation of these discourses. Power, desire, the gaze, are all returned, restored, to the colonizer in a narcissistic circle of self-glorification.

-II-

Eradicating the Native through Violent Desire in *The Last of the Mohicans*

If pressed to provide a plot summary of James Fenimore Cooper's *The Last of the Mohicans*, one would find that to recite a series of episodes in which characters are captured then rescued would be sufficient. Although it falls within the genre of the frontier/historical romance, certain attitudes towards the Indian that are rooted in the Puritan captivity narrative persist in Cooper's work. The narrow space that the Native American occupied in relation to America's national identity never really grew beyond the confines of demonic savagery and fiendish primitivism imposed by the Puritan imagination. Complicated by feelings of sympathy, guilt and the rightness of Progress and Civilization that of necessity eradicated the native, Cooper's text, as part of an emerging national literature, reflects these tensions of grieving the plight of the Indians and celebrating the great country that grew out of their destruction.

Published in 1826, the novel is set during the latter years of the French and Indian War (1689-1763) when conflicts between English, French and Spanish colonies in North America reflected the larger battles waged on the high seas and in the Old World. The conditions for the first captivity are set at the beginning of the novel as reinforcements are deployed to Fort William Henry where Colonel Munro hopes to make a stand against the massive French army reported to be advancing his way. The delicate white women, whose vulnerability to the perils of the wilderness heightens the danger of attack and capture by Indians, are provided in Cora and Alice Munro. Major Duncan Heyward of the Royal Americans must conduct them through the forest to William Henry where their father awaits them. Their guide, an Indian runner named Magua, leads them off the path to be ambushed, but they are saved by Natty Bumppo, a scout for the British armies known as Hawk-eye, and his two Mohican companions, Chingachgook and Uncas.

Before the two groups meet, however, we are introduced to Hawk-eye and Chingachgook as they dispute over whose arrival in the country was more reprehensible,

red or white:

“Your fathers came from the setting sun, crossed the big river, fought the people of the country, and took the land; and mine came from the red sky of the morning, over the salt lake, and did their work much after the fashion that had been set them by yours; then let God judge the matter between us, and friends spare their words!” (30)

In these first words uttered by Hawk-eye we can detect a tone of admonishment towards the Indians, the implication that they are to blame for their own precarious condition: whites are only following the example set by the natives before them. This strategy of blaming the native steadily increases throughout the novel in the characterization of Uncas’ rapid maturation from boy to adult warrior, and in the preordained demise that he rushes to meet. But it is in his reply to Chingachgook’s shrewd observation of the difference “ ‘between the stone-headed arrow of the warrior, and the leaden bullet with which [whites] kill’ ” that this condescension takes on more of a recognizably racist aspect: “ ‘There is reason in an Indian, though nature has made him with a red skin!’ ” (30). This last statement encapsulates the persistent ambiguity of Hawk-eye’s attitudes towards race, nation, and culture for the remainder of the novel, and prefigures his situation-- never entirely Indian or *Yengee*-- on the threshold in between.

What’s Red and White and Manly all Over?

“There is reason in an Indian.” By acknowledging this, Hawk-eye displays the fairness with which he regards his companion. He validates Chingachgook’s system of beliefs and difference in ways of thinking. But he does not finish this statement before framing it within a racialized discourse that subordinates this difference: “though nature has made him with a red skin!” *Despite* (his) nature-- his red skin-- an Indian has reason. Though valid, it is still an Indian’s reason, and therefore inferior to that of a white man. In one statement, Hawk-eye demonstrates the shifting movement that he makes throughout the novel between esteeming the Indian and belittling him, between a haughty opinion of his whiteness and lamenting over his non-Indian-ness.

Just a few moments later within the same scene, the same sort of pendulum movement takes place:

“I am not a prejudiced man, nor one who vaunts himself on his natural privileges, though . . . I am genuine white,” the scout replied, surveying, with secret satisfaction, the faded colour of his bony and sinewy hand; “and I am willing to own that my people have many ways, of which, as an honest man, I can’t approve.” (31)

His assertion of a lack of prejudice comes in a remark laden with it. Hawk-eye’s discourse is full of what he lacks-- in this particular case, prejudice. By drawing attention to its absence, he marks its presence. These “natural privileges”-- natural in the sense that nature colors the skin, and natural as a right, within an ideology that conceives of whiteness as superior-- emanate from being “genuine white.” The narrator provides a visual equivalent to accompany this unprotesting acceptance of privilege: he luxuriates, *secretly*, in the color of his skin. But as he revels in this whiteness, he denounces it-- secretly satisfied of his color while outwardly condemning the practices of those who share it. He proclaims this in such a way as to distinguish himself from the rest of his kind, and elevate himself so that he stands alone: he does not, cannot, approve of certain white dishonorable acts. In the short space where these words are uttered, Hawk-eye has placed himself in a position of *greater* privilege after declaring that he is not one to “vaunt himself” upon it. Where exactly, then, does he stand?

He compulsively reiterates his whiteness by referring to himself as “a man without a cross” over and over again; sometimes, in the oddest of situations: “ ‘Come on, ye bloody minded hell-hounds! ye meet a man without a cross!’ ” he bellows to some attacking Hurons (70). Hawk-eye’s war whoop, in contemporary parlance, is the cry of the Honkies. All he can offer in return to the terrifying cries of the Hurons is a pronouncement of his whiteness before engaging them in combat-- this is what he uses to intimidate his enemy. “ ‘Let us remember, we are men without a cross,’ ” he reminds Heyward “ ‘and let us teach these natives of the forest, that white blood can run as freely as red when the appointed hour is come’ ”(76-7). In these instances, he is clearly allied to his race. It is a source of overt pride, a means through which he can prove his manliness in battle or impending death. With his supply of powder exhausted after their only canoe is spirited away, Hawk-eye prematurely resigns himself to die as a white man: “ ‘As for me, who am of the whole blood of the whites, it is befitting that I should die as becomes my

colour, with no words of scoffing in my mouth, and without bitterness at the heart!’ ” (78).

He triumphantly details the part he played in the victories of the English army when his party lights upon the “bloody pond” on the way to Fort William Henry: “ ‘Hundreds of Frenchmen saw the sun that day for the last time’ ” (135). The notoriety of this battle has become the stuff of legend for the young major: “ ‘Twas a noble repulse!’ ” exclaimed Heyward in the heat of his youthful ardour; ‘the fame of it reached us early in our southern army’ ” (135). Hawk-eye continues his association with the white man’s army by serving as a scout, his knowledge of its officers and high-ranking officials is the means by which he and Heyward prove themselves as loyal subjects to the crown when they first encounter one another: “ ‘The 60th! you can tell me little of the Royal Americans that I don’t know, though I do wear a hunting shirt, instead of a scarlet jacket’ ” (38). He is not as out of touch as his willful exile in the wilderness implies-- familiar with Heyward’s reputation as the newest major in the corps, Hawk-eye also has access to the latest news that Heyward’s “ ‘party was to leave the encampment, [that] morning, for the lake shore’ ” (38). He is ever mindful of his station when placed next to his betters: “long and habitual deference to the mandates of his superiors, had taught the scout the virtue of obedience” (209), “[he] placed himself a little in the rear, with a deference to the superior rank of his companions, that no similarity in the state of their present fortunes could induce him to forget” (295). And most notably, Hawk-eye indulges the white “failing” of mercy by hastening the death of a struggling Huron as he flails from a deadly height: “ ‘Twas the last charge in my horn, and the last bullet in my pouch, and ’twas the act of a boy! . . . what mattered it whether he struck the rock living or dead! feeling would soon be over’ ” (75).

Yet Hawk-eye stands just as much within the realm of the Indian as he does without. Though he has no cross in his blood, “ ‘he [perhaps has] lived with the red skins long enough to be suspected!’ ” (35). He scorns settlement life and the soft men it produces, preferring nature’s book in which “ ‘he . . . see[s] enough to teach him that he is a fool’ ” (117). He craves the water from the springs that Heyward throws “aside with grimaces of discontent” (122) and boasts of his education in the wilderness. He has “ ‘listened to all the sounds of the woods for thirty years, as a man will listen, whose life and death depend on the quickness of his ears. There is no whine of the panther; no

whistle of the cat-bird; nor any invention of the devilish Mingoës, that can cheat [him]!’ ” (62). “ ‘Though . . . a man [with] the full blood of the whites, [his] judgment in deer and beaver is greater than in beasts of burthen’ ” (121). He is a “ ‘warrior of the wilderness’ ” (117). The narrator even describes him as filling the place of a savage in his instinctual reading of the forest’s signs (124). He is the indisputable leader of the fugitive band, and of the various search and rescue parties throughout the novel. While the villain, Magua, pays him the greatest compliment of all by conceding that he “ ‘carries the heart and cunning of a Huron under a pale skin’ ” (280).

There are, in addition, instances in which Hawk-eye suspends himself between white and Indian, especially while voicing notions of cultural relativity: “ ‘what might be right and proper in a red skin, may be sinful in a man who has not even a cross in his blood to plead for his ignorance’ ” (78). One’s environment should dictate one’s actions, he advises the naive Heyward at different times: “ ‘Whoever comes into the woods to deal with the natives, must use Indian fashions, if he would wish to prosper in the undertakings’ ” (40) and “ ‘If you judge of Indian cunning by the rules you find in books, or by white sagacity, they will lead you astray, if not to your death’ ” (204). Yet, he slackens in this relativism as circumstances become more desperate: “ ‘remember, that to outwit the knaves it is lawful to practise things, that may not be naturally the gift of white skin’ ” (229). Here we see that the situation influences most which side he will tread upon. It is in his ability to shift, *at will*, between white and red that he displays his most skillful trait. While arguing with the two Mohicans over the best route to evacuate the abandoned fort, the reader sees through Heyward, the difference in demeanor between the natives and the white man: while the Indians use direct, unadorned communication, “the scout was obscure; because, from the lingering pride of colour, he rather *affected* the cold and inartificial manner, which characterizes all classes of Anglo-Americans, when unexcited [emphasis added]” (199). He cleverly reserves the coup de grâce to this conscious performance when he “suddenly assumed the manner of an Indian, and *adopted* all the arts of native eloquence [emphasis added]” (199). So deftly does he operate within this discourse, that “Conviction gradually wrought its influence . . . In short, Uncas and his father became converts to his way of thinking” (199). He is an even better Indian than his

two red-skinned companions-- it is his opinion that is deferred to most often in the novel, his leadership and heroics that drive the frenetic action forward.

Strange, then, that he becomes so scrupulous at a crucial moment, in adhering to the unwritten laws of remaining within the boundaries of one's own race:

Nothing but the colour of his skin had saved the lives of Magua and the conjuror, who would have been the first victims sacrificed to his own security, had not the scout believed such an act, however congenial it might be to the nature of an Indian, utterly unworthy of one who boasted a descent from men that knew no cross of blood. (267)

The same sort of double-voicing elaborated upon earlier is present here. Though he has no misgivings about the acquisition and use of Indian traits to his advantage at other points in the novel, this particular instance is "utterly unworthy" of a man of unmixed blood; a state of purity that can be "boasted" of. This passage is written with all the arrogance of Hawk-eye's white half. But this vanity is the point upon which the tragic deaths of Cora and Uncas turn. At a later point, he stubbornly clings to this position: " 'yes, [Magua], I could strike you now, and no power of 'arth could prevent the deed! . . .Why should I not! Why!-- because the gifts of my colour forbid it' " (297). After such reluctance, however, Hawk-eye is the one who finally kills Magua. Employing the ability to overstep the boundaries of race at will, he stands on a self-made cross from which his rifle, "kill-deer," catches the defiant Huron within its sights.

The Beauty and Manliness of War: Desiring the Native through Violence

The Last of the Mohicans is a decidedly masculinist text. Under the flimsy guise of modesty in the Preface, Cooper goes as far as discouraging the faint-at-heart feminine readership, whose tastes dominated the literary marketplace, from reading his work: "He gives this advice to such young ladies, because, after they have read the book, they will surely pronounce it shocking; to the bachelors [who are under the influence of the winds], as it might disturb their sleep; and to the reverend clergy, because they might be better employed" (4). There is no shortage of misogyny in the taunting and humiliation that Cooper depicts as integral to Indian warfare either, where one's enemy is scorned by likening him to a woman. And in a passage describing the easily identifiable genders of

some mounted characters near the beginning of the novel, David Gamut, the singing instructor who latches onto the party when they first set out for William Henry, proves to be an anomaly: “the light and graceful forms of the females [were] . . . followed at each bend by the manly figure of Heyward, until, finally, the shapeless person of the singing master was concealed behind numberless trunks of trees” (27). Neither man nor woman, Gamut’s presence in the text disrupts the typical assignment of gender to the roles of rescuer and rescued, fighter and fought over. His amorphous figure, by virtue of its not fitting in, has the effect of highlighting the boundaries of the manly province that Cooper sets the action in-- we know what makes a man in this text by seeing how Gamut fails as one. He is often used by Hawk-eye as a platform to denounce the soft, that is, worthless, men which settlement life produces. When they first speak, Hawk-eye attempts to ascertain Gamut’s competence in woodcraft-- from experience with the rifle or compass, to mapmaking or putting his long legs to use as a messenger for the army. At numerous points in the narrative, Hawk-eye comments upon Gamut’s lack in these skills as a liability transmitted by woman: “ ‘The Lord never intended that the man should place all his endeavours in his throat, to the neglect of other and better gifts! But he has fallen into the hands of some silly woman, when he should have been gathering his education under a blue sky, and among the beauties of the forest’ ” (224). It is only when he begins to actively take part in the rescue and battle scenes that Hawk-eye finds favor with him: “ ‘You have spoken as a man, and like one who, under wiser schooling, would have been brought to better things’ ” (274).

This wiser schooling among the beauties of the forest includes the joys of the kill. Upon slaying a deer for their supper, Uncas is commended by Hawk-eye, “ ‘ ’twas a pretty sight to behold!’ ” (35). Cooper animates the male world of this forest with an intense love of violence. Externalized and phallic, it finds its expression in the wielding of a knife, the firing of a rifle, or whirling of a tomahawk; the thrill of the hunt and the bloody pleasures of the battlefield. At the beginning of the novel, the narrator disdainfully explains how the demoralized British receive the news of Montcalm’s approach: “its truth was admitted with more of the craven reluctance of fear than with the stern joy that a warrior should feel, in finding an enemy within reach of his blow” (14). The natives, on the other hand, embrace

their enemy with a passion that is almost sexual. The first intimation we see of the eroticism of combat comes in the furtive contact between Heyward and Magua, as the young major attempts to subdue his traitorous guide: “he even suffered their hands to meet, without betraying the least emotion . . . But when he felt the fingers of Heyward moving gently along his own naked arm, he struck up the limb of the young man, and . . . plunged . . . into the opposite thicket” (43). Violence is the means by which desire for the native is triangulated in this text-- desire for the native is expressed as desire for the violence that results from the encounter with him. The hand to hand combat scenes are particularly homoerotic, charged with an urgency that grows increasingly explicit. As Hawk-eye and “a savage of gigantic stature” wrestle over a knife, “for near a minute, they stood looking one another in the eye, and gradually exerting the power of their muscles for the mastery [of the blade]” (70-1). In another scene, Heyward once more initiates contact with a native-- another warrior of large proportions: “They encountered, grappled, and fell to the earth together. The naked body of his antagonist, afforded Heyward no means of holding his adversary” (110). And in a passage that describes a fierce dual between Chingachgook and Magua, their heat for one another is shockingly graphic:

When they engaged, some little time was lost in eluding the quick and vigorous thrusts which had been aimed at their lives. Suddenly darting on each other, they closed, and came to the earth, twisted together, like twining serpents, in pliant and subtle folds . . . Covered as they were, with dust and blood, the swift evolutions of the combatants seemed to incorporate their bodies into one. (113)

The ferocity that these men exhibit towards one another in trying to take the life of his enemy is conceived as a sort of lovemaking-- the consummation of which is death. Heyward lusts for this too. When he learns that the Delawares have declared war on the Hurons, he wore “a countenance that denoted how eagerly he, also, panted for the approaching contest” (321). And during this final battle between the two tribes, the eyes of Uncas and Magua meet before the Mohican rushes towards his enemy, “who watched the movement, [and] paused to receive him with secret joy” (334).

Desire in the text is overwhelmingly felt by men towards other men in this masculine province of violence and war. Anything that distracts from its expression, the fatal embrace with one’s (native) enemy, is often feminized and treated with contempt.

When Montcalm intercepts a message sent by potential reinforcements intended for the crippled Fort William Henry, a noticeable shift in strategies takes place, from direct, manly engagement to the delicate subtleties of diplomacy. Colonel Munro has already expressed distaste for the effeminacy of his adversary, referring to the “ ‘accursed politeness of [the French] nation’ ” (150), and the ease in which honor and title is attained among them: “ ‘A pretty degree of knighthood, sir, is that which can be bought with sugar hogs-heads! and then your two-penny marquessates!’ ” (157), “ ‘I have no overweening reliance on the faith of these marquesses . . . Their patents of nobility are too common, to be certain that they bear the seal of true honour’ ” (163). True honor for Munro is that which has been earned on the battlefield. Refusing Montcalm’s request to grant a personal interview in which the Frenchman wishes to parade his advantage, Munro sends Heyward in his stead, not to be outdone so easily even in courtesy: “ ‘it would but ill comport with the honour of Scotland, to let it be said, one of her gentlemen was outdone in civility, by a native of any other country on earth!’ ” (152). The ineffectiveness of this womanish bargaining, a deviation from the formula of direct confrontation on the battlefield, amounts to nothing: “the artifice of neither [Heyward or Montcalm] succeeded; and, after a protracted and fruitless interview, Duncan took his leave . . . as ignorant of what he came to learn, as when he arrived” (155). Artifice and fruitless-- these words convey the barrenness of such effeminate dissembling as opposed to the more productive and gritty immediacy of powder and lead. Seeing that he has no choice but to answer Montcalm’s polite insistence to speak with the Frenchman himself, Munro mourns this silken cord that has led him away from the violence he prefers: “ ‘the beauty and manliness of warfare has been much deformed, Major Heyward, by the arts of your Monsieur Vauban’ ” (161). His devotion to the beauty of this manliness surpasses any that he might feel as a father. When the native allies of the French instigate a brutal massacre of the fort’s inhabitants as they file slowly out of its walls, Munro hardens his heart to the pleas of his endangered daughters:

“Father-- father-- we are here!” shrieked Alice, as he passed, at no great distance, without appearing to heed them. “Come to us, father, or we die!”

The cry was repeated, and in terms and tones, that might have melted a heart of stone, but it was unanswered . . . Alice had dropped senseless on the earth, and Cora had sunk at her side . . . Munro shook his head, in disappointment, and

proceeded, bent on the high duty of his station. (176-7)

Hawk-eye, too, sees little value in women when it comes to war. He hastily clarifies his meaning when Magua mistakes him as offering himself up to be taken prisoner over Cora: “ ‘No, no; I have not said so much as that . . . It would be an unequal exchange, to give a warrior, in the prime of his age and usefulness, for the best woman on the frontiers’ ” (314). Women have no use in this male province except as a means for men to negotiate their desire for one another: in pursuing the captured women, the male rescuers pursue the male captors with the hopes of a violent encounter, whether it be punitive or vengeful.

In such a world where love and desire are expressed and mediated through violence, gunfire serves as a means of communication between opposing parties, “speaking, at times, in rattling volleys, and at others, in occasional, scattering shots” (72). Rather than shooting a Huron he wishes to question, Hawk-eye says he will speak to him instead, “ ‘in a voice he’ll find more agreeable than the speech of “kill-deer” ’ ” (324). He cautions silence as they lay in wait for the signal to attack, “ ‘Until the general whoop is given, nothing speaks but the rifle’ ” (328) and describes a gun-fight as a conversation (208).

It comes as no surprise, then, that Hawk-eye is so long-winded. Dubbed “la Longue Carabine,” the big gun or long rifle, by the Canadian tribes, it is safe to assume that he finds this appellation extremely gratifying-- the assurance of his manliness is always welcome, especially when it affords another opportunity to disparage those laughable specimens of manhood produced by the settlements. In order to restore the peace threatened by a discussion of the Delawares’ plight, Heyward commends Hawk-eye’s robust constitution. He could not have chosen a more effective means of placating the incensed scout:

“we have journeyed far, and few among us are blest with forms like that of yours, which seems to know neither fatigue nor weakness.”

“The sinews and bones of a man carry me through it all,” said the hunter, surveying his muscular limbs with a simplicity that *betrayed* the honest pleasure the compliment afforded him; “there are larger and heavier men to be found in the settlements, but you might travel many days in the city, before you could meet one able to walk fifty miles without stopping to take breath [emphasis added].” (127)

Just as the secret delight he takes in his white skin is disclosed when we first meet him, the pleasure that Hawk-eye derives from his muscled form is betrayed by the narrator. With these two instances, we see that gender, in addition to race, is another of the unspoken privileges that Hawk-eye vaunts himself upon. When Heyward claims to be *la Longue Carabine* in order to protect Hawk-eye in the village of the Delawares, the scout's vanity cannot bear this usurpation, even if it means endangering his life: "the excited woodsman . . . was now stubbornly bent on maintaining his identity, at every hazard" (298). The truth, naturally, is arrived at through the ultimate proof of manliness: competition with another man. A contest of marksmanship is declared between Heyward and Hawk-eye: "'Now let it be proved . . . who is the better man,' cried the scout" (299). With this opportunity to prove his manly worth, even Heyward is blinded by the boon he stands to earn by claiming *la Longue Carabine's* identity as his own: he "forgot the sudden motives of the contest, in a wish to excel . . . Had his life depended on the issue, the aim of Duncan could not have been more deliberate or guarded" (299). Apparently the life of his valued friend is not at issue if it means winning a contest.

The following image, recurring throughout the text, exemplifies the phallicism of Hawk-eye and his gun: "the rifle of Hawk-eye slowly rose among the shrubs, and poured out its fatal contents" (70). But it is not until the shooting contest that we see how essential the deadly violence of it is to his identity. When it is his turn, Hawk-eye marks the target, and the narrator describes his posture "as though both man and rifle were carved in stone. During that stationary instant, it poured forth its contents, in a bright, glancing, sheet of flame" (299). Joined to his weapon into a single object, hard and ejaculatory, the confirmation of Hawk-eye's identity comes about in this moment of phallic power: "it decided the question, and effectually established Hawk-eye in the possession of his dangerous reputation" (300). He *is*, literally, *la Longue Carabine*. Earlier in the narrative he describes the firing of a rifle as "putting forth its beauties" (70, 209), for it is during that split second that he is most himself, confirming his identity as the formidable "big gun," participating magnificently in the beauty and manliness of war. The race and gender that he derives such pleasure and satisfaction from are never more evident than when, as a white man, he masters technology with his muscular limbs and brings death to the evil Indian

who has killed his son.

