ABSTRACT

Navigating Between Two Worlds: How Portrayals of the Americas in Eighteenth-Century Novels Influenced the British Identity

Jennifer Aimee Mills, Ph.D.

Chairperson: Kevin J. Gardner, Ph.D.

In the early English novel British emigrants to the Americas occupied an ambivalent position within the empire; changed by the transatlantic ocean voyage and daily life in the colonies, colonists were distanced spatially and pragmatically from their fellow subjects who remained in England. Eighteenth-century novels often explore the implications to British society when characters migrate from Britain to the American colonies, are changed by their experiences and interactions there, and then return to England. *Moll Flanders* by Daniel Defoe, *The Female American* published anonymously, and *Humphry Clinker* by Tobias Smollett each depict main characters who amalgamate traits in the Americas that the British had demarcated as separate and opposite, yet they always maintain a self-identity of a British citizen. Moll Flanders, Eliza

Winkfield, and Obadiah Lismahago challenge and refine the construct of the British identity.

The eponymous Moll Flanders becomes isolated from society as a result of the influence of the Americas on her life from before birth, making her a detached observer unable to fully integrate into English society. Moll learns in the Americas to create new identities for herself that enable her to prey upon society and avoid being known by anyone, including herself. The titular Female American is separated from both English and Native American society because of her dual heritage in both. She stands apart from each culture, able to judge both and to adopt the best features of each. Rejecting the British colonial practices as inherently destructive, Eliza forms a different model for the ideal civilization, though this involves withdrawing to a small society isolated from the rest of the world. Obadiah Lismahago, by contrast, attempts to rejoin British society, but the American taint has reduced his ability to operate in the civilized world. Though at first the other characters exclude him because of these oddities, his marginalization is partially mitigated—though never erased—by his marriage into the Bramble family. However, his union with the family marks them as now unlike their English compatriots and more American by the gifts he bestows upon them and the continuing influence his interactions with them will have.

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by

Jennifer Aimee Mills, B.A.

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Dianna M. Vitanza, Ph.D., Chairperson

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Approved by the Dissertation Committee

_____

Kevin J. Gardner, Ph.D., Chairperson

_____

Daniel P. Walden, Ph.D.

_____

Sarah K. Ford, Ph.D.

_____

Lydia Grebenyova, Ph.D.

_____

T. Michael Parrish, Ph.D.

Accepted by the Graduate School
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J. Larry Lyon, Ph.D., Dean

Page bearing signatures is kept on file in the Graduate School.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgments vi

Dedication vii

I. Introduction: Transforming the British Identity through the Americas 1

II. Transgressing the Boundaries: Shifting Identity in *Moll Flanders* 10
- No Place to Belong 22
- Ambiguous Identity 27
- Significance of the Americas 29
- The Criminal Element 32
- Social Instability 35
- Circumventing the System 42
- Colliding Identities 45
- Lost Identity 48
- Social Hierarchy 52
- Freedom from Restraints 59
- Caliber of Character 65
- Importance of the Americas 67

III. The Best of Both Worlds:
The Birth of a New Identity in *The Female American* 59
- Eliza's British Identity 73
- Source Usage 74
- Superior Hybrid 77
- Contemporaneous Depictions of American Indians 80
- Social Integration 84
- American Royalty 88
- Right to Rule 90
- The Ideal Briton 93
- The Ideal Blend 95
- Cultural Authority 97
- Breaking Barriers 101
- Justification by Conversion 105
- Cannibals 108
- The Island Retreat 112
- Power Dynamics 117
- The American Identity 121
- The Role of the Americas 122

Depopulation of the Internal Empire 126
Transgressing Social Boundaries 136
The Scars of War 140
Identity Shifts 144
Loss of Self 149
The Body as Sign 154
Social Cannibalism 160
No Voice of his Own 170
Dinner and Entertainment 174
American Degeneracy 178
Physical Imbalance in the Americas 184

IV. Scars of the Americas: Shaping an Identity in *Humphry Clinker* 114
Depopulation of the Internal Empire 126
Transgressing Social Boundaries 136
The Scars of War 140
Identity Shifts 144
Loss of Self 149
The Body as Sign 154
Social Cannibalism 160
No Voice of his Own 170
Dinner and Entertainment 174
American Degeneracy 178
Physical Imbalance in the Americas 184

V. Conclusion: The Transatlantic Identity 197

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DEDICATION

For my family, with love

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction: Transforming the British Identity through the Americas

> Although other parts of the earth were equally uncharted, mysterious, and enticing to the British, only the Americas were designated the New World. The term suggests the endless possibilities that Europeans imagined for economic, political, religious, and social renewal. Sometimes imagined to be the site of the original Garden of Eden, sometimes represented as a fruitful or howling wilderness, the New World was a location for beginning de novo in many senses, and the British insisted upon this more frequently and fervently than in conjunction with other places around the globe. (Richard Frohock, *Heroes of Empire* 21)

Facing the ontological void of the "empty continent," the New World with vast tracts of "unclaimed" wilderness, the English felt strongly both the opportunity and the responsibility to inaugurate in this land an idealized civilization. They attempted to actualize widely divergent ideal societies in this new world, frequently frustrated by the failure of the actual colonies to embody these ideals.

One crucial difficulty resulted from the tumultuous interstices between the ideal and the actual Americas. Any written version of a location necessarily reflects the constructed vision filtered through the author's perceptions. Jeffrey Richards, in his study on eighteenth-century fictions depicting the Americas, argues, "the idea here is that America *is* a fiction, a shared rhetorical world

among persons both in and out of the land, and never exactly a fully concrete space that generates—in fiction—a reality that comports with the literal landscape" (Richards 501). Both the real and the rhetorical Americas powerfully influenced the British self-identity, moving British literature from primarily parochial or domestic literature to a consciousness of occupying a place in the center of an increasingly global empire. One result of this changing awareness is the number of texts that consider how this imperial center is infiltrated and altered by the British subject who is transculturated in the remote Americas and then returns to the British Isles.

This raises the important question, recently considered by Jeffrey Richards, "How relevant, then, is nationality to literature set geographically?" (497).[1] Transatlantic considerations of cultural interchange would suggest that because the criterion for establishing the "nationality" of an eighteenth-century novel, perforce, are inconsistent and frequently irrelevant, early novels should

[1] A whole subset of related questions then arise: does the nationality of the text depend on the nationality of the author of the text, the characters in the text, the scenes within the text, or the immediate intended audience of the text? How do we quantify and prioritize these characteristics? What, then, is a British novel? More contentiously, what is an American novel before the Revolutionary War? These questions are framed using contemporary constructs—audiences today having very different understandings of geopolitical identities and also conceptions of the novel genre that are frequently anachronistic. *Moll Flanders* considers similar questions about variations of the British identity and how to communicate these ideas in the developing novel genre.

not be forced into anachronistic categories of English or American. Dividing texts into these binary categories forecloses the potential for productive dialogue and causes insights between and within texts to be overlooked. Fictive envisionings of the Americas often provide fascinating insights into cultural relationship, views that diverge widely and frequently remain amorphous conceptions that defy typography, demonstrating a variety of disparate metaphysical conceptions of identity.

In fact, so did the reality. The boundaries of the actual Americas were nebulous and undefined. As Lester Langley has noted, the "most troublesome contemporary names are America and American. Even today, and certainly in the eighteenth century, America as a geographical term referred to the entire New World" (xv-xvi). The Americas were, and are, profoundly multivalent, a densely connected constellation of many representations: "while a seemingly unified figure, America exists as immensely fragmented by colonial, religious, national, and even local allegiances, making the term politically embattled and slippery within New-World historiography" (Richman 16). The English colonies in the Americas were loosely conjoined and defined by the English language and British commerce, but other defining characteristics often seem reductive or overly simplistic.

