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James Fenimore Cooper
The Last of the Mohicans

JAMES FENIMORE COOPER, OR 'the American Scott' as he was called in his own day, was the 'first American professional author, one who earned his living by writing'.[1] Leslie A. Fielder has observed that 'Cooper is a writer for children, more specifically for boys'.[2] However, Gail Schmunk Murray to some degree takes issue with this: 'Cooper's fanciful descriptions of American Indian and British colonial conflict on the late eighteenth-century frontier were written for adult audiences, but older children soon appropriated this adventure-filled literature for themselves'.[3] Jane Tompkins believes that the melodrama that made *The Last of the Mohicans: A Narrative of 1757* (1826) so popular with an adult readership in its own day has caused it 'to be relegated to the category of children's literature in our own'.[4] The aforementioned critics' observations, though making almost incompatible claims, would seem to indicate that *The Last of the Mohicans* is a crossover novel.

[1] Gail Schmunk Murray, *American Children's Literature and the Construction of Childhood* (New York: Twayne, 1998), p. 42.
[2] Leslie A. Fiedler, 'James Fenimore Cooper and the Historical Romance', in *Love and Death in the American Novel*, (Champaign, Illinois: Dalkey Archive, 1960), pp. 162-214 (p. 181).
[3] Gail Schmunk Murray, *American Children's Literature and the Construction of Childhood, op. cit.,* p. 41. See also Frederick Jackson Turner, 'The Significance of the Frontier in American History', in *The Frontier in American History* (New York: Dover, 2010), pp. 1-38.
[4] Jane Tompkins, 'No Apologies for the Iroquois: A New Way to Read the Leatherstocking Novels', in *Sensational Designs: The Cultural Work of American Fiction, 1790-1860* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), pp. 94-121 (p. 96).

As we will see, *The Last of the Mohicans* is a text that belongs exclusively to neither Anglo-American nor British literary culture. Indeed, it cannot be understood unless it is read as an attempt to mediate between the two. It could perhaps be viewed as an Anglospheric call to arms, albeit one of a distinctly literary nature. *The Last of the Mohicans* is a celebration of white agency, being one of the first works to attempt a portrait of explicit whiteness in the face of the Other. Hawkeye is, unlike Tom Sawyer, Huck Finn, Jim Hawkins, and Kim O'Hara, an adult. Yet, Hawkeye is a man many bookish boys would aspire to emulate, though perhaps in the realm of imagination only.[5] *The Last of the Mohicans* is a novel of a liminal nature insofar as both men *and* boys can identify with Hawkeye, who exists betwixt and between fantasy and reality.

Cooper was unequivocal in the view that the literatures of Anglo-America and Great Britain had a single foundation, unlike the Americanists who called for literary independence.[6] Furthermore, he claimed that Americans had as much claim to British literature as the British themselves:

> It is quite obvious, that, so far as taste and forms alone are concerned, the literature of England and that of America must be fashioned after the same models. The Authors, previous to the revolution, are common property, and it is quite idle to say that the American had not just as good a right to claim Milton, and Shakespeare, and all the old masters of the language, for his countrymen, as the Englishman. The American having continued to cultivate…an acquaintance with the writers of the mother country, since the separation, it is evident they must have kept pace with the trifling changes of the day. The only peculiarity that can, or ought to be expected in their literature, is that which is connected with the promulgation of their distinctive political opinions.[7]

Literature was the tie that bound. The literary heritage of the Anglosphere gave Britons and Anglo-Americans a sense of commonality, though Cooper did acknowledge that the identities

[5] Indeed, as D. H. Lawrence had it, 'give homage and allegiance to a hero, and you become yourself heroic'. See *Apocalypse and the Writings on Revelation* (1931) (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), p. 68.
[6] Benjamin T. Spencer, *The Quest for Nationality: An American Literary Campaign* (New York: Syracuse University Press, 1957), p. 91.
[7] James Fenimore Cooper, 'Notions of the Americans; Picked Up by a Travelling Bachelor' (1828), in *The Native Muse: Theories of American Literature*, *op. cit.,* pp. 222-228 (p. 223).

of both polities were very much distinct.[8] D. H. Lawrence's essay on Cooper discusses the fusion, and confusion, of identity contained within the Leatherstocking cycle. Americans had first to divest themselves of one identity before they could create another.[9] They stopped being British colonists and became Anglo-Americans, all the while remaining within the Anglosphere and maintaining their sense of ethnic identity; a consciousness of their common whiteness.[10] Chingachgook and Uncas are also part of an organic community that embraces a transcendent body comprised of ancestors, the living, and their heirs. The boy's own adventure story reader could derive from this that a people's identity is what makes it unique and irreplaceable, even though identity is perforce mutable. Cooper gives voice to a hegemonic ideology that promotes ethnocentrism as a survival strategy. Indeed, play up, play up, and play the game, but make sure one's own *ethnie* prevails. Cooper is a Janus-faced figure, looking backward to the British Isles, while at the same time looking forward to America's manifest destiny in the West. Imperialism and nineteenth-century boy's own adventure stories are inescapably related.[11]

It would be no overstatement to describe *The Last of the Mohicans* as Cooper's *magnum opus*, though the implicit assumption of racial supremacy and gender stereotyping contained therein should be viewed from a historical perspective.[12] Perhaps no writer better described the selflessly heroic quality of whiteness that often defined life on the American frontier. For Cooper, whiteness was not a limiting category, but rather an identity offering a vast array of aesthetic possibilities. Cooper primarily aims *The Last of the Mohicans* at a male readership.

[8] John P. MacWilliams, *Political Justice in a Republic: James Fenimore Cooper's America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972), p. 19.
[9] D. H. Lawrence, 'Fenimore Cooper's Leatherstocking Novels', in *Studies in Classic American Literature, op. cit.*, pp. 52-69.
[10] Jared Taylor, *White Identity* (Oakton, Virginia: New Century Books, 2011), *passim*.
[11] M. Daphne Kutzer, *Empire's Children: Empire and Imperialism in Classic British Children's Books* (New York: Garland, 2000, p. 66.
[12] Dennis Butts, 'Dogs and Cats: the nineteenth-century historical novel for children', in *Historical Fiction for Children: Capturing the Past*, ed. by Fiona M. Collins and Judith Graham (London: David Fulton, 2001), pp. 2-9 (p. 7).

Indeed, he makes a point of warning off female readers in his Preface, in which he states that *The Last of the Mohicans* is a narrative of wartime experience, therefore 'it relates…to matters that may not be universally understood, especially by the more imaginative sex, some of whom, under the impression that it is a fiction, may be induced to read the book.'[13] He did not aim his novel at a juvenile readership, but one may infer a tacit invitation to the boy reader to turn his back on the quotidian strictures of the schoolroom and embrace adventure and romance in the North American wilderness.[14]

The Last of the Mohicans is a historical novel. Indeed, Cooper declares in his first sentence that 'the colonial wars of North America' are his principal topic.[15] Historical novels are founded upon accuracy of historical reference, and also verisimilitude in the description of customs, manners, and perhaps also language. However, Cooper's relation to the genre of the historical adventure story is more one of appropriation than innovation. It is well known that Scott's historical romances are signal influences on Cooper's writing. Indeed, it was Scott himself who suggested the adaptation of his most favoured genre to American history in his introduction to *Rob Roy* (1817), when he compared past conflicts between the Gaels of the Scottish Highlands and Islands and the inhabitants of South Britain with contemporary conflicts between North American indigenes and British settlers. Scott describes Rob Roy as blending 'the wild virtues, the subtle policy, and unrestrained license of an American Indian', which would seem to evidence his exiguous knowledge of both Scottish Gaels and American Indians, for Rob Roy MacGregor was very much an atypical Gael of the period.[16]

[13] James Fenimore Cooper, 'Preface', in *The Last of the Mohicans* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2011), pp. 1-5 (p. 1). See also Arvid Schulenberger, *Cooper's Theories of Fiction: His Prefaces and Their Relation to His Novels* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1955), pp. 28-29.
[14] J. S. Bratton, 'Books for Boys', in *The Impact of Victorian Children's Fiction* (London: Croom Helm, 1981), pp. 102-139 (p. 104).
[15] Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, *op. cit.*, p. 12.
[16] Sir Walter Scott, 'Introduction', in *Rob Roy*, ed. by Ian Duncan (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), p. 5.

Scott acknowledged the influence of Homer, Shakespeare, and Milton on Cooper's writing in his introduction to *The Monastery: A Romance* (1820).[17] To Anglo-Americans raised on such writers these conflicting images intimated several literary parallels:

> It is the same with a great part of the narratives of my friend, Mr. Cooper. We sympathize with his Indian chiefs and back-woodsmen, and acknowledge, in the characters which he presents to us, the same truth of human nature by which we should feel ourselves influenced if placed in the same condition.[18]

Indeed, Scott placed characters in a similar situation when he wrote *Waverley.* Cooper follows the model of historical romance set by Scott, which is to say that though *The Last of the Mohicans* is indeed based on historical events it is more concerned with mythologisation than with historiography. Cooper, who is mythogenic in the manner of Scott, is a writer of fiction who interprets history in an imaginative manner for the entertainment of the general reading public.

György Lukáks has noted that the 'historical faithfulness of Scott is the authenticity of the historical psychology of his characters, the genuine *hic et nunc* of their inner motives and behaviour'.[19] I show in the discussion to come that the same claim could be made with equal force for Cooper. However, *The Last of the Mohicans* should not be viewed according to any degree of authenticity to which it may aspire, but rather by its relevance to the literary tradition within which it is placed.[20] Cooper's characters are, in some sense, *of* history, without actually being *in* it.[21]

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[17] Cooper himself claimed a Homeric precedent for his idealisation of Hawkeye and Chingachgook. See Geoffrey Rans, '*The Last of the Mohicans* (1826): The Death of a Nation, the Denial of a Genre', in *Cooper's Leatherstocking Novels: A Secular Reading* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1991), pp. 102-130 (p. 127). Cooper quotes from Alexander Pope's translation of Homer's *Iliad* in two epigraphs.
[18] Sir Walter Scott, 'Introductory Epistle', in *The Monastery*: *A Romance* (1820), ed. by Penny Fielding (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2000), pp. 1-112 (p. 5).
[19] György Lukáks, *The Historical Novel* (1932), trans. by Hannah and Stanley Mitchell (London: Merlin, 1962), p. 60.
[20] Terence Martin, 'From Atrocity to Requiem: History in *The Last of the Mohicans*', in *New Essays on The Last of the Mohicans*, ed. by Daniel Peck (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), pp. 47-66.
[21] Hayden White, 'The Historical Imagination between Metaphor and Irony', in *Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (Baltimore, Maryland: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2014), pp. 45-80 (p. 46).

Cooper launched his literary career with *Precaution* (1820), a novel of British manners inspired by Jane Austen's *Persuasion* (1818).[22] According to the critic, George E. Hastings, *Precaution* 'repeats almost every detail of situation, setting, characterisation, and plot used by Jane Austen'.[23] It is understandable, and indeed wholly reasonable, that Cooper would attempt to master the craft of writing fiction by seeking inspiration from the various British literary works that he admired. Yet, Cooper's future as a man of letters was not to hinge on the domestic themes that dominated his Austenesque apprentice work. It is not the Moseleys of *Precaution* for whom he is best remembered, but rather the proto-imperialist, Hawkeye, who is a wilderness scout, a homespun philosopher, a crack shot, and perhaps also a classic exemplar of the boy's own hero.

Sir Walter Scott and Scotland

The main influence on Cooper's Leatherstocking tales was the Waverley novels of Sir Walter Scott, whose *Waverley: or, Tis Sixty Years Since* (1814) is commonly believed to have established a new literary mode. However, most of the conceptual innovations attributed to Scott were in 1814 already established commonplaces of the British novel.[24] Scott was a sort of *laudator temporis acti* who extolled and romanticised the past. It is impossible to ascertain how closely Cooper read the Waverley novels before he began writing novels himself.[25] Cooper, despite some misgivings, praised Scott for having raised the novel to the dignity of the epic.[26] Cooper's admiration was reciprocated. Indeed, as Margaret Ball has observed, 'the

[22] George Dekker, *James Fenimore Cooper: The Novelist* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1967), p. 20.
[23] George E. Hastings, 'How Cooper Became a Novelist', *American Literature*, 12 (1940), pp. 20-51 (p. 21).
[24] Katie Trumpener, 'National Character, Nationalist Plots: National Tale and Historical Novel in the Age of *Waverley*, 1806-1830', in *Bardic Nationalism: The Romantic Novel and the British Empire* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1997), pp. 128-160 (p. 130).
[25] Andrew Newman, 'Sublime Translation in the Novels of James Fenimore Cooper and Walter Scott', *Nineteenth-Century Literature*, 59 (2004), pp. 1-26.
[26] James Fenimore Cooper, 'Romance and History', in *American Romanticism: A Shape for Fiction*, ed. by Stanley Bank (New York: Putnam, 1969), pp.110-139.