Manly Marriage in the Forest and
its Innovative Sons

In a tender speech to Heyward and Alice, Hawk-eye explains how Uncas is a virtual son to him, and why he must risk his life by returning to the Huron village after having just escaped:

“I have heard . . . that there is a feeling in youth, which binds man to woman, closer than the father is tied to the son. It may be so. . . You have risked life . . . to bring off this gentle one . . . As for me, I taught [Uncas] the real character of a rifle; and well has he paid me for it! I have fought at his side in many a bloody skirmish; and so long as I could hear the crack of his piece in my ear, and that of [Chingachgook] in the other, I knew no enemy was on my back . . . we have roved the wilderness in company, eating of the same dish, one sleeping while the other watched; and afore it shall be said that . . . the Mohican boy shall perish for the want of a friend, good faith shall depart the ‘arth, and ‘kill-deer’ become as harmless as the tooting we’pon of the singer!” (265-6)

Uncas is the offspring of Hawk-eye’s and Chingachgook’s pairing. In *Studies in Classic American Literature* (1977), D.H. Lawrence, perhaps overenthusiastically, states that,

in his immortal friendship of Chingachgook and Natty Bumppo [Cooper] dreamed the nucleus of a new society . . . a new human relationship. A stark, stripped human relationship of two men, deeper than the depths of sex. Deeper than property, deeper than fatherhood, deeper than marriage, deeper than love. So deep that it is loveless. The stark, loveless, wordless unison of two men who have come to the bottom of themselves. (59-60)

Yet after taking such great care to remove any homosocial/-erotic incidence of love between the two, Lawrence places them beyond all of the romantic subplots in the novel--Heyward and Alice, Uncas and Cora, Magua and Cora-- as a pair of proto-Adams:

Natty and Chingachgook: two childless, womanless men, of opposite races. They are the abiding thing. Each of them is alone, and final in his race. And they stand side by side, stark, abstract, beyond emotion, yet eternally together. All the other loves seem frivolous. This is the new great thing, the clue, the inception of a new humanity. (64-5)

Leslie Fiedler’s *Love and Death in the American Novel* (1966) goes as far as to call this relationship a marriage. He asks, what does one do with a hero who cannot get the girl? Marriage to a woman, “would have meant in short a kind of *emasculation*, since the virility

of Natty is not genital but heroic and cannot survive in the marriage bed any more than beside the hearth [emphasis in text].” In *The Last of the Mohicans*, Hawk-eye is clearly enamored of nature. Metonymically, the Indian, the aboriginal, is nature, or wild(er)ness. Hawk-eye therefore obtains his education from and is devoted to Chingachgook. Fiedler writes that,

There is a relationship which symbolically joins the white man to nature and his own unconscious, without a sacrifice of his “gifts”; and binds him in life-long loyalty to a help-meet, without the sacrifice of freedom. This is the pure marriage of males-- sexless and holy, a kind of counter-matrimony, in which the white refugee from society and the dark-skinned primitive are joined till death do them part. (211)

Throughout the novel, Uncas is presented as different and distinct. We are meant to believe that he is the one referred to by the title, if only because Chingachgook identifies him as such, the last of their line. When Uncas chooses to protect the women over the secrecy of their hiding place, and in his attentions to them, Heyward muses that, “it was an utter *innovation* on the Indian customs, which [forbade] their warriors to descend to any menial employment, especially in favor of women [emphasis added]” (56). Again and again, Uncas catches the scent when the trail goes cold, even for the sharp-sighted Hawk-eye, as they search for the stolen white girls. In his “beautiful proportions” (275) and denial of “his habits, we almost said his *nature* [emphasis added],” he flies to aid the terrified women after the fight on the hill (114). By this innovation, the denial of his nature, Uncas regards the tearful sisters “with eyes that had already lost their fierceness, and were beaming with a sympathy, that *elevated* him far above the intelligence, and advanced him probably centuries before the practices of his nation [emphasis added]” (115). The denial of his nature inscribes this scene within the racist discourse of Hawk-eye’s observation: There is reason in an Indian, though nature made him with a red skin. Denying his red nature, Uncas takes his first few tentative steps over the boundary of race that his white father effortlessly traverses. Clearly, we are meant to applaud this elevation of a savage. Civilization is the salvation that we bring to them.

According to his own criteria, killing Magua makes Hawk-eye a red skin. He might as well be-- he himself, Magua, and even the narrator, identify him as such. More

Indian than Heyward or Gamut, Munro or his daughters, and, at times, an even better Indian than the Mohicans themselves, the deliberate act of shooting Magua acquires such momentum through Hawk-eye's chant "I am a man with no cross in his blood," that it propels him out of the realm of whiteness and firmly into that of the Indian. After such a build-up, there can be no ambivalence about what shooting Magua means to Hawk-eye. Just as Uncas denies his nature, Hawk-eye does the same in finally killing Magua-- an act that his whiteness prevented him from executing before. Uncas is no longer "the child of his adoption" (265). In this marriage without women, without sex, where one partner has the ability to shift back and forth between races, and their offspring begins to realize the inheritance of this trait, Hawk-eye's first definitive act as an Indian is the finishing touch that Uncas needs to advance the red race. As Uncas is elevated by his movement forward into whiteness, Hawk-eye is debased by his regression into redness.

In an essay on vanishing Americans, Lora Romero states that, "for [Cooper,] aboriginals represent a *phase* that the human race goes through but which it must inevitably *get over* [emphasis in text]" (393). Such a decisive act of redness runs counter to Hawk-eye's mantra of racial purity. Richard Slotkin notes that, "he asserts at every opportunity the doctrine that the 'pure' and 'unmixed' race is best-- whether white *or* Indian [emphasis in text]" (xvii-iii). Thank goodness for Cooper, then, that he has given his hero the ability to shift back and forth without ever entirely being on either side, able to utilize the benefits of each while still maintaining his "natural privileges." Uncas, on the other hand, is unmade by his making. There can be no white Indians, for they compromise the power retained solely by whites. But there *can* be red white men, if only for the split second it takes to fire a gun. The advantages and skills of reds must only be available to whites, and not the other way round if the unequal distribution of power is to remain intact. Uncas is the last of the Mohicans. The marriage of his two fathers cannot biologically produce another. There will be no more, and in the reversal of title, transferred from son to father, Chingachgook inherits this melancholy distinction.

Rushing (to) Their Doom: Blaming the Natives for Their Extinction

In Uncas' rapid development, a tone of blame that such precocity is responsible for

the natives' extinction can be detected. When first we meet him, and for a portion of the novel after, Uncas is represented as a boy. Hawk-eye makes a wager with him that he can shoot a concealed deer in a particular spot between the eyes:

“It cannot be!” said the young Indian, springing to his feet with youthful eagerness . . .

“He’s a boy!” said the white man, shaking his head while he spoke, and addressing the father. “Does he think when a hunter sees a part of the creature, he can’t tell where the rest of him should be!” (34).

The wide-eyed enthusiasm and naivete he exhibits, as well as the avuncular Hawk-eye’s playful dismissal addressed to his father-- “He’s a boy. What does he know?”-- fixes Uncas in the reader’s mind as a boy. Arising largely out of the necessity to distinguish between him and his father, the older and the younger Indian, this technique also has the effect of widening the chronological distance between father and son. Twice must Hawk-eye scold him for being overzealous with his powder: “ ‘Uncas, boy, you waste the kernels by overcharging; and a kicking rifle never carries a true bullet’ ” (72). Addressing him as “boy” reinforces his identity as such, especially when accompanied by this light admonition as of adult to child. And even with two fathers, it takes some doing to control this impulsive child: “ ‘A difficult matter it was, too, to keep this Mohican boy snug in the ambushment! Ah! Uncas, Uncas, your behaviour was more like that of a curious woman, than of a warrior on his scent!’ ” (120).

As the novel progresses, Uncas’ maturation into an experienced and impressive warrior comes quite suddenly. Lightning quick, often anticipating what is required of him, there is an air of forward moving momentum about him, of leaping and hurtling ahead. His maturity accelerates after the massacre at William Henry, while his role in the rescuing party grows more prominent. The literal position he takes at the forefront of the group begins to take on significance: “A light figure preceded the rest of the party, with the caution and activity of a native; ascending every hillock to reconnoitre, and indicating, by gestures, to his companions, the route he deemed it most prudent to pursue” (182). On the lake, while everybody else attends to the Hurons pursuing them from behind in a canoe, Uncas looks forward: he “pointed towards the rocky shore, a little in their front, whence another war canoe was darting directly across their course” (206). When it comes down to

a test of speed between the canoes, the vessel of our heroes takes the lead: “ ‘You showed knowledge in the shaping of birchen bark, Uncas, when you chose this from among the Huron canoes,’ said the scout, smiling . . . in satisfaction at their superiority in the race” (207). But as haste continues to overtake him, it takes on negative characteristics that link up to the carelessness Hawk-eye has warned him about previously, growing more and more serious as the novel speeds to its climax:

The young Mohican darted away at the suggestion, and the scout had hardly done speaking, before the former raised a cry of success from the margin of the forest

“Gently, gently, Uncas [said the scout], you are as impatient as a man in the settlements; you forget that light feet leave but faint marks!” (185)

Hawk-eye compares Uncas to a settlement man in order to illustrate how the Mohican’s impatience makes him appear inexperienced, unpracticed and unmanly. But these inept settlement men are also white. This light rebuke is therefore a discreet warning to Uncas that his behavior places him dangerously close to being a white man, which, as already discussed in the previous section, does not bode well for the native who attempts it.

After the massacre, on the trail of Munro’s daughters who have been taken captive, yet again, by Magua, Uncas is the one who increasingly takes the lead: “At length Uncas, whose activity had enabled him to achieve his portion of the task the soonest . . . pointed out the impression of a moccasin in the moist alluvion” (215-6). Moments later, “the quick and active Uncas soon found the impression of a foot on a bunch of moss” (216). Once the trail ends at the village of the Hurons, he is captured and forced to run through a corridor of hostile warriors brandishing weapons. The narrator describes him using the following terms: having an active frame, bounding forward with the activity and swiftness of a deer or an arrow, active again, “his light form cleaving the air in some desperate bound,” possessing “astonishing powers of activity,” quicker than thought and meteor-like (237-8). He assumes “the chief authority” in the official declaration of war between the Delawares and the Hurons, no longer the inexperienced boy that we met at the beginning of the novel (320). But the impatience that Hawk-eye has reproached him for still remains, transformed into a recklessness that jeopardizes their endeavors:

Had Uncas followed the promptings of his own inclinations, he would have led his followers to the charge without a moment’s

delay, and put the conflict to the hazard of an instant issue; but such a course would have been in opposition to the received practices and opinions of his countrymen. He was, therefore, fain to adopt a caution, that in the present temper of his mind, he execrated, and to listen to advice at which his fiery spirit chafed, under the vivid recollection of Cora's danger, and Magua's insolence. (323)

His impulse is to act in opposition to the customs of his countrymen, which distances him even further from them and brings him closer to the whiteness that he cannot possess.

When he finally catches sight of Magua, this gathering momentum becomes an unstoppable burst of speed as he rushes headlong into the arms of his enemy: "In his eagerness to expedite the pursuit, Uncas had left himself nearly alone; but the moment his eye caught the figure of [Magua], every other consideration was forgotten" (334). Cora's welfare is only incidental to his enthusiasm for this encounter with the real object of his desire: "Uncas kept his eye on Magua, as if life possessed but a single object" (335). He rushes after the defiant Huron, unmindful that he has made himself an easy target by dashing out into the open: "At the moment when [Magua] thought the rashness of his impetuous young assailant had left him at his mercy, another shout was given, and la Longue Carabine was seen rushing to the rescue, attended by all his white associates" (334). Rash and impetuous characterize his behavior now-- he requires deliverance from the peril that this recklessness places him in, from his white, more evenly tempered, allies. But,

there was no time for greetings or congratulations; for Uncas, though unconscious of the presence of his friends, continued the pursuit with the velocity of the wind. In vain Hawk-eye called to him to respect the covers . . . [but he] soon compelled them to a flight as swift as his own headlong speed. It was fortunate that the race was of short continuance . . . or the Delaware [Uncas] would soon have outstripped all his companions, and *fallen a victim to his own temerity* [emphasis added]. (334)

Hawk-eye's earlier lesson to Heyward that one of the main components in the " 'philosophy of an Indian fight . . . [is keeping] a good cover' " illustrates how Uncas' refusal to respect the covers in the above quote adds fuel to his forward-moving momentum, bringing him in ever closer proximity to whiteness, and consequently, death (331).

He "bounds forward in pursuit" (335), like a deer, and "abandoned his rifle,

[leaping] forward with headlong precipitation . . . a moment after admonished of its madness, [the Hurons fired a shot, giving] the young Mohican a slight wound” (336). Speeding inexorably to the death awaiting in Magua’s embrace, he defies the edicts of prudence and physics: “In this manner, rocks, precipices, and difficulties, were surmounted, in an incredibly short space, that at another time, and under other circumstances, would have been deemed almost insuperable” (336). “Leaping frantically, from a fearful height,” Uncas meets his doom upon Magua’s blade in the sudden confusion that his appearance causes: Cora is dispatched by one of the Huron warriors, who is himself attacked by an enraged Magua. After the two struggling Hurons are separated by Uncas’ fall, “Magua buried his weapon in the back of the prostrate Delaware” (337). As if to emphasize the horror of this death even more, the fact that he is the last of the Mohicans-- owing not to the fact that there are no more Mohican women left for the continuance of a pure, unmixed race, but because of his own terrible demise brought about by his reckless impatience-- Uncas is stabbed three more times before falling dead at Magua’s feet. With the accumulation of these descriptions-- careless, impatient, rash, impetuous, reckless-- that began as the charming, wide-eyed over-eagerness of a boy at the beginning of the novel, it is difficult not to hear Hawk-eye’s earlier admonitions now taken up by Cooper on a grander scale as a condemnation, that this is Uncas’ own fault. This is what he deserves for the innovation and speed that bring him too close to whiteness.

White Deviltries and Disdain for the Native:
The Author and his Character Divided

Wherefore such hostility? In the admiration that he expresses for “these remarkable people” in his Introduction, is not Cooper on the side of the Indians (5)? It would seem, even, that he is on a mission to enlighten his readers in the following introductory passage that demonstrates, for them, his informed perspective in this undertaking:

The greatest difficulty with which the student of Indian history has to contend, is the utter confusion that pervades the names. When, however, it is recollected, that the Dutch, the English, and the French, each took a conqueror’s liberty in this particular; that the natives themselves not only speak different languages, and even dialects of those languages, but that they are also fond of multiplying their appellations, the difficulty is more a matter of regret than of surprise. (1)

He then goes on to address the multiplicity of names as a sort of recuperative gesture to counter the obfuscation of native history brought about by these conquerors' liberties. This tactic is extended to his narrator, who at the commencement of the novel, indignantly describes the different names imposed upon a body of water by the French and English: "The two united to rob the untutored possessors of its wooded scenery of their native right to perpetuate its original appellation of 'Horican' " (12). And in a move that makes Cooper's allegiances appear to fall even more on the side of the native, Hawk-eye serves as their most vocal spokesman in his idealization of nature and the native. In keeping with Cooper's grievance with mis-naming, he allows his character a word or two on the subject:

"I'm an admirator of names, though the Christian fashions fall far below savage customs in this particular. The biggest coward I ever knew was called Lyon; and his wife, Patience, would scold you out of hearing in less time than a hunted deer would run a rod. With an Indian 'tis a matter of conscience; what he call himself, he generally is." (57)

The skills of the native over the white man are openly acknowledged and praised, sometimes even to the detriment of the latter: " 'What right have christian whites to boast of their learning, when a savage can read a language, that would prove too much for the wisest of them all!' " (196). White ineptitude compared to an Indian even serves as an opportunity to take a jibe at both races: " 'this Huron travels like a white general!' " (214). He compares their judgment to the infallibility of the Bible: " 'when one Indian makes a declaration it is commonly true; but when he is supported by his people, set it down as gospel!' " (196).

Hawk-eye even defends the enemy tribes when the ignorance of his white companions towards Indian customs is implied or given voice: " 'I know your thoughts, and shame be it to our colour, that you have reason for them; but he who thinks that even a Mingo would ill treat a woman, unless it be to tomahawk her knows nothing of Indian natur, or the laws of the woods' " (215). When Gamut casually proclaims that they are the "profanest of the idolatrous," Hawk-eye is quick to point out how whites are implicated in this:

"Therein you belie the true nature of an Indian. Even the Mingo adores but the true and living God! 'Tis a wicked fabrication of the whites, and I say it to the shame of my colour, that would make the warrior bow down before images

of his own creation. It is true, they endeavour to make truces with the wicked one-- as who would not with an enemy he cannot conquer-- but they look up for favour and assistance to the Great and Good Spirit only.” (226)

He has already commented vehemently on the injustices perpetrated by whites against the natives, though they are conveniently committed by another nation: “ ‘at the bottom, ’tis a wicked lie [that the Delawares are a pacific people]. Such a treaty was made in ages gone by, through the deviltries of the Dutchers, who wished to disarm the natives that had the best right to the country, where they had settled themselves’ ” (127). With his own voice, Cooper condemns this historical episode in the Introduction. By doing so, both the author and his character are united in agreement over this matter, giving it the force of personal conviction that makes itself felt beyond the fiction built around it. And in explaining to Heyward how certain tribes have come to be at war with one another, the accountability of whites is once more noted: “ ‘it is not to be denied, that the evil has been mainly done by men with white skins. But it has ended in turning the tomahawk of brother against brother, and brought the Mingo and the Delaware to travel in the same path’ ” (227).

In these words, both Hawk-eye and Cooper identify the “deviltries” of whites as largely responsible for the unfortunate plight of the natives. Why, then, in the representation of Uncas’ demise is there blame leveled at them for their own predicament? Besides the respect and admiration for the Native American cited in the text, there is a steady accumulation of disdain for them and their customs. The bulk of this is voiced by the upright and dutiful Heyward, who, unlike Hawk-eye stands unequivocally within the realm of the white race: “ ‘I like not that principle of the natives, which teaches them to submit without a struggle, in emergencies that appear desperate’ ” (82). Masquerading as a healer in the Hurons’ village, he must sit maddeningly still in accordance with the habits of the natives’ stoicism: “The impatient Heyward, inwardly execrating the cold appearances of the savages, which required such a sacrifice to appearances, was fain to assume an air of indifference, equal to that maintained by the chief” (246). After proclaiming that “ ‘nothing short of being a witness, will cause me to think . . . that Chingachgook, there, will be condemned at the final day’ ” (116-7), and musing that “ ‘whether there be one heaven or two, there is a path in the other world, by which honest men may come together, again’ ”

(315), Hawk-eye switches to a tune similar to that of the pious David Gamut's conception of the natives as heathens. When Colonel Munro expresses his gratitude to the native women who mourn for Cora, and attempts to bridge the cultural gap by acknowledging their shared grief, Hawk-eye will not allow it:

“Tell them, that the Being we all worship, under different names, will be mindful of their charity; and that the time shall not be distant, when we may assemble around his throne, without distinction of sex, or rank, or colour!”

The scout listened to the tremulous voice in which the veteran delivered these words, and shook his head, slowly, when they were ended, as one who doubted their efficacy.

“To tell them this,” he said, “would be to tell them that the snows come not in winter, or that the sun shines fiercest when the trees are stripped of their leaves!”

Then turning to the women, he made such a communication of the other's gratitude, as he deemed most suited to the capacities of his listeners. (347)

In the strongest denouncement of Indian customs, Cooper expresses disapproval through the narrator, Hawk-eye and Heyward, in the following excerpt, magnifying it threefold. After passing a French sentry safely on the way to William Henry, Chingachgook slithers past and scalps him without provocation: “he then took his wonted station, with the air of a man who believed he had done a deed of merit” frowns the narrator. The scout, long-winded as usual, shook

his head in a mournful manner . . . muttered--

“ ’Twould have been a cruel and an unhuman act for a white-skin; but ’tis the gift and natur of an Indian, and I suppose it should not be denied! I could wish, though, it had befallen an accursed Mingo, rather than that gay, young, boy, from the old countries!’ ” (138)

While Heyward, “conquering his disgust,” tries to ignore it as best he can, hoping to spare Cora and Alice the horror of it: “ ’tis done, and though better it were left undone, cannot be amended’ ” (138). Despite all of Hawk-eye's exhortations that cultural relativity be observed in the forest, it is difficult for the reader not to add his or her own voice to the chorus of disapproval in the way Cooper has constructed this scene. We are drawn into Heyward's disgust, if only for a moment, and implicated in the growing disdain for the native that the novel increasingly conveys.

In Hawk-eye's compulsive pronouncement, “I am a man without a cross,” we can begin to discern the source of the ambivalence exhibited towards the native in the text. This

pronouncement, does it not carry a tone of embitterment at this lack? If we place Hawk-eye's chant within the earlier deconstructive analysis of his discourse, then the absence he draws attention to is really a presence. As already demonstrated, he is able to bypass a blood cross altogether for one made out of experience, habit, and skill, while still retaining a position of white authority. But by repeating such a litany, Hawk-eye expresses a yearning for it. Such ambivalence. D.H. Lawrence believes that, "[Cooper's] innermost wish was to be: Natty Bumppo" (54). Leslie Fiedler expands upon this by claiming that Cooper identified with the Indian as well-- the result being that the beleaguered qualities of actual Indians, along with Cooper's personal whiteness collapse into Hawk-eye's character:

as economic depression depleted his financial resources . . . and as agitation began against the old patroon system, Cooper began to feel himself one of the dispossessed. It was easy for him to identify himself, too, in terms of his distinguished ancestors, great white chiefs all of them, with the ancestral nobility of the Indian tribes-- and to identify the agitators calling for the breaking up of inherited estates with the crude squatters and despoilers who had first driven the red man from forest and plain. (183-4)

But, "above all things [Cooper was] a gentleman" (191). Both Fiedler and Lawrence make this point, though the latter adds that he was a gentleman, "in the worst sense of the word. In the Nineteenth Century sense of the word. A correct, clockwork man" (52). The class prejudices of such a station and time are manifested in the persistent dread with which miscegenation is treated by all of the characters in *The Last of the Mohicans*, Indian and white alike. The "lurid little circle of sensual fire [is extinguished]," Lawrence writes, "Fenimore kills them all off, Cora, Uncas, and Magua, and leaves the White Lily [Alice] to carry on the race. She will breed plenty of white children to Major Heyward" (64).

Hawk-eye's discontented hankering to be a man *with* a cross slips through his discourse, even as he disavows it. He is the voice of Cooper's Tourette's syndrome, that blurts out absurd remarks in inappropriate contexts. Cooper's nineteenth century gentlemanly imperatives recoil in horror at his identification with the natives. Yet he cannot help this as he discerns the similarities in his life situation with that of the dispossessed Indians. Fiedler comments that,

There is in all [the Leatherstocking tales], at one point or

another, a reflection of Cooper's quarrel with himself (with the 'Indian' deep inside him) . . . His first means of coming to terms with his guilt-feelings is by identifying himself with the injured party, disassociating himself from the exploiters. (195-6)

At odds with himself, this conflict is manifested in Hawk-eye's curious mix of admiration and disdain for the Indians, while he is simultaneously haughty and mournful of his whiteness.

National Identity and the Problem of the Indian

Ambivalence towards the Indian occurs on the national level too. In the introduction to *The Portable North American Indian Reader* (1973), Frederick Turner discusses contemporary American guilt over the crimes perpetrated against the natives of this land:

since we won the country from them we are in the altogether comfortable position of enjoying the fruits of our success while we lament the "plight" of the losers. Not that we are prepared to do anything to alleviate the plight, but the Indian is a convenient symbol as well as a suitably removed repository for the self-lacerating national guilt which white Americans curiously prefer to constructive action [emphasis in text]. (9-10)

This unremitting guilt is only part of an elaborate framework of attitudes towards the Native American that revolves around an enduring core of Puritan antagonism towards these "devils in waiting." In *The Ignoble Savage* (1975), Louise Barnett observes the utility of the captivity narrative for the Puritans who settled this vast and unfamiliar country populated by infidels: "the captivity . . . cast the Indian in a totally unsympathetic role as a gratuitous persecutor of [Christian] whites, perpetrator of numberless atrocious deeds which provoked pity for his victims' suffering and admiration for their endurance" (4). With the rationale of the unprovoked attack and capture of whites employed, "retaliation" became fully justifiable-- whether it came in the form of massacring the Indians or robbing them of their land: "the Indians forfeited their right to the land by shedding the first blood; more compelling than their failure to cultivate the land or their other primitive characteristics, this gratuitous demonstration of innate wickedness justified not only the white claims to the continent but the extermination of the Indian" (33).