Further complicating this interchange between constructs and realities in the Americas, a significant number of colonists left England because they rejected a part of the English experience. In refusing this experience, and leaving the repudiated practices in England thousands of miles behind, these colonists frequently maintained they were creating a New "England" in the New World, but one replicated without the degenerate vice or fatal flaw they identified in the current England of actuality. They insisted they created through this experiment a truer England, an England superior to the England they rejected.[2] Emerging English modes were cast off and often divergent archaic, nostalgic visions of an England that had never existed were claimed and created in the colonies.

British works written prior to the Revolutionary War often devote considerable concern to the numerous ways in which the ontological presence of the Americas shapes and defines English society. Remarking on the prevalence in British texts of the American colonies, one scholar notes, "English writers from

[2] Colonists imported the ideals of England they found desirable, but some went much further and attempted not only to reproduce but to actually relocate England onto the American continent. These colonists pursued this course so intensely that they had prefabricated wooden houses from England shipped to them in the Americas (Peterson 37-8), at great trouble and expense, and in sublime disdain of the forests all around them, in a determined attempt to create a literal English home in a foreign land. Despite their intentions to recreate their version of England in the Americas, "As most European settlers discovered, no matter how much they might try to reconstruct for themselves self-sufficient European environments in the New World, they would, with time, slowly become something other than what they had intended, something inescapably 'American'" (Pagden 11).

a variety of social, religious, and professional backgrounds represented the problems and possibilities of New World appropriation in a wide range of narrative forms. America was depicted in heroic drama, novels, histories, travel narratives, street pageants, broadsides, satires, and engravings" (Frohock 14). To analyze the means by which the American colonies were used to form and reform the British perceptions of their own identities, a wide variety of materials from a broad range of perspectives published by members of the British community on both sides of the Atlantic could usefully be analyzed, yet the limitations of a single study preclude such a far-reaching endeavor: the effort would be simply too exhaustive.

Furthermore, aspects of this topic have received uneven attention, with some textual mediums receiving more attention than others. Historical studies have gathered as artifacts for analysis diaries, newspaper items, sermons, tracts, pamphlets, or other purportedly nonfiction mediums in the search for indicators of the rise of a separate "American" national consciousness. Only rarely are these findings then inverted to consider how the "British" identity was both complicated and shaped by this process, though Transatlantic Studies are bringing the reciprocal nature of cultural transference into prominence. This study will draw but sparingly upon nonfiction accounts to focus instead on

fictional representations of the effects of the American presence upon the society in England, Scotland, Ireland, and Wales.

Fiction, contriving as it does to reframe reality into the mold cast by an author, has received less attention than other genres purportedly less removed from historical realities, with the possible exception of plays and performances. These have incited considerable interest over the years due to the inherent cultural inversions resulting when performers from a dominant culture temporarily adopting, embodying, and interpreting cultural identities of members of other cultures. Discoursing on such performative enactments whereby one culture interprets itself by characterizing contrasting groups, Joseph Roach outlines the process as follows:

> A number of important consequences ensue from this custom of self-definition by staging contrasts with other races, cultures, and ethnicities. Identity and difference come into play (and into question) simultaneously and coextensively. The process of surrogation continues, but it does so in a climate of heightened anxiety that outsiders will somehow succeed in replacing the original peoples, or autochthons. This process is unstoppable because candidates for surrogation must be tested at the margins of a culture to bolster the fiction that it has a core. That is why the surrogated double so often appears as alien to the culture that reproduces it and that it reproduces. (Roach 6)

Though Roach applies this analysis to performance theory and not written forms of cultural transmission, this process of social and individual identification is

equally at work in the transcribed medium of the novel. This process can still be traced, though it is further complicated, when the surrogated double tested at the margins of the culture was once a member of the primary culture and still claims membership in the dominant culture, yet through the powerful transformative forces at work in the Americas has been partially transfigured. The American British mirror the culture of England and allow novelists to reflect on attributes in English society. This cultural representative of the English in America usefully functions on numerous levels as both "other" and "self," challenging normative categorization schemas of the English culture.

In fact, this working out of identities through comparison with an "other" inherently features in the novel more than any other genre. In *Culture and Imperialism* Edward W. Said implies this special connection between the novel and the colonies: "Without empire […] there is no European novel as we know it […]. [T]he novel, as a cultural artifact of bourgeois society, and imperialism are unthinkable without each other" (Said 69). Yet novels have only infrequently been scrutinized in historical studies (most notably by Nancy Armstrong and Leonard Tennenhouse), for in the novel the world is reformed considerably to suit the author's various purposes. This distancing from the contemporaneous actuality inherent in the novel provides challenges for the historian, but poses

fewer concerns for a study such as this devoted to understanding the means by which the conception and manipulation of cultural identities was achieved through the printed word.

Rewriting reality permitted the novelist to recast and redefine the fictional British experience. Fiction of this period, claiming as it often does some measure of verisimilitude, permits the author simultaneously to create a new reality and typify it as truth. This fictional depiction of the interactions between the British core of the burgeoning empire and the American colonies on the periphery influenced the actual modes of the relationship and altered the ways in which each group and each individual interpreted identities.

When a British subject was reformed by experiences in the Americas in considerable ways, then chose to return to England or the internal colonies, the disparity in life experiences often resulted in discombobulation for both the individual and for the society as the colonist tried to reintegrate into the British culture. Eighteenth-century novels often reflect this reality and explore the implications to British society when characters migrate from Britain to the American colonies, are changed by their experiences and interactions there, and then return to England or an internal colony. The novels in this study consider the manner in which British society responds to, and can be altered by, those

colonists who return from America. In fact, these elements are so crucial to the early novel that one study tracing the genesis of this genre argues that "The fate of the novel and of the class of people whose interests it articulated must be understood in relation to the culture that developed to connect English people on one side of the Atlantic with English people who had migrated to North America" (Armstrong and Tennenhouse 387). In this way, the British experience (and therefore the novel) can be seen to be shaped, and formed, in response to and sometimes in reaction against the fluid interchange of citizens between England, the internal colonies, and the British colonies in America.[3]

The dynamic relationship between those British subjects in England and those in the Americas was further complicated by the new and organic nature of the British Empire. The appropriate status and relationships between the various geographical components of the empire—Wales, Ireland, Scotland, the Americas, even England—generated a plethora of commentary on this process. Many scholars have suggested recently that questions over what it means to be British, and, more particularly, how the American colonies should fit in this model, are responsible for the development of the novel as a genre.

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[3] In their compelling study, Armstrong and Tennenhouse argue that the American captivity narrative contributed significantly to the development of the novel as a genre. They go so far as to claim, "One has to go to America, in other words, to understand where English novels come from" (388).

Novels are methods of social enquiry within a protective buffer of figuration that allows the author the freedom to explore and manipulate potentialities. Margaret Doody asserts that novels can "tell the true story" because they are not constrained, as are other documents, by political pressures (263). While political pressures can assert an equally strong pull on novelists as on writers of any other form, the assertion that novels are not bound in the same way does bear further examination. In a sense the novelist can encode multiple layers of meaning for more discerning audiences, for the novel can dialogue about issues of identity to an unsurpassed degree.

The formation of the genre of the novel sprang from a confluence of factors that also led to Britain's expansion of its global involvements and concerns. Though these novels present three different depictions, they all join an ongoing debate about the influence of the Americas that was furthered by the nature of the developing genre of the novel. In novels, available interpretations of the colonial experience are richer and provide more interesting debates over the nature of the relationship between England, the internal colonies, and the Americas. From the prevalence of these issues in eighteenth-century novels, it is clear that considerations of the British identity in that dawning empire inspired the development of the novel genre.

Novelists respond in numerous ways to such identity issues, demonstrating how the Americas helped shape and define both the British Empire and England itself. Daniel Defoe's *Moll Flanders* treats the Americas as a formative land that both represents opportunity to reform individual circumstances and danger to the empire through these successive revisionings of self. *The Female American* suggests that, for those with the right motivation, the Americas can be used to strengthen the empire through the joining of cultures. Tobias Smollett's *The Expedition of Humphry Clinker* states that colonialism in the Americas causes the debilitating disease of luxury that threatens British social order and depopulates the internal colonies and England itself. These three views are representative of the literary presentations of the eighteenth century, which all suggest that the American colonists brought ideological changes back to Britain. The transformations available in the Americas provided the opportunities and dangerous threats that resulted from destabilizing the social hierarchy and the natural order of classes, and even problematized the established connection between wealth and land.