highest praise that Scott bestowed on any contemporary novelist was given to Cooper.'[27] However, I wish to argue that Cooper's writing does not simply take the form of some vague influence diffused through a partial view of Scott's novels, but instead is indicative of shared attitudes and beliefs held by the nineteenth-century Anglo-American community. Cooper's literary influences were many and varied, but those of the Anglosphere were by far the most prominent. James MacPherson's *The Works of Ossian* (1765), and Jane Porter's *The Scottish Chiefs* (1810) were widely read in the America of Cooper's day, and their influence can be seen in *The Last of the Mohicans*.[28] Cooper may be much more indebted to MacPherson's *Ossian* than is commonly realised, at least insofar as he consistently employs fanciful and stilted language in his dialogue. Moreover, Scott's Highlanders and Cooper's Indians declaim in a similarly eloquent manner. The attribution of eloquence to the 'noble savage' is characteristic of the eighteenth-century primitivism of writers such as Denis Diderot.[29] For example, his *Supplément au voyage de Bougainville* (1796). It is also significant that Scott's Highlanders speak English, as do Cooper's Indians. Cooper follows Scott in bringing together various registers and types of English in a linguistically eclectic narrative.[30] Nevertheless, it should be noted that Cooper does not mention either MacPherson or Ossian anywhere in his correspondence and journals. Cooper also employs quotations from Thomas Gray's *The Bard: A Pindaric Ode* (1757) in several epigraphs. Gray wrote of a bard in mediaeval Wales, albeit

[27] Margaret Ball, *Sir Walter Scott as a Critic of Literature* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1907), pp. 100-101.
[28] See Susan Manning, 'Ossian, Scott, and Nineteenth-Century Literary Nationalism', *Studies in Scottish Literature*, 17 (1982), pp. 39-54. See also Georg Friden, 'James Fenimore Cooper and Ossian', *Essays and Studies on American Language and Literature*, 8 (1949), pp. 1-54.
[29] Robert Lawrence Gunn, 'Philologies of Race: Ethnological Linguistics and Novelistic Representation', in *Ethnology and Empire: Languages, Literature, and the Making of the North American Borderlands* (New York: New York University Press, 2015), pp. 17-51.
[30] Cooper expressed regret over what he perceived to be a radical disjuncture between his fictional project of romantic realism and the limited knowledge of Native American languages that pertained in contemporary American society. See Gunn, *Ethnology and Empire: Languages, Literature, and the Making of the North American Borderlands*, *op. cit.*, p. 12.

in a distinctive Pindaric style, and this decorative mode of exposition may have been imitated by MacPherson, though at a later date Gray was to take inspiration from MacPherson's work.[31]

Cooper's title, *The Last of the Mohicans*, would seem to echo the title of Scott's narrative poem, 'The Lay of the Last Minstrel' (1805). Both echo the general situation imagined in the poems attributed to Ossian by MacPherson, since Ossian is, as William Wordsworth had it, 'last of all his race'.[32] However, there is yet another Scottish connection. John Gait published a novel on the decline of old families in the Western Highlands, *The Last of the Lairds* (1826), though there is no record of Cooper having read it. Scottish literary romanticism did indeed form the foundation of the Leatherstocking pentalogy, though Cooper sought to develop a theory of the Romance applicable to an American setting.[33]

Scott himself appears to have borrowed some of the *Waverley* plot from Sydney Owenson's *The Wild Irish Girl* (1806), which tells the story of a young Englishman's journey into the *Gaeltachd*, and his love affair with an attractive heiress. The subsequent union in marriage is designed to symbolise the political union of their respective lands. Several contemporary readers drew attention to the similarities, but Scott makes no mention of Owenson in his extant correspondence. Scott may have taken the name of his eponymous protagonist, Waverley, from a character in Jane West's novel, *The Loyalists* (1812). Furthermore, the plot of *Waverley* exhibits some similarities to Robert Bisset's *Douglas; or, The Highlander* (1800).[34] Cooper's textual borrowings are every bit as many and varied as those to be found in the works of Scott, who virtually instructed Cooper and his peers in how

[31] R. L. Mack, *Thomas Gray: A Life* (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 2000), pp. 514-523.
[32] William Wordsworth, 'Glen-Almain: or, The Narrow Glen', (1805) in *The Major Works* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984), pp. 312-313 (p. 313).
[33] Andrew Hook, *From Goosecreek to Gandercleugh: Studies in Scottish-American Literary and Cultural History* (East Linton, East Lothian: Tuckwell Press, 1999), pp. 20-22.
[34] Lisa Wood, 'Historicizing the Domestic Subject: Historical Fiction and Anti-Revolution, 1810-1814', in *Modes of Discipline: Women, Conservatism, and the Novel after the French Revolution* (Lewisburg, Pennsylvania: Bucknell University Press, 2003), pp. 137-154 (p. 137).

to imitate him. As we will see in Chapter 5, Rudyard Kipling also sought inspiration from *Waverley* when he composed *Kim* (1901).

Cooper is similarly indebted to another Scottish poet, Thomas Campbell, whose narrative poem, 'Gertrude of Wyoming' (1809) describes a battle that took place in the Wyoming Valley of Pennsylvania in 1778. Campbell's poem was far more popular in America than in Britain. Cooper seized upon Campbell's portrayal of hostility between two tribes that were members of the Iroquois Confederation, the Mohawk and the Oneida, as a flexible template for *The Last of the Mohicans*.[35] Cooper had earlier quoted the death-song of the Oneida chief, Outalissi, from 'Gertrude of Wyoming', in an epigraph for the climactic chapter of *The Pioneers* (1823). '"And I could weep" ― th' Oneida chief / His descant wildly thus begun ― / "But that I may not stain with grief / The death-song of my father's son." '[36] The Oneida were allies of the Mohicans during the Revolutionary War, taking up arms against American Loyalists and the British Army. Campbell inspired Cooper, but he also inspired Scott, who mentions him in his notes.[37] Scott was also influenced by Jonathan Carver's *Travels Through the Interior Parts of North America, in the years 1766, 1767, and 1768* (1778), which contains descriptions of skirmishes and battles in the North American wilderness, and was published for children *and* adults. Cooper drew heavily from the same source.[38] Scott's rewriting of Carver's experiences may be one reason why his portrayal of Scottish Highlanders bears such a strong resemblance to Native Americans, for Carver's words did much to define the popular image of the Native American across the Anglosphere, and it was comparatively easy for Scott to slip from one romantic notion to another. Scott's Scottish Highlander and Cooper's Native American become mirror images of one another by the importation and

[35] Robert Clark, 'The Last of the Iroquois: History and Myth in James Fenimore Cooper's *The Last of the Mohicans*', *Poetics Today*, 4 (1982), pp. 115-134 (p. 127).
[36] James Fenimore Cooper, *The Pioneers* (London: Penguin, 1998), p. 396.
[37] Tim Fulford, *Romantic Indians: Native Americans, British Literature, and Transatlantic Culture, 1756-1830* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), p. 196.
[38] *Jonathan Carver's Travels Through America*, ed. by Norman Gelb (New York: Wiley, 1995), *passim*.

exportation of literary concepts to and fro across the Atlantic.[39] Scott's narrative poems 'The Lady of the Lake' (1810) and 'Rokeby' (1813) were not set in America, but in Scotland. However, Scott made the link between Scottish Highlanders and so-called Red Indians in his notes for these works, citing the travel texts that Campbell had also cited.[40]

Although Cooper was often called 'the American Scott', no one ever called Scott 'the Scottish Cooper', which is some indication of their relative places in the literary pecking order of the day. Contemporary readers could hardly have failed to notice that the Scottishness of Scott had a good deal in common with the Americanness of Cooper.[41] The major themes of the Leatherstocking cycle, such as the clash between primitivism and civilisation, and between settlers and indigenes, are inextricably linked with Scott's exploration of the relationship between Gaeldom and the Anglosphere. The literature of the American frontier is a literature of political, cultural, and racial conflict, and in this it has much in common with British imperial fiction.[42] Scotland's Highland line becomes the model for Cooper's American frontier. Cooper suggests, though perhaps more in the manner of MacPherson than Scott, that the more primitive society embodies a heroic tradition that is being eroded by prolonged contact with civilisation.[43]

[39] Scott and Cooper may also have borrowed from Aphra Behn's novella, *Oroonoko: or, The Royal Slave* (1668). She depicts a noble savage, though the story is based on her experiences in Surinam, not North America. See W. C. Brownell, 'Cooper', in *American Prose Masters: Cooper, Hawthorne, Emerson, Poe, Lowell, Henry James*, ed. by Howard Mumford Jones (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1967), pp. 5-42 (pp.16-19).
[40] Sir Walter Scott, *The Poetical Works of Sir Walter Scott, with the Author's Introductions and Notes*, ed. by James Logie Robertson (London: H. Frowde, 1894), p. 391.
[41] Susan Manning, *The Puritan-Provincial Vision: Scottish and American Literature in the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), pp. 114-116.
[42] Andrew Hook, 'Scotland, the USA, and National Literatures in the Nineteenth Century', in *Scotland and the Nineteenth-Century World*, ed. by Gerard Carruthers, David Goldie, and Alastair Renfrew (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2012), pp. 37-52.
[43] Scottish academic interest in American literature is long standing. See Andrew Hook, 'Scottish Academia and the Invention of American Studies', in *The Scottish Invention of English Literature*, ed. by Robert Crawford (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp. 164-179.

Romantic poets and novelists found the theme of a dying native race a source of inspiration, and appended a mawkish patina to the concept that enhanced its appeal.[44] Indeed, some forty novels published between 1824 and 1834 constituted what could be called the cult of the vanishing American.[45] The demographic decline of the dispossessed Indian tribes, particularly as portrayed by the last living member of a tribe, became a staple of the American storytelling tradition from which Cooper drew.[46]

Cooper disliked being compared to Scott for a number of reasons, not least being that the pervasive irony in Scott's work is very much at odds with his own point of view.[47] The Leatherstocking cycle is anything but ironic.[48] Nevertheless, the tenor of Cooper's writing in *The Last of the Mohicans* does vacillate between a diluted version of Scottish literary romanticism and an authentic American literary expression.

Cooper adapted Scott's setting of a disputed ground that is contested by warring parties to the American wilderness in his second novel, *The Spy: a Tale of the Neutral Ground* (1821), which is another apprentice work. The protagonist, Harvey Birch, a counterspy serving the American forces, is Cooper's first well-drawn character in whom courage, acuity, and unmatched skill-at-arms are personified. Unknowingly, Cooper had created the model for the boy's own hero of the Leatherstocking cycle, who is known in *The Last of the Mohicans* as Hawkeye or *la Langue Carabine*.[49]

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[44] Jean M. O'Brien, *Firsting and Lasting: Writing Indians out of Existence in New England* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010), p. 110.
[45] Brian W. Dippie, *The Vanishing American: White Attitudes and U.S. Indian Policy* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1982), p. 21.
[46] Robert F. Berkhofer, *The White Man's Indian: Images of the American Indian from Columbus to the Present* (New York: Vintage, 1979), p. 87.
[47] George Dekker, *James Fenimore Cooper: The American Scott* (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1967), p. 21.
[48] The Leatherstocking cycle was not written in chronological order, for it was not originally conceived as a series, and their storylines are not consistent with their publication dates. *The Pioneers, or The Sources of the Susquehanna; A Descriptive Tale* (1823), *The Last of the Mohicans: A Narrative of 1757* (1826), *The Prairie; A Tale* 1827), *The Pathfinder; or, The Inland Sea* (1840), and *The Deerslayer; or, The First War Path* (1841). Cooper's heroic protagonist is an old man in the first of them, and is youngest in the last, which is set a dozen years before the events of the Seven Years' War described in *The Last of the Mohicans*.
[49] Cooper's heroic protagonist is named Natty Bumppo, but is also known to British settlers as 'Leatherstocking', 'the pathfinder', and 'the trapper'. However, he is known to Native Americans as 'Deerslayer', 'Hawkeye', and '*Longue Carabine*'.

In comparison, Cooper's maritime tales now find a limited number of readers, perhaps confined to scholars of nineteenth-century American literature. Cooper's *The Pilot: A Tale of the Sea* (1823) is clearly indebted in tone and substance to Sir Walter Scott's *The Pirate* (1820). Cooper, who served with the United States Merchant Marine, evidences a mastery of nautical technicalities that is absent from Scott's work. Cooper discusses Scott's *The Pirate* at some length in the preface to the 1829 edition of *The Pilot* (the preface to the 1823 edition makes no mention of Scott or his works):

> *The Pilot* was published in 1823. This was not long after the appearance of *The Pirate*, a work which it is hardly necessary to remind the reader, has a direct connection with the sea. In a conversation with a friend…the authorship of the Scottish novels came under discussion. The claims of Sir Walter were a little distrusted, on account of the peculiar and minute information that the romances were then very generally thought to display. *The Pirate* was cited as a very marked instance of this universal knowledge, and it was wondered where a man of Scott's habits and associations could have become so familiar with the sea. The writer has frequently observed that there was much looseness in this universal knowledge, and that the secret of its success was to be traced to the power of creating that *vraisemblance*, which is so remarkably exhibited in these world-renowned fictions, rather than to any very accurate information on the part of the author.[50]

Scott was indeed unfamiliar with nautical matters, but perhaps Cooper is implying that a sea tale can be convincing even though its author lacks recondite knowledge, or personal experience, of seafaring.[51] Cooper's protagonist is John Paul Jones, a real-life Scottish adventurer, some would doubtless say renegade, who was the first man to be assigned the rank of First Lieutenant in the Continental Navy, which later became the United States Navy.[52] In fact, *The Pilot* is really the first significant example of an American naval yarn. Its unifying purpose appears to be the glorification of the aforementioned Jones, a figure who has achieved a quasi-mythical status among those connected with the United States Navy. This ploy clearly

[50] James Fenimore Cooper, *The Pilot: A Tale of the Sea* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1986), p. 5.
[51] Thomas Pilbrick, *James Fenimore Cooper and the Development of American Sea Fiction* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1961), p. 50.
[52] Evan Thomas, *John Paul Jones: Sailor, Hero, Father of the American Navy* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2003), p. 45.

owes much to the style of Scott, who customarily included at least one historical figure in his historical novels, thereby establishing a convention of the genre.