Despite the emergence of less murderous views towards the native, such as Thomas Jefferson's "optimistic hope . . . that American Indians would be civilized rather than destroyed," Barnett observes that "the problem of the Indian as Other and as Inferior still persisted under this more charitable dispensation" (11). The popularity of the captivity narrative and the reality of the French and Indian Wars together reinforced the image of the bad Indian: "The initial and continued success of this figure is attributable to the employment of the captivity episode as the central plot action of fiction containing Indian characters"-- an episode that basically sums up the plotline of Cooper's novel (12). And outside of fiction, history continually belied the white charity that was to be extended to the native in a series of massacres and dispossessions, notably in King Philip's War, the Trail of Tears, and at Wounded Knee. It soon became evident that there was no alternative for the Indian but extinction before the Progress and Civilization brought by whites to the land. In the novel, Uncas' forward moving momentum and speed, his "innovation", makes him too progress, i.e. white, oriented. Progress and innovation are, as Hawk-eye would say, white gifts. For his hasty presumption in going against his nature, therefore, Uncas must die.

With the fierce nationalism that animated the American Revolution, the need to differentiate the fledgling country away from the Old World and to forge an identity that was uniquely American called for the creation of a national literature. The Indian was increasingly regarded as a resource, " 'the chief hope for an original American literature' " (23). But as Benjamin T. Spencer notes in *The Quest for Nationality* (1957), "the Indian was to appear only as grist for the conqueror's mill" (52). White characters, written by white authors for a white audience, naturally exhibited superiority over the native. This is everywhere evident in *The Last of the Mohicans*. Not only is marksmanship and skill with the rifle a means for Hawk-eye to constantly affirm his manly identity as la Longue Carabine, they are indicators of one's worth in Cooper's male world of violence. The firing of the natives' arms is described as "impotent fury" (72), "[their] aim was bad" (144), while Hawk-eye sneers at this evidence of their castration: " 'Them Hurons have never a piece in their nation that will execute at this distance; but "kill-deer" has a barrel on which a man may calculate' " (205). Even the misapplied appellation of la Longue

Carabine serves to illustrate their ineptitude with firearms and naming-- the latter of which he has already commended their accuracy in, thereby canceling out his earlier admiration: “ ‘Though why they have given me such a name, I never knew, there being as little likeness between the gifts of “kill-deer” and the performance of one of your real Canada carabynes, as there is between the nature of a pipe-stone and a flint!’ ” (257). Heyward, whose attitudes regarding the red men he desires in battle are prejudiced in every other matter concerning them, echoes Hawk-eye’s backhanded acknowledgement of reason to “the brutes of these vast wilds” as “an instinct nearly commensurate with his own reason” (230). How else could he pass as a healer in their village if their stupidity was not so easily exploitable: “he prepared to commence that species of incantation, and those uncouth rites, which the Indian conjurers are accustomed to conceal their ignorance and impotency” (255). And in the scene where the scout and a native warrior of “gigantic stature” struggle for mastery of a knife, this last part takes on allegorical significance: “the toughened sinews of the white man prevailed over the less practised limbs of the native” (71). When Hawk-eye persuades both of the Mohicans to follow his escape plan out of the deserted William Henry,

[they] abandoned their own previously expressed opinions, with a liberality and candour, that, *had they been the representatives of some great and civilized people*, would have infallibly worked their political ruin, by destroying, for ever, their reputation for consistency [emphasis added]. (199)

Although it is later revealed that they are of the stock of the Delawares, a nation that Hawk-eye regards as “a superior race of beings” (303)-- or as the above quote states it, a great people-- they still do not meet the other criterion: a civilized people. It is no wonder, then, that they are destined to vanish: in their impotence in warfare, foolish superstition, and undeniable inferiority to whites, their disappearance before Progress and Civilization is already assured.

But in order to magnify the achievement of taking the land and underscore winning the country from them, the natives had to become an even more monstrous adversary in the mythmaking that this national literature employed: “unable to compete with the armies of Europe in size or magnificence,” Louise Barnett continues, “Indians had to excel in gruesome accomplishment” (35). The dashing of an infant’s head against a rock, and the

axing of its horrified mother is only the beginning of the appalling massacre at Fort William Henry, where “the flow of blood might be likened to the outbreaking of a torrent . . . as the natives became heated and maddened by the sight, many among them even kneeled to the earth, and drank freely, exultingly, hellishly of the crimson tide” (176). Distaste in the regular eating habits of the Hurons is conveyed when they sit down to the “revolting meal” of an uncooked fawn (100). The narrator describes the scene a few pages later as a “cluster of lolling savages, who, gorged with their disgusting meal, lay stretched on the earth in brutal indulgence” (105). Hawk-eye, after ambushing the monsters, surveys their meal and reinforces this narratorial revulsion: “ ‘everything is raw, for them Iroquois are thorough savages’ ” (119). Earlier, when these savages proclaim a triumph, “the air continued full of horrible cries and screams such as man alone can utter, and he only when in a state of the fiercest barbarity” (84). Reviving the Puritan conception of Indians as devils, the depiction of the Hurons becomes increasingly diabolical. The scenes inside the Huron village are explicitly likened to Hades, and the increased emphasis on the darkness of the natives’ bodies invokes racial and religious discourses that set the white, Christian heroes in direct opposition to the dark, heathen savages:

A dozen blazing piles now shed their lurid brightness on the place, which resembled some unhallowed and supernatural arena, in which malicious demons had assembled to act their bloody and lawless rites. The forms in the back ground, looked like unearthly beings, gliding before the eye, and cleaving the air with frantic and unmeaning gestures; while the savage passions of such as passed the flames, were rendered fearfully distinct, by the gleams that shot athwart their inflamed visages. (237)

Predictably, Magua figures as Satan: “it would not have been difficult to have fancied the dusky savage as the Prince of Darkness, brooding on *his own fancied wrongs*, and plotting evil [emphasis added]” (284). The accountability of whites pointed out by Hawk-eye, their devilry, is lost in this picture of Magua as the devil himself.

Evidently, the conception of the Indian in the relatively securer times of the nineteenth century varied little from that of the newly arrived Puritans. Citing Cotton Mather’s *Decennium Luctuosum* (1699) as “one of the best known and most typical Puritan ‘historical accounts’ of the white-Indian confrontation,” Barnett observes that, “the action which Mather focuses upon as the central experience of white-Indian relations, the capture

of white settlers by Indians, remains the major plot action in pre-Civil War frontier romance” (4). *The Last of the Mohicans* is, at heart, an extended narrative of captivity and deferred rescue: “by increasing the number of [captivity] incidents [in one narrative], authors repeated the excitement and suspense inherent in Indian seizure and multiplied instances of white ingenuity in escaping or rescuing others” (52). The idea of the Indian as the serpent in the Garden, placed in the American wilderness in order to test the Puritans’ faith and confirm their election as citizens in the new Eden, never really disappeared entirely from the American imagination. It altered slightly under the need for a national identity, which required the Indian to be placed on the continent in order to test white claims over the land. According to Roy Harvey Pearce in *Savagism and Civilization* (1988), “Americans [came] to understand the Indian as . . . bound inextricably in a primitive past, a primitive society, and primitive environment, to be destroyed by God, Nature, and Progress to make way for Civilized Man” (4). Louise Barnett quotes General Sullivan’s Revolutionary war toast, “Civilization or death to all American savages” (11).

With the enduring image of the evil Indian circulated by the captivity narrative and the French and Indian Wars, coinciding with the formation of a national literature that demanded the maximizing of white achievement, it was evident that death, violently inflicted by “retaliating” whites, was the only option available: “By slaying the Indian, European whites killed Cotton Mather’s serpent in the the New World garden, a rite of passage from which they emerged a new people” (33). Indian-killing in the frontier romance is often a rite of manhood for white characters. Hawk-eye is the name given to Natty after he kills his first man, his first Indian, in *The Deerslayer*-- another novel in the Leatherstocking series set much further in the past during Natty’s inexperienced youth. Killing the snake in the garden, therefore, accomplished two things as a rite of passage for America: first, it initiated whites into a manhood separate and independent from the parental Old World; second, as a result of this independence, it also served as an initiation into nationhood. It follows, then, that eradicating the native is an essential component of American national identity.

Hiding the Face of the Manitto: The Last of the Mohicans

By the end of Cooper's novel, the Hurons are defeated by the Delawares. But this is no victory as the narrator explains it-- the tone of blame is sympathetically muted but still unmistakable: "The sounds of the battle were over, and they had fed fat their ancient grudge, and had avenged their recent quarrel with the Mengwe, by the destruction of a whole community" (338). An officer of the Captain of the Canadas has just recently arrived and, "finding his errand of peace *frustrated by the fierce impetuosity of his allies*, was content to become a silent and sad spectator of the fruits of the contest, that he had arrived too late to anticipate [emphasis added]" (341). Here it is not only the precocious impatience of the individual Uncas, but the recklessness of an entire people that is the cause of their demise. The civilizing hand of the white man comes too late-- the blame can therefore be fully laid on the natives' own "impetuosity." The deviltries of the whites in "turning the tomahawk of brother against brother" as Hawk-eye calls it, is entirely forgotten in the circumstances that culminate in this scene where the white man stands innocently on the outside of the "ruthless results which attend an Indian vengeance" (339). Cooper makes this a resounding condemnation of the natives by having the sage of the Delawares pronounce its divine ordination:

"Men of the Lenape!" he said, in hollow tones, that sounded like *a voice charged with some prophetic mission*, "the face of the Manitto is behind a cloud! his eye is turned from you; his ears are shut; his tongue gives no answer. You see him not; yet his judgments are before you [emphasis added]." (341)

Louise Barnett quotes Cooper's *Notions of the Americans* (1841) in order to show the depth of his self-deception in advocating a blameless white position:

The Indians have never been slain except in battle, unless by lawless individuals; never hunted by bloodhounds, or in any manner aggrieved, except in the general, and perhaps, in some degree, justifiable invasion of a territory that they did not want, nor could not use. (Barnett, 188)

Just as Hawk-eye draws unwanted attention to the very thing he compulsively disavows-- that he is a man without a cross-- so too, does Cooper fall into the same trap with the above quote: "Enmeshed in exceptions and qualifications, Cooper's brief apology for white conduct toward the Indian evokes the violence and justice it tries to deny" (188). In *The*

Last of the Mohicans, the rightness of the final outcome of events is never questioned--tragic, to be sure, but still right and proper. Uncas' fall is unstoppable, propelled by the momentum of his too hasty (white) disposition, and the "destruction of the entire community" of the Delawares is preordained by their own deity. There is throughout a feeling of inevitability. Setting the novel in the past means that whatever events take place inside it have already happened-- they cannot be changed. Barnett writes that "nineteenth century authors could afford to shed some tears for the aboriginal inhabitants of what was now so firmly their country" (6). Not only is this elegiac theme reflective of a charitable white sympathy for the natives long gone, it is also a means of asserting the blamelessness of whites on multiple levels. Adhering to the captivity genre, Cooper revives the notion of the Indians' innate wickedness and the fully justifiable retaliation of whites as a response to it. Within the narrative itself, Hawk-eye, the natives' most persuasive advocate, alternates between idealization and condemnation of them, negating any admiration he has expressed earlier, whether it be the acknowledgement of reason in them or belief in a happy after-life for them. Resorting to the Puritan conception of the Indians as devils and representing Uncas and his tribe as "victims of their own temerity" diverts blame onto the natives themselves. And on the authorial level, Barnett quotes once more from Cooper's *Notions of the Americans*: "as he describes [the Indians' decline], the phenomenon seems to be self-induced and almost painless: 'As a rule, the red man disappears before the superior moral and physical influence of the white' " (188). This reflexive posture persists today in the way "the Indian has become a national fad," Frederick Turner notes in *The Portable North American Reader*: "in the process white Americans are succeeding once again in avoiding a knowledge of the complex truths of their collective history and are perpetuating the past's old mistakes" (9).

-III-

The Secret Pleasure of Going Native Altogether Diffused and Defused in *Kim*

Befitting his youth, the title character of Rudyard Kipling's *Kim* (1901) is a playful border figure, who prefers to move about outside of the hierarchies of race, nation and class maintained by the British. The Little Friend of *All* the World, his life is one of adventure and intrigue, commissioned as he is every now and then by "sleek and shiny young men of fashion" to perform undisclosed errands (3). The narrator tells us that, "what he loved [about these missions] was the game for its own sake," and what white, young Irishman would enjoy such freedom from the restraints of respectability if he remained within the boundaries proper to his race and nation (3)? Kim knows this. He is mindful of the fact that certain garbs, "when engaged on certain businesses," keeps the flow of things smooth (3)-- an early awareness of how identity arises out of something as unstable as outward appearance, and its direct correlation to mobility. His is the yell that could "call up legions of bad bazar boys if need arose," so that even the local constabulary endures his impertinence (11). The native policemen, the water-carrier, the Museum carpenter, the food merchants, all "knew Kim of old." Indeed, "everybody in sight [in the city of Lahore]," tolerates his mischief as if he was their own adored son (3). Fully cognizant that this charmed life results from living outside of British hierarchies, Kim avoids missionaries and "white men of serious aspect who asked who he was, and what he did" (2). Being forced into school, into the positions demanded by these hierarchies, would end a life "wild as that of the Arabian Nights" (2). No longer could he associate with men who "led lives stranger than anything Haroun al Raschid dreamed of," or eat from the same dishes as holy men when no one is looking (2). Yet Kim, not fully aware of it at the beginning of the novel, exists squarely inside these hierarchies, even as he dodges them in the person of missionaries and inquisitive white men. As the novel progresses and he matures into adulthood, he becomes increasingly aware of his ability to be in two places at once, to double himself, until, by the end of the novel, his potential to become a model

agent of the British Secret Service in India is just beginning to be realized. The promise is that Kim will go far.

Soon after the novel begins, Kim attaches himself to a venerable Tibetan lama who seeks the River that “ ‘washes away all taint and speckle of sin’ ” (9). Their wanderings together are cut short, however, when a pair of missionaries discovers that Kim is white and compels him to attend school. Once enrolled, he begins to imbibe a certain hostility towards the native, though the majority of his classmates are literal hybrids, products of inter-racial relations between British men and native women. On his holidays from school, Kim manages to escape having to play the part of a white boy, and indulges his appetite for the native by immersing himself entirely inside its sights, sensations and tastes. Kipling directs his hero's desire for the native towards the land of India itself, but his continuing education and induction into the Great Game of the British Secret Service draws an increasingly distinct opposition between his white and native halves. Caught between love and contempt for the native within him, the essential whiteness that Kipling has built into him ensures that Kim, and British colonial control of India, can only profit in the end.

Fulfilling his Father's Prophecy:
Elevated in Race, Nation and Class

Not only is Kim the offspring of Irish parents-- a nursemaid mother who dies of cholera, and a drunken soldier for a father who “died as poor whites die in India,” from opium addiction-- he is also looked after by the half-caste woman who introduced his father to the narcotic (1). With such origins, Kim is at the bottom of the class hierarchy: “a poor white of the very poorest” (1). Some of the prevailing racial theories of the mid- to late nineteenth century that classified the Irish as white negroes would also have placed him near the bottom of the racial, and consequently, national, hierarchy as well. Yet when we first encounter him, Kim is on top. We find him in the middle of a game of king-of-the-castle with two native boys; the contested marker of sovereignty, a large cannon dubbed Zam-Zammah: “Who hold Zam-Zammah, that ‘fire-breathing dragon,’ hold the Punjab, for the great green-bronze piece is always first of the conqueror's loot” (1). Kim sits cheekily astride this great piece “in defiance of municipal orders” (1). But the narrator hastily joins the citizens of Lahore who tolerate such audacity from the Little Friend of All the World:

“there was some justification for Kim . . . since the English held the Punjab and Kim was English” (1). On the first few pages alone, Kim is established in two places at once within these hierarchies: luxuriating in the freedom and mobility of the bottom, while retaining the power and authority of the top.

He defends both sides of this position from those who would wrest him away, the missionary men who would enroll him in school, and his two native playmates who attempt to seize control of Zam-Zammah. Asserting the English birthright of dominance over the Punjab, Kim simultaneously avoids the claims of Englishness incarnated in the missionaries, even as he keeps the documents that prove his nationality, literally, close to his heart. In the fugue states induced by the opium, Kim’s father would prophesy that these documents, nestled inside an amulet around his son’s neck like some sort of magical talisman, “would yet make Kimball a man” (2). Proof of birth, and the birthright that follows, the confirmation of race and nationality, all will elevate him to the pinnacle of these hierarchies. Manhood is promised as the reward conferred, as well as the means by which he attains it. This would be magic indeed-- a complete transformation from the life Kim currently knows. With the breaking of the amulet’s seal, the elder Kimball would prattle on, dignitaries and armies would attend upon Kim. What a legacy to leave a son. But until he reaches the proper age to claim it, Kim will merrily wend his way in and out of the hierarchies, taking all the pleasure he can as a low caste Hindu boy in India.

The fulfillment of old Kimball’s prophecy begins when Kim encounters his father’s regiment. The scene in which he is caught spying on the soldiers allows the reader to compare for the first time young Kim with “real” white men. It is startling. The first instance in the narrative in which he speaks English to an Englishman, it is “the tinny, saw-cut English of the native-bred” that makes the chaplain jump when he hears it (76). We jump with him. For though the dialogue and events in the novel have been related in English, we are reading the narrator’s translation of the Punjabi, Urdu, and Hindustanee spoken by Kim, as well as the myriad dialects of the people of India. Even though we know from the very first page that Kim is not only white, but English, and that he is having his fun masquerading as a Hindu boy, it is only in comparison to the Reverend Arthur Bennett’s indisputable Englishness that Kim’s un-Englishness is thrown into such sharp

relief: “ ‘Give it me. O give it me. Is it lost? Give me the papers,’ ” he mewls as Bennett snatches the amulet (76). Bennett jumps at this unexpected utterance, not so much out of astonishment that a Hindu thief speaks English, but more out of what it sounds like. The narrator’s use of “tinny” and “saw-cut” in describing Kim’s English conveys a certain grating, irritating quality. It certainly is not the pristine English of the narrator’s translation that we are accustomed to. Even when the narrator includes a native word here and there in the text to provide some local flavor, a parenthetical translation often follows to assuage the contemporary reader who might find this seasoning too potent and disquietingly unfamiliar. Mispronunciation, poor grammar, and awkward idiomatic expression are not part of Kim’s plan, “to keep the character [of a thief] laid down for him [by Bennett],” (76): at the very beginning of the novel, we are told that, “he . . . spoke his mother-tongue in a clipped uncertain sing-song” (1).

This scene is framed through the disdainful eyes and ears of the Reverend Bennett: his hacked-up English, his Hindu clothing-- “a dirty turban and Isabella-coloured clothes” (14)-- and his skin color-- “burned black as any native” elicit disgust (1). Occupying this subject position, a vague discomfort is transferred to us. We hold Kim at arm’s length with Reverend Bennett and regard him as a curiosity. The British hierarchies become much more evident in this scene-- even more so when Father Victor, the Catholic chaplain of the Irish contingent, is summoned to examine the specimen. “ ‘Ordinarily, I should have chastised him and let him go,’ ” Reverend Bennett explains, “ ‘because I believe him to be a thief. But it seems he talks English, and he attaches some sort of value to a charm around his neck’ ” (76). The privileging of language and, indirectly, nation, are Bennett’s justification for detaining Kim, as Victor coolly opens the amulet against the boy’s wishes. Kim’s dalliance at the top and bottom of the hierarchies is suspended by the birthright which worked in his favor atop Zam-Zammah: the English rule the Punjab. But caught as he is in the person of a Hindu boy, this works against him when he encounters the British chaplains of his father’s regiment. He must submit to such bullying, as well as the following indignity by the over-zealous Irish priest: “Father Victor stepped forward quickly and opened the front of Kim’s upper garment. ‘You see Bennett, he’s not very black’ ” (77). Such brazen liberties with a white person, once they confirm that the documents in

his amulet do indeed apply to Kim, are instantly regretted-- this sort of mistreatment is appropriate only for natives: “ ‘It is possible I have done the boy an injustice,’ ” Bennett concedes, “ ‘He is certainly white’ ” (77). This begs the question: the injustice of mistaking him for a thieving Hindu, or for violating his person and possessions? Nevertheless, it is all one and the same for these men: intersecting hierarchies that subordinate the non-English and non-white below them-- for a white man would never have to endure such treatment at the hands of another respectable white man.

These hierarchies become more and more apparent as the Reverend Bennett comes into contact with more to define himself against. When the dignified lama strides into the tent to corroborate Kim's story, “Bennett looked at him with the triple-ringed uninterest of the creed that lumps nine-tenths of the world under the title of ‘heathen’ ” (79). Father Victor muses that the lama does not appear to be of a villainous aspect, to which Reverend Bennett replies, using the most convenient excuse for ignorance: “ ‘My experience is that one can never fathom the Oriental mind’ ” (79). He is prevented by Father Victor from offering the lama the rudeness of a dismissive rupee to speed him on his way. And during the holy man's long silences of contemplation once he learns of Kim's origins and the white men's intentions to take him away, “Bennett fidgeted with impatience, and suggested calling a sentry to evict the faquir” (84). The injustice that Bennett feels he unwittingly showed Kim before it is proven that he is white, is not lamented in this colossal insensitivity towards the lama. Yet Kim still remains as somewhat of a curiosity to the men of the regiment, who treat him, with the taint of Hinduism clinging to him, as some sort of exotic animal. Sitting at the far end of the camp, scrubbed clean and “silent as a wild animal,” the Sergeant calls him “ ‘a most amazin’ young bird,’ ” and muses that, “ ‘Injia's a wild land for a God-fearin’ man. I'll just tie his leg to the tent-pole in case he'll go through the roof’ ” (86-7). His father's prophecy of prestige at the top of the hierarchies begins its fulfillment at the bottom, with Kim fastened to a pole like a strange beast-- not even a human being.

This indignity is not to last long, however. Kim has already been assured that he can only stand to benefit from being schooled. Acting as translator between the lama and the imperious chaplains, he explains to the former, “ ‘I must needs go to a madrissah

[school] and be turned into a Sahib [white man]' ” (81). Through a colonial education, Kim will be elevated within the hierarchies of race and nation. And compared to the disempowered and infantilized natives, being white and English equates to the possession of manhood: “ ‘We’ll make a man of you,’ ” vows Father Victor (86). Such a leap in prestige, attributed entirely to education, is an irresistible offer. In his limited acquaintance with this handful of white men, Kim’s awareness of the advantages available to him as a Sahib begins to grow: “Meantime, if the Sahibs were to be impressed, he would do his best to impress them. He too was a white man” (86). Claiming his rightful place among this brotherhood of man-- when formerly, he hushed or evaded the lama whenever the issue of his whiteness was brought up-- Kim embarks upon this latest adventure with the giddy expectation of somebody just beginning to realize the innumerable ways in which the world opens up for a white man.

Lessons in the Schoolyard: Performing Whiteness, Parading the Native

One of the more effective means of acquiring and maintaining power is by cloaking the processes by which it operates; masking it to the point so that its uneven distribution seems natural and right. In this, the British had a formidable ally in the education that they so generously provided for their native subjects-- implicit in the methods of teaching, what was taught, and the materials used in colonial classrooms, is the superiority of the British. Here in the schools, efforts to inculcate the concept of the British dominating the top of the racial and national hierarchies are at their most persuasive and unrelenting; the added pressure of an all-boys atmosphere, and the miniature social hierarchies that assemble themselves around the strongest and most aggressive lads, reinforce notions of power and submission. We see how Kim falters under the weight of these combined hierarchies when the drummer-boy assigned to watch him spies our little Sahib haggling with a letter-writer from the bazar: “ ‘You talk the same as a nigger, don’t you?’