The rapid changes to British society and identity occurred, in part, in those areas Mary Louise Pratt designates "Contact zones," a term she uses to indicate the turbulent "social spaces where disparate cultures meet, clash, and grapple

with each other, often in highly asymmetrical relations of domination and subordination […]" (Pratt, *Imperial* 4). Examining the complex interactions at some of these points in time and space she concludes that "Borders and all the entity called Europe was constructed from the outside in as much as from the inside out" (Pratt, *Imperial* 6). Analyzing numerous maps, reports, and other colonial documents Pratt draws a number of significant conclusions about the overseas British Empire; this study will examine works of fiction, which Pratt does not draw upon frequently to consider the influence on England, which her extensive studies touch on only briefly.

Like the works of Pratt, hundreds of historical and literary studies trace the emergence of a new character in the American colonies mediating between the native and the British identities.[4] Most of these studies primarily prefigure the rise of a distinct and discrete American consciousness and attempt to discern the rise of a separate American national identity that led up to a political break with England.[5] A sufficient number of history scholars have been and currently are engaged in this endeavor to define the crucial points in the genesis of a separate American consciousness by identifying those distinguishing

[4] Examples of recent studies of this nature would include works by Sarah Ford, T.H. Breen, Allena Carey-Webb, S. Conway, and Percy Adams.

[5] See, for instance, works by Christopher Flynn, Benedict Anderson, David Armitage, James Axtell, Rebecca Bach, and Linda Colley.

characteristics of this new intermediate category, as well as considering the appropriate ontological schematization for this new identity.[6] Far less consideration, in fact hardly any at all, has been given to the inverse process of the alterations to the British identity in response to the Americas.

Though Karen Kupperman's analysis primarily focuses on the formation of a separate American national identity, her work also usefully synthesizes essential concerns in the study of relations between England and the colonies in the Americas:

> [I]t seems to me that we have constantly come up against three interrelated, but different, questions, to none of which we have yet discovered ways of formulating satisfactory answers. The first question, and the one most likely in the long run to prove amenable to some kind of answer, since part of it at least can be reached by statistical analysis, is the degree of interest generated by news from the newfound world. The second question is that of the assimilation of this world into the European consciousness; and the third, and most complex of all, relates to the transforming effect of America on that consciousness. (Kupperman 395)

This study addresses this last question, focusing on the infrequently explored concept of how early British novels depict the ways in which English society responds to, and even in some texts can be altered by, transforming interactions with those colonists who return from America.

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[6] Bernard Bailyn, in particular, does an excellent job with this task.

The novel, with its increased interest in individual identities, perforce became concerned in examining the alterations to the collective identity of the still-forming British empire and the individual identities of those British subjects who spent time in the American colonies. The novel constantly endeavored to achieve a working definition of self from which to evaluate outside experiences. As Bakhtin observes, "when the novel becomes the dominant genre, epistemology becomes the dominant discipline" (*Before Novels* 15). However, such epistemological considerations are predicated upon some stability of self identity.

Many novels, then, tacitly suggest the means by which the American environment and experience alter the identity of the British national and individual character and suggest new possibilities tendered by these intersections of culture; evidence of how the English experience can be shaped in response to and sometimes in reaction against the fluid interchange between England and the English colonies in America is present to varying degrees in nearly every novel written in the eighteenth century.

With dozens upon dozens of novels to choose from, selecting primary texts for such a study presents a daunting challenge. While insightful analysis would result from narrowing the selection to only those novels with a broad and

extensive contemporaneous audience, many of the popular early novels and protonovels achieved limited enduring success and attained little cultural influence. Another possibility, an intense study of a specific year, would reveal much about the novel but less about affects on the culture. For this study, it seemed most appropriate to concentrate on those novels containing protracted and extensive fictionalized accounts detailing the interactions between colonists returning from the Americas and those citizens who remained in England; to give preference to those texts which were sufficiently well known to have affected the attitudes of a considerable number of readers; and to include those works which have endured in public consciousness for successive generations of readers.

Further, though the political and ideological separation from England was a gradual process that continued well into the nineteenth century, the signing of the Declaration of Independence formalized certain tensions and heightened elements in the relationships between colonized and colonizer so that they are sufficiently distinct from those in earlier texts to warrant separate study. Therefore, this work focuses only on those novels written before the somewhat arbitrary dividing date of 1776, when the Declaration of Independence declared

the United States a separate nation, though England did not recognize this independence until much later.

Given these parameters, Daniel Defoe's *Moll Flanders* (1722), the anonymous author's *The Female American* (1767), Tobias Smollett's *The Expedition of Humphry Clinker* (1771), along with briefer insights from other texts, form the core of this study. I argue through examinations of these works that in the early English novel the American colonist occupied a position between the colonizer and colonized: not merely blending the two identities, but transforming both, without fully resembling or participating in either one. Though this distinction necessarily results from the intersection between any two cultures, the Americas heightened this effect. The long passage across the Atlantic, combined with the vast unformed potential of the New World, made the Americas more transformative than other parts of the world. This median position shattered the binary sensibilities of difference that inflect and simplify social constructs of the English identity. The colonist amalgamated traits of the "Other" that the English had demarcated as separate and opposite, yet still maintained a self-identity of an English citizen. This new identity was not fully "other," yet in both mental attitudes and status was uncomfortably both like and unlike the English who remained at home.

These novels—*Moll Flanders, The American Female,* and *Humphry Clinker*—illustrate the formation of a third culture at the interstices of the other two. Homi Bhabha has argued that the colonizer seeks to create compliant subjects who willingly accept and reproduce—"mimic"—the cultural identity of the colonizing force, but who do so without exact replication. In this process, I would argue, the colonizers also begin to reflect the "other" in ways often uncomfortable for those back home at the heart of the empire, complicating the binary presented by postcolonial theory.

Bhabha argues that perfect copies of the colonizing culture in the darker, more "savage" bodies of the colonized would be too threatening to imperial hierarchy, for a perfectly civilized and British "other" would threaten the British identity. Consequently, Bhabha claims, there must remain a difference between the colonizer and the colonized's mimicked performance; the colonizer's desire, therefore, is "for a reformed, recognizable Other, *as a subject of difference that is almost the same, but not quite*" (Bhabha, "Of Mimicry" 122, italics in original). Postcolonial theory examines this relationship, the power struggles that often center around defining the identity of a people. The claims Bhabha makes about the colonized also apply, to a lesser extent, to the colonizer who has allowed the New World to make him not quite fully British. Bhabha's argument that

mimicry must always produce and perform its own difference as a blurred copy of the colonial original, that it would never be permitted to be indistinguishable from the original, suggests a possible explanation for why Moll, Eliza, and Lismahago are never depicted as able to fully rejoin the British culture in the British Isles. They remain detached observers of culture, unable to successfully become fully indistinguishable from the others. Bhabha notes, "in order to be effective, mimicry must continually produce its slippage, its excess, its difference [. . .]. [M]imicry is therefore stricken by an indeterminacy: mimicry emerges as the representation of a difference that is itself a process of disavowal" ("Of Mimicry" 122). The three novels examined in this study would suggest that British novelists of the eighteenth century had begun to consider the fine gradations of Britishness, asserting that the Americanized British colonist was between worlds.

Transatlantic studies increase awareness of the patterns linking these disparate parts of the globe, the "planetary currents" that mean waves originating off the coast of Florida may break against the shores of England. Transatlantic studies, especially those works of Bernard Bailyn and Peter Linebaugy and Marcus Rediker demonstrate how the ocean tides connected the English Empire, meaning that Europe, Africa, and the Americas need to be

considered in conjunction one with the other to develop a more complete understanding of the forces at work. However, while the Atlantic certainly must be considered a unifying force that relates these geographically distanced continents, that same Atlantic must be considered a powerful separating force that helped to form the British identity.