Cooper as writer

'People mayn't be like their books,' wrote Robert Louis Stevenson to J. M. Barrie, 'they are their books.'[53] Similarly, Cooper's reading is evidenced in his writing. As we will see, Cooper's reading very much reinforced his sense of literary identity. Cooper was nurtured in a home that valued the literary heritage of Europe, particularly that of Great Britain. Intellectual inquiry was a familial trait.[54] His published works cannot be understood without a textual awareness of the Anglosphere.

Cooper borrowed extensively, but not lazily or complacently, from the ideas and characters that he found in life and books; he then revamped these sources of inspiration, and inserted them into episodes and characters in his novels. He mimicked and reprised what he read and observed, and out of the ensuing confluence created a sort of newness that took the form of a ground-breaking novel that explored the interface between Anglospheric society and the North American wilderness. He not only alludes to his predecessors, particularly Scott, through verbal, thematic, and formal echoes in his story, but begins each chapter with epigraphs taken from the canon of English literature, perhaps seeking by such a stratagem to scatter some sort of cultural prestige around the text. A wide-ranging use of intertextuality in a writer's work customarily has the effect of locating it in relation to the tradition to which it alludes, which is in this case the Anglospheric tradition. The pioneer spirit of the American West suffuses the

[53] *The Letters of Robert Louis Stevenson*, ed. by Bradford A. Booth and Ernest Mehew, 8 vols (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1995), VIII, p. 48.
[54] Nick Louras, 'On Education', in *James Fenimore Cooper: A Life* (Alresford, Hampshire: Chronos, 2016), pp. 24-36.

pages of *The Last of the Mohicans*, and this frontier ethos could be construed as an Emersonian descant on the manifold virtues of self-reliance.[55]

Cooper's earlier work, *The Pioneers* (1823), intimates a nascent *Leitmotiv* in the Leatherstocking cycle, not only because it introduces Natty Bumppo, but because it also explores the nature of the border country wherein the retreating wilderness and the advancing Anglosphere intermittently collide.[56] Cooper can be seen to promote an ideal of a sense of place, but also of a tradition derived from his familial background. Cooper made his own contribution to this literary tradition of comparing the Native American with the Anglo-American. For example, one hundred years hence Willa Cather would describe in *Death Comes for the Archbishop* (1927) the contrasting Anglo-American and Native American views of the natural world. Journeying with his Indian companion, Eusabio, is for Bishop Latour, 'like travelling with the landscape made human'. The Anglo-American's way, Latour realises, is 'to assert himself' in any given natural environment, 'to change it, make it over a little (at least to leave some mark or memorial of his sojourn).' The Native American's way, conversely, is to pass through the countryside 'and leave no trace, like fish through the water, or birds through the air'. Such notable harmony with nature has nourished life, both physical and spiritual, 'from immemorial times'.[57] Similarly, Eric J. Sunquist propounds a historicised version of this view, arguing that Cooper merely fictionalised a view that was embodied in earlier works on the experience of those taken captive by Indians, but also by a number of historical works.[58] However, Cooper's novels do not provide any ideological justification for the Indian policies of Jacksonian America, which were legally sanctioned dispossession and suppression. Instead,

[55] 'It is easy to see that a greater self-reliance must work a revolution in all the offices and relations of men; in their religion; in their education; in their pursuits; their modes of living; their association; in their property; in their speculative views.' See Ralph Waldo Emerson, 'Self-Reliance' (1841), in *Nature and Selected Essays* (London: Penguin Books, 2003), pp. 175-204 (p.195).
[56] Thomas Philbrick, 'Cooper's *Pioneers*: Origins and Structure', *Proceedings of the Modern Language Association*, 79 (1974), pp. 579-593.
[57] Willa Cather, *Death Comes for the Archbishop* (New York: Vintage, 1971), p.233.
[58] Eric J. Sundquist, *Empire and Slavery in American Literature, 1820-1865* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2006), p. 70.

he should be looked upon as the author who initiated the absorption of the Native American into the literary consciousness of the Anglosphere, a process that did indeed begin with the narratives of captives and Indian warfare of that period, but was brought to fruition by the critical and commercial success of *The Last of the Mohicans*.[59]

The Ethnic Dimension

Cooper had a sense of racial mission. A hortatory dimension of white culture was a salient feature of Cooper's thought from the outset. The three major relationships represented in *The Last of the Mohicans* are those between Alice Munro and Major Duncan Heyward, Cora Munro and Uncas, and Hawkeye and Chingachgook. All three have ethnic or national dimensions. *The Last of the Mohicans* is a story about ethnic strife, and describes what happens when very different cultures encounter one another, or indeed collide. Cooper's own thoughts about profoundly different, perhaps mutually incompatible, peoples living in close proximity to each other may be found in *The American Democrat* (1838). His Manichean, perhaps indeed apocalyptic, view of the consequences attendant upon the manumission of Negroes is indicative of his opinion concerning the nature of a multi-ethnic society.[60] Cooper's attitude toward

[59] Paul Fussell, 'Leatherstocking Tales of James Fenimore Cooper', in *Frontier: American Literature and the American West* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1965), pp. 1-33.

[60] 'American slavery is distinguished from that of most other parts of the world by the circumstance that the slave is a variety of the human species, and is marked by physical peculiarities that are so very different from his master as to render future amalgamation improbable. In ancient Rome, in modern Europe generally, and in most other countries, the slave not being thus distinguished, on obtaining his freedom, was soon lost in the mass around him; but nature has made a stamp in the American slave that is likely to prevent this consummation, and which menaces much future ill to the country. The time must come when American slavery shall cease, and when that day shall arrive (unless early and effectual means are devised to obviate it) two races will exist in the same region, whose feelings will be embittered by inextinguishable hatred, and who carry on their faces the respective stamps of their factions. The struggle that will follow will necessarily be a war of extermination. The evil day may be delayed, but it can scarcely be averted.' See 'On American Equality', in *The American Democrat: or, Hints on the Social and Civic Relations of the United States of America* (Indianapolis, Indiana: Liberty Fund, 1981), pp. 27-29 (p. 29). Alexis de Tocqueville was of a similar mind. 'The most formidable evil threatening the future of the United States is the presence of the blacks on their soil…One can make the Negro free, but one cannot prevent him facing the European as a stranger.' See *Democracy in America* (two volumes, 1835-1840), trans. by George Lawrence, ed. by J. P. Mayer (London: Fontana, 1994), pp. 340-341. For an African-American literary critic's view of this pervasive sense of alienation see Kenneth W. Warren, *Black and White Strangers: Race and American Literary Realism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), *passim*.

slavery hardly differed from that to be found in Aristotle's *Politics*.[61] *The Last of the Mohicans* is a racial, though *not* a racialist, novel that employs whiteness as a unifying device, thereby determining not only who is white, but who is *not* white.[62]

Now, one's ethnic identity may be assumed without reflection, but a *statement* of that identity involves a conscious act, and serves as a basis for an effort to perceive oneself in a historical context as part of a particular group.[63] Cooper makes it abundantly clear that Hawkeye is a 'genuine white' and a 'white-skin' with 'no taint of Indian blood', which would doubtless make him more acceptable to an Anglospheric readership.[64] Hawkeye is described in *The Last of the Mohicans* as having 'the lingering pride of colour…which characterizes all classes of Anglo-Americans'.[65] Cooper is an author who is obsessed with racial differences.[66] He created a literary fund of Amerindian mythology, based on such differences, from which a number of authors were to draw, some of whom were his contemporaries.[67]

Underlying Cooper's portrayal of frontier warfare is a pervasive fear of miscegenation. This theme, though certainly latent in the Pocahontas stories and captive narratives, is more

[61] Aristotle, *Politics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), pp. 13-19.
[62] Cooper was heavily criticised by his contemporaries for depicting both indigenes and persons of mixed race in a favourable light. Indeed, Hawkeye was derided as a 'white Indian'. See Barbara Alice Mann, 'Race Traitor: Cooper, His Critics, and Nineteenth-Century Literary Politics', in *A Historical Guide to James Fenimore Cooper*, ed. by Leland S. Person (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), pp. 155-186 (pp. 158-162). Mark Twain hinted at the Pavlovian response of the Native American to danger and hardship when he wrote that whites who evinced such inurement were animalistic, stating that 'it is mere animal training; they are white Indians.' *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court* (1889) (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), p. 8. See also Kate Flint, 'Off-White Indians', in *Conflict and Difference in Nineteenth-Century Literature*, ed. by Dinah Birch and Mark Llewellyn (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), pp. 66-79. As a corollary, see also Maria DeGuzman's concept of 'alien whiteness' in *Spain's Long Shadow: The Black Legend, Off-Whiteness, and Anglo-American Empire* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005), *passim*.
[63] John M. Reilly, 'Criticism of Ethnic Literature: Seeing the Whole Story', *Melus*, 5 (1978), pp. 2-13 (p. 3).
[64] Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans, op. cit.,* p. 162.
[65] *Ibid.,* p. 269.
[66] The German author, Karl May (1842-1912), was heavily influenced by Cooper. His protagonists, Shatterhand and Winnetou, are closely modelled on Hawkeye and Chingachgook, and some of his plots and characterisations are similar to those found in the Leatherstocking cycle. May shared Cooper's interest in social, cultural, and physical differences, and was likewise fascinated by Native Americans and the American wilderness. See Jeffrey L. Sammons, *Ideology, Mimesis, Fantasy: Charles Sealsfield, Friedrich Gerstacker, Karl May and Other German Novelists of America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 1998), p. 130.
[67] Jared Gardner, 'Cooper's Vanishing American Act', in *Master Plots: Race and the Founding of an American Literature, 1787-1845* (Baltimore, Maryland: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000), pp. 81-124.

effectively articulated in the anti-miscegenationist subtext of *The Last of the Mohicans*.[68] In *The Deerslayer*, Natty Bumppo makes clear his opposition to miscegenation: 'Ought the young to wive with the old — the pale-face with the red-skin — the Christian with the heathen? It's ag'in reason and natur'.'[69] Correspondingly, Leslie A. Fiedler has argued that miscegenation is the insistent *Leitmotiv* of *The Last of the Mohicans*.[70]

The Last of the Mohicans is perhaps the first novel to illustrate the concept of race as a contentious issue.[71] Cora is the daughter of Munro's first wife, a West Indian woman of mixed race, who is euphemistically described by her father as 'descended remotely from that unfortunate class who are so basely enslaved to administer to the wants of a luxurious people.'[72] Major Duncan Heyward, in a conversation with Munro, reveals a romantic interest in the younger half-sister, Alice, who is possessed of a 'dazzling complexion, fair golden hair and bright blue eyes'.[73] Indeed, 'a whiter hue than white'.[74] He has plainly no such interest in the elder half-sister, Cora, for her 'tresses…were shiny and black like the plumage of a raven',

[68] Americans in Cooper's day used the term 'amalgamation' to refer to the mixing of the races, but a new word appeared in 1863. Two Democrats who opposed Lincoln's re-election published a 72-page pamphlet titled *Miscegenation: The Theory of the Blending of the Races, Applied to the American White Man and Negro*. The authors, who wrote pseudonymously, were two New York City journalists pretending to be Republican supporters of the President. They argued that amalgamation was an inappropriate term, and one that was more properly employed in the field of metallurgy, whereas a combination of the Latin *miscere*, to mix, and *genus*, race, would better convey the concept under discussion. The pamphlet was widely read, and the neologism became widely used. See Jared Taylor, 'The Racial Revolution: Race and Racial Consciousness in American History', in *Race and the American Prospect*, ed. by Samuel T. Francis (Mount Airy, Maryland: Occidental Press, 2006), pp.135-146. See also Nicholas Guyatt, 'Amalgamation', in *Bind Us Apart: How Enlightened Americans Invented Racial Segregation* (New York: Basic Books, 2016), pp. 115-196.

[69] James Fenimore Cooper, *The Deerslayer*, op. cit., p. 374. See also Ives Goddard, who discusses the use of Red and White as racial terms. It is clear from the earliest citations that *redskin* was regarded as a Native American expression. '"I am a Red-Skin": The Adoption of a Native American Expression', *European Review of North American Studies*, 19 (2005), pp. 1-20 (p. 11).

[70] Leslie A. Fiedler, 'James Fenimore Cooper and the Historical Romance', in *Love and Death in the American Novel*, *op. cit.*, pp. 162-214 (p. 205). See also Winthrop D. Jordan, 'Fruits of Passion: The Dynamics of Interracial Sex', in *White over Black: American Attitudes toward the Negro, 1550-1812* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1968), pp. 136-178. Cooper patently viewed race as a physiological and genetic fact, immediately perceptible to the human senses, rather than any social and/or cultural construction.

[71] Fiona J. Stafford, 'New Ideas of Race: *The Last of the Mohicans*', in *The Last of the Race: The Growth of a Myth from Milton to Darwin* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), pp. 232-275.

[72] Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans, op. cit.*, p. 215.

[73] *Ibid.*, p. 22.