‘No-ah! No-ah! I onlee speak a little,’ ” he hedges (92). Already, any feeling of allegiance to these people is subsumed within the network of hierarchies he finds himself enmeshed in: race, nation, and, among the boys, size and strength. Kim is learning that to dangle his legs on both sides of these boundaries, in the presence of loathsome schoolyard

bullies, invites censure the least of which is a blackened eye. The darkening skin of such a bruise, after all, might spread from one's eye until it covers the entire body, until such an unlucky person might find himself branded a nigger too. Talking like one is only so far from being one-- though Kipling never really explains how Kim goes from being "burned black as a native" to passing unmolested as a European boy with a simple change of clothing. The socialization of the schoolyard supplies a more immediate and potentially injurious demonstration of the lessons taught in the colonial classroom. Contests and proofs of manliness erupt in the schoolyard daily-- this brief exchange with the drummer-boy illustrates how race becomes a trait that needs to be proven as well. A fragile commodity that, like masculinity, can easily be taken away, it needs to be vigilantly policed, scrupulously maintained, and continually validated by the approval of other white men. Fortunately, the education he is to receive once he transfers to St. Xavier's specializes in such areas: before he leaves this temporary stay at Umballa, Father Victor tells him, " 'They'll make a man o' you, O'Hara, at St. Xavier's-- a white man, an', I hope, a good man' " (105). Father Victor, at least, shows an understanding that just because one is white, and a man, it does not necessarily follow that one is good. The prophecy continues its fulfillment.

The drummer-boy at Umballa picks up where the Reverend Bennett left off, in showing Kim that everything he has valued invites contempt, along with the expectation that Kim should feel the same. At the mercy of such conflicting demands on his person and his loyalties-- the denial of everything that he has loved dearly and the negation of a happy past, an uncertain present, and a future that hinges upon the continuation of this disavowal for an indefinite period of time-- Kim naturally feels disoriented on his way down to St. Xavier's:

"Hai-mai! I go from one place to another as it might be a kick-ball. It is my kismet. No man can escape kismet. But I am to pray to Bibi Miriam [the Virgin Mary] and I am a Sahib"-- he looked at his boots ruefully. "No; I am Kim. This is the great world, and I am only Kim. Who is Kim?" He considered his own identity, a thing he had never done before, till his head swam. He was one insignificant person in all this roaring whirl of India, going southward to he knew not what fate. (106)

What starts off as a harmless guessing game at the beginning of the novel, becomes a more

vexing issue as Kim enters adolescence, when such issues become more pressing. When we first meet Mahbub Ali, Kim is savoring his slippery status: “ ‘Maharaj,’ whined Kim, using the Hindu form of address, and thoroughly enjoying the situation; ‘my father is dead -- my mother is dead-- my stomach is empty’ ” (17). When Ali plays along and demands that he go beg from those of the same faith, he replies, “ ‘Oh Mahbub Ali, but am I a Hindu?’ ” (17). We all of us, Kim, Mahbub Ali, and the reader, know that this question is not so easily answered.

“ ‘The best schooling a boy can get in India,’ ” is not all that awaits Kim at St. Xavier’s (85). The dilemma of duality that occupies his mind is a much more unavoidable matter for the chums he finds there. As Mahbub Ali observes, this is a school “for the sons of Sahibs-- and half-Sahibs” (100). The majority of St. Xavier’s boys have native blood flowing under the shiny white, English veneers that they present to the world and each other. Polished and sparkling, they regard themselves in the mirror of whiteness that they reflect off one another: denying one full half of their origins. Cautious of the precedent set by the drummer-boy in the school-yard at Umballa, Kim, “quietly . . . measured himself against his self-reliant mates,” who exchange stories, “which to them were [not] adventures [but] would have crisped a Western boy’s hair” (111). These accounts of the jungle, of their indifference to ferocious beasts, and defending plantations from head-hunting Akas, are related by the boys to shore up the bulwarks that surround their precious Englishness, besieged as it is by the tide of native blood that surges and swirls around it. Yet, “every tale was told in the even, passionless voice of the native-born, mixed with quaint reflections, borrowed unconsciously from native foster-mothers, and turns of speech that showed they had been translated from the vernacular” (112). Here, a reversal of value and esteem can be seen between Kim and his classmates. Whereas Kim avoids Englishness while still claiming its privileges atop Zam-Zammah, these half-Sahibs deny the native element in their compositions even as they unwittingly parade its presence in their stories, their manner of speaking, and veiled affection for the dusky women who took care of them when they were young. No wonder then, that “Kim watched, listened and approved” (112). He knows exactly where they are coming from, though it happens to originate in the opposite direction. These boys are building themselves up with tales of “a life he knew

and in part understood,” a life that Kim voluntarily chose over that of a Sahib when we first meet him as the beloved son of all Lahore (112).

Controlling Ambivalence and The Avoidance of Women

A limit exists, however, as to how far one can go in one’s appreciation and regard for the native:

None the less [he] remembered to hold himself lowly. When tales were told of hot nights, Kim did not sweep the board with his reminiscences; for St. Xavier’s looks down on boys who “go native altogether.” One must never forget that one is a Sahib, and that some day, when examinations are passed, one will command natives. Kim made a note of this, for he began to understand where examinations led. (112)

This is the quintessential example of ambivalence towards the native or indigenous population on the part of the invading powers, that intensifies beyond first contact, and extends well into the establishment of territorial control and the building of empire. A constant movement that crisscrosses back and forth between attraction and repulsion for the other, it manifests itself most visibly in the boys of St. Xavier’s themselves: the products of inter-racial desire. St. Xavier’s emerges as an integral part of the colonial process and the maintenance of British control in India, in its apparently exclusive enrollment of these half-breeds whose education consists largely of learning to deny the native *within* so as to control it *without*. Its recruitment, year after year, is self-regenerative, as British desire continues unimpeded in siring heirs who will carry on the tradition of commanding the native: “Their parents could well have educated them in England, but they loved the school that had served their own youth, and generation followed fallow-hued generation at St. Xavier’s” (111). Kim swiftly undeceives Mahbub Ali when he implies that all his classmates are Sahibs: “ ‘Not all!’ Kim cut in with a snort. ‘Their eyes are blue and their nails are blackened with low-caste blood, many of them. Sons of metheeranees-- brothers-in-law to the bhungi’ (sweeper)” (129).

Procreative, and therefore heterosexual, relations between native women and British men are at issue, then, in the existence of these fallow-hued boys. The regulation of British women’s sexuality that constituted the white woman as keeper of the empire’s

honor, in the moral and sexual sense of the word, meant that relations with native men were entirely out of the question-- whether they actually took place or not. The fallow-hued boys are the most overt indicator of a British, male, heterosexuality in the novel. To incorporate inter-racial desire any more explicitly than the instances in the above quotes, scattered as they are and, consequently, diluted throughout the text, would have been scandalous. Yet a novel that locates itself within the tangled relations between the dominating British and their native subjects cannot avoid this ubiquitous product of colonial rule. In *Empire and Sexuality* (1990), Ronald Hyam furnishes the following background:

many young Victorians going overseas expected to indulge in casual sex as a routine ingredient of life. Moreover, empire unquestionably gave them a larger field of opportunity. Greater space and privacy were often available; inhibitions relaxed. European standards might be held irrelevant. Abstinence was represented as unhealthy in a hot climate. Boredom could constitute an irresistible imperative. The Indian army conveniently arranged for prostitutes; or boys, especially in Ceylon. The white man's status put him in a strong position to get his way. As Bucknill reported to the government in 1906, "of course the lascivious-minded man of European race can always, in any part of the world, find means of gratifying his wishes". (88)

Despite all of this, there is barely a moan of identifiable (hetero-)sexuality in *Kim*. These worrisome relations have, of necessity, been put under the knife -- the unsexed animal of inter-racial desire wanders aimlessly about, sterile and muffled throughout the novel so as to become docile and unrecognizable. Having a young boy as a protagonist also helps in that he still exists within a pre-sexual state.

Women in *Kim*, just as they are represented in *The Last of the Mohicans*, are regarded as impediments to the masculine domains of the Great Game and Middle Way. Two of the major characters who devote their lives to these endeavors, two very different guardians, voice this opinion to Kim at some point in the novel, who eventually internalizes these beliefs. First is Mahbub Ali, who, upon waking from a drugged sleep and finding his quarters ransacked, suspects that " 'Surely there is a woman behind this [mischiefs]' " (23). Later in the novel, the following words are quoted back at him by his young protégé: " 'in the Great Game . . . it is by means of woman that all plans come to ruin' " (159). Second is the lama, who adds the following spiritual warning: " 'Thus it comes-- take note, my chela-- that even those who would follow the Way are thrust aside by idle women' " (159).

(194), which Kim dutifully takes to heart: “ ‘How can a man follow the Way or the Great Game when he is eternally pestered by women?’ ” (231). In *The Last of the Mohicans*, Cooper places his most powerful argument against miscegenation in the mouth of his most pious character, David Gamut, who relates his eagerness to join the battle between the Delawares and the Hurons through Biblical text: “ ‘your men have reminded me of the children of Jacob going out to battle against the Schehemites, for wickedly aspiring to wedlock with a woman of a race that was favored of the Lord’ ” (327). Kipling’s holy lama echoes the same sentiment, though with less of a zealot’s fervor and more a touch of subtlety: “ ‘marriage and [child-] bearing [are] darkeners of the true light, stumbling-blocks upon the way’ ” (50). Within the context of the sallow-hued boys’ genesis, child-bearing as the darkening of the true light, though meant in the spiritual sense here, takes on significant resonance.

My Boy, My Man: The Shape of Homosexuality at Lurgan Sahib’s

An alternative to the problematic results of this heterosexual desire for the native exists in *Kim*, however, though it brings with it a different set of difficulties. As part of his training in the Great Game, Kim is sent to a Lurgan Sahib, a collector of curiosities “with white hands” (133) who is himself a hybrid of sorts: “He was a Sahib in that he wore Sahib’s clothes; [but] the accent of his Urdu, the intonation of his English, showed that he was anything but a Sahib” (136). Lurgan is attended by a Hindu boy, whose feelings of animosity towards Kim suggest a homosexual apprenticeship:

“I am sorry you cannot beat my boy this morning. He says he will kill you with a knife or poison. He is jealous, so I have put him in the corner and I shall not speak to him to-day. He has just tried to kill me. You must help me with the breakfast. He is almost too jealous to trust, just now” (136).

The name of the jealous Hindu boy is withheld, just as the name of his relationship to Lurgan Sahib goes unsaid. He is simply Lurgan’s “boy” whose “name varied at Lurgan’s pleasure” (143), and who addresses the enigmatic man as “ ‘my father and my mother’ ” (140). In explaining why his boy attempted to poison him, Lurgan poses to Kim the following question, “ ‘Suppose you were fond of some one, and you saw some one come, and the man you were fond of was [more] pleased with him than he was with you, what

would you do?" " (140). " 'I should not poison that man,' " answers Kim " 'but I should beat that boy -- if that boy was fond of my man' " (140).

Recall the reference in *Empire and Sexuality* to the Indian army and the availability of boys in the sexual economy. Hyam also introduces us to a Captain Kenneth Searight, an Indian army officer who documented his pederastic sexual adventures from 1897 to 1917 while on duty: "India acted as the safe and effective catalyst or displacement channel for the pursuit of his dangerous interests in a way that had never been possible in Britain itself" (130). Though the expression of homosexual desire is not limited to pederasty, the fictional Lurgan shares a taste for boys with this real-life army officer in India. And as opposed to the muted evidence of heterosexual desire and inter-racial union embodied in the sallow-hued boys, coupled with Hyam's edifying evidence of the sexual opportunities available in colonial India, the scenes in Lurgan's shop exude a homosexual *frisson*. Unlike the touch of the female prostitute who has more intimate contact with Kim's body in smearing the dye over its various surfaces (a scene addressed in the next section), the following extended passage depicts a more noticeable, elusively suggestive response that is elicited by Lurgan's protracted physical contact with him. Following his instructions, Kim regards the fragments of a shattered vessel that glitter on the ground:

Lurgan Sahib laid one hand gently on the nape of [Kim's] neck, stroked it twice or thrice, and whispered: 'Look! It shall come to life again, piece by piece. First the big piece shall join itself to two others on the left and right . . .

To save his life, Kim could not have turned his head. The light touch held him as in a vise, and his blood tingled pleasantly through him . . . Another wave of prickling fire raced down his neck, as Lurgan Sahib moved his hand.

'Look! It is coming into shape,' said Lurgan Sahib.

So far Kim had been thinking in Hindi, but a tremor came on him, and with an effort like that of a swimmer before sharks, who hurls himself half out of the water, his mind leaped up from the darkness that was swallowing it and took refuge in-- the multiplication-table in English!

'Look! It is coming into shape,' whispered Lurgan Sahib.

The jar had been smashed-- yess, smashed-- not the native word, he would not think of that-- but smashed -- into fifty pieces, and twice three was six, and thrice three was nine, and four times three was twelve. He clung desperately to the repetition

'Look! Is it coming into shape?' asked Lurgan Sahib.

'But it is smashed-- smashed,' [Kim] gasped-- Lurgan Sahib had been muttering softly for the last half-minute

'It is there as it was there,' said Lurgan watching Kim

closely while the boy rubbed his neck The tingle had gone from [Kim's] veins; he felt unusually wide awake. (138-9)

Foremost among the many things that can be placed into the vessel, whose scattered pieces Lurgan repeatedly prompts Kim to mark, is the knowledge of homosexual desire-- whether finally learning of its existence, the suggestion of its fulfillment, or the understanding of Lurgan's relationship to his boy. It is the unmentionable thing, "coming into shape" that Lurgan instructs Kim to look for.

This is the most explicit homosexual relationship alluded to in the novel. Kim's association with the lama and Mahbub Ali falls more into the typical heterosexual buddy paradigm established by Cooper in Hawk-eye and Chingachgook-- a refuge from the taint and ruin that cling to women. Faced with the problem of finding an appropriate object choice for his desire-- native women and the sallow-hued results of heterosexual expression, or the panic induced by the knowledge of homosexuality, a darkness that threatens to swallow his mind-- Kipling directs his hero to a much safer indulgence.

Desiring the Native through the Land

While he accompanies the lama on his search for the River, Kim's enjoyment of exploring India is infused with an undeniable sensuality. It starts off innocently enough, his pleasure slyly attributed to the newness of experience as he and the lama travel on the Grand Trunk Road:

Kim's bright eyes were open wide. This broad, smiling river of life, he considered, was a vast improvement on the cramped and crowded Lahore streets. There were new people and new sights at every stride-- castes he knew and castes that were altogether out of his experience. (55)

This delight increases as Kipling veers off into narrative bliss, rhapsodizing in detail about the Grand Trunk Road and its denizens:

It was beautiful to behold the many-yoked grain and cotton waggons [sic] crawling over the country-roads . . . It was equally beautiful to watch the people, little clumps of red and blue and pink and white and saffron, turning aside to go to their own villages, dispersing and growing small by twos and threes across the level plain. Kim felt these things, though he could not give tongue to his feelings. (57)

Receiving a voyeuristic thrill by observing the joining and separating of multi-colored

bodies on this thoroughfare, Kim, at other times, joins in: he “dived into the happy Asiatic disorder,” (58) of “great, gray, formless India” (85-6). The distribution of desire is spread so thin that all of India becomes the object of Kim’s desire: sexless, faceless, neither black nor white but gray and formless, serving as a safe substitute for the Indian body. Weary of his perpetual counterfeiting at St. Xavier’s and of repressing his preference for the native, he anticipates the orgy of tactile sensation that beckons on his first break from school-- a holiday from being a Sahib: “Kim yearned for the caress of soft mud squishing up between the toes, as his mouth watered for mutton stewed with butter and cabbages, for rice speckled with strong-scented cardamoms, for the sweetmeats of the bazars” (113). Sexual desire in Kim’s body is diffused and defused, removed from the treachery of potentially procreative, genital longings, so that his feet, taste buds, and stomach become repositories of pleasure.

However, in order to partake of these delights, Kim must first attend to his blanched skin before venturing out on holiday. Fittingly enough, he goes to a brothel in order to have this service performed. Any glimmer of genital sexuality is sublimated within this visit. Here, his skin is colored, not by the flush of heterosexual intercourse teasingly suggested in this visit with a native prostitute, but by the juices used to dye his complexion which alter the appearance of his race and nation. This proves to be a more palatable substitute for the sallow-hued boys, the discomfiting markers of sexual relations between white men and native women. Instead of a procreative inter-racial coupling, we are given a non-sexual representation of the mingling of skins and races. Harmless, the dye sits only on the surface of the skin-- no penetration, of any kind, takes place. And ultimately, it fades away. Once the transformation is complete, “his eyes [are] ablaze with mirth as he thought of the fat days before him . . . A cookshop was his next point of call, where he feasted in extravagance and greasy luxury” (114).

In India, the two major conduits of travel serve to level caste separations-- both the Grand Trunk Road and the train are filled by the jostling and bumping of bodies against one another, “ ‘All castes and kinds move here,’ ” the old soldier who escorts Kim and lama on the Road exclaims, “ ‘Look! Brahmins and chumars, bankers and tinkers, barbers and bunnias, pilgrims and potters-- all the world going and coming’ ” (51). Rather than

board a second-class compartment when he embarks upon his holiday as one of his classmates does, “Kim patronised a third, and was the life and soul of it” (114). Even the sexes often time ride together, as we learn on the lama’s first train ride: “ ‘there is not one rule of right living which these te-rains do not cause us to break,’ ” muses a moneylender (25). This is India at its most mercurial-- gloriously alive and multi-faceted with its variety of tongues and temperament and creed all squashed together. Perfect for Kim. No longer is his tongue prevented from thrilling along the dips and curves of the vernacular, and regaling those around him with lavish tales: “As the occupants of the carriage changed, he varied [his] tale, or adorned it with all the shoots of budding fancy, the more rampant for being held off native speech so long. In all India that night was no human being so joyful as Kim” (114). Months of abstinence at St. Xavier’s, and the repression of his desires there, lead up to this ecstatic outpouring. Undue attention to the traitorous desires that spawned the sallow-hued boys is diverted away, and the sexual energy that animated their conception dispersed through the ears, mouth, stomach and eyes of a pre-pubescent boy rejoicing in the spinning of fantastic tales onboard a third-class train carriage full of colorful travelers.

Smudging the Lines of Race and Nation: Dividing the Two-Sided Man

The tension that builds up whenever Kim spends a prolonged amount of time at St. Xavier’s needs this outlet for release. When Mahbub Ali catches up to him and chides him for shirking his duty by taking these holidays, Kim explains to him, “ ‘At the madrissah I will learn. In the madrissah I will be a Sahib. But when the madrissah is shut, then must I be free and go among my people. Otherwise I die!’ ” (122). Kim freely admits that these are his people, at least for the moment: “ ‘And who are thy People, Friend of all the World?’

‘This great and beautiful land’ ” (122). In a deft reversal of his denial to the drummer-boy at Umballa, Kim proclaims, “ ‘I am not a Sahib,’ ” in order to show his loyalty to Ali (121). This ease in shifting identities according to the demands of the situation has always been an ability that Kim has utilized. One of the more overt instances of this comes before his schooling, when he and the lama meet the old Kulu widow on the

Road. He shifts his mode of discourse accordingly as her mood changes. The narrative is replete with references to this in their dialogue: “Kim changed his tone promptly to match that altered voice,” “he wailed in extravagant terror,” “dropping into his most caressing and confidential tone -- the one, he well, knew, that few could resist,” “Kim quoted the proverb with a meditative cough, looking discreetly downward,” “a professional could have done no better,” and with the lama: “Kim used the thoughtful, conciliatory tone of those who wish to draw confidences” (61-5). This transparent sort of manipulation becomes increasingly harder to discern as Kim progresses at St. Xavier’s, perfecting the art of dissembling in the schoolyard and classroom. Ali advises him to maintain this fluidity, and explains how one’s identity should hinge upon whatever environment is currently occupied: “ ‘Therefore, in one situate as thou art, it particularly behoves thee to remember this with both kinds of faces. Among Sahibs, never forgetting thou art a Sahib; among the folk of Hind, always remembering thou art--’ he paused, with a puzzled smile” (128). We are never given an answer. Kim himself is still unsure, when he replies with the question: “ ‘What am I? Mussalman, Hindu, Jain, or Buddhist? That is a hard nut’ ” (128).

Colonel Creighton offers Kim similar counsel:

“Thou art a Sahib. Therefore, do not at any time be led to condemn the black men. I have known boys newly entered into the service of the Government who feigned not to understand the talk or the customs of black men. Their pay was cut for ignorance. There is no sin so great as ignorance. Remember this.” (107)

Kim’s talent for smudging the lines of his identity that produce a blurring of race and nation is now officially sanctioned as an indispensable tool for maintaining British colonial control over the native: know the black man in order to better rule him, Creighton advises. For the reader, however, it becomes more and more difficult to discern exactly where he stands.

Like Hawk-eye in *The Last of the Mohicans*, there are several instances where he resists whiteness and glorifies in his native half. At school, he cannot bear eating at the same table with the other boys: “this was peculiarly revolting to Kim, who preferred to turn his back on the world at his meals,” while clothing, too, causes him discomfort: “Trousers and jacket crippled body and mind alike” (95). When a driver uses the “thou” form of address to Kim, “which is rudeness when applied to a white man . . . Kim pointed out his

error” (108). He does so in the “clearest and most fluent vernacular,” insisting that he be recognized as a native (108). He prefers what other Sahibs do not: “a bed among brickbats and ballast-refuse on a damp night, between overcrowded houses and unwashed Baltis, would not appeal to many white boys; but Kim was utterly happy” (123). Tellingly he thinks, even dreams, in Hindustanee (34, 135, 175, 231), and finds “sweetest of all [that Lurgan] treated [him] as an equal on the Asiatic side” (136). Stepping into Lurgan’s shop for the first time, “full of things that smelt like all the temples of all the East” Kim automatically reverts to speaking in the vernacular: “the smells made him forget that he was to be a Sahib” (134). At this early stage in his training, it is an effort to repress the native inside him sometimes.

But recall his awareness of the advantages available to him as a Sahib. Kim certainly does not forget. Chief among them is power and the ability to impress others with it. We are given a hint of his appetite for this early in the narrative: while boasting to a native soldier that he possesses classified information of the British armies’ movements, the narrator reveals that he plays this game for “the sheer excitement and sense of power” (42). Resolving to be a Sahib after one of his holidays, he immediately “cast about for one to impress” and lights upon Lurgan’s Hindu boy squatting underneath a lamp-post (133). When the boy does not answer to Kim’s demands, he is reminded of his interrogator’s status: “ ‘Give answer, devil! Is this the way to lie to a Sahib?’ ” (135). Unfamiliar with wielding this power, Kim resembles the bully in the schoolyard at Umballa, “ ‘I will beat thee in the mornig [sic]. I do not love Hindus,’ ” before indignantly pondering such unbecoming treatment: “ ‘This with a beggar from the bazar might be good-- but I am a Sahib and the son of a Sahib and, which is twice as much more beside, a student of Nucklao. Yess . . . a boy of St. Xavier’s’ ” (135). And later, in the context of the Great Game, the narrator informs us of certain codes of honor that Sahibs must observe, though only when it is convenient for them to do so: “ ‘If a Sahib kills a man he is hung in the jail’ ” (154), and “a Sahib cannot very well steal” (229). This insistence on being recognized both as a native and a Sahib, depending upon the situation, makes Kim the two-sided man of the epigram placed at the beginning of chapter eight. The excerpt is taken from the poem of the same name:

Something I owe to the soil that grew--
More to the life that fed--
But most to Allah Who gave me two
Separate sides to my head.