The long and difficult Atlantic crossing was highly significant to the identity of all the protagonists of these novels. Moll frequently remarks on the dangers of transatlantic travel and the losses she sustains from pirates or bad weather on every ship in which she embarks or ships goods. In *The Female American* Eliza's ship and all her goods are stolen and she is marooned while trying to make her passage back to England. These ocean vicissitudes strengthen the psychological connections of Moll and Eliza to England and the internal colonies as the distance from their homeland increases. For Lismahago, with the passage of time, the recollected England and Scotland became an increasingly idealized conception. In this way, he and the many actual British colonists in the Americas began to develop an idea of home that differed from the geopolitical reality. Emigrants who returned to England or the internal colonies after some time spent in the Americas often took these idealized versions back with them. Through this process, they helped revise the actuality. Thus, the construct of

England and the internal colonies, and ideas of what it meant to be British, were, in part, formulated in the Americas.[7] Daniel Defoe's *Moll Flanders*, the anonymous work *The Female American*, and Tobias Smollett's *Humphry Clinker* represent three prominent views on the various ways in which the Americas participated in this ongoing process of defining Britain and what it meant to be British.

[7] A similar process occurred anywhere a shared geopolitical entity was formed: "Just as the construct 'Europe'—the image of a set of societies seen to share cultural and social constructs—resulted in the 'Europeanization of Europe' in the preceding centuries, the 'Americanization of America' had taken place in European lore and literature by the mid-eighteenth century" (O'Reilly 101).

CHAPTER TWO

Transgressing the Boundaries: Shifting Identity in *Moll Flanders*

"[A]nthropologies have taken the politically constructed dichotomy of colonizer and colonized as a given, rather than as a historically shifting pair of social categories that needs to be explained."

(Ann Stoler, *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power* 136)

The modern tendency to reduce interactions between England and the Americas to fit the binary classification system of colonizer and colonized described above has led to interpretations of the many diverse relationships in eighteenth-century novels that oversimplify and conflate the highly nuanced power distributions depicted in relationships within these texts.[1] The influence was more reciprocal than many scholars acknowledge; the Americas impacted the political, economic, religious, and social structures in England significantly. How the English would define themselves from the eighteenth-century onward was shaped—to a considerable extent—by the Americas, with subtle distinctions needed to clarify the position of those English immigrants who traveled to the Americas, remaining British subjects but not English citizens.

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[1] Noting that these "theoretical blindnesses" are also faults of other disciplines, Rebecca Bach reminds us that "we literary critics and cultural studies practitioners pay attention to the hybridity of the native subject but too often see the colonizer as a monolithic representative of governmental or technological power, rather than as a constructed category painfully maintained in order to preserve English power in the face of appealing or divisive difference" (5). The many gradations between these two binaries are clearly demonstrated in a text like *Moll Flanders,* where the status of the English immigrant to the Americas is problematic because she is a criminal involuntarily exiled from England.

The limitations of a dichotomous system of classifying identities as either "colonizer" or "colonized" is particularly evident in Daniel Defoe's novel *Moll Flanders*. Moll Flanders would not fit neatly into either category, a fact made evident in multiple ways throughout the novel, for Moll never comfortably belongs within the English society. Moll's life in the American colonies demonstrates her ambiguous and continually altering status, highlighting questions about the potential pliability of individual identity and the instability that can result for the English social hierarchy. The Americas have a formative influence on Moll's character, changing her in ways that have significant impact for English society both times she returns from living in the Americas.

No Place to Belong

Moll's self-identification and classification within English society is problematic from the start, for her recounting the story of her early years demonstrates she never truly belonged in any place. Moll may be a native of England, but she is not a native of the established society. Moll was born in Newgate Prison, a place of origin that is highly significant, for the prison seems an unincorporated space within the novel. Newgate is a holding place for those who must soon leave England, one way or the other, and the inmates there seem to have lost their humanity. In fact, when Moll is later arrested and sent to

Newgate she says of herself, "I scarce retain'd the Habit and Custom of good Breeding, and Manners, which all along 'till now run thro' my Conversation; so thoro' a Degeneracy had possess'd me, that I was no more the same Thing that I had been, than if I had never been otherwise than what I was now" (345-5). In Newgate, people become other than what they were and lose those marks of civility that distinguish the English from the uncivilized. People leave Newgate for the gallows or the Americas, both dreadful fates that somehow make the prisoners less than English even before their departures.[2]

Criminals and miscreants considered unfit to be part of life in the British Isles were often shipped to the Americas to be part of the society there. This presents a unique issue, for such transported colonists were, by legal decree, separated from England by the entire Atlantic Ocean. They were denied access to England, being forbidden upon pain of death from returning for a proscribed period of time that sometimes, as in the case of Moll's fourth husband Jemy, meant banishment for life. These criminals would have continued to think of England as home and still considered themselves English—Moll, her mother,

[2] This relates to the issue that "[. . .] England's colonial enterprises helped to define an Englishness that was always a constructed category. English gentility and commonness were defined sometimes together against each other in the face of colonial transformation; and Englishness and savagery were both defined in the colonial crucible of the new Atlantic world" (Bach 3).

and Jemy all do within the novel—but have been forcibly prevented from taking part in life in their native land.

During the eighteenth century the physical form of those convicted of crimes was altered to signify a permanent change in status. Newgate prisoners are literally branded with a mark of shame that signifies they are criminals, marked as "other," those who are judged to be unfit and dangerous to society. Being "burnt in the hand" symbolizes both an outcast and outcaste status, and the text uses some variant of this phrase nearly a dozen times regarding American colonists during Moll's first visit to the Americas. Branding seared their changed status into them even before their involuntary departure for the New World. Moll's mother has been so marked and separated from society before Moll enters the world, born into Newgate.

Exiled criminals fail to fit within the established framework of British society, much like indentured servants who were seen as standing outside society. Transportation to America makes the convict analogous to a colonial possession, an object to be sold to provide labor in the New World. This process commoditized transported felons, making them to be regarded as property instead of fellow British citizens. The condition of Moll's nativity, born in Newgate to a branded felon just before she is exported, makes Moll by extension a subject in England but less than a fully integrated citizen there.

The Americas contribute to her disenfranchised condition: had criminals been sentenced to segregation in some part of England, the psychological effect would not have been the same. Being ejected from England indicated a concomitant reduction in citizenship and social identity, an effect that seems to transfer in some degree to Moll. Moll has no family, no home, no history to give her a place within the English culture. Moll's connections to England are further exacerbated by her initial association with traveling gypsies—the ultimate emblem of rootless wanderers—which further destabilized her roots in English society. She says of her earliest remembrances of herself,

> The first account that I can Recollect, or could ever learn of myself, was, that I had wandred among a Crew of those People they call *Gypsies*, or *Egyptians*; but I believe it was but a very little while that I had been among them, for I had not had my Skin discolour'd, or blacken'd, as they do very young to all the Children they carry about with them, nor can I tell how I came among them, or how I got from them. (3)

Moll, then, is left very vulnerable by the transportation of her mother to the Americas. She does not know her own history, and her identity is uncertain and not as fully British as other characters, though she is not fully "other," either. Her skin is not "discolour'd or blacken'd" so that she belongs among the gypsies, and she chooses to hide from them

even at a young age so that she can join settled English society, an endeavor she will continue throughout her whole life.[3]

Moll only finds a welcome among the English citizens through their charity, because she is too young to fit into the role of menial servant where the text suggests the townsfolk would otherwise place her—a position Moll spends her whole life avoiding. She says of her formative years that the townspeople took pity on her "and I became one of their own, as much as if I had been born in the Place" (4). However, this belonging is through adoption, not birth. She is never quite one of the townsfolk with a native right to belong. The knowledge of this distances Moll, making her an outside observer of British society who tries to insert herself into the culture as a gentlewoman, by which she means someone with the right to belong to herself only and live as a fully included member of society.