[74] William Shakespeare, 'Venus and Adonis' (1593), in *The Complete Sonnets and Poems*, ed. by Colin Burrow (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), p. 171-236 (p. 197).

while ‘her complexion was not brown, but it rather appeared charged with the color of the rich blood that seemed ready to burst its bounds’.[75] Scott’s dark-haired, assertive Flora MacIvor and the reflective Rose Bradwardine, who is possessed of ‘hair of paley gold, and a skin like the snow of her own mountains in whiteness’, are similarly contrasted in *Waverley*.[76] The resemblance between the forenames of Flora and Cora highlights the parallel.[77] However, Cora’s strength of character brings much more to mind Jeanie Deans, the young woman who behaves so selflessly in Scott’s *The Heart of Midlothian* (1818). Thomas Hardy’s division of women into dark and fair, experienced and innocent, sensual and pure, is Cooper’s division, too. However, within the wider history of narrative, the convention of juxtaposing dark and fair ladies can be traced back to the contrast of Una and Duessa in the first book of Edmund Spenser’s *The Faerie Queen* (1589).[78] Cora envies her younger half-sister’s attributes: ‘She is fair! Oh surpassingly fair!’ Cora sighs. ‘Her soul is pure and spotless as her skin’, which reveals that Cora has absorbed this literary tradition.[79] Cora, as a mulatto, may be said to imitate, or perhaps parody, the property of whiteness, but she is surely aware that she can never possess it, even though she may intermittently enjoy its associated privileges.[80] Munro divulges that Alice is ‘the image of what her mother was at her years’.[81] However, Munro was clearly sufficiently fond of Cora’s mother to wed her. Munro, who is palpably an allophile, would

[75] Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans, op. cit.,* p. 23. Shakespeare’s sonnets 127-154 are known as the ‘Dark Lady’ sonnets, wherein the bard speaks of a beautiful, but enigmatic, mistress possessed of black hair and ‘raven black’ eyes. See William Shakespeare, ‘Sonnet 127’, in *The Complete Sonnets and Poems, op. cit.,* p. 635.
[76] Walter Scott, *Waverley*, ed. by Andrew Hook (London: Penguin, 2011), p. 43. Herman Melville carried this physical argument into the spiritual plane when he attempted to equate blondism with goodness. In *Pierre: or, The Ambiguities* (1852), Melville has Isabel complain: ‘Oh, God! That I had been born with blue eyes, and fair hair! These make the very livery of Heaven! Heard ye ever of a good angel with dark eyes, Pierre? — no, no, no — all blue, blue, blue — Heaven’s own blue.’ See *Pierre: or, The Ambiguities*, ed. by William Spengemann (New York: Penguin, 1996), p.314. Toni Morrison wrote a rejoinder to this Eurocentric view of virtue and beauty in her Afrocentric novel, *The Bluest Eye* (1974).
[77] Nina Baym, ‘The Women of Cooper’s Leatherstocking Tales’, *American Quarterly*, 23 (1971), pp. 696-709.
[78] Edmund Spenser, *The Faerie Queene*, ed. by Thomas P. Roche and Patrick O’Donnell (London: Penguin, 2003), p. 42.
[79] Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans, op. cit.,* p. 215.
[80] Cora, though of mixed race, enjoys the privileges of whiteness. For an exploration of this phenomenon see Ann Twinam, *Purchasing Whiteness: Pardos, Mulattos, and the Quest for Social Mobility* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2015), *passim*.
[81] *Ibid.*, p. 216.

appear to be overly defensive regarding both his first marriage and his firstborn offspring.[82] The readers of such authors as Rider Haggard, Rudyard Kipling, G. A. Henty, John Buchan, Mayne Reid, and A. E. W. Mason could not help but pick up on such self-exculpatory dissembling.[83] Persons of non-European ethnicity were frequently traduced as utterly alien, if not indeed animalistic, in literature aimed at the boy's own adventure story market.[84] Literary whiteness can sometimes be predicated upon a heightened sense of the Other.[85] As we have seen, whiteness is a visually defined quality, though it does have other dimensions. The everyday experience of being white is constructed through the valuations accorded to patent phenotypical traits, and sustained by the manifestations of white culture. *The Last of the Mohicans* offers commentary on the meaning of whiteness by examining the vexed relationship that exists between the Other and Anglospheric society.

Munro tells Hayward that 'You scorn to mingle the blood of the Heywards with one so degraded,' and reminds him that he was 'born in the South, where these unfortunate beings are considered of a race inferior to your own'.[86] Heyward, perhaps predictably, denies any such bias, though he has doubtless been made aware from birth that a single drop of Negro blood is sufficient to discolour a sea of Caucasian whiteness. Yet, it is more in relation to Uncas that Cora's ancestry has an ambiguous function in *The Last of the Mohicans*, for by portraying Cora as not only a dark lady, the daughter of a high-ranking British officer and a woman of sub-Saharan African antecedents, Cooper at one and the same time places Cora within range of

[82] Ruth Frankenberg, 'Race, Sex, and Intimacy: Interracial Couples and Interracial Parenting', in *White Women, Race Matters: The Social Construction of Whiteness* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993), pp. 102-136.
[83] Wendy R. Katz, *Rider Haggard and the Fiction of Empire: A Critical Study of British Imperial Fiction* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), pp. 131-152. See also Brian V. Street, 'Reading the novels of empire: race and ideology in the classic 'tale of adventure'', in *The Black Presence in English Literature*, ed. by David Dabydeen (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1985), pp. 95-111.
[84] Stephen Horigan, 'Beyond the bounds of culture: the noble savage and the wild man', in *Nature and Culture in Western Discourses* (New York: Routledge, 1988), pp. 50-65.
[85] Valerie Babb, 'Toward a Philosophy of Whiteness', in *Whiteness Visible: The Meaning of Whiteness in American Literature and Culture* (New York: New York University Press, 1998), pp. 7-45.
[86] Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans, op. cit.*, p. 215-216.

Uncas, yet also somehow out of range. Cora cries out in approval on beholding Uncas, 'Who looks at this creature of nature remembers the shade of his skin.'[87] The narrator has earlier asserted that Uncas is a pure-blooded Mohican, the last of his tribe.[88] Yet, at the funeral of Cora, the six Delaware girls sing of her union in death with Uncas, who preferred her because 'she was of a blood purer and richer than the rest of her nation.'[89] There is a Shakespearean echo here, taken from *The Tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark* (*circa* 1599-1602), when the Delaware girls sing of Uncas and 'the truant disposition of his inclinations'.[90] Horatio, asked by Hamlet what has brought him to Elsinore from university in Wittenberg, replies, 'A truant disposition, my good lord.'[91] The inclination manifested by Uncas is so designated for the reason that he has been 'truant' to the women of his own race in being drawn toward Cora. Munro, espousing a pious hope of racial equality before God, enjoins Hawkeye to inform the mourners that 'the time shall not be distant when we may assemble around His throne without distinction of sex, rank, or color', but he declines to translate, telling Munro that 'To tell them this would be to tell them that the snows come not in the winter, or that the sun shines fiercest when the trees are stripped of their leaves.'[92] Cora and Uncas, though fated to die, are united in a *Liebestod*.[93] Cooper could not have had it any other way, for Cora's end might be said to manifest his view that miscegenation is a corruption of one's familial lineage, and can end only in tragedy, not the least being the erasure of visible racial differences.[94] For example, in *The*

[87] *Ibid.*, p. 70.
[88] It is surely significant that Cooper gave the last member of the Mohican tribe the name of Uncas, for that was the name of an illustrious forbear in seventeenth-century Connecticut. However, Cooper made no attempt to pattern his character on the historical figure. See Michael Leroy Oberg, *Uncas: First of the Mohegans* (New York: Cornell University Press, 2006), p. 3. See also Scott Weidensaul, *The First Frontier: The Forgotten History of Struggle, Savagery, and Endurance in Early America* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2012), p. 128.
[89] Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, *op. cit.*, p. 466.
[90] *Ibid.*, p. 465.
[91] William Shakespeare, *Hamlet* (London: Bloomsbury Arden Shakespeare, 2016), I.3.169, p. 210.
[92] *Ibid.*, p. 471.
[93] Nancy Armstrong, 'Why Daughters Die: The Racial Logic of American Sentimentalism', *Yale Journal of Criticism*, 7 (1994), pp. 1-24 (p. 2).
[94] Cora's fate reflects the trope of the tragic mulatto. See Penelope Bullock, 'The Mulatto in American Fiction', in *Interracialism: Black-White Intermarriage in American History, Literature, and Law*, ed. by Werner Sollers (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), pp. 280-284. See also Dorothy M. Broderick, 'The Mulatto', in

Prairie (1827), the Dahcotah chief, Mahtoree, asks a trapper to translate a proposal of marriage to Ellen Wade, and receives instead an indignant lecture.[95] In *The Wept of Wish-ton-Wish* Cooper again wards off miscegenation, albeit in a different manner. The marriage between the Native American chief, Conanchet, and Ruth Heathcote, is traumatically ended. Uncas murders Conachet, and his wife dies of grief, though Cooper, perhaps tellingly, gives no inkling of what befell their infant son. The basic theme is that unions between Native Americans and whites can have no good outcome for Anglo-American society, the individual participants, or the offspring of any such misalliances.[96] However, Alice Munro, Cora's Scottish half-sister, and Duncan Heyward, an American of Anglo-Scottish ancestry, seem poised to perpetuate an unbroken white lineage, which would certainly meet with Cooper's approbation. Whiteness is the visible absence of colour. The future lies with Duncan Heyward and Alice Munro, who will not only 'breed plenty of white children', but will also in all likelihood own black slaves.[97] They personify two key norms of idealised whiteness: heterosexuality and racial purity. The happy ending, defined as the marriage of Duncan and Alice, is indeed qualified, but by no means negated.[98]

The Mohicans are aligned with the Romantic trope of the noble savage, though Magua is described as a 'dusky savage', a foul abhuman with something of Milton's Satan about him.[99] Indeed, Cooper refers to Magua as 'the Prince of Darkness', which is a quotation from *Paradise*

The Image of the Black in Children's Fiction (New York: R. R. Bowker, 1973), pp. 116-118, and Jack D. Forbes, 'The Mulatto Concept: Origin and Original Use', in *Africans and Native Americans: The Language of Race and the Evolution of Red-Black Peoples* (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 1993), pp. 131-150. For a discussion of Ralph Waldo Emerson's association of racial hybridity with moral turpitude, see Howard L. Malchow, *Gothic Images of Race in Nineteenth-Century Britain* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), p. 184.

[95] Cooper, *The Prairie* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), pp. 297-298.

[96] June Namias, *White Captives: Gender and Ethnicity on the American Frontier* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1993), pp. 96-98.

[97] D. H. Lawrence, 'Fenimore Cooper's Leatherstocking Novels' in *Studies in Classic American Literature, op. cit.*, pp. 52-69 (p. 64).

[98] Louise K. Barnett, *The Ignoble Savage: American Literary Racism, 1790-1890* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1975), p. 64.

[99] Cooper, *The Prairie, op. cit.,* p. 136. Washington Irving's 'Traits of Indian Character' provides some indication of contemporary received opinion throughout the Anglosphere regarding the Native Americans. See *The Sketch-Book* (1820) (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), pp. 240-249.

Lost (1667-1674).[100] However, Milton rendered Satan as a splendid figure, befitting his status as a fallen angel. Satan's demagogic oratorical skills in *Paradise Lost* are somewhat similar to those employed by Magua, who is depicted as demonically treacherous; a decidedly malevolent entity. Magua was banished from his own tribe, the Mohawk, and sought sanctuary among the Huron. Yet, early on in the novel, Cora asks 'Shall we distrust a man because his manners are not our manners, and that his skin is dark?'[101] One may infer that Cora's plea for tolerance is not a disinterested one. As Shylock had it, 'Mislike me not for my complexion/The shadowed livery of the burnish'd sun.'[102] Cooper also seems to be employing darkness in a metaphorical sense.[103]

In taking a path through the woods Cora's trust in Magua proves to have been misplaced, for her father had earlier disciplined Magua for drunkenness and insubordination. He was 'tied up before all the pale-faced warriors, and whipped like a dog.'[104] Consequently, Magua seeks revenge. Indeed, the entirely apposite epigraph to Chapter XI, Shylock's declaration taken from *The Merchant of Venice* (*circa* 1596-1599), illuminates Magua's state of mind: 'Cursed be my tribe/If I forgive him.'[105] Cooper once again echoes Shylock in the final chapter when the Lenape are described as having 'fed fat their ancient grudge'.[106] Shylock vows: 'If I can catch him once upon the hip/I will feed fat the ancient grudge I bear him'.[107] However, Magua is a one-dimensional villain, and this is perhaps indicative of Cooper's

[100] Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans, op. cit.,* p. 267. See also John Milton, *Paradise Lost* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), p. 251. Milton was a forceful presence in American literary culture, mainly due to the political and religious compatibility that were perceived to exist between his views and those Americans of a liberal disposition. See George F. Sensabaugh, *Milton in Early America* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1964), *passim*.
[101] Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, op. cit., p. 26.
[102] Shakespeare, *The Merchant of Venice*, ed. by John Drakakis (London: Bloomsbury Arden Shakespeare, 2011), II. 1. 1-2, p. 32.
[103] Annette Kolodny, *The Lay of the Land: Metaphor as Experience and History in American Life and Letters* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1975), p. 81.
[104] Cooper, *The Last of the Mohican, op. cit.,* p. 139.
[105] Shakespeare, *The Merchant of Venice, op. cit.,* I. 3. 46-47, p. 24.
[106] Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, op. cit., p. 460.
[107] Shakespeare, *The Merchant of Venice, op. cit.,* I. 3. 41-42, p. 24.

limitations as a writer. As we will see in the following chapter, Stevenson's Long John Silver, though equally villainous, is a much more complex character than Magua. Silver, though a liar, a thief, and a murderer, inexplicably manages to endear himself to the reader. Nevertheless, Magua would have been an instantly recognisable stereotype to a contemporary readership, and perhaps therein lay his strength.[108] Cooper shows the power of a stereotyped character, for such a character has the power to convey concepts in a condensed form.[109] Magua was the bloodthirsty redskin of Colonial America's nightmares.[110] In the context of a boy's own adventure story, stereotyped characters and formulaic plots are effectively a form of cultural shorthand.