I would go without shirts or shoes,
Friends, tobacco or bread
Sooner than for an instant lose
Either side of my head. (117)

Mimic Men: The Monstrous
Hybridism of East and West

Kim's two sides, though prized by him for the mobility that they allow, soon become unbalanced by the weight of value disproportionately conferred to his Sahib side. As he sits in the brothel wiped by a cloth that spreads the dye across his skin, he instructs the girl, " 'Not too black, Naikan. I would not appear to her as a hubshi' " (113). Kipling provides a parenthetical translation for Kim's use of this word: nigger. Now what are we to make of such a remark, especially since it comes after Creighton's specific advice not to "contemn" the black man? Ensconced as he is in a house of ill-repute, far from the watchful eyes of the sallow-hued boys, what need is there for this? Moments away from a long-awaited reunion with great, gray, formless India, this is a manifestation of Kim's heightened dis/ease with the native, communicated to him through the drummer-boy at Umballa and St. Xavier's. Such an ugly remark reminds the girl, the reader, and Kim himself, that he is still a Sahib, and that this is a "jest"-- a temporary one, a holiday. Even on the verge of this respite that will relieve him of his repressed desires, which he himself says will cause his "death" if they accumulate without a discharge, even then must he insist that we not forget he is white. Under this remark we can hear Kim reassuring himself that he is not going native altogether. He buries it further under the trappings of a multi-pronged jest, intended for the fictional schoolmaster whose daughter he supposedly shares amours with-- a joke he includes his make-up artist in on-- and the joke played on the make-up artist herself, since this is all an elaborate deception that Kim so cleverly has orchestrated. The tides of native ambivalence, the drifting from attraction to repulsion and back again, have pulled Kim into their wake.

When the prostitute who applies this make-up mistakenly assumes that this jest is to

woo another girl-- native, no doubt, though the narrator does not need to specify, “ ‘Who is she? Thou art full young, as Sahibs go, for this devilry’ ”-- Kim does not correct her error. As he enters the brothel, he “smiles sinfully” (113). Kipling flirts with this intimation of sexual relations between races, though he does so only when it can be shrouded within a jest consistent with the mischievous character established in Kim. By doing so, it can be laughed off and dismissed. This is the sort of wink and a nudge that authorities exchange when dealing with the inevitable relations among their men and the native population. Kim’s holidays shamble out of the same monstrous den of desires that animate this cultural tourism and sexual slumming, though dallying in the native has a different outcome for Kim: a satiated appetite means a full belly and well-crafted tale related in the vernacular. Enrollment at St. Xavier’s, meanwhile, remains high, where the disavowal of the native implicit in the act of segregating these visible products of inter-racial desire continues in the boys themselves. Though the narrator does not explicitly represent it, these boys most likely experience the same fear and uncertainty over their identity as Kim does. But for them, it is amplified by self-loathing. When Colonel Creighton informs Kim that “ ‘there are many boys [at St. Xavier’s] who despise the black men,’ ” he shrewdly replies that “ ‘Their mothers were bazar-women’ . . . he knew well there is no hatred like that of the half-caste for his brother-in-law” (107).

Colonial contempt for the Indian native is conveyed through the educated, native elite and their pretensions to whiteness. In their inevitable failure comes the unspoken decree that natives must remember their place in relation to their English masters. Anne McClintock, in discussing Homi Bhabha’s essay “Of Mimicry and Man”, defines this class of mimic men as those who “serve as the intermediaries of empire; they are the colonized teachers, soldiers, bureaucrats and cultural interpreters whom Fanon describes as ‘dusted over with colonial culture’ ” (62). This last image is particularly evocative of the disdain that this class garnered from both sides of the colonial divide in their posturing and affectation of whiteness. In *Masks of Conquest* (1989), Gauri Viswanathan explores how these natives were persuaded, through a colonial education, to acknowledge their own inferiority, resulting in a desire to emulate their rulers and elevate themselves to the superiority of the English. Kipling represents this in the students of the Punjab University

who ineffectively “copy English customs” by smoking “rank cigars” (14), while on the Grand Trunk Road the despised figure of a Punjabi constable cries “ ‘Halt!’ . . . in impressive English” before attempting to swindle Kim and the lama (54).

The use of English as a marker of prestige is also seen in Huree Babu, a corpulent and prolix native with an M.A. from Calcutta University, who confesses that “ ‘all we Babus talk English to show off’ ” (165). When Mahbub Ali takes Kim to the sorceress Huneefa to be protected by her spells, Huree is caught between English rationality and native dread of the devils who are invoked in the rituals: “ ‘How am I to fear the absolutely non-existent?’ said Hurree Babu, talking English to reassure himself. It is an awful thing still to dread the magic that you contemptuously investigate-- to collect folk-lore for the Royal Society with a lively belief in all Powers of Darkness” (162). This internal dividedness is also seen in the thanks he offers to the “Gods of Hindustan, and Herbert Spencer” (216), and the content of his dreams: “Bengali Gods, University text-books of education, and the Royal Society, London, England” (242). His morning ablutions include “washing his teeth with ostentatious ritual” (204), thereby proving that he is a “decently bred Bengali” (163). And he carries “a gay blue and white umbrella”-- a sign of English civility and class respectability in the protection that it extends over its user from the sullyng elements (205).

In *Culture and Imperialism* (1993), Edward Said regards Hurree Babu as a sort of foil to Colonel Creighton: “the native anthropologist, clearly a bright man whose reiterated ambitions to belong to the Royal Society are not unfounded, is almost always funny, or gauche, or somehow caricatural, not because he is incompetent or inept . . . but because he is not white” (153). The evidence points to the contrary however: he is incompetent and inept *precisely* because he is not white. Though Kim envies Hurree’s effortless transformation into various personages while they play the Great Game, the Babu can never pass himself off as a Sahib. He can only play “ ‘supernumerary [characters] . . . [a] person mentally impotent and hungree, or some such thing’ ” and mourns this limitation to Kim, “ ‘Onlee-- onlee-- you see, Mister O’Hara, I am unfortunately Asiatic, which is serious detriment in some respects’ ” (202). McClintock regards Kim’s ability to pass as a native as a “privilege of whiteness,” while Hurree is “Bhabha’s Anglicized man who is not

English [and] Kim . . . is the Indianized man who is not Indian. Evidently, passing ‘down’ the cultural hierarchy is permissible; passing ‘up’ is not” (70). In addition to being internally divided, Hurree’s dismissal of the “ ‘foolish natives’ ” reveals a social division from the uneducated natives below him that adds to the separation of the ruling English above him. Drunk,

his gravity departed him . . . and [he] spoke in terms of sweeping indecency of a Government which had forced upon him a white man’s education and neglected to supply him with a white man’s salary. He babbled tales of oppression and wrong till the tears ran down his cheeks for the miseries of his land. (214)

Kipling’s flat characterization of the Russian spies allows them to unambiguously express contempt for the native: “ ‘To fight a fellow- Continental in our game is something. There is risk attached, but these people-- bah! It is too easy’ ” (214). They discuss Hurree’s condition with clinical detachment, conceiving of it in a way that connects him to the sallow-hued boys:

“He represents in petto India in transition-- the monstrous hybridity of East and West . . . It is we who can deal with the Orientals.”

“He has lost his own country and has not acquired any other. But he has a most complete hatred of his conquerors.” (215)

As a hybrid between East and West who is given a white man’s education, Hurree Babu shares remarkable resemblance to the sallow-hued boys of St. Xavier’s. But unlike them, he has no white blood in his veins, is not paid like a white man as they will be, nor will he ever rule his country like the white man. He is the despised native, essaying whiteness through hybridity, monstrous and malformed.

Drowned in Ambivalence, Restored to Heterosexuality

Kim spends his formative years among the sallow-hued boys, the living embodiment of ambivalence felt towards the native. Creighton’s warning that there is no greater sin than ignorance is preempted by the drummer-boy at Umballa, and the threat of violence and ostracism radiating from his fists; the unspoken humiliation of expulsion from the ranks of race, nation and masculinity. Kim’s exposure to this ignorance increases at St.

Xavier's, where he learns to stop up his mouth against the flood of native love that aches to gush out. As he shifts between exercising his power as a white man and insisting that he is a native, back and forth then back again, Kim drowns in the rising and falling of these tides until he floats, disconnected from the world itself:

He looked upon the trees and the broad fields, with the thatched huts hidden among crops-- looked with strange eyes unable to take up the size and proportion and use of things-- stared for a still half hour. All that while he felt, though he could not put it into words, that his soul was out of gear with its surroundings . . .

"I am Kim. I am Kim. And what is Kim?" His soul repeated it again and again. (254)

This inevitable result of his conflicting identities lasts but a moment, however, in one of the more skillfully rendered passages in the novel:

with an almost audible click he felt the wheels of his being lock up anew on the world without. Things that rode meaningless on the eyeball an instant before slid into proper proportion. Roads were meant to be walked upon, houses to be lived in, cattle to be driven, fields to be tilled, and men and women to be talked to. They were all real and true-- solidly planted upon the feet-- perfectly comprehensible-- clay of his clay, neither more nor less. (254-5)

It is interesting to note that in Kim's returning sentience, there is still the absence of sexuality: men and women are to be *talked* to. There is no mention of the pleasure to be found in love or carnality. Kim remains chaste to the end. After the above quoted passage, he goes outside to communicate with the beloved landscape of India, the stand-in for the native that his desire is directed towards:

The ground was good clean dust-- no new herbage that, living, is half-way to death already, but the hopeful dust that holds the seed of all life. He felt it between his toes, patted it with his palms, and joint by joint, sighing luxuriously, laid him down full length . . . And Mother Earth was as faithful as the Sahiba. She breathed through him to restore the poise he had lost lying so long on a cot cut off from her good currents. His head lay powerless upon her breast, and his opened hands surrendered to her strength. The many-rooted tree above him, and even the dead man-handled wood beside, knew what he sought, as he himself did not know. Hour upon hour he lay deeper than sleep. (255)

The Kulu widow, the Sahiba mentioned above, ministers to Kim and facilitates his healing prior to this contact with the regenerative (feminine) dust of India. Native women, then, avoided all this time, are responsible for Kim's restoration. Formally rejecting the

(homo-)sexuality of Lurgan Sahib and his Hindu boy, and bypassing the problems of sexual relations with native women entirely, Kim reclaims his identity through what McClintock calls “a curious ritual of restored heterosexuality” (71).

A White Boy Who is Not a White Boy

Kipling leaves Kim beside his lama, a man who believes that “ ‘there is neither black nor white, Hind or Bhotiyal. We be all souls seeking escape’ ” (191). In Kim’s growing devotion to this man, who occasionally expresses bemused wonder that Kim is a Sahib, these teachings are quoted back at him: “ ‘Thou hast said there is neither black nor white. Why plague me with this talk, Holy One? Let me rub the other foot. It vexes me. I am not a Sahib. I am thy chela [disciple], and my head is heavy on my shoulders’ ” (243-4). The novel ends with the touching scene of the lama, as he rejoices at finding his River of purification, explaining to Kim that his chela’s eternal soul will also be free:

“Son of my Soul, I have wrenched my Soul back from the Threshold of Freedom to free thee from all sin-- as I am free, and sinless. Just is the Wheel! Certain is our deliverance. Come!”

He crossed his hands on his lap and smiled, as a man may who has won Salvation for himself and his beloved. (261)

Tempted as we are to content ourselves with this satisfying end, Kim’s employment within the Secret Service has just begun. Sweet as it is, his insistence that he is solely the lama’s chela will eventually be subordinated to the fact that he *is* a Sahib. And effective as it may be in washing away one’s sins, the currents of the lama’s River are not enough to combat the tides of ambivalence that unfurl greedy fingers around his chela.

After all of his dabbling and slumming in the native, Kipling ensures that it is impossible for the Little Friend of All the World to go native altogether, by preserving some essential Irishness that remains untouched by the native chaos that engulfs it. When his passage is arrested by a snake in his path, “ ‘I hate all snakes,’ said Kim. No native training can quench the white man’s horror of the Serpent” (38). His noble white blood contrasts with the cowardice of a native’s (41), enabling him to resist Huneefa’s spells (161), and harbors “every unknown Irish devil,” loosed upon the unlucky Russian who strikes him (218). He utilizes “the craft of his mother-country” (224), and is “Irish enough

by birth to reckon silver the least part of any game” (32). Yet Kim is just as much a native: he “could lie like any Oriental” (21), sleeps and squats native style, resigns himself “Oriental fashion, [to] time and chance” (95), “mechanically [follows] the huckster instinct of the East” (120), possesses “all the Oriental’s indifference to mere noise” (125) and dreams in Hindu. Most significantly, however, Kim exhibits this duality in the deepest, most essential, enduring part of him: “the Irish and the Oriental [co-exist] in his soul” (224). Despite this pairing in his soul, however, one half must always take precedence. Kipling provides a safety valve in Kim’s essential Irishness, and through the repetition of the qualifier “though” reiterates the following: “Though he was burned black as any native; though he spoke the vernacular by preference, and his mother-tongue in a clipped uncertain sing-song; though he consorted on terms of perfect equality with the small boys of the bazar; *Kim was white* [author’s emphasis]” (1). We are to extend this pattern throughout the narrative, and make it our mantra: *though* we see Kim engaged in activities that would seem to undermine it, *though* we might be perplexed, *though* he might seem to actually enjoy vagabonding as a native, make no mistake, Kim is white.

The lowly sweeper in Umballa perhaps sums it up best in describing Kim: “ ‘There is a white boy under a tree who is not a white boy’ ” (90). Kipling propels his hero from the bottom of the hierarchies to the top, and even manages to obtain salvation for his immortal soul in the process. His fear of schooling as a young boy has proven groundless; instead of preventing it, education has allowed him to be at the bottom and the top of, as well as inside and out of the hierarchies simultaneously, so that his life remains as wild as the Arabian Nights and he can still eat out of the same bowls as holy men. Kim’s future in Government service will be full of honors and glory, but only one half of the races and nations that make up his identity stand to reap the benefits.

-IV-

Denying the Native in the Desirable White Body in *Tarzan of the Apes*

For an American novel, Edgar Rice Burroughs' *Tarzan of the Apes* is curiously British. With the majority of the action set in an unspecified expanse of African jungle, the imprints of Tarzan's marooned parents, who precede all of the other major characters in treading these wilds, mark a path for the remainder of the novel's characters to follow. Before attending to the more alluring title character, therefore, we must alight upon this path of his parentage, and trace the means by which they came to this place.

Through the records at the British Colonial Office, the narrator confirms that,

a certain young English nobleman, whom we shall call John Clayton, Lord Greystoke, was commissioned to make a peculiarly delicate investigation of conditions in a British West African Colony from whose simple native inhabitants another European power was known to be recruiting soldiers for its native army, which it used solely for the forcible collection of rubber and ivory from the savage tribes along the Congo and the Aruwimi. (2)

Out of Clayton's commission comes all of the action in the novel. It is the first cause, the event from which all things spring in *Tarzan*. Yet after taking the trouble to relate how he came upon this knowledge-- moving from disbelief to the reluctant admission that "it *may* be true [emphasis in text]" once he considers the records from the Colonial Office, a battered diary later to be revealed as Clayton's, and measures this against the besotted narrative of his host who he first hears it from; and after informing the reader of his diligent efforts: "I give you the story as I painstakingly pieced it out from these several various agencies" (1), the narrator dismisses this background that he has so laboriously reassembled: "Why [Clayton] was sent, is, however, of little moment to this story" (2). Within this recovered information, however, are the British imperial interests that engender Tarzan-- both the character *and* the narrative itself; interests so natural and understandable as to appear unremarkable and commonplace. They fade, therefore, even further into the background-- a dissipation that begins with this swift dismissal of their import to the novel.

This banishing impulse towards “unimportant” details carries the experience of the native with it so that their servitude and enforced dependence upon the empire is elided, as well as the means by which the empire and Tarzan both depend upon the native, the African, the black, to maintain their positions of ascendancy and dominance.

First published in 1914, the novel’s depiction of the white, English man as the pinnacle of the evolutionary ladder reflects the influence that Darwinism exercised over Burroughs. Tarzan, raised by apes, is gradually differentiated away from them in his evolution from savage beast to aristocratic, white, English man; bypassing Africans, lower class white men, and noble white women along his way up the ladder. In this novel, as opposed to Cooper and Kipling’s, the native exists within the white body of Tarzan himself. The narrator’s constant referrals to the brownness of his skin and the stunning beauty of his muscles also draws attention to the desire elicited by them in the novel’s other white characters, both male and female. White/colonial desire for the native, then, is returned to the white body, a circle of narcissistic self-appreciation that denies the existence of the native entirely. Burroughs’ interest in a return to primitivism, however, is problematized by the primitive’s association with the African, the native that he wishes to deny. But like Cooper and Kipling before him, he finds a way to sidestep this through the use of hybridity.

In explaining why Clayton is sent on this assignment to the British colony, the narrator continues, “the Englishmen in Africa [said] that these poor blacks were held in virtual slavery . . . [Clayton’s] confidential instructions centered on a thorough investigation of the unfair treatment of black British subjects by the officers of a friendly European power” (2). It would appear that British subordination is preferable. But even with this hostile seizure of British subjects, who are forged into an army that pits African against African for the material benefit of this other European power, it still remains a “friendly” one. The tone of sarcasm here is overridden by the language of diplomacy in negotiating this contested land and labor: it is “a delicate and important commission in the service of the Queen” (3). That these kidnapped subjects are being used to fortify the ranks of another European power’s army makes this mission truly “delicate” in maintaining the territories and resources of competing empires.

The empire itself as a means of upward mobility for citizens of the metropolis can be seen in Clayton's glad acceptance of this commission: "political ambition had caused him to seek transference from the army to the Colonial Office," which he hopes will lead "to posts of greater importance and responsibility" (2-3). The historic conflicts between competing empires are further conveyed in the ironic wreckage of their ship on the island of St. Helena, a monument to British victory, where the vanquished Napoleon was sentenced to exile. This ship is "a vessel of the type often seen in coastwide trade in the far southern Atlantic" (3-4). Lines of commerce, trade, and profit intersect on the *Fuwalda*-- it is the interest of obtaining more profit, or at least keeping it, that animates this "peculiarly delicate investigation" (2). Labor is being bled away from this colony, and the land is slowly seized by the enslavement of its inhabitants-- this sly, steady taking of territory is what impels Clayton's visit. The fits and starts of an empire, expanding and maintaining its boundaries, sends him on his way.

Degeneration in Africa,
Regeneration in the Primitive

Lord Greystoke is well-fitted for his duties, a perfect specimen of British manliness: "a strong, virile man-- mentally, morally, and physically. In stature he was above the average height; his eyes were gray, his features regular and strong; his carriage that of perfect, robust health influenced by his years of army training" (2). For the business of empire, he is suited even better: "the type of Englishman that one likes best to associate with the noblest monuments of historic achievement upon a thousand victorious battles fields" (2). Yet even with such qualifications, the rigidity of this distinctively British masculinity ill-equips him for what transpires aboard this ship full of "the offscourings of the sea-- unhanged murderers and cutthroats of every race and every nation" (4). The narrator glosses over, giving only the slightest of ominous hints as to what sort of activities took place: "Clayton and his young wife witnessed scenes upon the deck of the *Fuwalda* such as they had believed were never enacted outside the covers of printed stories of the sea" (4). His preoccupation with honor and propriety seem dangerously out of touch in the zone of lawlessness and disintegrated boundaries aboard the *Fuwalda*: " 'Mutiny on the high sea may have been common a hundred years ago, but

in this good year 1888 it is the least likely of happenings,' ” he reassures his wife, Alice (9). The manliness that recommends him for this assignment is what proves to be his undoing on his way towards fulfilling it. Ignoring the signs which point to the precariousness of their situation, he stifles a request to be put aboard a passing British battle-ship: “[the officers] would but laugh in their sleeves and attribute his reason for wishing to leave the ship to but one thing-- cowardice” (7). Even after the boundary of their chambers and personal belongings is crossed by a mutineer searching for weapons, and after coolly observing the “short and grisly” work that the revolvers are put to against the officers of the *Fuwalda*, the absurdity of this brand of gentlemanly masculinity, with its reliance on propriety and good form aboard a mutinous ship full of murderers, places them in immediate peril (13). His earnest explanation to Alice, “ ‘We must not let them think we expect any but courteous treatment,’ ” is promptly followed by an attack from a crewman brandishing an axe (13).

This deficiency aboard the *Fuwalda* is more than amply made up for once Clayton and Alice are left behind on a stretch of the African coast. The sire of the mighty Tarzan, after all, must pass down the many saving traits of heredity so central to his heir’s ascendancy in the jungle and civilization. Away from the chaotic *Fuwalda*, Clayton’s masculinity reasserts itself as a steady pillar upon which Alice can lean as she cries uncontrollably: “ ‘There is but one thing to do, Alice,’ and he spoke as quietly as though they were sitting in their snug living room at home, ‘and that is work. Work must be our salvation. We must not give ourselves time to think, for in that direction lies madness.’ ” (18). He goes on to explain,

“Hundreds of thousands of years ago our ancestors of the dim and distant past faced the same problems which we must face, possibly in these same primeval forests. That we are here today evidences their victory.

What they did may we not do? And even better, for are we not armed with ages of superior knowledge, and have we not the means of protection, defense, and sustenance which science has given us, but of which they were totally ignorant? What they accomplished, Alice, with instruments and weapons of stone and bone, surely that may we accomplish also.” (19)

Alice understands completely what Clayton proposes: “ ‘I will do my best to be a brave primeval woman, a fit mate for the primeval man’ ” (19). In the jungle of Africa, they

move backwards into time, undergoing a devolution that brings with it a degeneration in class, for this English aristocrat and his wife are forced to turn their hands to work in order to survive. Their success, however, is part of Burroughs' intent to demonstrate the regenerative aspects of a return to primitivism in the novel. Balanced against his distaste for the effete artifice of civilization and modernity, his most persuasive argument for revitalization through the primitive is embodied in the virility and manliness of Tarzan himself. At this point in the novel, however, he has yet to be born. And far from being debased by working in Africa, his parents actually prosper and, for a time, live happily.

Out of the frightful, African jungle John Clayton carves out a domestic, English space in which he can provide for his wife, and where they may both live in comfort and safety. He is apparently able to add hunter, in addition to architect, potter and carpenter, to his list of accomplishments: "skins of lion and panther covered the floor. Cupboards and bookcases lined the walls. Odd vases made by his own hands from the clay of the region held beautiful tropical flowers . . . That he had been able to turn his hands at all to such unaccustomed labor was a source of mild wonder to him" (27). Other amenities include a bed and dining set in this quaint little cabin tucked away in the jungles of Africa. It is only a matter of time before a baby arrives to make this idyllic picture complete.

Black Beginnings: Tarzan's African Parentage

During America's history of slavery, the occurrence of inter-racial desire and its dusky progeny was sometimes explained by the startling of a white pregnant woman by a black man, usually a slave, who may have entered the room, for example, without the lady knowing it. In *Tarzan of the Apes*, Lady Alice sees something that "filled her soul with terror": a huge anthropoid ape and her husband both rushing towards her, each with a different purpose (25). "Screaming with rage and pain [after being shot by Alice], the ape flew at the delicate woman, who went down beneath him to merciful unconsciousness" (25-6). Clayton must pull Alice from underneath the lifeless bulk that has collapsed on top of her-- the suggestion of a consummated rape uncomfortably clear. Their son is born that very night, already "colored" by this attack from a great anthropoid ape.