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[3] Unfortunately, for Moll and for society, Moll's experiences during her formative years have caused her to conceive of being a gentlewoman as a status dependent upon money and not refinement of character. This belief resulted from her conversation with the Mayor's wife when she was very young and first beginning to think about the future life she wanted for herself:

> nay, says she, the Child may come to be a Gentlewoman for ought any body knows, she has a Gentlewoman's Hand, says she; this pleas'd me mightily you may be sure, but Mrs. *Mayoress* did not stop there, but giving me my Work again, she put her Hand in her Pocket, gave me a Shilling, and bid me mind my Work, and learn to Work well, and I might be a Gentlewoman for ought she knew. (8)

For Moll, being given a shilling was a token that she might become a gentlewoman, forming a link in her between money and the status she wanted to attain. Throughout her life, then, she seeks wealth and social position as part of her quest to belong in society as a "gentlewoman."

Ambiguous Identity

Moll's ambiguous position within society relates to problems of classification with other marginalized groups. Though they use the terms to clarify the status of members of native groups partially incorporated into the British Empire when their lands were claimed as colonies, the distinction Armstrong and Tennenhouse make between "the people" and "the population" seem equally to serve to indicate the reduction in citizenship status for those subjects deported for the Americas. *Moll Flanders* considers, therefore, whether an acceptable alternative can be found in the Americas, whether an appropriate identity can be found for those who are members of "the population" but not of "the people," as Armstrong and Tennenhouse have designated these terms.[4] These scholars suggest that the eighteenth century

> registered a growing tension between "the people" and "the population." Where the first concept refers to all members of the national community that can be construed as a single unified body, the second points to those who are included, whether permanently or temporarily, within the nation even as they are excluded from

[4] Linda Colley argues that the British "came to define themselves as a single people not because of any political or cultural consensus at home, but rather in reaction to the Other [by which she means Catholic Europe] beyond their shores" (6). Flint applies this "guiding principle" to prove "the presence of the United States in nineteenth-century political and cultural relations complicates this conception of Otherness considerably" (Flint 17). I would argue that this process can be seen at work while the American colonies were yet an overseas adjunct of the British empire, that British, even English, identity responds to the presence of the Americas.

> membership in it. (Armstrong and Tennenhouse, "The Problem of Population" 682)

Moll's life-long quest to establish herself as a gentlewoman relates to this underlying issue of her identity. All the events in Moll's life were set in motion because Moll was the offspring of one who was marginalized by imprisonment in Newgate and then further removed from English society by exile to the Americas shortly after Moll's birth. If the status of Moll's mother becomes problematic, so too does Moll's own sense of who she is and where she belongs. Moll cannot claim to be English with the same assurance as those whose family connections have tied them to the land for generations and so she seeks to establish an unassailable position for herself within society. To her, being a gentlewoman meant having an identity of her own, not dependent for her status upon her "Service" to another (5-8). The manner in which Moll is deprived of her mother, her mother's branding and being deported to the Americas sets up all the subsequent events in the novel as Moll lives her whole life trying to overcome these fundamental facts about her birth.[5]

[5] Moll obsesses about her status, analyzing in detail how she is superior in looks and musical talent to the daughters of the Mayor, and acquires the same education through her attendance in their lessons: she cannot understand why she is not destined to be a gentlewoman like they are given that she is equal, even superior, in every category she thinks should count.

The Americas have a profound influence on Moll's life. Moll knows very little about her mother except that she was involuntarily exiled, forced from England and given a lesser status, the punishment of being in the Americas. In analyzing the structure of the work, one scholar finds the experiences in the Americas to be the organizing principle of the work: "Indeed, the thesis advanced in the present study is that Moll's life, and thus the novel, should be viewed as divided into two main cycles, each about 35 years in length, each of which concludes with a return to England from America" (Camaiora 15). This observation reveals the importance of the Americas structurally to the novel, a significance heightened when the events even before Moll's first voyage to the Americas are seen to be motivated and influenced by her mother's voyage to the Americas, an event that instigates all that occurs later in Moll's life, foreshadowing her own later transportation to the Americas.

Significance of the Americas

Camaiora's division segments the text into halves based upon the major episodes in Moll's life that occur in the Americas and the two 35 year periods this reflects. The text seems to more naturally divide into three sections roughly equal in length; each section still illustrates a response in England to the influence of the Americas. The transportation of Moll's mother begins a segment

of equal length to those following Moll's two trips to the Americas and serves much the same purpose: to demonstrate the instability to the identity of an English character that results from the influence of the Americas. Moll's three destabilizing encounters with the Americas logically divide the text into three segments that each consider the effects of the Americas in slightly different ways: on the life of a child deprived of her mother by the Americas so that this fact becomes foundational to her identity, to the life of a colonial bride who travels with her husband to the Americas where she is strongly influenced by the criminal element to which she is exposed there, and finally as a transported felon herself who makes her fortune during the period of her sentence in the Americas. The prominence of the Americas in the structure of the text suggests that the pattern of influence of Moll's interactions with the Americas should be seen as of central importance to the text.

Moll first freely hazards a life in the Americas for eight years as the wife of a colonial plantation owner, allowing the novel to explore the effects of America on a previously law-abiding, though morally questionable, character, effects that later facilitate her life of crime. Through the changes in Moll and the ramifications this has on England, Defoe's text tackles the difficult and pressing fears about internal transformation of English culture concurrent with the attempt to construct a coherent English identity. The Americas are a

transformative space where emigrants like Moll have the potential to considerably alter their financial standing, allowing them to increase their social position in England.

Through the interactions between the two sides of the Atlantic, *Moll Flanders* shows the Americas have repercussions for all other parts of the empire. Eighteenth-century novels nearly always include adventures on multiple continents; they also increasingly were written by authors who spent some time in the Americas or researched the Americas extensively, and they were frequently distributed to readerships on both sides of the Atlantic.[6] Moll inhabits an America that serves as an adjunct to England, where people may go to establish their fortunes and their new identities, returning to England considerably altered, though not necessarily reformed for the better. Besides the inherent greed encouraged by the colonial project, and the problems of class confusion this can cause, the Americas were dangerous because of the caliber of people with whom honest immigrants were forced to associate.

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[6] Defoe developed extended scenes in the Americas in several other novels, including *Robinson Crusoe*, which occurs primarily on a deserted island in the Americas, and in *Colonel Jack*, who finds himself trepanned to the Americas to be sold as a plantation slave. These, along with *Moll Flanders,* are often considered together as Defoe's statement in fiction on the empire. These three works have very different themes and objectives and should be carefully considered first as individual statements to avoid eliding the often sharply contrasting views of the imperial endeavor provided in each.

The Criminal Element

During the eight years Moll spends in the Americas as the wife of a plantation owner, her husband's mother—herself an exported convict—repeatedly emphasizes to Moll that those individuals, even former criminals, who are able to productively build a new identity may attain success in the Americas. As she frequently suggests, in the Americas "many a *Newgate* Bird becomes a great Man" for here there are "several Justices of the Peace, Officers of the Train Bands, and Magistrates of the Towns they live in, that have been burnt in the Hand" (101). The mother's oft repeated refrain had greater significance for Moll because the mother herself modeled this pattern for success.[7]

As a transported criminal herself who owns three successful plantations, the mother is proof of her claims. But she also recounts names of other individuals with success stories similar to her own, illustrating her point that a criminal history does not prevent social advancement in the Americas: "[…] some of the best Men in this Country are burnt in the Hand, and they are not asham'd to own it, there's Major ----, *says she*, he was an Eminent Pickpocket; there's Justice Ba----r was a

[7] Having lived and prospered in the Americas, before her mother's revelation divorced Moll from her former contentment, Moll has learned to have less fear about transportation, the penultimate punishment second only in severity to death. The terror of involuntary transportation that caused dozens of British citizens to plead each year for harsh corporal punishment, even to the loss of limbs, rather than transportation to the Americas—a fact recorded in eighteenth-century court trials (Morgan 430)—still fills Moll with horror but not to the same extent as for those to whom America remained a distant and dreadful land.