Shakespeare was part of everyday life for nineteenth-century Anglo-Americans, and many sought in the plays a source of moral guidance.[111] However, the plays were also regarded as popular entertainment.[112] Children were introduced to Shakespeare in order to educate and entertain, the latter doubtless masking the former.[113] Cooper was acquainted with the collective consciousness of his prospective readership, and chose his epigraphs in a knowing manner. Cooper's pseudo-Shakespearian idiom betrays his literary origins. Such an oppositional allusion depends for effect on its extension and regularity. The reader must bear in mind both the lessons of the pattern of meaning to which Cooper alludes, and the distortions that occur in

[108] Pontiac's War did much to create the image of the redskin demagogue. See Gregory Evans Dowd, *War under Heaven: Pontiac, the Indian Nations, and the British Empire* (Baltimore, Maryland: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002), *passim*.
[109] Donna Sabis-Burns has noted that some ethnic stereotypes cannot be avoided without risking a misrepresentation of their subjects. See 'Taking a Critical Look at Native Americans in Children's Literature', in *Multicultural Literature and Response: Affirming Diverse Voices*, ed. by Lynn Atkinson Smollen and Ruth A. Oswald (Santa Barbara, California: Libraries Unlimited, 2011), pp. 131-152 (p. 136).
[110] Hostility toward Native Americans and their cultures was once a salient feature of books marketed to children. See Donald A. Barclay, 'Native Americans in Books from the Past', *The Horn Book Magazine*, 72 (1996), pp. 559-566.
[111] Emerson called Shakespeare 'the father of the man in America'. See Ralph Waldo Emerson, 'Representative Men', in *Essays and Lectures* (1849) (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), pp. 611-762 (p.722). See also Alden T. Vaughan and Virginia Mason Vaughan, *Shakespeare in America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), p. 1.
[112] Frances Teague, *Shakespeare and the American Popular Stage* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), *passim*.
[113] Erica Hateley, *Shakespeare in Children's Literature: Gender and Cultural Capital* (New York: Routledge, 2009), *passim*.

his own text, which could be viewed as a conduit metaphor.[114] Cooper employs the totemic status of *Shakespeare* among his targeted readership to convey, and to affirm, his own cultural values. Didacticism is omnipresent in the nineteenth-century boy's own adventure story, though the lessons to be learned therefrom are not always palatable to a twenty-first century readership.

Hawkeye

Cooper's story of Hawkeye's heroic adventures can be seen to conform to the pattern of the classical heroic quest, following the simple threefold mythic path of the classical hero — Separation, Descent, and Return — as defined by the folklorist, Joseph Campbell, in his seminal work of comparative mythology, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* (1949). Hawkeye is the hero as warrior.[115] Strangely, Campbell does not comment on *The Last of the Mohicans,* yet the story fits his theory of the universal hero perfectly, thereby revealing a fundamentally generic intertextuality. Hawkeye is an archetypal hero. The concept of the hero's journey, which is central to Campbell's study of myth, has an application to all four novels examined in this thesis.

The significance of Hawkeye's journey is amply evidenced when his party approaches Fort William Henry in the hours of darkness. Cooper's description of this journey is one of a descent into life-threatening chaos.[116] Fort William Henry, while not quite John Winthrop's 'City upon a Hill', is nevertheless an outpost of civilisation, albeit one that lies under siege by the King's enemies and their aboriginal hirelings. Hawkeye and his party are challenged by a

[114] Literary language may be used as a conduit to convey implicit moral concepts from writer to reader. See M. J. Reddy, 'The Conduit Metaphor: A Case of Frame Conflict in our Language about Language', in *Metaphor and Thought*, ed. by Andrew Ortony (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), pp. 284-310.
[115] Joseph Campbell, 'The Hero as Warrior', in *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* (Novato, California: New World Library, 2008), pp. 287-292.
[116] Thomas Philbrick, 'The Last of the Mohicans and the Sounds of Discord', *American Literature*, 43 (1971), pp. 25-41, (p. 39).

French picket. However, responding in fluent French, Heyward succeeds in deceiving the picket into believing that he is a French officer, *un capitaine de chasseurs à cheval*, who has captured the daughters of the garrison commander, Major Edmund Munro, and is escorting them to the quarters of Montcalm. The French picket assures the Munro half-sisters of Montcalm's hospitality, and waves the party through his position. Cora issues the valediction '*Adieu, mon ami',* to which Heyward appends *'Bonne nuit, mon comarade'.* Suddenly, Hawkeye and Heyward pull up short at the sound of 'a long and heavy groan'. Moments later their Mohican guide emerges from a thicket to join them once again:

> with one hand he attached the reeking scalp of the unfortunate young Frenchman to his girdle, and with the other he replaced the knife and tomahawk that had drunk his blood. He then took his wonted station, with the air of a man who believed that he had done a deed of merit.[117]

The killing of the French soldier shocks even Hawkeye. It is perhaps all the more shocking that the tomahawk and scalping knife employed by the Mohican are 'of English manufacture'.[118] Hawkeye leans on his rifle, musing 'in profound silence'. He shakes his head sadly, and mutters that 'Twould have been a cruel and unhuman act for a white-skin, but 'tis the gift and nature 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!'[119] Hawkeye, despite the company he keeps, remains profoundly ethnocentric, and whiteness can be seen to be rather more than a mere label of racial classification. He knows that he can depend on Chingachgook's courage and fidelity, wisdom and woodcraft. Yet, when Chingachgook tomahawks and scalps the French picket Hawkeye does not feel able to reproach him, but merely wishes that the victim had been an Iroquois warrior, a 'Mingo', in the service of the French Army. Any considerations of probity are inextricably entwined with personal loyalty. Hawkeye adheres to

[117] Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans, op. cit.,* p. 185.
[118] *Ibid.,* p. 36.
[119] *Ibid.,* p. 186.

an innate code of honour. Indeed, he may himself be capable of savagery in a combat situation, for mortal danger may invoke an atavistic response, but he is by no means of a savage disposition.[120] His pride and stoicism mask his concern over the savagery that surrounds him, but also mirrors the ferocity of his associates. Hawkeye may be trapped between two worlds, and lack the education and manners of British Army officers, but he is possessed of an inner moral sense that places him apart from those around him. Contemplation of Hawkeye's successive journeys would serve as a valuable learning experience for the nineteenth-century boy reader. As we will later see, Kipling's boy hero, Kim, also journeys abroad, and is similarly caught between two worlds, and learns similar lessons therefrom.

Cooper's invitation to the reader to empathise with the fallen French soldier is an act of racial solidarity. Hawkeye has no understanding of the French language, and hence is unaware of what transpired in the short conversation that took place, but he clearly feels a bond with the French soldier even though he is the enemy. Cooper thereby employs the bloodlust of the Native American to reinforce the ethnocentrism of the European. Chingachgook's behaviour is at odds with the code of honour to which Hawkeye subscribes. It can be seen, therefore, that though Hawkeye has gone native, he has not adopted the moral code of the Indian.[121] Indeed, as he says in *The Deerslayer*, 'a red-skin's scalping don't justify a pale-face's scalping'.[122] Hawkeye does not take scalps, nor does he give way to what Herman Melville was later to describe in *The Confidence-Man: His Masquerades* (1857) as 'The metaphysics of Indian-hating, according to the views of one evidently not so prepossessed as Rousseau in favour of

[120] Stuart Hannabuss, 'Ballantyne's message of empire', in *Imperialism and Juvenile Literature*, ed. by Jeffrey Richards (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1989), pp. 53-71 (p. 57).
[121] Frank Bergmann, 'The Meaning of the Indians and their Land in Cooper's *The Last of the Mohicans*', in *Upstate Literature*, ed. by Frank Bergmann (Syracuse, New York: Syracuse University Press, 1985), pp. 117-128 (p. 118). See also James Axtell, who discusses the phenomenon of British and Anglo-American settlers adopting Indian culture, and sometimes voluntarily living with Indian tribes, in 'The White Indians', in *The Invasion Within: The Contest of Cultures in Colonial North America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), pp. 302-327.
[122] Cooper, *The Deerslayer*, op. cit., p. 60.

savages'.[123] Cooper seems to suggest that Hawkeye remains an authentic Anglo-American insofar as he has acquired the Native Americans' knowledge of woodcraft without acquiring their savagery. Hence, it can be seen that Hawkeye's role in the story is to manifest the finest qualities of the Native American, while also manifesting the finest qualities of the Anglo-Saxon. He willingly exists in a primeval wilderness in which entropy reigns supreme, yet white society is by no means foreign to him. Hawkeye represents the optimal blend of two very different cultures, albeit in a somewhat atavistic form. As we will see in a later chapter, Kim is similarly a divided self. The nineteenth-century boy's own adventure story reader would perhaps be led by this to question the very nature of personal identity, while enhancing a sense of ethnic identity.[124] Whiteness may be given form by contrast to the Other.

Chingachgook seems to occupy a middle ground between noble savage and red devil.[125] Indeed, it is a white devil, Hawkeye,[126] who tells Chingachgook, 'You are a just man for an Indian.'[127] This has literary importance as a prototype of similar friendships in *Moby-Dick; or, The Whale* (1851), and *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn (Tom Sawyer's Comrade)* (1884). Cooper's depiction of the unlikely friendship between Hawkeye and Chingachgook as a product of the bleak and hostile environment in which they live does have a historical grounding.[128] In addition, there is a compelling literary reason to have someone as mysterious and savage as Chingachgook accompany Hawkeye. He has the allure of the unknown, and some measure of that allure attaches to Hawkeye. The close friendship forged by Hawkeye and

[123] Herman Melville, *The Confidence-Man: His Masquerades* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), p. 97-101. Contrary to popular belief, Rousseau never used the phrase noble savage, or *bon sauvage*. See Ter Ellingson, *The Myth of the Noble Savage* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), p. *xiv*.
[124] Rudyard Kipling, 'Two Races', in *The Complete Verse*, ed. by M. M. Kaye (London: Kyle Cathie, 2006), pp. 672-673.
[125] John P. MacWilliams, 'Red Satan: Cooper and the American Indian Epic', in *James Fenimore Cooper: New Critical Essays*, ed. by Robert Clark (London: Vision Press, 1985), pp. 143-161 (p. 144).
[126] Stephen Brumwell, *White Devil: A True Story of War, Savagery, and Vengeance in Colonial America* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2004), p. 104.
[127] Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans, op. cit.*, p. 42.
[128] Dana D. Nelson, 'Cooper's Leatherstocking Conversations: Identity, Friendship, and Democracy in the New Nation', in *A Historical Guide to James Fenimore Cooper*, ed. by Leland S. Person (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), pp. 123-154 (p. 137).

Chingachgook, who are men representative of very different peoples, presages the affiliations of Ishmael and Queequeg, Huck and Jim, Kim and Teshoo Lama, and perhaps even the Lone Ranger and Tonto.[129] Similarly, Robert Louis Stevenson employed the Brown Indian, Secundra Dass, as a catalyst in *The Master of Ballantrae: A Winter's Tale* (1889). James Durie, Master of Ballantrae, finds Dass useful when confronted by the so-called Red Indians. Dass is mainly used for the exoticism and mystery that he adds by association with Durie's character. The relationship between David Balfour and Alan Breck Stewart in *Kidnapped* (1886) is another attraction of opposites. As we will see in the following chapter, Stevenson mentions Cooper as a source of inspiration in a poem that prefaces *Treasure Island*.[130] Allan Quatermain and his faithful Hottentot tracker, Hans, have a correspondingly symbiotic relationship in Rider Haggard's *King Solomon's Mines* (1885). A. E. W. Mason also rewrites the Anglo-Saxon warrior and exotic companion trope in *The Four Feathers* (1902), in which Oxford Blue, Harry Faversham and his faithful Arab companion, Abou Fatma, perform acts of derring-do in the course of the Mahdist War in Sudan.[131]

Hawkeye serves as a tool for a social and cultural examination of historical events. In the first Leatherstocking novel, *The Pioneers*, he is seen in old age, and he reflects on his life and the environment in which he has lived. He fought alongside the Delaware and the Mohican in his younger days, but he has lived most of his life as a quasi-recluse in a log cabin on a lakeside shore. He is a man at home in the wilderness, which he calls 'a second paradise'.[132] Hawkeye is portrayed as being largely a voluntary isolate, though he occupies a liminal position in which he is simultaneously both inside and outside the dominant culture. An enigmatic

[129] Ivy Schweitzer, 'Eat Your Heart Out: James Fenimore Cooper's Male Romance and the American Myth of Interracial Friendship', in *Perfecting Friendship: Politics and Affiliation in Early American Literature* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006), pp. 133-164.
[130] Joseph Bristow, *Empire Boys: Adventures in a Man's World* (London: HarperCollins, 1991), p. 111.
[131] J. A. Mangan, 'Manly Chaps in Control: Blues and Blacks in the Sudan', in *The Games Ethic and Imperialism: Aspects of the Diffusion of an Ideal* (London: Frank Cass, 1998), pp. 71-100.
[132] Cooper, *The Pioneers, op. cit.*, p. 320.

figure, factual or fictional, has an attraction for readers of adventure stories, particularly juvenile readers in search of a hero.