In *The History of Race in Science: Great Britain 1800-1960*, Nancy Stepan

chronicles the means by which the Negro came to be associated with the ape. From the Great Chain of Being to the proliferation of the different branches of science in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries that increasingly found “evidence” of the Negro’s proximity to the ape on the evolutionary scale-- paleontology, physiology, anthropology and comparative anatomy to name a few-- “the association between man and ape was too deeply embedded . . . to disappear. Textbook after textbook compared the Negro to the ape” (18). “Burroughs was influenced by the current vogue for Darwin,” the editor of the Penguin Twentieth Century Classics edition of *Tarzan* informs us, which can easily be detected in the notions of survival of the fittest and natural selection, along with the concepts of evolution and the family of man in the text (xvi). Instances of phrenology and craniometry, the latter being what Stephen Jay Gould in *The Mismeasure of Man* calls “the leading numerical science of biological determinism during the nineteenth century,” also turn up (25): Kala, Tarzan’s adoptive mother has “a round, high forehead, which denoted more intelligence than most of her kind possessed” (31), while Kerchak, the boorish leader of the apes has a forehead “extremely low and receding” (30). Tarzan’s head, on the other hand is referred to as “well shaped” (53). Evolutionary science, for a time, posited that climate served as one of the major determining factors in the emergence of the different races of man. If whites remained long enough in the torrid conditions of Africa, the darkening of skin would accompany an acquired immunity to the diseases that visiting whites encountered there. We can see the persistence of this notion in *Tarzan of the Apes*: “the fever had not been a result of infection . . . but one of those that commonly attack whites in the jungles of Africa” (217). With all of these examples, it comes as no surprise, then, that Burroughs showcases his familiarity with these sciences by distributing the weight of their “findings” throughout the body of *Tarzan of the Apes*, the most obvious occurring in the various ways that a tribe of Africans and the tribe of anthropoids are linked together. Kerchak, the leader of the apes, is described as follows: “his nasty, close-set eyes gleamed hatred from beneath his shaggy brows, while his great canine fangs were bared in a horrid snarl” (25). Bloodshot and small, these eyes are set close to his “coarse, flat nose” (30). Tarzan’s first sighting of other humans, a troop of African warriors at the vanguard of several hundred villagers in search of a new place to settle, recalls the

fearsome, bizarre aspect of the king of the apes: “in their noses huge rings, while from the kinky wool of their heads protruded tufts of gay feathers . . . Their yellow teeth were filed to sharp points, and their great protruding lips added still further to the low and bestial brutishness of their appearance” (71). The use of the word “low” here delineates their position on the evolutionary scale. It also locates them within a discourse that constructs them as wanting in morality and civilization. In their ghastly body decorations, nose rings, tattoos, and feathered head-dress, the Africans are also linked with the apes in their monstrously primitive aspect.

Even more horrific, both tribes indulge in ritualized cannibalistic frenzies. The rites of the Dum-Dum for the apes, and the torture rituals in the village of the Africans are identical in their fierce dismemberment of their prey. In describing both practices, the apes and the Africans become indistinguishable. Compare, “as the noise and rapidity of the drum beats increased the dancers apparently became intoxicated with the wild rhythm and the savage yells. Their leaps and bounds increased, their bared fangs dripped saliva, and their lips and breasts were flecked with foam” (60), with “the bestial faces . . . the huge mouths and flabby hanging lips -- the yellow teeth, sharp filed-- the rolling demon eyes . . . Surely no such creatures really existed upon earth” (198). Though it really is of no consequence whether or not we can discern which is African and which is ape in these passages-- we are meant to see that they are virtually the same.

Tarzan, as part of Kerchak’s tribe, participates in the rending and devouring of flesh-- in the one case that we are shown, the body of a vanquished enemy from another tribe. But there is one crucial difference between the two rituals: the Africans’ prey is still alive when they set upon him. As he observes the torture of their victim, “Tarzan of the Apes, young and savage beast of the jungle, wondered at the cruel brutality of his own kind” (89). The narrative directs us to make this distinction between Tarzan, the apes and the blacks: even though Tarzan himself has participated with the apes in similar rites, though he is a “savage beast of the jungle,” and though the blacks are higher on the evolutionary scale than the apes, this “cruel brutality” makes them much worse than the anthropoids: “He saw that these people were more wicked than his own apes, and as savage and cruel as Sabor [the lioness], herself. Tarzan began to hold his own kind in but

low esteem” (90).

Differentiation through Darwinism

Luckily, the Africans are *not* his kind. Lest this English aristocrat be thought of as irredeemably lost owing to his upbringing with the apes-- who through these similarities in savagery, cannibalism and monstrous appearance, along with the pernicious notion that placed them next to one another in man's upward climb out of barbarity, link them together with the Africans-- the name he is given marks off his difference not only to the tribe but to the reader as well: “Tarzan . . . was the name they had given to the tiny Lord Greystoke . . . which meant ‘White-Skin’ ” (38). In effect, every time he is named, called or referred to, his whiteness is invoked to remind and reassure. Like Hawk-eye's compulsive declarations that he is a man with no cross in his blood, and Kipling's reliance on Kim's essential Irishness that resists contamination by all things native, Burroughs feels compelled to draw attention to his character's inviolable whiteness.

Tarzan's natural superiority among the apes is made more clear in the appropriately titled chapter “The White Ape”: “on the ground [he] could do many wonderful things which were beyond the powers of his little brothers and sisters . . . they often marveled at his superior cunning” (38), and “his higher intelligence resulted in a quickness of mental action far beyond the powers of the apes” (41). In the scene where he is drinking at the lake, an attack from Sabor catches his cousin unawares, while the “self-confidence and resourcefulness which were the badges of [Tarzan's] superior being,” enable him to escape with his life (41). Yet again, this superlative is used to describe Tarzan, making the fact of his ascendancy more clear: “His superior intelligence and cunning permitted him to invent a thousand diabolical tricks to add to the burdens of Tublat's life” (43). He alone excels in these skills: “What Tarzan did they tried to do also, but he alone originated and became proficient” (44).

“Tarzan held a peculiar position in the tribe,” the narrator tells us. “They seemed to consider him one of them and yet in some way different” (57). Beyond the obvious markers of outward appearance, along with the uneven rate of physical development-- the apes attain six foot proportions by the age of ten-- Burroughs, for the sake of his story,

means for us to believe that Tarzan, through his upbringing, really “is” an ape: “Tarzan of the Apes had a man’s figure and a man’s brain, but he was an ape by training and environment” (156). But this, as we have seen, brings worrisome associations with the Africans too close to our hero. Burroughs, then, gradually differentiates Tarzan away from them. He has already begun doing so with the apes since the English lord’s first arrival among them. But the following scene allows him to distance his character from both the Africans and their hirsute relations in one fell swoop, almost as if to jolt the reader out of any idle notions that Tarzan is an ape, or horrors, black. Avenging the death of his adopted mother, Kala, at the hands of an African warrior, Tarzan prepares to feast on the kill, as is the custom of the jungle. But,

Of a sudden, a strange doubt stayed his hand. Had not his books taught him that he was a man? And was not The Archer a man, also?

Did men eat men? Alas, he did not know. Why, then, this hesitancy! Once more he essayed the effort, but of a sudden a qualm of nausea overwhelmed him. He did not understand.

All he knew was that he could not eat the flesh of this black man, and thus hereditary instinct, ages old, usurped the functions of his untaught mind and saved him from transgressing a world-wide law of whose very existence he was ignorant. (80)

His growing awareness of himself as a man propels him further away from the apes. And the hidden promptings of civilized blood prevent him from embarking upon the damning practice of cannibalism that help to characterize the Africans as so irredeemably barbaric in the novel. That the human flesh he cannot bring himself to consume is black is also noteworthy. It marks the beginning of Tarzan’s awareness of the racial hierarchy and his place within it.

Tarzan’s distinction from the apes, beginning with his name, continues along an upward trajectory, as his natural superiority elevates him from the degeneration that his parents were forced to undergo years ago. With the progression of his education amongst the moldering books in the cabin, he comes to see his proper place in the jungle: “*Clothes* therefore, must be truly a badge of greatness; the insignia of the superiority of *man* over all other animals, for surely there could be no other reason for wearing the hideous things [*italics in text*]” (65). The shame that he once felt for his scrawny, hairless body next to his

mighty siblings evaporates: “now he was proud of his sleek skin for it betokened his descent from a mighty race” (65). After slaying Sabor the lioness with the divine tools of human technology, poison-tipped arrows from the Africans and the keen knife found in his father’s cabin, he proclaims his distinction to the tribe: “ ‘Who else among you has ever killed one of Numa’s people? Tarzan is the mightiest amongst you for Tarzan is no ape. Tarzan is--’ But here he stopped, for in the language of the anthropoids there was no word for man” (95). Kerchak cannot abide this overweening pride and finally challenges Tarzan to the fight that Burroughs has been setting up between them ever since the latter’s uneasy arrival into the tribe. Without his arrows, “he confronted Kerchak now with only his hunting knife and his superior intellect to offset the ferocious strength of his enemy” (96). It is this tool, however, this knife, “that had so often rendered him master of far mightier muscles than his own,” and Tarzan of the Apes wins Kerchak’s crown and the rightful position of dominance over the apes that is his privilege as a man (97). He soon grows impatient, however, with his new position, “he much preferred the peace and solitude of his cabin to the irksome duties of leadership amongst a horde of wild beasts” (102). And in the chapter titled “Man’s Reason,” Burroughs names that which truly separates him from the apes. Answering the challenge of the tribe’s bully for the throne, the narrator compares each combatant:

In the sum total of their points, however, the anthropoid had a shade the better of the battle, and had there been no other personal attribute to influence the final outcome, Tarzan of the Apes, the young Lord Greystoke, had died as he had lived-- an unknown savage beast in equatorial Africa.

But there was that which had raised him far above his fellows of the jungle-- that little spark which spells the whole vast difference between man and brute -- Reason. (103)

His decision to spare Terkoz stuns the apes: “deep in [their] minds . . . was rooted the conviction that Tarzan was a mighty fighter and a strange creature. Strange because he had had it in his power to kill his enemy, but had allowed him to live-- unharmed” (105-6). He leaves them at the end of this chapter, to go on to the next, entitled “His Own Kind.” But the narrator’s last words in “Man’s Reason” demonstrate Burroughs’ attempt to remove his hero from any lingering associations with the Africans as well: “And thus young Lord Greystoke took the first step toward the goal which he had set-- the finding of other white

men like himself" (106).

It is not so easy, however, for Tarzan to take this leap across eons of evolution from ape to white manhood, even as he boasts the blood of English aristocracy coursing through his veins. Instead, he can only go from savage beast to black man at this time. That is, after all, the next step up in the evolutionary scale. Before confronting the dilemma of whether or not he should eat human (black) flesh, he examines and admires the markings and attire of the dead African warrior: "never had he seen any other human being. The knife with its sheath and belt caught his eye; he appropriated them. A copper anklet also took his fancy, and this he transferred to his own leg . . . He investigated and appropriated the feathered head-dress" (79). It is a self-conscious evolution as the narrator describes it:

he determined to filch what few garments he could from one of the black men of Mbonga's village, for Tarzan of the Apes had decided to mark his evolution from the lower orders in every possible manner, and nothing seemed to him a more distinguishing badge of manhood than ornaments and clothing . . . he collected the various arm and leg ornaments he had taken from the black warriors . . . and donned them all after the way he had seen them worn. (107-8)

Poor Tarzan fashions this vaunted badge of manhood mistaking the Africans as the model he should emulate. The "greatest joy of all" comes in the form of "a handsome doeskin breechcloth" that he unceremoniously pulls from the body of a victim and places about himself: "Now indeed was he dressed as a man should be. None there was who could now doubt his high origin. How he should have liked to have returned to the tribe to parade before their envious gaze this wondrous finery" (109-10).

The Tantalizing Nut Brown Flesh: Desiring the Native in the White Body

Decked out with his head-dress and his doeskin cover-up, Tarzan cuts quite a figure. But there is a much more immediate, heart palpitating reference that the narrator returns to again and again that blurs the boundaries between black and white: his tight, tawny body. Unlike Kim, whose skin is burned black like a native's, Burroughs cannot bring himself to allow the setting of equatorial Africa to affect his hero's skin beyond a comely brown. For the litany of "White-Skin" chanted each time that Tarzan is named,

there seems to be a counterpoint of brown skin offered up in return. At the commencement of his education among the books and relics in the cabin we find him, “squatting upon his haunches on the table top . . . his smooth, brown, naked little body bent over the book” (53). While during the rites of the Dum-Dum, “his brown, sweat-streaked, muscular body, glistening in the moonlight, shone supple and graceful among the uncouth, awkward, hairy brutes about him” (60). When he dons the diamond studded golden locket that he finds in the cabin, again, “in imitation of the ornamentation he had seen to be so common among the black men,” the narrator contrasts “the brilliant stones [gleaming] strangely against his smooth, brown hide” (88). References to the appetizing brownness of his flesh always seem to come during his fight scenes. Against Tublat, his adoptive father, our young stud is momentarily leapt upon by his attacker, “but his fangs never closed in that nut brown flesh” (63). In the battle for kingship of the apes, “the young lord’s sinewy fingers were at Kerchak’s [throat] before the cruel fangs could close on the sleek brown skin” (96). And perhaps the most visibly excited description of his body comes from Jane, whose desire to have a helping of the delectable flesh will be discussed shortly. She defends his good name, and apparently his good body, from speculations that he might be villainous: “ ‘Could you have seen those mighty muscles knotting under the brown skin-- could you have seen them force back those awful fangs-- you too would have thought him invincible’ ” (226). Unlike the black flesh of the warrior that discourages consumption, Tarzan looks good enough to eat.

His physical beauty is lavished with even more loving detail. With “handsome lips” (82), he throws back “his fine young head [and] roared out the awful challenge of the victorious bull ape” (94). The narrator even appears somewhat inflamed in the following passage where his body is described:

His straight and perfect figure, muscled as the best of the ancient Roman gladiators must have been muscled, and yet with the soft and sinuous curves of a Greek god, told at a glance the wondrous combination of enormous strength with suppleness and speed

With the noble poise of his handsome head upon those broad shoulders, and the fire of life and intelligence in those fine, clear eyes, he might readily have typified some demi-god of a wild and warlike bygone people of his ancient forest. (108)

Consider that right at this moment, almost halfway through the novel, this buxom young throwback to the lusty ancient gods is buck naked. Burroughs gives his readers a not-so-small thrill and a scandalized flush of the skin, as all of the swinging that Tarzan does through the trees now takes on added resonance. The first time that his cousin, William Clayton, lays eyes upon him in the jungle, his physical beauty takes on phallic proportions. Once more, a fight scene is used to make the point: "The man before him was the embodiment of physical perfection and giant strength, yet it was not upon these he depended in his battle with the great cat . . . To his agility, to his brain and to his long keen knife he owed his supremacy" (126). And in yet another battle scene, this time with Sabor, "the steel forearms" secure the lioness in a full-Nelson. Clayton is once more treated to a show that most modern readers would have to offer a handful of dollar bills in order to see: "At last Clayton saw the immense muscles of Tarzan's shoulders and biceps leap into corded knots beneath the silver moonlight" (136). His admiring cousin ventures to say what the narrator could not-- that he *is* a god-- as he reassures Jane:

"Do not tell me that human throat voiced that hideous and fearsome shriek."

"But it did, Miss Porter," replied Clayton; "or at least if not a human throat that of a forest god."

And then he told her of his experiences with this strange creature-- of how twice the wild man had saved his life -- of the wondrous strength, and agility, and bravery-- *of the brown skin and handsome face* [emphasis added]. (137)

This curious need to relate these particulars of his physical appearance-- the brownness of his skin along with his good looks-- also appears in a letter that Jane pens to her friend Hazel, in which she rhapsodizes about "the wonderful creature who rescued us . . . he is a perfectly god-like white man tanned to a dusky brown; with the strength of a wild elephant, the agility of a monkey, and the bravery of a lion" (164). She finds it necessary to mention that this creature is a tanned *white* man, perhaps anxious that her friend might take any thing with these abilities in the African jungles to be black. Unlike Kim, all of the characters who encounter Tarzan recognize him immediately as a white man. From the apes who dub him "White-Skin," to the African warriors, to Jane's party of bewildered cabin-mates, no character in the novel ever mistakes him to be black-- a recurring example for the reader to follow.

The abundance of descriptions outlining his physical beauty do not stop here. Jane cannot bear to look at his face for too long: "Once he looked down into her eyes and smiled, and the girl had to close her own to shut out the vision of that handsome, winning face" (183). It is one of "extraordinary beauty. A perfect type of the strongly masculine, unmarred by dissipation, or brutal or degrading passions" (182), enough to allay Jane's terrors: "When, with closed eyes, she commenced to speculate upon the future, and terrifying fears were conjured by a vivid imagination, she had but to raise her lids and look upon that noble face so close to hers to dissipate the last remnant of apprehension" (183). Foregoing the image of a pagan forest-god suggested by the narrator and voiced by Clayton, she sees him as embodying a more Judeo-Christian perfection:

as she looked up at his great figure towering above her, there was added a strange sense of perfect security . . . She noted the graceful majesty of his carriage, the perfect symmetry of his magnificent figure and the poise of his well shaped head upon his broad shoulders.

What a perfect creature! There could be naught of cruelty or baseness beneath that godlike exterior. Never, she thought had such a man strode the earth since God created the first in his own image. (184)

The Frenchman, D'Arnot, confers the same beneficence of heart upon seeing this brown-skinned Adam come to his rescue: "D'Arnot was reassured . . . he felt that that face could not mask a cruel heart" (201). Although Jane's appreciation of Tarzan's physique helps to decoy the homoeroticism of other males' gazes away-- whether the reader, characters in the novel, or Burroughs himself-- it slips its way back in to peep through the white men in the novel as they sneak furtive glances at him. Enclosed in his tight embrace while being carried through the trees, his cousin is free to regard his marbly hardness: "From the first sensation of chilling fear Clayton passed to one of keen admiration and envy of those giant muscles and that wondrous instinct or knowledge which guided this forest god through the inky blackness of the night" (133). After he is rescued from the Africans' torture, D'Arnot examines him more closely: "His face was very handsome-- the handsomest, thought D'Arnot, that he had ever seen" (214). And the priest at the remote outpost that Tarzan and D'Arnot set sail for France from cannot help himself either: "Father Constantine took the hand which Tarzan extended in imitation of the priest's act, while the latter took in the superb physique and handsome face in one quick, keen glance" (241). All, it would seem,

swoon before his brown, muscled beauty. Even his writing is pleasing to the eye: “the ape-man snatched up a piece of paper, and with a pencil printed on it for a few moments until it bore several lines of strong, well-made, almost letter-perfect characters” (113).

Muscle Over Mind and Racial Polarization

Despite all of this parading about of naked, brown flesh that captivates the gaze of all who encounter him, Burroughs attempts to divert attention back to what really matters. From out of D’Arnot’s mouth, we hear the narrator echoed from the chapter “Man’s Reason”: “ ‘you will realize that it is mind, and not muscle, that makes the human animal greater than the mighty beasts of your jungle . . . Otherwise, Tarzan of the Apes, how long would you have lasted in the savage wilderness?’ ” (237). The ape-man concurs. And earlier in the novel, the narrator offers this opinion: “Man’s survival does not hinge so greatly upon the perfection of his senses. His power to reason has relieved them of many of their duties” (174). But as already demonstrated by the numerous references to it in the novel, Tarzan’s body is infinitely more appealing than his mind. His miraculous muscles are capable of suspending that which is celebrated in the novel as the one thing that elevates us high above the beasts-- reason: Jane “could not analyze her feelings, nor did she wish to attempt it” (185), “she could not understand it. Her reason told her that she should be torn by wild anxieties, weighted by dread fears, cast down by gloomy forebodings; but instead, her heart was singing and she was smiling into the answering face of the man beside her” (191).

Since he wears and utilizes the accoutrements of the Africans, Tarzan can easily be mistaken for an ally to these ebon beasts-- though, again, never one of them: “ ‘He is a strange, half-savage creature of the jungle,’ ” Clayton reminds Jane. “ ‘We know nothing of him. He neither speaks nor understands any European tongue-- and his ornaments and weapons are those of the West Coast savages’ ” (205). Provoked by jealousy when he notices Jane’s fervent loyalty to the muscled giant, he even encourages Jane’s father and the French officers’ to speculate upon whether or not he might be a member of the tribe. For the contemporary reader, however, who knows better, but still might be entertaining fears that Tarzan is still too closely associated with the Africans, Burroughs provides the

equivalent of the menacing drummer-boy who accuses Kim of speaking like a nigger in the schoolyard at Umballa: lessons in how to be a white man.

At various points in the novel, Burroughs utilizes the term “race” in its widest, most inclusive sense: to refer to the human race. Take for example, “he was of a different race from his wild and hairy companions. He was a M-A-N, they were A-P-E-S” (56). At times, he uses it in the sense of one’s ancestral stock: “In his veins, though, flowed the blood of the best of a race of mighty fighters” (48). And then there is the odd usage of it here: “ ‘And could you have seen the chivalrous treatment which he accorded a strange girl of a strange race, you would feel the absolute confidence in him that I feel’ ” (226). Early in the novel, Tarzan’s understanding of race falls within the first of these definitions, encompassing all of humanity: as he chases the warrior, he thinks to himself with barely suppressed excitement, “Could it be that he was trailing a MAN-- one of his own race?” (75). He is fascinated once he finds the African village, “lured by a fever of curiosity to behold animals of his own kind” (81). But the narrator quickly modifies this by pointing out the stern jungle ethics that dictate his loyalties: “Tarzan of the Apes was no sentimentalist. He knew nothing of the brotherhood of man. All things outside his own tribe were his deadly enemies” (81). At this point in the novel, his allegiance remains with the apes, but as he learns to see himself as a man, Tarzan’s loyalties shift to whites. His understanding of race goes through a process of refinement and distillation until the concept of it splits and polarizes, and superiority comes to settle more on one side than the other.

The awareness of his whiteness brings with it an attendant antagonism towards blacks. In the notice he attaches to the cabin door he writes, “THIS IS THE HOUSE OF TARZAN, THE KILLER OF BEASTS AND MANY BLACK MEN” (115). And in the scene where D’Arnot is dragged into the village of the Africans to be tortured,

Tarzan had looked with complacency upon their former orgies, only occasionally interfering for the pleasure of baiting the blacks; but heretofore their victims had been men of their own color.

Tonight it was different-- white men, men of Tarzan’s own race-- might be even now suffering the agonies of torture in that grim, jungle fortress. (199)

The manner in which Burroughs frames this scene is particularly interesting. Tapping into one of the more enduring tropes that encapsulates what civilized (white) men may

encounter in the savage regions of the world-- the white man's predicament, bound in a simmering cauldron surrounded by dancing natives, has found its way into comic strips, variety shows and cartoons-- he dramatizes the scene thus: "And then began for the French officer the most terrifying experience which man can encounter upon earth-- the reception of a white prisoner into a village of African cannibals" (197). This is no joke however. Burroughs means for us to feel the horror of D'Arnot's plight. In the ghastly details of his torture, the drawn out torment of being beaten with stones and fists, clothes torn, his naked body spit upon, insults hurled and weakened by several spear wounds that cause the blood to leak slowly from out of his body, the bestiality of the Africans measured against the noble innocence of the white man is assured. But Burroughs appends a puzzling passage here. After he sets up the scene as "the most terrifying" for a white man, he writes the following:

To add to the fiendishness of their cruel savagery was the poignant memory of *still crueller barbarities* practiced upon them and theirs by the white officers of that arch hypocrite, Leopold II of Belgium, because of whose atrocities they had fled the Congo Free State-- a pitiful remnant of what once had been a mighty tribe [emphasis added]. (197-8)

Their once mighty numbers decimated by the "atrocities" of a hypocritical king who perpetrated "crueller barbarities" against them? Rarely does Burroughs use such forceful language in the service of the Africans-- one might even be persuaded to excuse their barbarity. But this awareness of the chain of cruelty and abuse that originates with these white men is not enough to alter the more immediate horror of the oppositions that he has set up in the village of white vs. black, civilized vs. savage, eaters vs. eaten. Nor does Burroughs wish it to be.