Shoplifter, and both of them were burnt in the Hand, and I could name you several, such as they are" (102). Hearing these stories of convicts who became prestigious members of the community appears to make an impression on Moll, for these are the conversations Moll includes in her remembrances.[8]

Had Moll heard these conversations after she was transported to the Americas, the words would have offered her hope for changing her wicked ways so that she could begin a new and better life in the Americas. Given Defoe's interest in expanding the empire, many scholars see the mother's speeches as support for the regenerative power of the New World. Offered to Moll before her criminal career, however, these speeches seem to offer *a priori* forgiveness, even permission, for her illegal acts. The message seems to be that the Americas offer opportunities for a new life far better than the old, even for those who

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[8] The actual reception of most transported criminals is helpful here to show how Defoe's account of the reception of criminals in the Americas compares with the reality. Naturally, American colonists objected strenuously to England's policy of sending members of the lowest social orders and transported felons to their shores. Benjamin Franklin wrote stinging condemnations of this practice, one of the most famous of which is the following tirade, published in his Philadelphia newspaper:

> BRITAIN! Thou art called our MOTHER COUNTRY; but what good *Mother* ever sent *Thieves* and *Villains* to accompany her *Children;* to corrupt some with their infectious Vices, and murder the rest? What *Father* ever endeaveour'd to spread the *Plague* in his Family! […] In what can *Britain* show a more Sovereign Contempt for us, than by emptying their *Jails* into our Settlements; unless they would likewise empty their *Jakes* on our Tables? (Franklin 358)

Tempting as it is to find such statements merely amusing today, the influx of undesirable immigrants from England posed a philosophic and existential crisis for the colonists who sought to frame their identity as British, yet felt a strong repulsion for the persons sent from Great Britain to join their ranks.

commit crimes against society, and provide a way to circumvent rigid society constructs designed to prevent movement between social strata in England: an opportunity attendant with potential benefits and fraught with dangers for both the individual and British society.

In fact, the advancement of convicts to great men in the Americas may not have been seen as positive by many of Defoe's readers. The text does not indicate that these characters were morally reformed or became better people as a result of their experiences in the Americas, merely that their status has changed. This may not indicate any advancement of their characters at all, making a convict's conversion to respected society leader more ominous than promising.

In reality, convicts were no more welcome in the Americas than in England: the colonists simply did not have sufficient power to end the practice that England considered so conducive to its society, clearing England of undesirables. Religious dissenters, political dissidents, the indigent, and the corrupt were shipped to the New World so that they would no longer threaten the Old. *Moll Flanders* suggests that this policy is not such an easy or healthy solution for England as it first would appear. Though Moll remains in England, she experiences the effects of her mother's transportation to the Americas, which

creates issues of identity within English society.[9] Later her criminal activities in England can be considered as partially in response to what she learned from the transported criminals in the Americas about creating a new identity free from the taint of a criminal past, and Moll profits from her punishment of transport to the Americas and returns to England as rich and much advanced in social status without a concomitant moral reform, so that she poses a threat to the social order.

Social Instability

Many of those in England suggested that rapid social advancement was unhealthy for the individual as well as the state and often resulted from corruption. Francis Bacon implied that advancement in the colonies was almost certainly an indicator of moral corruption, that American advancement so far from the moderating oversight of England was suspicious by nature:

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[9] British writers had long used the Americas to explore potentialities, conceiving of the Americas in that ways collided in disconcertingly with the reality. As one scholar remarks, "the idea here is that America *is* a fiction, a shared rhetorical world among persons both in and out of the land, and never exactly a fully concrete space that generates—in fiction—a reality that comports with the literal landscape" (Richards 501). The scope and frequency of this process increased considerably, however, with the introduction of the novel. Daniel Defoe's *Moll Flanders* is one such novel that examines at length the numerous ways in which the American colonies influenced British culture.

> Let us trace these men in Authority and Favour to whose hand the dispensation of the Countries wealth has been commited; let us observe the sudden Rise of their Estates composed with the Quality of which they first entered this Country [. . .]. And lett us see wither their extractions and Education have not bin vile, And by what pretence of learning and vertue they could soe soon [enter] into Imployments of so great Trust and consequence. (141–2)

The advancement available in the New World was the frequent subject of discussion because of the effects this had on the status of those in England. Colonists to the Americas were appointed to colonial positions and ranks higher than those they would have received in England, and because the American regions were considered no sinecure, those willing to remain often advanced through the ranks more quickly than those who remained at home in England or who served in the domestic colonies.

Those who would have been permanently excluded in the British Isles where class boundaries were more jealously guarded are able to bypass these barriers through the Americas. Thus being branded a criminal was less of a deterrent for Moll if it did not preclude social advancement elsewhere that could then be converted back to elevated status in England. When her fading beauty obviates the method of attaining her life goal through marriage, Moll remembers the lesson she learned in the Americas, that criminal activities in England led some to social advancements in the Americas, and became more open to beginning a life of crime.

This certainly would seem to support the frequently expressed concerns that the social intermingling of the criminals in America with those such as Moll, who was not a criminal at this point but was certainly morally susceptible, would lead more persons to a life of crime. The nature of the enterprise in the Americas meant that ambitious members of the peerage and respectable merchants mixed socially with servants and criminals. Servants, unskilled laborers, and those without fortunes from every walk of life flocked to the New World looking for better opportunities, joining the thousands of convicts sent there who had no choice in the matter at all. Moll's mother remarks on the intermingling of the criminals with the other classes of immigrant: "'When they [criminals] come here, *says she*, we make no difference, the Planters buy them, and they work together [with indentured and free servants] in the Field till their time is out; when 'tis expir'd, *said she*, they have Encouragement given them to Plant for themselves […]" (101). The convicts work alongside servants of varying status and strength of moral character, living life side by side in a way that would not have been permitted in the more rigidly hierarchical England.

The serious nature of this concern was furthered by the dubious moral and cultural quality of the migrants to the Americas. Those colonists willing to make the arduous trek to the New World, leaving behind all family and connections, were not often social arbiters in England, yet in the Americas they

possessed authority and attained prestige for positions far above what would be permitted them in England. Concurrently, social forces bringing the lesser sons also brought the lowest social stratum to the New World to seek greater opportunity, to better themselves mainly in the strictly financial sense so that upon their return they would be able to forward their social positions in society.

Given that from her earliest memories onward Moll's life goal was to become a gentlewoman, one cannot help but speculate that the mother's many speeches about the criminal backgrounds of so many successful community leaders in the Americas removed, for Moll, some of the stigma of a life of crime. After all, if the Americas permit "many a Newgate Bird" to transform himself into "a great Man," then why could not a prostitute and thief become a gentlewoman, following the path of her mother before her? A place where errant members of the community can redeem themselves and become productive and profitable members of the empire would be positive, but this potential is made troubling by the fact that these conversations precede Moll's life of crime.[10]

[10] The idea of a fresh start is also undermined because Moll's mother is ultimately unsuccessful. Moll's mother has become a esteemed and wealthy plantation owner in the Americas and managed to conceal the specifics of her criminal history, but she fails to keep her former identity entirely undisclosed; the one person to whom she relates her story is the one it is most disastrous with whom to share. Both she and her newly discovered daughter must then suffer the dreadful consequences of this revelation. A problem with a fresh start in the Americas is that changing her name and rewriting her history only alters the externals, her social facade. Her genetic identity, who she really is beneath all the constructed identities, does not alter. Her

Had Moll's ambitions succeeded before she became a criminal, the implications of her success would seem less ambiguous and would demonstrate a way for the industrious and clever to navigate around the moribund English society that prevents social advancement. However, Moll does not succeed as a colonist, and not only that but her attempt to do so is forever tainted by the fact that her husband and partner in this venture turns out also to be her brother. Not until she returns to the Americas as a transported criminal does Moll achieve success, rewarding her criminal endeavors but not her earlier efforts in the Americas before her life of crime.