A similarity between Cooper's fictional backwoods hero, Hawkeye, and the legendary frontiersman, Daniel Boone (1734-1820), was commented upon by many contemporary readers. Indeed, there would seem to be an echo in their very names — Daniel Boone and Nathaniel Bumppo.[133] Cooper actually mentions Boone by name in the later Leatherstocking novels, *The Prairie* (1827), *The Pathfinder*, and *The Deerslayer*. In addition, the issue of captivity, and subsequent rescue therefrom, in *The Last of the Mohicans* appears to be based on Boone's daring rescue of his daughter, Jemima, and the Callaway sisters, Fanny and Betsy, from a group of Cherokee and Shawnee Indians in 1796.[134] The captive narrative was a popular genre in Cooper's own day.[135]

Francis Parkman wrote admiringly of the Leatherstocking cycle, and noted that Cooper's portrait of Hawkeye portrayed one of the noblest types of American character: 'The quiet, unostentatious courage of Cooper's hero had its counterpart in the character of Daniel Boone; and the latter had the same unaffected love of nature which forms so pleasing a feature in the mind of Leatherstocking.'[136] In Parkman's view, Hawkeye is a marriage of New England Puritan virtues and the primeval ferocity of the Native American. Heaven and hell have equal part in him. Parkman lived with the Plains Indians, and wrote about his experiences with them in *The Oregon Trail: Sketches of Prairie and Rocky-Mountain Life* (1847). Cooper can be seen to embrace the folklore that surrounds Boone.

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[133] John Mack Faragher, *Daniel Boone: The Life and Legend of an American Pioneer* (New York: Henry Holt, 1992), pp. 331.
[134] Meredith Mason Brown, *Frontiersman: Daniel Boone and the Making of America* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2008), pp. 105-111.
[135] Richard Slotkin, 'Ideology and Fiction: The Role of Cooper', in *The Fatal Environment: The Myth of the Frontier in the Age of Industrialization, 1800-1890* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1998), pp. 81-106 (pp. 102-103). See also David T. Haberly, 'Women and Indians: *The Last of the Mohicans* and the Captivity Tradition', *American Quarterly*, 28 (1976), pp. 431-443.
[136] Francis Parkman, 'James Fenimore Cooper', in *Leatherstocking and the Critics*, ed. by Warren S. Walker (Chicago: Scott Foresman, 1965), pp. 4-6 (p. 4).

Hawkeye's moral sense must be understood in the terms of the life that he has led. Indeed, it is a dying Huron warrior who bestows the name of Hawkeye on the young Natty Bumppo. The Huron, who is the first man Natty kills, meets his end as a result of a dispute over possession of a canoe. It is this act that heralds Hawkeye's transformation into a heroic figure, and is perhaps symbolic of the demographic fate of Native Americans.[137] As Cooper would have it: 'Such was the commencement of a career in forest exploits, that afterwards rendered this man…as renowned as many a hero whose name has adorned the pages of works more celebrated than legends simple as ours can ever become'.[138] Presumably Cooper alludes to heroes portrayed in European and Classical literature. Indeed, Hawkeye is a fictional white scout in a world of danger who has in some way been retrospectively reified by the real-life exploits of white scouts such as Kit Carson, Wild Bill Hickock, and Buffalo Bill Cody. The popular image of such men helped to shape conceptions of white identity. They are as a group united in whiteness. Cooper shows Hawkeye to be a reflective man, whose wisdom stems from personal experience and intuition, and not formal education. He adheres to natural law, not statutory law. Hawkeye remains 'as illiterate as a Mohawk', having 'never passed a day within reach of a spelling book' or 'read a book in [his] life',[139] though his lack of formal education is no handicap. He is patently of good character, and is presented as a credit to his kith and kin.

Hawkeye, and indeed Duncan Heyward, may also be seen as templates for Edgar Rice Burroughs' Tarzan, who first appeared in *Tarzan of the Apes* (1914). Tarzan behaves in a principled manner; he does not adopt the law of the jungle, though he feels perfectly at home in the African tropical wilderness. He is white, tall, athletic, and exhibits noble character traits. Tarzan is in fact William Clayton, Earl of Greystoke, and his aristocratic bearing is doubtless

[137] Astrid Wind, 'Adieu to All: The Dying Indian at the Turn of the Eighteenth Century,' *Symbiosis: A Journal of Anglo-American Literary Relations*, 2 (1998), pp. 39-55.
[138] Cooper, *The Deerlayer*, *op. cit.*, pp. 126-127.
[139] Cooper, *The Pathfinder*, *op. cit.*, p. 296. *The Prairie*, *op. cit.*, p. 184. *The Pioneers*, *op. cit.*, p. 293.

intended to be seen as innate. Indeed, Tarzan means White-Skin in the ape language.[140] Burroughs was an Anglo-American, almost entirely of English descent, who wrote for the Anglospheric boy's own adventure story reader, which is to say that he wrote for people much like himself.[141] Tarzan, like Hawkeye, is a warrior, but also, like Heyward, he is a man of urbane limitations. Jane Porter, like the earlier Alice Munro, is the damsel in distress. Tarzan could be seen as a Hawkeye for the early twentieth-century Anglospheric imperial fiction market, which differed precious little from its nineteenth-century counterpart. Cooper's sympathetic depiction of some, but by no means all, Native Americans stands in marked contrast to Burroughs dismissive characterisation of sub-Saharan Africans, whom he describes as childlike in nature.[142] Nevertheless, Burroughs, like Cooper, believed that the most effective use of primitive peoples in fiction is where they are shown to be steadfastly loyal followers of an inspirational white leader.[143]

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, in his historical romance of the fourteenth century, *The White Company* (1891), and in its companion work, *Sir Nigel: Boyhood of the Commander of the White Company* (1906), illustrates fully, in the figure of Sir Nigel Loring, how chivalry and an Anglo-Saxon martial spirit could be fused to triumph over chaos and redeem any given parlous situation, while remaining resolutely honourable. Conan Doyle's novel is based on the factual exploits of a fourteenth-century mercenary company that was led by Sir John Hawkwood. The boy's own adventure story reader could easily construe this as Hawkeye in mediaeval mode, for Hawkeye is clearly invested with something of the Arthurian myth. Conan Doyle makes plain in his novel's dedication the centrality of the Anglosphere in his thought: 'To the hope of

[140] Edgar Rice Burroughs, *Tarzan of the Apes* (New York: Penguin, 1998), p. 38.
[141] John Taliaferro, *Tarzan Forever: The Life of Edgar Rice Burroughs* (New York: Scribner, 1999), p. 27.
[142] Patrick Brantlinger, *Rule of Darkness: British Literature and Imperialism, 1830-1914* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1988), p. 191. See also Jan Nederveen Pieterse, *White on Black: Images of Africa and Blacks in Western Popular Culture* (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1995), *passim*.
[143] Eric Cheyfitz, *The Poetics of Imperialism: Translation and Colonization from "The Tempest" to "Tarzan"*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), p. 3. See also Erling B. Holtsmark, *Tarzan and Tradition: Classical Myth in Popular Literature* (Santa Barbara, California: Greenwood, 1981), *passim.*

the Future/The reunion of the English-speaking races/This little chronicle to our common ancestry is inscribed.'[144] This is patently a plea for Anglospheric unity.

Farmer James famously queries in J. Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur's *Letters from an American Farmer* (1782) 'What, then, is the American, this new man?'[145] Cooper answers that question in full. Hawkeye, despite having gone native, remains at heart an Anglo-Saxon warrior.[146] Cooper repeatedly identifies Hawkeye as a classifiable racial type, and this is without question a factor in his transformation into an archetypal heroic figure of nineteenth-century fiction for boys. He is a Byronic *homme fatale*, perhaps in the manner of Conrad in 'The Corsair' (1814), who is violent and ruthless, yet also gentlemanly.[147] Indeed, in nineteenth-century America no other Romantic poet approached Byron in fame and popular appreciation.[148] As we will later see, Hawkeye, a loyal son of Albion despite his savage mien, does indeed 'Play up! Play up! And play the game!'[149] *The Last of the Mohicans* displays the poetic use of symbolism, and the exaltation of the past and the primitive, that characterises the Romantic era.[150] Hawkeye evinces the sentiment of the Romantic hero, albeit shorn of his mawkishness, but remains an entirely credible frontiersman, and herein lies his attraction, for

[144] Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, *The White Company* (Ware, Hertfordshire: Wordsworth, 1996), dedication page.
[145] J. Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur, *Letters from an American Farmer* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), p. 10.
[146] Alasdair MacIntyre, 'The Virtues of Heroic Societies', in *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory* (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 2007), pp. 121-130.
[147] Lord Byron, *The Corsair* (London: Penguin, 1999), *passim*.
[148] William Ellery Leonard, *Byron and Byronism in America* (Washington, District of Columbia: Library of Congress, 1905), *passim*. See also G. Werner Krug, *Lord Byron als Dichterische Gestalt in England, Frankreich, Deutschland, und Amerika* (Potsdam: Richard Schneider, 1932), p. 2.
[149] Sir Henry Newbolt's short poem, '*Vitai Lampada*', enjoins youth to play determinedly, but fairly. See Patrick Howarth, *Play Up and Play the Game: The Heroes of Popular Fiction* (London: Eyre Methuen, 1973), unnumbered page. Johan Huizinga examined this concept of play as the basis of culture in his seminal study *Home Ludens: A Study of the Play Element in Culture* (1938) (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1980), *passim.*
[150] Joel Porte, *The Romance in America: Studies in Cooper, Poe, Hawthorne, Melville, and James* (Middletown, Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 1969), pp. 18-22. Romance is not always concerned with past events, however. For example, Nathaniel Hawthorne set his romances in the contemporary scene. See 'Preface', in *The House of the Seven Gables* (1851) (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), pp. unnumbered.

folkloric heroes inevitably exhibit those traits of character which their celebrants most admire.[151] Hawkeye's heroism is an acclamation of whiteness.

The Noble Savage

Cooper places his work at the fore of a developing frontier literary tradition. He shows that Native Americans can be cruel, sadistic, and vengeful, but also shows that they can be noble, courageous, and loyal, and thereby prefigures the ambivalent attitude toward Indians that much of Anglospheric culture would hold throughout the course of the nineteenth century. Such a comparative ethnology is symptomatic of two very different narratives that ran in tandem with one another. Native Americans were perceived to be savage and dangerous, but also exciting and fascinating, depending on the context.[152] D. H. Lawrence perceptively noted in 'Fenimore Cooper's White Novels' (1923) that 'There has been all the time, in the white American soul, a dual feeling about the Indian.'[153] This duality is perhaps reified to some degree in the figure of Hawkeye, who though self-describing as white seems to evidence some element of ethnographic self-fashioning.

Roy Harvey Pearce has argued that in American fiction it was Cooper who first portrayed the Native Americans as more complex than the bloodthirsty savages they were universally taken to be. After Cooper, he explains, writers of fiction always 'tried to argue feelings of guilt and hatred, of pity and censure, out of existence by showing how Indian nobility was at one with Indian ignobility.'[154] Cooper's writing implicitly reflects such a dual

[151] Hoffman, Daniel, 'The American Hero: His Masquerade', in *Form and Fable in American Fiction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1961), pp. 33-82.
[152] Kate Flint, 'Savagery and Nationalism: Native Americans and Popular Fiction', in *The Transatlantic Indian, 1776-1930* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2009), pp.136-166 (p.154).
[153] D. H. Lawrence, 'Fenimore Cooper's White Novels', in *Studies in Classic American Literature, op. cit.,* pp. 40-51 (p. 41).
[154] Roy Harvey Pearce, *Savagism and Civilization: A Study of the Indian and the American Mind* (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1988), p. 197.

vision. Chingachgook remains an enigma. We never learn how he feels about Hawkeye killing Amerindians, even though they may be his own tribe's traditional enemies.

Cooper's narrating of the Fort Henry episode indicates the dangers inherent to the taking of Native American allies. Indeed, the killing of the French picket, which strikes a disquieting note at the moral heart of the novel, would seem to prefigure the attack on the British column a short distance from Fort William Henry. In a similar manner to which Hawkeye is implicated in the killing and mutilation of a French picket, so is Montcalm judged to be equally culpable as regards the treacherous behaviour of his Indian allies.[155] Cooper, regarding this matter, makes an oblique reference to Scott's *Guy Mannering* (1815).[156] Montcalm's behaviour during the massacre at Fort William Henry is described as 'an immovable blot on the…fair escutcheon'.[157] The literal meaning of escutcheon is a shield bearing a coat of arms, thereby identifying its owner as a nobleman. Scott employed the term in its literal sense. However, the term also has the metonymical meaning of honour, which is presumably how it is employed by Cooper.[158]

The ferocity of the Native Americans may be harnessed by the European militaries, but it does not do to give it free rein. They are wild, and they cannot be tamed, though they can be cowed. Cooper warns of the dangers faced by Europeans in allying themselves with such unpredictable and uncontrollable auxiliary forces. It is a message reiterated by many Anglospheric writers, not least by authors of boy's own adventure stories. The idea of European moral superiority appears to have been as firmly fixed in Cooper's mind as it was in the mind of his Anglospheric readership. Rider Haggard would later build on the success of such works

[155] Richard White, *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), pp. 245-247.
[156] Walter Scott, *Guy Mannering* (London: Penguin, 1999), p. 244.
[157] Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans, op. cit.,* p. 242.
[158] It was John Dryden who coined the phrase, 'a blot in his escutcheon', meaning an incident damning to an individual's reputation, in 'Dedication to the Aeneis' (1697). See James Anderson Winn, *John Dryden and His World* (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1987), p. 570.

as *The Last of the Mohicans* when he took British pluck, along with guns and quinine, into the heart of Darkest Africa.[159] Haggard, and his literary compatriot, George Henty, held the Martini-Henry rifle to be the ultimate moral exemplar.[160]

Cooper's description of the events immediately following the surrender of Fort William Henry, particularly the whirlwind of murder and mayhem that ensues when the British column is attacked by wild beasts in human form, is recounted with care. Cooper describes a river of blood in full spate: 'The flow of blood might be likened to the outbreak of a torrent; and as the natives became heated and maddened by the sight, many among them even kneeled to the earth, and drank freely, exultantly, hellishly, of the crimson tide.'[161] *The Last of the Mohicans* is by far the most sanguinary volume of the Leatherstocking cycle. The words 'blood' and 'bloody' occur like a drumroll throughout the story.