Anglo Superiority and French Civility

As Tarzan learns to distinguish the savage and barbaric from the enlightened and civilized, the differences between white and black become more clearly delineated. Like the plummeting Indians in *The Last of the Mohicans*, D'Arnot witnesses two very different descents from the trees: "the black came sprawling to earth again-- to lie very quietly where he had fallen. Immediately after him came a white body, but this one alighted erect" (201).

Interestingly, it is often through D'Arnot's subject position-- the man responsible for civilizing the ape-man-- that attention is drawn to Tarzan's whiteness. In the chapter "Brother Men," the Frenchman hazily remembers "the strange white figure in whose arms he had sunk into oblivion" (213). He blearily regards his savior as he recovers from a fever: "The broad muscular back was turned toward him, but tanned though it was, D'Arnot saw that it was the back of a white man, and he thanked his God" (214). Firing a shot at the figure who startles him in the deserted cabin once they finally return, "suddenly in the half dusk of the open door [D'Arnot] saw that the man was white . . . [and] that he had shot his friend and protector Tarzan," eliciting "a cry of anguish" from the affrighted Frenchman (231). The delay of D'Arnot's recovery and the suspicion of Tarzan's alliance with the Africans spurs Jane's party and the French officers to leave after having waited a sufficient amount of time for them to return. When they come upon the two letters left for them in the cabin, D'Arnot wonders "how strange it seemed that to a fullgrown white man an envelope was a mystery" (232). Contained in each letter, one from Clayton and the other from Jane, are references to Tarzan as, "the strange white man who saved our lives so many times" (222), and "the great white giant who wore the diamond locket upon his chest" (233). Burroughs prompts the reader to take note of Tarzan's whiteness more and more.

In relating Clayton's feelings towards Jane, the narrator informs us: "the girl was not only of his own kind and race, but was the one woman in all the world whom he loved" (135). Once he learns to speak, one of the first questions Tarzan asks D'Arnot is if " 'any white men live in Africa?' " and " 'where are the nearest?' " (234). When he discovers that Jane has left without him, we see the same pairing of race and gender that Kim must learn to negotiate at Umballa: "Never would he see his own kind again . . . He would leave that forever behind him with the great hopes he had nursed of finding his own race and becoming a man among men" (219). Like a child, Tarzan's untutored understanding of race relations prompts him to draw his bow against some unsuspecting blacks working in the fields at the outpost he and D'Arnot travel to in order to leave for Europe: " 'Maybe they are friends,' suggested D'Arnot.

'They are black,' was Tarzan's only reply.

And again he drew back his shaft” (240).

It is up to D’Arnot to teach him how to be a white man for all of the different social situations they find themselves in from now on: “ ‘You must not, Tarzan! . . . White men do not kill wantonly. *Mon Dieu!* but you have much to learn’ ” (240). In *The Last of the Mohicans*, we see in Heyward’s salutation to Hawk-eye how greetings can provide us with the opportunity of observing how a character declares and establishes allegiance to the querying party. To Hawk-eye’s inquiry of “ ‘Who comes hither, among the beasts and dangers of the wilderness?’ ” Heyward replies: “ ‘Believers in religion, and friends to the law and to the king’ ” (36). This response marks Heyward as civilized, in his deference to religion, as well as obeisant to the white English men who make and enforce the law through the sanction of the crown. Compare this to D’Arnot’s response to Father Constantine’s question when they arrive at the outpost: “ ‘What manner of men are you?’ he asked in French.

‘White men,’ replied D’Arnot” (241). Apparently this is sufficient for Burroughs to indicate where one stands in his novel. The only oppositions he is interested in are white vs. black, and the collection of binaries that cluster around it: ruler/ruled, superior/inferior and so on. At the outpost, Tarzan’s lessons in the proper roles for white and black continue, with the addition of gender, class and nation as well: “For a week they remained there, and the ape-man, keenly observant, learned much of the ways of men; while black women sewed upon white duck garments for himself and D’Arnot that they might continue their journey properly clothed” (242). The inhabitants of the outpost pay D’Arnot the respect and honor that his position in the French army commands, while a keenly observant Tarzan espies what title and wealth can accomplish in the realm of the human race: servile black women swaddle him in white to be delivered into the civilized world.

The Clayton Precedent

Burroughs aptly titles the next chapter “The Height of Civilization.” From savage beast to savage man to white man, Tarzan’s evolution up from the state of devolution his parents suffered is complete. Through the convention of gratitude he is also able to bypass the class degeneration, brought about by the need to work, that was wrought upon his

parents. D'Arnot inquires,

“How will you get to America without money?” . . .

“How do men get money?” [Tarzan] asked at last.

“They work for it.”

“Very well. I will work for it, then”

“No, my friend,” returned D'Arnot, “you need not worry about money, nor need you work for it. I have enough for two-- enough for twenty. Much more than is good for one man and you shall have all you need if ever we reach civilization.”(235)

For D'Arnot, Tarzan's jungle skills and bravery, those magnificent muscles, and most of all, his whiteness, work upon his sense of gratitude and spur him on to do all he can to bring the ape-man into civilization. With these characteristics, the English and African parentage intermingled in Tarzan can be seen: the survival skills in the jungle that shape his body into such stunning proportions are coupled with an unequivocal whiteness and nobility of blood that exercises untold influence upon the savagery of his darker half. “ ‘You are pure man,’ ” D'Arnot conjectures. “ ‘and, I should say, the offspring of highly bred and intelligent parents’ ” (238). Here now, may we discuss the peculiar feeling of repetition, of *déjà vu*, in this novel. Let us return to the source, these highly bred and intelligent parents, and map out how their resemblances can be picked out in the characters that follow them.

In their personality traits John Clayton and William Cecil Clayton, Tarzan's cousin, are predictably similar. Both are composed of the same steely English mettle, well-formed, upright and honorable, though the fortitude of the former seems to be a bit diluted in the blood of his nephew, William. Calm and dispassionate, John is able to confront the raging captain of the *Fuwalda* “never [turning] a hair, but . . . eyeing the excited man with level gaze” (9). He watches the frightful results of mutiny on the ship unflinchingly, and is “himself brave and fearless, yet . . . able to appreciate the awful suffering which fear entails-- a rare gift” (21). William, on the other hand, after getting himself lost in the jungle and attacked by a lion, cannot fathom whether his rescuing cousin is a threat or not, and gives himself up unprotestingly: “The Englishman, finally concluding that he was a prisoner, saw no alternative open but to accompany his captor” (127). The narrator contrasts Tarzan's victory cry over Sabor with William's feeble utterances: “And in London another Lord Greystoke was speaking to *his* kind in the House of Lords, but none trembled

at the sound of his soft voice [*italics in text*]” (94). This thinning of Greystoke blood between cousins only emphasizes John Clayton’s hereditary attributes passed down to Tarzan even more. And it allows Burroughs to contrast the frailty of civilization versus the regenerative vigor of primitivism that began in the Claytons’ prosperity in the jungle. Although in fairness to William, he is not entirely bereft of courage as seen in his demand that Jane and her father be treated with courtesy by the pirates who have brought them to the jungle. Ultimately, there is no shortage of English manliness in the Greystoke line-- the most potent stream is passed directly from John Clayton to his son Tarzan.

Lady Alice and Jane Porter are also very similar. Level-headed and prudent, Alice is the perfect colonial wife, who places her husband’s duty above her own welfare and safety aboard the ill-fated *Fuwalda*:

“Duty is duty, my husband, and no amount of sophistries may change it. I would be a poor wife for an English lord were I to be responsible for his shirking a plain duty. I realize the danger which must follow [from disclosing to the captain the crew’s designs for mutiny], but I can face it with you-- face it much more bravely than I could face the dishonor of always knowing that you might have averted a tragedy had you not neglected your duty.” (8)

Her advice that John preserve the anonymity of the individual who slips a letter under their chamber door, warning them not to interfere in the mutiny, is sensible and wise, very likely prolonging their lives on the ship. And of course, she dutifully follows her man into degeneration once they land upon the African wilderness. In Jane Porter, we find virtue and “delicate . . . snowy skin” (157). Her hardy sensibility is contrasted against the buffoonery of her colored waiting woman, Esmerelda, whose cowardice and mangling of the English language Burroughs turns to the purposes of comic relief. Upon discovering the remains of the Claytons in the cabin, Esmerelda lets loose “a shriek of terror . . . and like a frightened child the huge black ran to bury her face on her mistress’ shoulder.” For Jane however, “there was no panic in her fright” (120). When Sabor assails the women in the cabin, “the negress sobbed hysterically . . . while the white girl, dry-eyed and outwardly calm, was torn by inward fears and forebodings” (128). In her marriage to William, at least, this man-like strength makes up for his lack.

Similarities can be also found in the means by which both parties end up in the

jungle: each mission is motivated by an interest in attaining or maintaining profit. Recall the British imperial interests in land and labor that comprise John Clayton's "delicate investigation" for the queen. In Jane's letter to Hazel, we learn the truth behind the Porter expedition: to claim the bounty of a Spanish galleon that has been buried near the west coast of Africa. Jane's father has borrowed ten thousand dollars from one Robert Canler in order to finance their trip, offering his daughter in return as security. Property, whether it be colonized land and the subjects who live there, or the homosocial trade in women between men, lies at the heart of what brings them all to the jungle.

Like Kipling who bestows an essential Irishness upon his young hero, Burroughs relies heavily upon the traits passed down from his father to explain Tarzan's ascension and superiority. We have already seen how it prevents him from tasting of the forbidden (black) flesh of another man, and how his blood burns with the fire of great ancestral fighters, but it is the gentling influence of a woman that coaxes the gentleman out of him in the chapter entitled "Heredity":

taking the locket in his hand, [he] stooped gravely like some courtier of old, and pressed his lips upon it where hers had rested.

It was a stately and gallant little compliment performed with the grace and dignity of utter unconsciousness of self. It was the hall-mark [sic] of his aristocratic birth, the natural outcropping of many generations of fine breeding, an hereditary instinct of graciousness which a lifetime of uncouth savage training and environment could not eradicate . . . Now in every fiber of his being, heredity spoke louder than training.

He had not in one swift transition become a polished gentleman from a savage ape-man, but at last the instincts of the former predominated, and over all was the desire to please the woman he loved, and to appear well in her eyes. (189-90)

Protector and provider for the woman he loves, Tarzan, like his father, revels in his newfound role: he "derived the greatest pleasure of his life in hunting meat for these strangers. It seemed to him that no pleasure on earth could compare with laboring for the welfare and protection of the beautiful white girl" (165). Fearless and resourceful, the noble blood of the father sings within the veins of his son.

The most significant precedent, however, that the Claytons set for those who come after them is that of devolution. Just as the Native Americans represent metonymically the American wilderness in *The Last of the Mohicans*, Tarzan, through his associations with

the Africans and the apes, comes to represent the jungle in Burroughs' novel. Though differentiated away from them, Tarzan still retains enough of their influence, both within and without to serve this function. In his feathery head-dress, breechcloth, African trinkets and arms, his woodcraft and upbringing, he embodies the savage and forbidden that beckons from the dark jungles of Africa, seducing whites to revert to a primitive state of degeneracy. Body over mind. There is nothing but the body in this jungle. And time after time it is Tarzan's splendid proportions that flex and ripple before us. Like the phallic, externalized violence stripped bare in the naked Indians of Cooper's novel, and the beloved landscape of India itself in *Kim*, Tarzan's body becomes a spectacle in its muscular brownness. Burroughs cannot get enough of describing it. His characters cannot get enough of looking at it. Desire for it, both from women and men, is more overt as opposed to desire for the racial other in *The Last of the Mohicans* and *Kim* because now it is directed towards something safe: the white body. Here, there is the appearance of savagery with the assurance of whiteness. Like Kim with his dyed flesh, Tarzan's brownness is only a tint that sits on his skin, easily eradicated and ultimately inconsequential to the hereditary whiteness glittering underneath. But it marks him as part of Africa. Although Hawk-eye has no difficulty in the confidence and conviction of his whiteness, Tarzan, like Kim who drowns in a sea of identity confusion, is aware on some level of the degenerative effects of the jungle, fearing that he too will be altered. Evolving to a higher plane means that he can just as easily fall back into hairy ape-hood:

He was worried because he had no clothing to indicate to all the jungle folks that he was a man and not an ape, and grave doubt often entered his mind as to whether he might not yet become an ape.

Was not hair commencing to grow upon his face? All the apes had hair upon theirs, but the black men were entirely hairless, with very few exceptions.

True, he had seen pictures in his books of men with great masses of hair upon lip and cheek and chin, but, nevertheless, Tarzan was afraid. Almost daily he whetted his keen knife and scraped and whittled at his young beard to eradicate this degrading emblem of apehood. (108-9)

The apprehension he feels has the effect of gathering up any similar distress that the contemporary reader might have concerning Tarzan's status as a white man, the uncertainty of race and loyalty that his hybrid condition creates and that is given voice by the

suspicious French officers later in the novel. By confronting these collected anxieties in the narrative directly, they are reconfigured into a harmless form that only reinforces Tarzan's charming naiveté: oh, silly ape-man, the reader might say, frightened by something as natural to all men as facial hair. In this way, the doubts created by Tarzan's hybridity and the degenerative influence of the African jungle are overcome. He will not devolve by remaining there. The whiteness that Burroughs places such significance in is, once more--like Hawk-eye's compulsive and continual declarations that he is a man without a cross--assured.

Taking Pleasure in Tarzan's Body:
Jane and A-Tingle

There is a correspondence between Tarzan's striking body representing the jungle, and the jungle itself becoming a body, which on its own, can penetrate and consume. D'Arnot is swallowed whole when "suddenly a half dozen black warriors arose about him . . . before he could draw his revolver he had been pinioned and dragged into the jungle" (196). And each time the beasts attack, there is some mention of fangs sinking into flesh. The suggestion of Lady Alice's "rape" by an anthropoid is returned to once again when her lifeless body is discovered upon the bed by Kerchak: "Gingerly he lifted one corner of the shroud, but when he saw the body of the woman beneath he tore the cloth roughly from her form and seized the still, white throat in his huge, hairy hands . . . his fingers sink deep into the cold flesh" before he realizes that she is dead (33). When Tarzan brings Jane to the clearing where the apes danced in the ritual of the Dum-Dum, he leaves her momentarily and without warning to forage for fruit: "she glanced nervously about. Every vine and bush seemed but the lurking-place of some huge and horrible beast waiting to bury its fangs in her soft flesh. Every sound she magnified into the stealthy creeping of a sinuous and malignant body" (185). She senses on some level that at any moment she might be taken by the jungle: "Who could be this new suitor? If he were another of the wild denizens of this terrible forest what might he not do to claim her?" (212). But there is something unusual in the reactions of both Lady Alice and Jane Porter to this beastly jungle that aches to rend and consume their flesh. As the ape she has just shot grabs hold of Lady Alice in his steely grip, "[she] went down beneath him to merciful unconsciousness" (26).

Jane, too, faints dead away after firing a shot at Sabor, as the lioness rips her way into the cabin: “[Sabor] saw her prey . . . lying senseless upon the floor; there was no longer any resistance to be overcome. Her meat lay before her” (131). The men, on the other hand, exhibit a more conscious form of dread to this threat of penetration:

“It was not the roaring and growling of the big beasts that effected [sic] me so much as it was the stealthy noises . . . the unaccountable sounds as of a great body moving almost noiselessly, and the knowledge that you didn’t *know* how close it was, or whether it were creeping closer after you ceased to hear it? It was those noises-- and the eyes.

Mon Dieu! I shall see them in the dark forever-- the eyes that you see, and those that you don’t see, but feel; ah, they are the worst [italics in text].” (227)

The greedy appraisal of these eyes is “the worst,” for it renders them passive before the undetectable penetration of the jungle.

What is it about this place that works this black magic on the white women who are left there, fainting before they are to be consumed, falling so readily into unconsciousness? Tarzan is the embodiment of what Burroughs cannot bring himself to say: savagery is sexy. Jane begs to be transformed: “ ‘Beast?’ she murmured. ‘Then God make me a beast; for man or beast, I am yours’ ” (206). Besides permitting contemporary readers to indulge the forbidden desires of inter-racial relations, there is the added thrill of class transgression that crooks its finger at admiring readers. And, because of the manner in which Burroughs deliciously frames Tarzan’s body again and again, we cannot help but admire it. Unmannered and crude, with his swarthy skin, his muscles and incoherent speech-- along with the class degeneration that he has inherited from his parents-- Tarzan bears the marks of the working class upon his massive bulk.

Between Tublat, the abducting ape, and Jane, Burroughs provides another hint of sex-- yet another similarity between her and Lady Alice who is attacked, both while she is alive and dead, by a rampaging anthropoid. But like Magua’s interest in Cora in *The Last of the Mohicans*, these discomfiting relations, whether between an Indian male and a somewhat dusky white female in Cooper’s work, or between an anthropoid ape-- who is linked with the Africans-- and a white female in Burroughs’, these horrifying possibilities are presented domestically: “ ‘When Magua left his people, his wife was given to another chief . . . Let the daughter of the English chief follow, and live in his wig-wam for ever’ ”

(104). And in *Tarzan*, when Tublat seizes Jane,

she was dragged toward those awful fangs which yawned at her throat. But ere they touched that fair skin another mood claimed the anthropoid.

The tribe had kept his women. He must find others to replace them. This hairless white ape would be the first of his new household . . . (172)

These alarming situations titillate without ever subjecting these women to explicit sexual harm, though in the case of Magua, his carnal intentions are compressed into a look. The clearest indication that Burroughs gives us about inter-racial relations is foreshadowed when Tarzan flattens himself against the wall of a hut as an African woman gropes in the darkness for a cooking pot, unaware of his presence there: “so close was she now that the ape-man felt the animal warmth of her naked body” (91). Jane is the one through which Burroughs expresses the logical progression of this scene when she falters in her conviction and considers that Tarzan might be a part of the African tribe after all: “if he belonged to some savage tribe he had a savage wife-- a dozen of them perhaps-- and wild, half-caste children. The girl shuddered, and when they told her that the cruiser would sail the morrow she was almost glad” (230). Along with the racial and class transgressive thrill of desiring Tarzan’s brown body so openly, Burroughs provides further excitement in these various allusions to inter-racial relations. In the passage cited above in which Tublat seizes Jane, notice the threat of penetration to her fair and white skin-- one out of several instances in which her race and complexion is foregrounded, adding to the increased awareness of race that turns up in the latter portion of the novel.

All of this attention to bodies in the text also includes the apes. Kerchak is described as standing “nearly seven feet . . . on his short legs. His enormous shoulders were bunched and rounded with huge muscles. The back of his short neck was as a single lump of iron sinew which bulged beyond the base of his skull, so that his head seemed like a small ball protruding from a huge mountain of flesh” (95). This description takes place during his skirmish with Tarzan, which gives the narrator another opportunity to shower the ape-man with ecstatic awe: “Awaiting him stood Tarzan, himself a mighty muscled animal, but his six feet of height and great rolling sinews seemed pitifully inadequate to the ordeal which awaited them” (96). Something about the violence in these encounters

triggers such excited, lingering descriptions of flesh. In *The Desirable Body*, Jon Stratton cites an article by Steve Neale called “Masculinity as Spectacle”: “Neale writes: ‘ . . . in a heterosexual and patriarchal society, the male body cannot be marked explicitly as the erotic object of another male look; that look must be motivated in some other way, its erotic component repressed’ ” (181). Though both writers are discussing modern films such as the “Rambo” series, their arguments can be applied to Burroughs’ novel as well. Stratton picks up Neale’s reasoning and continues, “Thus, for example, the sadism and mutilation which often occur in [these] films . . . provide a way of repressing homoerotic desire and of disqualifying the male body from being an object of erotic contemplation” (181). Recall that the majority of the descriptions of Tarzan’s brown flesh and the sublime beauty of his muscles occur during scenes of physical combat-- scenes akin to the beauty and manliness of war in *The Last of the Mohicans*, in which Hawk-eye (re-)confirms his manly identity. And it is during the battle with Tublat in which the ape-man’s muscles leap along Jane’s astonished gaze into some deep, dark part of her, to pull her into a state of primitivism:

[she] watched the primordial ape battle with the primeval man for possession of a woman-- for her.

As the great muscles of the man’s back and shoulders knotted beneath the tension of his efforts, and the huge biceps and forearm held at bay those mighty tusks, the veil of centuries of civilization and culture was swept from the blurred vision of the Baltimore girl.

When the long knife drank deep a dozen times of Terkoz’s heart’s blood, and the great carcass rolled lifeless upon the ground, it was a primeval woman who sprang forward with outstretched arms toward the primeval man who had fought for and won her. (175)

Wondrous brawn indeed to incite a woman to devolve at the slightest bulging of a bicep. All propriety thrown aside, she permits this naked stranger to kiss her as they stand in this steamy embrace. The fact that this reaction occurs in a woman disarms the homoeroticism of the sly glances thrown his way by the men of the novel, including any male readers, while still allowing her appreciation of his body to serve as a voyeuristic window for these men to maintain their gaze uninterrupted and unthreatened.

Jane is the only one out of all the landing party to devolve because she is the only one that Burroughs can allow to feel such intense, pronounced desire for Tarzan’s body. Though the men look, that is all they can do-- and even this must be done surreptitiously.

Instead, they are left with the homosocial preoccupation of appearing well in the eyes of he who possesses phallic power. William Clayton is more concerned about besmirching the name of Tarzan over hurting the woman he loves: "He was sorry ere the words were spoken though he did not know how cruelly they had cut the girl. His regret was for his baseless disloyalty to one who had saved the lives of every member of his party, nor ever offered harm to one" (210). And poor Esmerelda is already stuck in a position of laughable disqualification. Back in the clearing of the Dum-Dum, as she anxiously waits for Tarzan's return, Jane "almost prayed for the cruel teeth that would give her unconsciousness and surcease from the agony of fear" (185). She aches to be consumed and penetrated by (t)his body, while Esmerelda, William, Professor Porter and Mr. Philander spend their time fleeing literal consumption by the beasts of the jungle-- at some point Tarzan must rescue each of them from the jaws of death. Even one of the French officers indicates that he knows what the jungle can do to a white woman if she stays there too long: when informed of her disappearance he exclaims: " 'it may be better that the poor lady were never found. It is horrible, Monsieur, It is too horrible' " (178).

Burroughs makes it quite clear that more than anything else, it is Tarzan's body that mesmerizes Jane. When forced to confront the possibility of his death, it is not for his attentions and tenderness or the loss of his passionate love for her that she mourns: "She would not admit that he could be dead. It was impossible to believe that that perfect body, so filled with triumphant life, could ever cease to harbor the vital spark-- as soon believe that immortality were dust" (230). Already we have seen how the degenerative African jungle conspires with this perfect body to scramble her reason: "she was satisfied to feel the safety of those strong arms, and to leave her future to fate" (185). And as his fetching form strides towards her, no doubt the muscles rolling and flexing in a manner to which arousal is the only response, "Jane Porter's heart beat faster and her eyes brightened as they had never done before at the approach of any man" (191), and later: " 'You do not know him,' she replied, a little thrill of pride setting her nerves a-tingle" (224). But in America, far from the backward influence of the jungle, and with those mighty bulges encased in civilized attire, reason prevails over her nerves gone a-twitch:

That she had been carried off her feet by the strength of the young giant when his great arms were about her in the distant

African forest, and again today, in the Wisconsin woods, seemed to her only attributable to a temporary mental reversion to type on her part-- to the psychological appeal of the primeval man to the primeval woman in her nature.