The text does complicate Moll's criminal status, making even the binary of convict versus free citizen complex. Moll uses special pleading to suggest that she deserves to be regarded differently than other convicted felons, that her fortune and cleverness merit her placement in a different category. Though Moll has detailed dozens of crimes she committed against the unwary citizens of England, and bragged she was the most successful pickpocket and thief in London, through dexterous sophistry she argues that neither she, nor her highwayman husband Jemy, should strictly be considered transported convicts.[11]

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child birthed during her former life in England is still biological sister to the son she had in the Americas, and the union between these two is unnatural and vile.

[11] Moll's argument is that she was only caught once and so was not deserving of transportation—a fate that should be reserved for offenders repeatedly tried and convicted. She

Moll argues that both their cases are exceptional, maintaining her illusion that they are not involuntarily transported criminals. Examining Moll's claims on her right to be regarded as different from "the wretch'd Companies" (294), one scholar suggests, "it is important to notice that the assumption being developed here is that all the others, wicked and evil as they are, amply deserve their transportation, whereas for Moll different parameters are to be applied […]"(Camaiora 52). How Moll justifies her distinction is of considerable interest, because her arguments reveal her personal values and the conflation in her mind of moral virtue with external indicators of where she belongs that mostly depend on status symbols. Moll distinguishes herself from the others sent from Newgate to the New World aboard ship by purchasing for herself and Jemy a separate cabin from their fellow transported prisoners, the "others" who form "such a

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also outlines a number of times when she could have escaped the sentence of transportation had she really attempted it. The prison chaplain who has her death sentence commuted also attempts to prevent Moll's transportation, but she does not assist him in this endeavor once she learns that Jemy could be sent with her to America (378). She also states that the ship's mate implies he would arrange her escape for a sufficient sum, which she possesses, but she chooses to travel to the Americas with Jemy (388). Moll's partner in crime, the governess, suggests that Moll could easily buy her way out of being exiled, asking, "did you ever know of one in your Life that was Transported, and had a Hundred Pound in his Pocket" (363). Through all these illustrations Moll's point has been that her second eight-year stint in the Americas was voluntary because she could so easily have avoided it.

Concerning her husband Jemy, she argues that he similarly was unlike other exiled convicts and should be regarded differently. Jemy, whose armed robbery of coaches and various other serious crimes certainly merit the death penalty, she excuses by saying that an important lord had interceded on his behalf so that his case never came to trial; he was to be allowed to voluntarily transport himself on the condition that he recognize it as an actual life sentence, a permanent exile to the Americas. In point of fact, incriminating evidence arose that would have resulted in his hanging, forcing him to quickly arrange his departure so that his name is listed on the roster with the others as a transported convict.

wretched Crew" (363). Moll seems to feel that because she is not housed in the same compartments spatially as the "dreadful Gang" (363) who are "such a horrid Example" (363), that she is no longer counted among their number metaphorically either.

In actual fact, Moll is only able to purchase a literal distance from those she describes as "a Gang of Thirteen, as harden'd vile Creatures as ever Newgate produc'd in my time" (363) by using her ill-gotten gains plundered from numerous victims in England. Moll does not journey to the Americas among her fellow convicts because she has profited so extensively from her crimes; she can afford to spend the ill-gotten gains to avoid the full experience of her proscribed punishment. The other criminals she so denigrates were less successful criminals, captured before they had opportunity to prey on as many victims as Moll did, yet her purchase of a stateroom and being allowed to eat with the captain permits Moll to depict herself as superior to the others morally as well as financially.[12]

[12] Many years before Moll had suggested to her third husband, who owned plantations in the Americas, that she "did not care to be Transported" (94), making even voluntary emigration there seem like a considerable concession on her part. Even in this much earliest voyage to the Americas upon which she willingly embarked she is using the idea of transportation as a bargaining tool and exaggerating her reluctance for the voyage to increase her dominance in the relationship. For someone like Moll Flanders who values the bottom line even criminal transportation can be a lucrative venture if managed correctly.

Circumventing the System

What Moll's machinations suggest to the reader is that though Moll has managed to avoid acknowledging to herself that her guilt deserves such a harsh punishment, she really belongs among the criminal element. Her memoir, sanitized as it purportedly has been by an editor (2), still demonstrates that she has stripped even the most destitute and helpless of their possessions and continues to do so long after exigency no longer presses her to illegal and immoral acts for survival. By framing the punitive measures taken against her as an undeserved and overly harsh sanction that she intends to convert into personal financial profit, Moll manages in her mind to avoid the intended punishment for her crimes. To Moll, exile to the Americas only functions punitively when conditions are harsh and the recipient acknowledges it as punishment. Moll's mental attitude and skillful manipulation of the system of British jurisprudence result in the circumvention of justice, allowing her to avoid paying for her crimes. She makes no restitution to the victims and is permitted actually to profit from her nefarious acts.

Moll converts her commuted death sentence into an opportunity for economic and social aggrandizement. This allows her to use her supposed punishment as a time to advance herself so that she can return to England a rich and respected land owner. Through this process Moll hopes to move from a

marginalized, nearly disenfranchised, subject to being a member of society accorded all the rights of a full citizen. Though as a transported felon Moll remains a British citizen, her status is different from those in England, even from those free subjects in the Americas. In the terms used by Armstrong and Tennenhouse, Moll wants to move from being a member of "the population" to being one of "the people."

How the author intends the reader to respond to this is somewhat difficult to discern. Many scholars consider *Moll Flanders* to be a narrative promotional tract for the Americas, but if the reader is supposed to unquestioningly accept Moll's attainment of wealth and cultural capital in the Americas, Defoe would not have described some of her victims with such pathos. The little child from whom Moll steals a necklace and the family from whom Moll steals their last worldly possessions when they thought she was helping save their belongings for them from a fire, for instance, are sufficiently moving in the text that some expiation seems necessary. Moll does serve out her full time in the Americas, which might suggest some acknowledgement of her proscriptive punishment; however, in spite of her husband Jemy's permanent banishment from the British

Isles, Moll arranges for him to illegally return with her so that they can enjoy the life of ease in Britain.[13]

This brings up a second major issue regarding the transporting of criminals to the Americas: the alteration of identity caused by the Americas. Moll's identity is somewhat unformed, more so than for other British citizens who are more connected to the land and to their families. Therefore she is particularly susceptible to the influence of the Americas and also is more vulnerable to tragic conflicts in identity. Because Moll has never known her mother or much about her family's past, she does not know that her mother has assumed a new identity in the New World. The mother's new life, and concealment of her former identity, leads Moll to inadvertently marry her own brother.[14]

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[13] "If the fluid, amorphous aspects of this relationship between literature and national identity create obvious problems of academic classification, they also suggest the manifold ways in which English and American literature have been intertwined since the eighteenth century. They also highlight ways in which literary histories written from nationalist standpoints, either explicitly or implicitly, remain locked into teleological structures that necessarily remain blind to anything which would radically traverse or obstruct their nativist agenda" (Giles 359).