The demonic violence recounted in *The Last of the Mohicans* helps to place it in the category of a boy's own story, for violence is a signal component thereof. Indeed, the mythology of the American wilderness is steeped in violence.[162] The massacre is the climax of *The Last of the Mohicans,* but not its conclusion. It is, however, the pivotal episode of the story. *The Last of the Mohicans*, in the manner of its progenitors such as *Waverley* and *Rob Roy*, has male protagonists, involves adventure and violence, escape from mortal danger, and takes place in remote locations. The tried and tested formula of the boy's own adventure story is to some extent a formulaic sort of intertextuality.[163]

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[159] Patrick Brantlinger, 'Victorians and Africans: The Genealogy of the Myth of the Dark Continent', *Critical Inquiry*, 12 (1985), pp. 166-203. See also Dierk Walter, *Colonial Violence: European Empires and the Use of Force*, trans. by Peter Lewis (London: Hurst, 2017), p. 194.
[160] Mawuena Kossi Logan, 'Legacy and Impact of Nineteenth-Century Juvenile Literature', in *Narrating Africa: George Henty and the Fiction of Empire* (New York: Routledge, 1999), pp. 167-188.
[161] Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans, op. cit.*, p. 238.
[162] Richard Slotkin, *Regeneration through Violence: The Mythology of the American Frontier, 1600-1860* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2000), *passim.*
[163] Dennis Butts, 'Exploiting a Formula: The Adventure Stories of G. A. Henty (1832-1902)', in *Popular Children's Literature in Britain*, ed. by Julia Briggs, Dennis Butts, and M. O. Grenby (Aldershot, Hampshire: Ashgate), 2008, pp. 149-163.

Chingachgook and Uncas are portrayed as noble savages, which is a cultural fiction that very much places them in the European literary tradition.[164] Indeed, there is something of Voltaire's *L'Ingénu* (1767) about them both, for just as the Huron child of nature is more virtuous than the people he encounters in France, so are the Mohicans too estimable to be entirely credible.[165] However, much the same could be said of Hawkeye. As we have seen, Cooper is not entirely impervious to the myth of the noble savage. George Sand observed the elegiac force of Cooper's writing, and remarked: 'While Sir Walter Scott mourns for a nation, a power, above all an aristocratic way of life, what Cooper sings for, and laments, is a noble people exterminated.'[166] Henry Wadsworth Longfellow took this idealised view of Native Americans to its logical conclusion with 'The Song of Hiawatha' (1855). Indeed, a number of the *Encyclopédistes*, and their Anglospheric fellow travellers, entertained similar views regarding the assumed virtue of those persons not of European ethnicity. *The Last of the Mohicans* could be read as a satire on the cult of sensibility that was embraced by American intellectuals in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The literature of sensibility still found an audience in America long after it had declined in the British Isles.[167] In Henry McKenzie's novel, *Man of the World* (1787), the protagonist, Richard Annesly, lives with Native Americans for a number of years, but then decides to return to his own people. He compares the 'fraud, hypocrisy, and sordid baseness' of Anglo-Americans with the 'honesty, truth, and savage nobility of soul' to be found among the indigenes.[168] However, as Ter Ellingson has noted, this

[164] Anthony Pagden, *The Fall of Natural Man: The American Indian and the Origins of Comparative Ethnology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), p. 97.
[165] In comparison, Brian Moore's novel, *Black Robe* (1985), portrays the Hobbesian environment in which the Huron, Iroquois, and Algonquin interact in a markedly different light. Voltaire was a gadfly whose writings were more polemical than didactic. He gained his notoriety more for his contrariness and obstinacy than for any originality or profundity.
[166] George Sand, 'Fenimore Cooper' (1856), in *James Fenimore Cooper: The Critical Heritage*, ed. by George Dekker and John P. Williams (London: Routledge, 2013), pp. 261-269 (p. 268).
[167] Julie Ellison, *Cato's Tears and the Making of Anglo-American Emotion* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), p. 9.
[168] Henry MacKenzie, *Man of the World* (London: J. Limbird, 1833), p. 71.

comparison is much more a figment of imagination than a description of reality.[169] Sensibility is not an acceptable substitute for first-hand experience.

A number of critics have alleged that Cooper possessed no empirical knowledge of Native American culture, but this is simply not the case. For example, Robert F. Berkhofer asserts that 'like so many authors of his time, Cooper knew little or nothing of Native Americans directly, and so his works reveal the typical confusion of one tribe with another in customs, names, and languages.'[170] This is quite simply wrong. Cooper certainly found the prospect of faithfully representing Amerindians to be a challenging task, and his depiction of them does appear to be a composite one, but his knowledge was based on personal acquaintanceship with many prominent Indian chiefs. In particular, he became well acquainted with Ongpatonga, chief of the Omaha, and Petalesharo, chief of the Pawnee, when he met them in New York in 1821. He also had rewarding conversations with interpreters and army officers, from whom he learned much about various Indian tribes and their customs.[171] Cooper strove to know as much as he could about Indian life and lore and, more importantly, to use such knowledge in a discerning manner. It is indeed the case that Cooper had no direct experience of hostile Native Americans in an uncontrolled environment. However, he could certainly write *ex cathedra* on the subject of whites and whiteness.

[169] Ter Ellingson, *The Myth of the Noble Savage*, *op. cit.*, p. 2.
[170] Robert F. Berkhofer, *The White Man's Indian: Images of the American Indian from Columbus to the Present, op. cit.*, p.93.
[171] Nick Louras, *James Fenimore Cooper: A Life*, *op. cit.*, p. 113.

The Strange Case of David Gamut

Cooper opens Chapter 2 with an apt Shakespearean epigraph: 'Sola, sola! wo ha, ho! Sola, sola!'.[172] Launcelot, the clown, imitates with his cry of 'sola!' the horn of the courser, and 'wo, ha, ho!' is a falconer's call. David Gamut's demeanour could certainly be described as clownish. However, this line could also represent a voice singing notes from the sol-fa scale, hence its use to introduce the chapter in which the pious singing-master, Gamut, makes his appearance. It has been argued that Gamut is a failed attempt on the part of Cooper to create a humorous character.[173] The buffoonish psalmodist is a passive individual, though he is the first character to speak in the novel, and sings 'forth the language of the holy book'.[174] Indeed, the most distinctive characteristic that Cooper gives Gamut is that of psalm singer.[175] Gamut may have been based on the ungainly Connecticut Yankee, Ichabod Crane, who is a comedic character in Washington Irving's short story 'The Legend of Sleepy Hollow' (1819). He is a singing-master, and instructs juveniles in psalmody.[176] Gamut and Crane are ungainly eccentrics, and their elongated physiques are remarkably similar, though Gamut has a large head, and Crane a small one. Another similarity is that Gamut and Crane have biblical forenames. In addition, Irving and Cooper employ aptronym when choosing surnames. A crane is a long-legged bird, and Ichabod Crane has a not dissimilar physique, whereas gamut is the whole scale of recognised musical notes, though gamut is also the full range of avian plumage colouration. However, it is perhaps the case that Cooper used the signifying surname of Gamut derisively. Clarence O. Johnson has argued that John Milton employed this term in

[172] William Shakespeare, *The Merchant of Venice,* v. 1. 39, *op. cit.,* p. 127.
[173] Karen S. Sloan, 'The Nineteenth-Century Church Music Controversy: A Possible Referent for Cooper's "Manifestly Impossible" Singing-Master in *The Last of the Mohicans*', *American Notes and Queries: A Quarterly Journal of Short Articles, Notes, and Reviews,* 19 (2006), pp. 33-42.
[174] Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans, op. cit.,* p. 21.
[175] Cheryl C. Boots, 'Singing and Reading: Cooper's Public Presentation of Psalmody in *The Last of the Mohicans*', in *New England Music: The Public Sphere, 1600-1900*, ed. by Peter Benes (Boston, Massachusetts: Boston University Press, 1998), pp. 61-71.
[176] Washington Irving, 'The Legend of Sleepy Hollow', in *The Sketch Book, op. cit.,* pp. 291-318.

'Areopagitica' (1644), a prose polemical tract, to attack England's Imprimatur laws as stooping to include forms of music that were allegedly tainted by Papism.[177]

Gamut reads Psalm 133 from the 'sixth-and-twentieth edition' of 'this gifted work', *The Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual Songs of the Old and New Testaments; faithfully translated into English Metre, for the Use, Edification, and Comfort of the Saints, in Public and Private, especially in England* (1640), commonly known as *The Bay Psalm Book*, which was the first book to be printed in the British North American colonies.[178] Gamut is perhaps the first character in American fiction to take a hymnal with him wherever he may go, but he is verifiably not the last. For example, the eponymous protagonist of Harriet Becher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852) carries one with him, as does Ellen Montgomery, who is the protagonist of Susan Warner's *The Wide, Wide World* (1850), which is widely held to be the first work written by an American author to be accorded the status of bestseller.[179]

Biblical references and injunctions were by no means uncommon in nineteenth-century boy's adventure fiction.[180] American literary culture in the nineteenth century, in the manner of its parent culture, was suffused with biblical diction, and with biblical allusions.[181] The Bible, and for many the King James Version is *the* Bible, contains within itself no invitation to a literary reading.[182] However, the King James Bible is often thought of as a literary work, and

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[177] Clarence O. Johnson, 'A Note on Milton's Use of *Gamut* in *Areopagitica*', *English Language Notes*, 14 (1977), pp. 187-189.
[178] Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans, op. cit.*, p. 32. *The Bay Psalm Book* takes its name from the Massachusetts Bay community for which it was initially printed. See Isaiah Thomas, *The History of Printing in America* (1817) (New York: Gramercy, 1988), p. 47.
[179] *The Wide, Wide World* went through fourteen editions in two years and sold over a million copies. Hitherto, no novel, not even those of Sir Walter Scott or Charles Dickens, had ever sold in such numbers. See Jessica DeSpain, 'Claiming Kindred with All the World: Susan Warner's *The Wide, Wide World* and its British Reprints', in *Nineteenth-Century Transatlantic Reprinting and the Embodied Book* (Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate, 2014), pp. 51-106. In comparison, Anna Petry's *The Street* (1946) was the first novel authored by an African-American to sell over a million copies. See Valerie Babb, *A History of the African-American Novel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), p. 95.
[180] John J. MacAleer, 'Biblical Analogy in the Leatherstocking Tales', *Nineteenth Century Fiction*, 17 (1963), pp. 217-235.
[181] Robert Alter, 'Style in America and the King James Version', in *Pen of Iron: American Prose and the King James Bible* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2010), pp. 9-41.
[182] John B. Gabel and Charles B. Wheeler, *The Bible as Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), pp. 233-235.

the collective literary consciousness of the nineteenth-century Anglosphere was to no little degree formed by it. It is a classic English literary text, albeit a translation of foreign works.

The semantic depth and stylistic gravity of the King James Bible is on occasion drawn upon by nineteenth-century children's authors in order to connect with their readers, even though none of the novels examined in this thesis are pervasively biblical. The literariness of the King James Bible helped nurture a common approach to literary language in the Anglosphere. Indeed, there was sufficient interest in the question of the Bible as a literary influence for published discussion thereof to appear on both sides of the Atlantic.[183] Therefore, given the centrality of the Authorised Version to the literary culture of the Anglosphere, it is hardly surprising that Cooper references it.

There is a correspondence between Gamut, who at one time grandiosely describes himself as 'the royal David', and his namesake, the biblical figure of King David of Israel, who as a young man evinces a talent for music.[184] Saul, King of Israel, was troubled by an evil spirit, until 'David took a harp, and played with his hand: so Saul was refreshed, and was well, and the evil spirit departed from him.'[185] Gamut's 'pitch-pipe', or 'tooting whistle' as Hawkeye disparages it, is perhaps a substitute for a harp.[186] However, it takes courage to sing in the face of death.[187] Gamut supplies a grotesquely comical element during the Fort William Henry massacre when he raises his voice in a psalm to test 'the potency of music' in taming the passions of the savages.[188] This would appear to be an allusion to William Congreve's 'Musick

[183] David Norton, *A History of the Bible as Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), p. 202.
[184] Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans, op. cit.,* p. 31.
[185] *The Bible*: *Authorised King James Version with Apocrypha*. The First Book of Samuel, 16:23 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998).
[186] Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans, op. cit.,* p. 303.
[187] Matthew King, 'Cooper's Heroic David Gamut', in *James Fenimore Cooper: His Country and His Art,* ed. by Hugh C. MacDougall, and Steven Harthorn (Oneonta: State University of New York Press, 2007), pp. 44-47.
[188] Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans, op. cit.,* p. 239.

hath charms to soothe a savage breast', which is the first line of his play, *The Mourning Bride* (1697).[189] Alice Munro would subsequently be a bride in mourning for her half-sister.