If he should never touch her again, she reasoned, she would never feel attracted toward him. She had not loved him, then. It had been nothing more than a passing hallucination, *super-induced by excitement and by personal contact* [emphasis added]. (274-5)

Reenacting the Colonial Narrative: Glorifying British Achievement

Long equated with sex, the black body invites a lurid sort of fascination in the novel as well. The titillating component of anthropology can be seen in the narrator's descriptions of the savages' nakedness and smooth, shining bodies. And in the scene where he spies another human for the first time, "Tarzan looked with wonder upon the strange creature beneath him-- so like him in form and yet so different in face and color. His books had portrayed the *negro*, but how different had been the dull, dead print to this sleek and hideous thing of ebony, pulsing with life [*italics in text*]" (76). The African landscape itself is also a dark, inviting body that calls out for exploration. These quests, both of exploration and "discovery" often shifted to strategies of conquest and colonization, typically feminizing the land or territories that were encountered. Thus, invading British forces penetrated the "virgin" African land. Here we begin to see why the Claytons' parentage, their imprint, leaves such a powerful impression in the jungle once they are long gone.

With such distinguishable resemblances occurring in the circumstances and characters who come after them, it would seem that John Clayton and Lady Alice are the forebears of more than the peerless Tarzan. Towards the beginning of the novel, just after the mutiny on the *Fuwalda*, they stand on the deck contemplating their future in the jungle. There is a vague presentiment of the devolution that awaits them there, and already they begin to take on the shape of the essential "man" and "woman" befitting their roles as the new Adam and Eve in the primitive world of Africa:

From the dark shadows of the mighty forest came the calls of savage beasts-- the deep roar of the lion, and, occasionally, the shrill scream of the panther.

The woman shrank closer to the man in terror-stricken

anticipation of the horrors lying in wait for them in the awful blackness of the nights to come, when they two should be alone upon that wild and lonely shore. (15)

Hearing “the calls of savage beast,” just as Jane’s devolution occurs in the chapter entitled “The Call of the Primitive,” Burroughs indicates that this is a place located near the beginning of time. The precedents that the Claytons leave for the other characters to follow, whether it be in disposition, the incidents that befall them or through heredity, accumulate until they form a reenactment of the colonial narrative: the strong, honorable Englishman with his dutiful wife arrive like God’s first man and woman in the savage garden of Africa, bringing with them light, literature, science, reason and salvation. Through their parentage, the heredity that permeates the jungle and all of its inhabitants, an elevation into civilization occurs. They are the originators, the founders, a concept which coincides with a recurring phenomenon that Burroughs distributes throughout the text: *Tarzan of the Apes* is a novel of firsts, of discoveries. Because of his isolation, the uniqueness of his upbringing, Tarzan’s first encounters acquire an air of added significance: the first time he sees another human-- which is the first time he sees a black man-- the first time the Africans see him, the first time he sees and is seen by other whites, the first time he communicates with another through writing and then through speech, and on and on. Each tiny step, each leap forward in his evolution seems to be precipitated somehow by one of these firsts, starting of course, with the first time he discovers the books in his parents’ cabin. As he squats on the table-top, “Tarzan of the apes, little primitive man, presented a picture filled, at once, with pathos and with promise-- an allegorical figure of the primordial groping through the black night of ignorance toward the light of learning” (53). This critical stage in his evolution, really the most pivotal, is part of his parents’ grand legacy, adding to the preeminence of heredity in the novel and referring back to their unmistakable stamp in the jungles of Africa. They are the bringers of the “light of learning” that allow the natives of the jungle to stagger, bleary-eyed, out of the “black night of ignorance.” With all of these elements contributing to the reenactment of the colonial narrative, the importance of the British is underscored, magnified, again and again, in a perpetual gesture of self-exaltation.

Civilization or the Primitive?

John Seelye, the editor of the Penguin edition writes that “*Tarzan* . . . celebrates the ascendancy of superior individuals” (xv). Like Darwinism and the myriad sciences that confirmed the European’s place at the top of the evolutionary scale and of the races of man, Burroughs’ novel exists in a reality that leaves no room for any other alternative to racial and social organization. Immutable, a fact of nature, the inferiority of Africans was something inherent to blackness, crying out for domination by the superior European. The children that result from the uneasy coupling of penetrating British invaders and the feminized African land are the natives already living there, infantilized by the ideologies of their conquering masters that set them up as inferior, primitive, in need of civilization. Let us return to the origins of this story: John Clayton, Lord Greystoke, “was commissioned to make a peculiarly delicate investigation of conditions in a British West African Colony from whose simple native inhabitants another European power was known to be recruiting soldiers for its native army” (2). Cast as a protective parent naturally concerned for its bullied, “simple” children-- the natives of this colony too daft to know when they are being duped-- the rightness of British domination is casually related in this brief passage. Using “simple” as a means to describe the natives masks the synonymous justifications employed to subordinate them: naive, weak, backward, unsophisticated, inept, lowly, and stupid. The need for their benevolent parent deepens with this one word that breeds a litter of mewling meaning. With such native inferiority, the need to be governed and protected is reinforced. Overlooked is the means by which this relationship was forged, the enforced dependence upon this invading power. As Edward Said observes in *Culture and Imperialism*:

How easily so much could be compressed into that simple formula of unappreciated magnanimity! Dismissed or forgotten were the ravaged colonial peoples who . . . endured summary injustice, unending economic oppression, distortion of their social and intimate lives, and a recourseless submission that was the function of unchanging European superiority.
(22)

John Seelye observes that “Burroughs’ novel was part of a powerful renaissance in the United States of [a] popular interest in primitivism” (viii). We have already seen this interest manifested in the Clayton’s prosperity and the virility of Tarzan. It also extends

through Tarzan's encounters with the various representatives and customs of civilization. After a time, he begins to doubt whether or not it is a state he wants to live in. From his point of view as "a savage beast of the jungle" (89), the first white men he sees "were evidently no different from the black men-- no more civilized than the apes-- no less cruel than Sabor" (112). Although it should be observed that these are pirates, lower class reprobates, "a most filthy and blood-thirsty looking aggregation" who he eventually rejects as not being of his kind (114). Burroughs makes a point of gradually introducing his hero to others of a different race, class, nationality and sex, so that the ape-man can ascertain exactly where he belongs and define himself against them. "The others of the party were of a different stamp"-- predictably refers to Jane and the trio of white upper-class men who accompany her off the skiff (114)-- "Here at last was one of his own kind; of that he was positive. And the young man and the two old men; they, too, were much as he had pictured his own people to be" (122). He "intuitively" feels an affinity for them as like calls out to like, his noble blood recognizing the same in others (123). But after having to rescue the men from their own dimwittedness in the jungle, Tarzan begins to waver: "Surely the men were stupid and ridiculous and cowardly. Even Manu, the monkey, was more intelligent than they. If these were creatures of his own kind he was doubtful if his past pride in blood was warranted" (150). Even Robert Canler, the wealthy American who Professor Porter has promised his daughter to as security for his loan, exhibits ape-like behavior in the bullying claims he exercises over her (recall Terkoz's abduction of Jane in the jungle). Nor does William Clayton escape comparisons to an ape during a fit of jealous rage: "in sudden brutality that was as unlike Clayton as courteous consideration is unlike an ape, he blurted out [that Tarzan must have partook in the devouring of D'Arnot with the rest of the African tribe]" (210). Having to snatch each of the principal characters from the consuming body of the jungle Tarzan tells the Frenchman, " 'When I see how helpless you are, D'Arnot, I often wonder how the human race has escaped annihilation all these ages which you tell me about. Why, Sabor, single-handed, could exterminate a thousand of you' " (237). What follows in D'Arnot's response betrays an ambiguity that lies elsewhere in Burroughs' text: the exalting of human civilization, or, its distance from the primitive, even as he is supposed to be promoting the benefits of the latter. " 'You will think more

highly of your genus when you have seen its armies and navies, its great cities, and its mighty engineering works,' ” D’Arnot informs the unsophisticated ape-man-- followed by the previously quoted excerpt on mind over muscle, along with a reminder of what elevates us high above the beasts: reason (237).

Ambiguity in *Tarzan* can also be found in the representation of the Africans. Although Burroughs’ racial biases have already been outlined in Tarzan’s gradual “evolution” into a white man, there still exist some odd passages that give one pause. But like the scene of D’Arnot’s torture, where Burroughs briefly pulls back from the Africans’ savagery to reveal its source in white cruelty, such episodes are not enough to alter his rhetoric of white superiority that sits so heavily in the novel. This is the same acknowledgement of white devilry in *The Last of the Mohicans* that is subsumed within the rhetoric of the Native Americans’ destiny to vanish. Interestingly, John Seelye compares Burroughs to James Fenimore Cooper in order to make the following point:

Where Cooper sought out vanished wilderness zones in order to emphasize his elegiac theme-- a sense of loss symbolized by the disappearing noble Red Man-- Burroughs created imaginary arenas within the heart of Africa in order to reenact [sic] repeatedly his favorite sport, the perpetual victory of the white man- who bore civilization in his genes-- over inferior peoples, including Russians and humanoid apes . . . Burroughs peddled an extreme line of racist goods of which Cooper was never guilty. (xiv)

As the dichotomy of black and white is reinforced in the novel, the depiction of the Africans grows more and more unimaginatively stereotypical: several references to their rolling eyes are present, then there is the minstrel Esmerelda with her ridiculously poor grammar, the cannibalistic torture of the white man, William Clayton’s too-hasty suggestion that “ ‘it must have been a party of blacks’ ” that made off with the buried treasure chest (229), and a “huge black, crazed by drink,” like the murderous, raging Kerchak, terrorizes a coastal town (244). But Burroughs seems to be a bit muddled in his representation of oppressive cycles, the chain of dominance, and deciding exactly where accountability lies. When Tarzan sees the Africans for the first time, the narrator offers the following as an explanation for their need to find a new place to settle: “They were fleeing from the white man’s soldiers who had so harassed them for rubber and ivory that they had turned upon their conquerors one day and massacred a white officer and a small detachment

of his black troops” (72). And though, “what meant freedom and pursuit of happiness to these savage blacks meant consternation and death to many of the wild denizens of their new home,” this only confirms Burroughs’ conviction that man, whether black or not, enjoys a position of privilege over the brutes of the jungle (72). Briefly occupying the subject position of the Africans, Burroughs writes that “here there were no white men, no soldiers; nor any rubber or ivory to be gathered for cruel and thankless taskmasters” (72). Even the rites of the Dum-Dum serve as the foundation from which “all forms and ceremonials of modern church and state” spring (58). And then there is Tarzan, at the height of civilization, arguing with a table full of white men that “ ‘one might as well judge all blacks by the fellow who ran amuck last week, or decide that all whites are cowards because one has met a cowardly white. There is as much individuality among the lower orders, gentlemen, as there is among ourselves’ ” (245). Though maintaining the ideology that they are of the lower orders, such generosity towards blacks feels so out of place in this novel that insistently portrays them as irrevocably monstrous. Admiring and repulsed by the primordial, we are left to ask: is it civilization or the primitive that Burroughs prefers?

Hybridity at Work: Exalting the Anglo-Saxon

Like Cooper and Kipling, Burroughs finds a means of situating his hero on both sides of the question through the use of hybridity. For his character, however, it is not just the boundaries of race or nationality that Tarzan straddles, but human and beast, savage and civilized as well. Recall the passage where he faces Terkoz. In the space of a few lines the narrator refers to him as a “savage beast” while possessing “that which had raised him far above his fellows of the jungle-- that little spark which spells the whole vast difference between man and brute-- Reason” (103). Burroughs tries to have it both ways here, but one cannot possess divine Reason and still be a savage beast at the same time-- at least, not by the criteria that he establishes. In this explicit glorification of his humanity, the narrator, only a few pages before, speaks of Tarzan in reverent terms as one who is not a man, and not human. As the Africans are forced to seek a new settling place deeper in the jungle, the narrator tells us that “more often was the tribe of Tarzan disturbed by these wandering

huntmen. Now was the quiet, fierce solitude of the primeval forest broken by new, strange cries. No longer was there safety for bird or beast. Man had come" (99). By the next page, the narrator says that because of this encroachment, "Tarzan led [the apes] inland for many marches to a spot as yet undefiled by the foot of a human being" (100). One might venture that this occurs before Tarzan's complete evolution into white manhood, and therefore Burroughs still wishes for us to consider him an ape, but even after he attains this stage of development, he is still referred to as a beast: by D'Arnot, who "alone knew that a savage beast had spoken its simple reason through the lips of the ape-man" when they sit, civilized, in the coastal town (246), and by Tarzan himself: " 'I am still a wild beast at heart,' " he informs Jane (265), and " 'I see now that you could not be happy with-- an ape' " (266). Even when it appears that a clear answer is given to what Burroughs is endorsing, civilization or the primitive, it is an answer still shrouded in ambiguity. Ever since his first meeting with Jane, Tarzan must decide how to act as a man rather than an ape: should he claim his mate like all citizens of the jungle do? Should he leave one of his own to die if it suits him? And most significantly, should he sacrifice everything he has attained by keeping his real identity secret, knowing that revealing it would impoverish Jane? He receives a telegram from D'Arnot confirming him as Lord Greystoke, and therefore the rightful owner of the title and wealth that his cousin enjoys. Claiming them means that Jane, who has already accepted William's proposal, will be yoked to a man destitute of everything that will ensure her comfort. When William asks him how he ever came to the jungle, Tarzan responds: " 'I was born there . . . My mother was an Ape, and of course she couldn't tell me much about it. I never knew who my father was' " (277). We are meant to admire such noble self-sacrifice, a decision befitting a true man, his final, definitive step into full fledged civilization. But is not this decision one that prompts him to declare that he is *not* a man? He becomes a man by declaring that he is not one?

In choosing ape-hood, Burroughs asks us to recall Tarzan's earlier exhilaration when he briefly returns to the trees that ring the coastal town, in order to win a bet that he cannot bring back a lion " 'naked and armed only with a knife and a piece of rope' " (246):

This was life! ah, how he loved it! Civilization held
nothing like this in its narrow and circumscribed sphere,

hemmed in by restrictions and conventionalities. Even clothes were a hindrance and a nuisance.

At last he was free. He had not realized what a prisoner he had been. (247)

Tarzan, we finally see, is happiest in the jungle. In his parents' prosperity there, and in Jane's willingness to accompany him, " 'May God have pity on my soul that I should acknowledge it. Had you come back for me, and there had been no other way, I would have gone into the jungle with you-- forever' " (230), Burroughs' preference for the primitive seems to surpass any expressed for civilization. John Seelye remarks that Burroughs' interest in returning to primitivism was "part of a complex reaction to the . . . Industrial Revolution and technical innovation" (viii). But something stands in his way: in order to valorize the primitive, he endorses blackness. For, in the novel at least, is not the primitive the African? Savage, cannibalistic, superstitious and repulsive, they subsist in a "primeval forest" where time has slowed to a standstill, while the Western world has evolved and progressed through the Age of Enlightenment and into Industrialism (70). We see now that it is not only for reassurance that the awareness of race and whiteness increases as the novel progresses, this also depicts a return to primitivism, to blackness, with a difference: those who undergo such a transformation retain their whiteness. Burroughs cheats by allowing his characters to regress and move back in time while bringing the advantages of modernity with them. Recall John Clayton's explanation to Alice that they are " 'armed with ages of superior knowledge, and . . . the means of protection, defense, and sustenance which science has given [them]' " (19). Degenerating into the primeval man and woman, they are still able to construct a secure, English space where books and graceful clay vases sit prettily on carved tables. And although Tarzan is raised by apes in this primordial jungle, maturing into one of its most formidable citizens, the scene in which he performs the chivalrous gesture towards Jane of stooping to kiss the locket illustrates how courtly behavior, the maintenance of sex and gender roles, and the institution of heterosexual monogamy-- a "marriage" could not be far off-- is also preserved. Like Cooper and Kipling, this retention of the advantages of whiteness, along with the persistent traits of heredity, enables Burroughs to flirt with his characters going native altogether while providing insurance that they not cross over entirely. This endeavor

involves an enormous omission and denial, however: that of the native which constitutes a large portion of these hybrids' identity.

The beginning of this chapter elaborated upon the casual dismissal of the native's import to the novel. Cruelty originating with whites and a certain level of sympathy towards the Africans' plight has also been demonstrated in Burroughs' work. But like D'Arnot's torture in their village, this is hastily mentioned, almost as an afterthought, then quickly forgotten in the more immediate and conveniently familiar face of black savagery with its rolling eyes and thick, flapping lips. In *The Poetics of Imperialism*, Eric Cheyfitz quotes John Higham in order to make his argument about Burroughs' novel, which happened to appear around the time that the second wave of immigration to the United States reached its peak:

“[w]hereas the First Immigration had been entirely white and predominantly English-speaking [and Protestant], the second brought a Babel of tongues and an array of complexions” that threatened the Protestant vision of a homogeneous America and provoked a resurgence of the Anglo-Saxon myth of race that “summoned Anglo-Saxon America to protect herself at home [from these foreigners] and to demonstrate her mastery [of them] abroad.” In such a climate, when those perceived as foreigners-- appearing in a range of figures from the colonial subject to the immigrant worker to the black citizen-- threaten to become America itself, it is not surprising . . . that a new American superhero, heir to the frontier individualism of Natty Bumppo, should be an English nobleman, epitome of the Anglo-Saxon race . . . (4)

Like America itself, and the predication of its national identity on the eradication of the native, *Tarzan of the Apes* depends upon the marginalized, the other, while denying their legitimacy and contribution to the ascendancy that it enjoys. For it is through the Africans and the savage that Tarzan acquires his extraordinary skills in the jungle, not to mention his striking physique, the attributes and distinction that make this character so exciting to read. Who would want to read about him otherwise? But Burroughs cannot acknowledge the validity and worth of the Africans-- to do so would undermine the superiority of the Anglo-Saxon that he is committed to portraying in his work. Tarzan's dependence and indebtedness to them is clouded, therefore, and Burroughs extends his hero's adventures in sequel after best-selling sequel, perpetually depicting the white man's superiority over inferior races, while the natives, simple and savage, are consigned to remain in darkness

and obscurity. This custom persists in present-day America in the low paying jobs and often hazardous working conditions that exploit the immigrant, minority and female worker. These positions, from the agricultural and clothing manufacture industries, to domestic and everyday chores, plus dozens more, form a framework of labor and constitutes an invaluable resource that shares striking resemblances to the plight of the colonized subjects in Africa that John Clayton is sent to investigate at the beginning of the novel. But like Burroughs' narrator, the rhetoric of America's greatness directs us to take no notice. It is "of little moment to [the] story" that Burroughs authors, as well as the story that America tells itself in order to sleep at night (2).

Conclusion

All paths eventually lead back to the colonizer in the novels examined by the previous chapters. Ideologically conceived as primitive and barbaric, the natives in *The Last of the Mohicans* and *Tarzan of the Apes*, by responding to the atrocities and injustices first committed by whites, confirm the imperial image of them as irredeemable and demonic savages. For the Africans, it is the “still crueler barbarities” of their Belgian masters that provoke them to rise up in murderous revolt (197). And for the Native Americans in *The Last of the Mohicans*, it is the “ ‘deviltries of the Dutchers’ ” (127) the “ ‘Canada fathers [who] came into the woods, and taught [Magua] to drink the fire-water . . . and made him a villain’ ” that lie at the heart of native resentment and the savage’s fierce lust for vengeance (102). In *Kim*, mimic men who vainly aspire to whiteness, the educated Indians who form the native elite, are already set up to fail by the colonizing rhetoric of British superiority, in the very same education that makes them “elite”. Thus, the colonizing power in these three novels sets the conditions for its own self-fulfilling ideologies. In the confirmation of the natives’ savage and primitive inferiority, comes the verification of the colonizer’s own magnificence and splendor-- what Abdul JanMohamed refers to as a self-sustaining cycle of imperial authority.

The strategic deployment of hybridity is integral to this process. For Hawk-eye and Kim, it is a matter of will. Unlike the precocious Uncas who is put to death for being too progress, i.e. white-oriented, or the laughable Hurree Babu, “ ‘unfortunately Asiatic’ ” who is crippled by not being white enough, the white protagonists of these novels can inhabit either of their hybrid sides *at will* (202). It is an ability entirely under their control, as in Hawk-eye’s decision to finally execute Magua, or Kim’s ease in mimicking the native: “a demon in Kim woke up and sang with joy as he put on the changing dresses, and changed speech and gesture therewith” (143). The integration of the native in *Tarzan* is seamless to the point that he can literally change from being a “handsome Frenchman in immaculate white ducks” in one moment, sitting and laughing at the dinner table with other

white men (243), to a “ ‘naked [savage] armed only with a knife and a piece of rope’ ” swinging about the jungle and slaying lions in the next (246). Here we see the privilege of “passing down” owing to whiteness that Anne McClintock refers to, the privilege of the imperialist who sets the rules and weights the game in his favor to ensure that he always comes out on top.

These protagonists are all beautiful men. Hawk-eye surveys his fine, white muscles and participates in the beauty and manliness of war as the formidable Longue Carabine. Kim, in the only instance where Kipling’s narrator steps back to describe his aesthetic qualities, is “a young man . . . of singular, though unwashed beauty” (216). And one cannot be in Tarzan’s presence without marking his lusty virility with no small amount of envy, awe or arousal. But the native man in these texts is beautiful too. In the desire for the native that slips out of the hybrid space inhabited by these protagonists, a current of homoeroticism or homosociability is revealed. Uncas’ features, allaying fear much like Tarzan’s, are also compared to classical sculpture: “some precious relic of the Grecian chisel” (53). The passionate Heyward, always eager to initiate an encounter with the native, is “accustomed to . . . the perfection of form which abounds among the uncorrupted natives, [and] openly expressed his admiration at such an unblemished specimen of the noblest proportions of man” (53). Kim’s desire for great, gray, formless India includes all of its people, both male and female. But his movements within the exclusively male domains of an empire-building education at St. Xavier’s, the Great Game and the Way place him largely in the (preferred) company of other men who tread the same path. As Edward Said in *Culture and Imperialism* comments: “It is an overwhelmingly male novel” (136). All of this is established prior to the scene of his heterosexual restoration at the end of the novel, where the land of India is feminized into Mother Earth. This may retroactively remove the taint of suspected homosexuality in Kim, but it does not alter the homosocial bonds in the text. Said continues, “all of [the overwhelmingly male characters] speak the language that men speak among themselves. The women in the novel are remarkably few by comparison, and all of them are somehow debased or unsuitable for male attention” (136). Burroughs’ novel bypasses this sort of subtlety in a much more economical fashion: the beautiful native man is simply Tarzan himself.

Imperial desire for the native, then, expressed through the strategic deployment of hybridity, is returned to the white body across these three novels. Triangulated through violence in Cooper, and diffused throughout the land of India in Kipling, Burroughs directs it back from whence it came, eliding the native in the process. Like the self-regenerating enrollment of sallow-hued boys at St. Xavier's-- perpetual products of colonial desire for the native-- who, "when examinations are passed . . . will [someday] command [the] natives," power and domination is kept within the bounds of the imperial body (112). Instructed to deny the native within so as to control it without, the sallow-hued boys are trained in the mastery of Self that "liberating" post-colonial formulations of hybridity theorize the Other as also existing within. Every stage of this self-sustaining, self-regenerating mastery of the Self results in a steady removal of the native's existence, which, as those theories of hybridity accurately point out, is integral to this Self's constitution. Eradicated in Cooper in order to forge a national identity, repressed in Kipling so that they may be better governed, and denied in Burroughs in order to depict the Anglo-Saxon male's continual conquest over inferior sub-altern peoples, the native, in its disappearance, confirms the self-mastered imperialist as brave, muscular, intelligent, manly, and above all, English rulers of the Earth.

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