Indeed, there is a further parallel character to Gamut in the form of Nehemiah, who appears in Herman Melville's epic poem, *Clarel* (1876).[190] Nehemiah would initially appear to be a stock character who serves as a foil to the eponymous Clarel, but he subsequently proves to be much more than that. Nehemiah and Gamut both try to force their religious beliefs on others, and use music to spread the Word. Nehemiah and Clarel, as members of a small party, journey together through the Holy Land in order to restore their faith in Christian doctrine, and thereby establish a point of reference in their lives. Nehemiah's religious belief drives him to the point of madness, but Gamut tempers his religious belief during the course of his struggle to survive in the wilderness. Nehemiah dies a religious fanatic, whereas Gamut adapts in order to survive. Gamut is an otherworldly jester who brings the concept of *kismet* into question, and is perhaps all the more effective for adopting the role of spectator. Moreover, his otherworldliness proves no handicap when interacting with the Other. Gamut exhibits a whiteness of a singularly peculiar mode.

Coincidences

Mark Twain mocks Cooper's alleged literary shortcomings in 'Fenimore Cooper's Literary Offences' (1895), asserting that Cooper wrote 'the poorest English that exists in our language'.[191] However, Twain was surely aware that Cooper's unaffected characters, who voice their opinions in colloquial speech, bear no little resemblance to some of the characters to be found in his own novels. Cooper, though a novelist who is as much copied as mocked,

[189] William Congreve, '*The Mourning Bride*', in *The Best Plays of the Old Dramatists* (London: Vizetelly, 1887), p. 419.
[190] Herman Melville, *Clarel: A Poem and Pilgrimage in the Holy Land* (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 2008), *passim*.
[191] Mark Twain, 'Fenimore Cooper's Literary Offences', in *The Portable Mark Twain*, ed. by Bernard deVoto (London: Penguin, 1986), pp.541-557 (p. 557).

and not least by Twain himself, seems to use comedy as a form of disguise. Twain's attack on Cooper has itself warranted several measured counterattacks. For example, Sydney Krause notes:

> The sulphurous grumblings over Cooper are hardly the work of a judicious person, of a respectable citizen like Sam Clemens, who after the debacle of 1892, had made it a point of honour to pay his creditors one hundred cents on the dollar; rather, it belongs to a hoodwinking persona who puts up a good front, but is not always entitled to the horror he exhibits, and is not the unsuspecting reader he pretends to be.[192]

Krause argues that Cooper was used by proponents of literary realism as a scapegoat; the most prominent symbol of defunct Anglo-American romanticism. Twain attacked him at a time when the historical novel, and Cooper's literary reputation, was experiencing a revival. John P. MacWilliams concurs that Twain's attack is unmerited, and states:

> Hilarious though Twain's essay is, it is valid only within its own narrow, and sometimes misapplied, criteria. Whether Twain is attacking Cooper's diction or Hawkeye's tracking feats, his strategy is to charge Cooper with one small inaccuracy, reconstruct the surrounding narrative or sentence around it, and then produce the whole as evidence that Cooper's kind of English would prevent anyone from seeing reality.[193]

MacWilliams argues that Twain is simply defending his own notions of literary and historical appropriateness, for Twain was in revolt against the entire Romantic tradition, and employed Cooper as a metonym in his fight against the literary conventions that he so much disliked. Twain's essay, 'The Noble Red Man' (1870), mocks Cooper's idealised characterisation of Chingachgook and Uncas. He compares the noble savage as described in books with the Indians he has met in his travels, and remarks that 'the Noble Red Man in print' has no basis in reality.[194] 'Huck Finn and Tom Sawyer among the Indians' (1884), an unfinished short story,

[192] Sydney Krause, *Mark Twain as Critic* (Baltimore, Maryland: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1967), p. 128. See also Krause's 'Cooper's Literary Offences: Mark Twain in Wonderland', *New England Quarterly*, 38 (1965), p. 291-311.
[193] John P. MacWilliams, *The Last of the Mohicans: Civil Savagery and Savage Civility* (New York: Twayne, 1995), p. 35.
[194] Mark Twain, 'The Noble Red Man', in *Collected Tales, Sketches, Speeches, and Essays, 1852-1890* (New York: Library of America, 1992), pp.561-564 (p. 561).

takes a similarly cynical view of Native Americans.[195] Twain claimed that his opinion of the so-called Red Indian was based on personal experience, but his appraisal of that experience does exhibit some bias. Twain's characterisation of the half-breed, Injun Joe, is perhaps a measure of Twain's opinions regarding Native Americans as expressed in 'The Noble Red Man'. Twain was particularly scathing of *The Deerslayer*, claiming that 'its conversations are — oh! Indescribable; its love scenes odious; its English a crime against the language.'[196] Twain doth protest too much, methinks, for a similar charge could be legitimately levelled at some of his own work. As we will see, it has been argued that 'Fenimore Cooper's Literary Offences' is simply a futile attempt by Twain to cover his own tracks.

Twain has no qualms in misrepresenting Cooper, and misquoting his text. In *The Last of the Mohicans*, for example, Hawkeye attempts to locate the approach to Fort William Henry through dense fog, and decides to sight on the direction of a furrow cut by a cannonball in order to orientate the party. However, Twain misrepresents the scene: the lost party hears 'a cannon-blast, and a cannon-ball presently comes rolling into the wood and stops at their feet', whereupon Twain mockingly declares, 'I wish I may never know peace again if [Hawkeye] doesn't strike out promptly and follow the track of that cannonball across the plain through the dense fog and find the fort.'[197] This is a wilful distortion of Cooper's text, for the furrow initially misleads them. Hawkeye, finding himself in a perilous situation, within sound of the enemy, though not within sight, proposes that if they follow the furrow it should guide them to the fort. Hawkeye states, 'This shot that you see…has ploughed the 'arth in its road from the fort, and we shall hunt for the furrow it has made, when all other signs may fail.'[198] The party once again lose their sense of direction, until Uncas lights upon the furrow 'where it had cut

[195] Leland S. Person, 'The Leatherstocking Tradition in American Fiction; or, The Sources of *Tom Sawyer*', in *James Fenimore Cooper: His Country and His Art*, ed. by George A. Test (Oneonta: State University of New York Press, 1987), pp. 67-77.
[196] Twain, 'Fenimore Cooper's Literary Offences', *op. cit.,* (p. 557).
[197] *Ibid.*, (p. 545).
[198] James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans, op. cit.*, p. 193.

the ground in three adjacent anthills.'[199] They thereby guide themselves by it until they see a flare of light and hear the report of several cannon from the fort, indicating that they have been moving toward the French positions in the woods. As a consequence, they hastily retrace their path, eventually finding their way to the relative safety of Fort William Henry. It seems that Cooper's description of the attempt by Hawkeye's party to find Fort William Henry by means of a cannonball furrow troubled Twain so greatly that he felt compelled to distort it.

Sacvan Bercovitch observes that *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* and *The Pioneers* share a marked similarity of structure. Indeed, Twain appears to have learned much more from his predecessor than he was willing to admit. For example, in *The Pioneers*, Natty Bumppo is portrayed as a quasi-comedic figure who is domiciled on the fringes of a frontier settlement. A local dignitary, Judge Temple, is a small town patriarch who seems to embody all that Natty is not. Edwards, the hero of the story, mediates between the two, and covertly courts the Judge's daughter, Elizabeth. Bercovitch draws the parallels between the two novels:

> After a trial, a treasure hunt, and a climactic death-trap escape by the lovers, the *dénouement* brings together the Judge, the lovers, and in a temporary reconciliation the old pioneer. This pattern forms a direct parallel with the story of *Tom Sawyer* — a parallel which seems with great significance to relate Judge Thatcher and Judge Temple, Tom and Edwards, Becky and Elizabeth, Huck and Natty, Injun Joe and Indian John, and the Negro boys, Jim and Aggy.[200]

Were there still the slightest doubt that these parallels between the two texts might be a coincidence, and that they may have been echoes of earlier reading rather than direct copying so to speak, then this doubt should disappear after further reading of both works. Needless to say, Twain's novel does not duplicate Cooper's in every significant aspect, but the literary influence can certainly be seen, and not least in the supposedly notorious snapping twig incident. Huck Finn, who is really a juvenile Natty Bumppo, moves noiselessly on his bare

[199] *Ibid.*, p. 194.
[200] Sacvan Bercovitch, 'Huckleberry Bumppo: A Comparison of *Tom Sawyer* and *The Pioneers*', *Mark Twain Journal*, 14 (1968), pp. 1-4 (p. 1).

feet, but at the crucial moment 'a twig snapped under his foot.'[201] However, Twain wrote of Cooper, 'Another stage property that he pulled out of his box pretty frequently was the broken twig…Every time a Cooper person is in peril and absolute silence is worth four dollars a minute, he is sure to step on a dry twig.'[202] It would appear that Huck Finn is very much 'a Cooper person', though perhaps Twain is simply writing a parody. It could be argued that Twain should have had the opening sentence of *Huckleberry Finn* read: 'You don't know about me, without you have read a book by the name of *The Pioneers*, but that ain't no matter.' As we have seen, Twain's literary offences are surely no worse than those of his unacknowledged mentor, James Fenimore Cooper.[203] In *Roughing It* (1872), a quasi-autobiographical travelogue, Twain has the fool confess that he is 'a disciple of Cooper and a worshipper of the Red Man — even of the scholarly savages in *The Last of the Mohicans*.'[204] One may infer that Twain was simply playing the fool as critic. In a following chapter we will encounter yet further evidence of Twain's shameless shenanigans in the literary sphere.

Conclusion

The Last of the Mohicans contains a good many references and allusions to British authors that are signal to a storyline that was to serve as an *Urtext*, and flexible template, for subsequent nineteenth-century boy's own adventure stories. This is by no means surprising, for he wrote for an Anglospheric readership, for which an implicit whiteness was a given.[205] Cooper was an articulate advocate for the white community of which he was a member. Hence, it can be seen that Cooper wrote for those with whom he was of one mind. As we have seen, he spun threads of his own experience, and threads of all that he had read, and interwove them into the fabric

[201] Twain, *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (London: Penguin, 2006), p. 129.
[202] Twain, *The Portable Mark Twain*, *op. cit.*, pp.541-557 (p. 544).
[203] J. B. Priestley, *Literature and Western Man* (London: Heinemann, 1960), pp.155-156.
[204] Mark Twain, *Roughing It* (London: Penguin, 1982), p. 68.
[205] Leonard Tennenhouse, *The Importance of Feeling English: American Literature and the British Diaspora, 1750-1850* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2007), p. 4.

of the literary tradition to which he adhered, which was that of the Anglosphere. He slid knowingly, and adeptly, between historical truth and untruth, doubtless chancing upon moments of harmony interposed between them. Cooper's approach to the question of historical authenticity, however, does seem to have been more intuitive than conscious.[206]

Cooper conforms to a cultural ideal of writing books for men *and* boys that are of a distinctly improving nature, for the explicit whiteness of Hawkeye and the implicit whiteness of Heyward are nineteenth-century role models, albeit of a necessarily different stamp to one another. In his portrayal of a Colonial American frontiersman and a British Army Officer, their differences and their similarities, Cooper can be seen to exhibit in his writing an awareness of being part of a literary community that transcends national boundaries, thereby embracing the ethnic identity and cultural tradition of the Anglosphere.[207] It is demonstrably the case that children are cognitively able to recognise ethnicity and its literary manifestations.[208] It was by no means difficult for the nineteenth-century author to tap into the natural wellspring of ethnic feeling. The genre assisted Anglospheric imperialist culture to cohere by promulgating notions of idealised whiteness.

The Last of the Mohicans is indeed an entertainment, but it also contains a didactic element. It is an assertion of ethnic pride and belonging, thereby emphasising the import of discrete racial bloodlines. Courage in the face of danger and resilience in the face of adversity, as exemplified by Hawkeye and his companions, are hallmarks of the boy's own adventure story. The reading of such a work by a juvenile reader would serve as a form of induction into the Anglospheric imperium. Cooper explores how symbol, myth, and received opinion can be

[206] William P. Kelly, *Plotting America's Past: Fenimore Cooper and the Leatherstocking Tales* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1984), *passim*.
[207] Martin Barker and Roger Sabin, 'Cooper's Book', in *The Lasting of the Mohicans*: *History of an American Myth* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1995), pp. 16-33.
[208] Yvonne Atkinson and Michelle Pagni Stewart, 'Do Dick and Jane Still Live Here? Reading Children's Literature as Ethnic Literature', in *Ethnic Literary Traditions in American Children's Literature*, ed. by Yvonne Atkinson and Michelle Pagni Stewart (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), pp. 1-8 (p. 1).

enlisted in support of the primacy of whiteness.[209] He portrays the Other in a manner that is surely calculated to influence the racial perceptions of his readers, while employing literary figures and themes that romanticise and valorise a hegemonic whiteness. The ultimate effect on such readers would be the reinforcement of white identity. Indeed, as the novel's final speech proclaims, 'The pale-faces are masters of the earth.'[210] *The Last of the Mohicans* is a white novel. D. H. Lawrence was right.

[209] See also Rudyard Kipling's celebration of whiteness in 'A Song of the White Men', in *The Complete Verse*, ed. by M. M. Kaye (London: Kyle Cathie, 2006), p. 225.
[210] Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans, op. cit.*, p. 475.