[14] This makes the new life and fresh start offered by the Americas problematic, because successfully creating a new identity means concealing the old. Moll's mother makes use of being unknown in the Americas to dissociate herself from responsibility for the consequences of the crimes she has committed in England, suggesting that once she has attained a desirable position in life she can simply forget the past. She asks Moll, "'Why, my dear,' says she very kindly, 'what need these things [the story of her dissolute life in England] trouble you? These passages were long before your time, and they give me no trouble at all now; nay, I look back on them with a particular satisfaction, as they have been a means to bring me to this place'" (103). The irony is, these passages are about to bring the entire family a great deal of grief, and Moll has considerable

Colliding Identities

Learning her relationship with her husband is incestuous shocks and horrifies Moll, whose insecurity about her own status and identity magnifies the impact of this discovery. Her lack of identity creates the situation, and exacerbates it further: "Moll's first journey to Virginia ended in the disaster of incest because no one knew who anyone was or how they were related to anyone else, and incest was an appropriate punishment for her tendency to hide behind false identities and to pursue relationships with self-serving motives and hidden agendas" (Todd 125). Up to this point in the narrative, Moll has always established her identity and advanced her social position through her marriages, as many women did during this time period. When Moll's identity as the wife of an American planter violently collides with her newly discovered identity established through her biological family, the results are catastrophic for her conception of herself. Her reunion with her biological family and establishing a relationship with them would, in the normal course of events, have been a joyous

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reason to be troubled, for in this same speech in which the mother declared the liberation she felt from all her previous misdeeds, making her grand claims about fresh starts resulting from new identities, her former life collides with the new. In this dialogue she has unknowingly communicated to Moll that she is Moll's mother, meaning Moll has inadvertently married and had three children by her own brother. The distance between England and the Americas, and the ideology that the Americas represent a fresh start, inclines Moll's mother to expect a complete disconnect between the two sides of the Atlantic. However, both are part of the same empire; the interactions between England and the Americas mean that decisions made in the Americas can have consequences in England, and vice versa.

occasion appropriate for the ending of an adventure story of this period. The discovery of a long lost parent that typically closes a story with a touching happy conclusion here shatters the family bonds. Because the relationship is incestuous, Moll feels nauseated disgust at the presence of her husband / brother and cannot bear to think of him in either capacity. She feels an uncontrollable repulsion that forces her to flee back to England. As a result of this discovery, she also leaves behind her mother, never seeing her again.

In the eighteenth century, when the relationship between England and her colonies was often conceived of as that of a mother to her children, this incident of incest would have had even more force than for modern readers. Moll's family relationships are inherently conflicting, dual ties that are mutually exclusive so that nature itself (Moll says) is revolted by this relationship (104). The discovery of the incestuous foundation of her third marriage fundamentally alters Moll's methods for understanding her own identity. Until this point in the narrative, Moll has maintained a fairly consistent self-identity. She has exaggerated her own qualities to make herself more marketable, presenting herself as more innocent or more wealthy than she really is, but she has never attempted to essentially become a different character. After this shattering experience in the Americas, Moll begins for the first time to change her name, signaling an attempt to concurrently alter who she is.

Moll is deeply troubled by these events and refers to herself at multiple points for many subsequent chapters as an incestuous whore. She strongly castigates herself, condemning herself for having this identity, in contrast to her justification of all her other questionable acts. Discovering she had married her own brother causes Moll to consider herself tainted by her vile and unnatural relationship with her family. This experience breaks the restraints on Moll's behavior. At crucial points in her history, as she deliberates over committing criminal acts, Moll brings up her incestuous relationship to argue she has already been as morally compromised as possible. These reflections allow her to justify her corrupt acts, as though she now considers herself a depraved person rather than a victim of a horrible mischance. Prior to her American voyage Moll restrains her actions to function mostly within the bounds of British social expectations, justifying at length two notable transgressions. The first was an affair before her first marriage and the second that she and her second husband parted amicably over money issues without getting a divorce so that her subsequent marriages are polygamous. However, after her experiences in the Americas,

> She returns to her native land with a complete lack of scruples regarding sexual relationships, which will allow her to set up as a kept mistress, a situation that she would never have accepted before her voyage to America; she returns with a capacity to

> manipulate people and circumstances, an ability extremely useful for the making of the future thief. (Camaiora 42)

She has also becomes motivated to separate her sense of self from her terrible incestuous marriage, which begins the process whereby Moll learns to carry out dreadful crimes under another name so that she can dissociate from her vile activities.

Lost Identity

After her time in the Americas Moll begins to rename herself, completely changing her identity to compartmentalize and protect herself, even once dressing like and calling herself a man. She does not want to be the person who has such an unbearable history. Names have significance, signifying a stable identity and sense of self. Her shifting names indicate a deep dissatisfaction with who she was and the role she played in life.

The Americas are crucial to this process of destabilizing Moll's identity. Not only did the removal of her mother from England make Moll's identity vulnerable, and her discovery in the Americas that her husband was also her brother shatter all her typical modes of establishing herself within society, but the Americas also taught Moll that renaming and re-identifying herself is a means to social advancement. Prior to her first eight years in the Americas Moll did not rename herself and thereby re-identify herself completely. Though she

misled people about herself, claiming to be wealthier or more innocent than she really was, these are traits about her that she misrepresents. She does not claim to be an entirely different character until she learns that this adaptive technique works well for criminals and others who desire a new chance to start completely over as a new person in the Americas. The Americas come to represent concerns about identity in the text, for encounters with the Americas change an English individual's sense of self.

After returning from the Americas, Moll takes on names and plays roles, sometimes adopting numerous identities within a short space of time, once even carrying out her nefarious activities dressed and identified in every way as a man. Moll explains that she adopts so many names and changes her outward appearance so that her criminal co-conspirators do not know who she really is and therefore cannot turn her in to the authorities. But the text suggests that, whether Moll acknowledges it or not, her serial identities suggest something further.

The changes to her external appearance and to her names indicate an essential instability in how Moll conceptualizes herself. She has a remarkable ability to adapt herself because she is never able to declare to herself or to others her real identity. At one point in the text Moll attempts to justify identifying herself only by a pseudonym, saying "so you may give me leave to speak of

myself, under that Name [Moll Flanders] till I dare own who I have been, as well as who I am"(2). But Moll never dares. She never dares to own her identity, to recognize and admit who she is and what she has done. Moll cannot change her past, and finds that her attempts to change her present condition lead her increasingly to become a person she does not want to acknowledge.[15]

Moll becomes unknown, even to herself, through her frequent identity shifts. These series of rapidly shifting identities allow Moll to more effectively prey on English society without discovery, though her activities eventually result in her incarceration in Newgate, where she says of herself, "I degenerated into Stone' I turned first Stupid and Senseless, then Brutish and Thoughtless, and at last raving Mad as any of them were; and in short, I became as naturally pleas'd and easy with the Place, as if indeed I had been Born there" (343). This self knowledge that she is a criminal as dreadful as any of the others, that her place in the world had forever been rendered problematic because of her birth there is the knowledge Moll has been trying to escape from by shedding the names and identities she assumes for her criminal purposes.

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[15] Moll never becomes incorporated into any society: "To maintain her autonomy, she remains an outsider and an isolate, conducting herself in secrecy, hiding her inner life from everyone. When she participates in society, she participates only as an actress, impersonating someone inside society while in fact standing outside it" (Todd 128).

But Moll has also, in the text, attempted to shed her real name and the identity that signifies. Moll never, in fact, reveals her real name or identity in the text, motivated by her desire to avoid prosecution for the crimes in which she participates, but more as an indicator that Moll remains incapable of revealing her true identity. When Moll feels threatened, as though she might face the consequences of her actions undertaken while identifying herself by one of her many aliases, she says, "Upon these Apprehensions, the first thing I did, was to go quite out of my Knowledge, and go by another Name [. . .]" (2). The irony is that the name she chose to change her identity so completely was the name Mrs. Flanders (73). This other name that takes her quite out of her knowledge is the very name that the reader must accept as her identity, for she and her memoirs are both eternally known by the name Moll Flanders.

The authorial voice that intrudes into the text makes it clear that Moll's story is published after Moll has passed away, the subtitle of the work itself proclaiming that Moll "died a *Penitent*." Yet Moll's real name is never revealed. Her refusal to give her true name, her habit of taking and discarding names and identities throughout the text, reminds the reader that the actual Moll is never known in the text by either the reader or by Moll. Moll cannot reveal what she does not know, and she refuses to know herself. She remains "Moll Flanders," a name indicating prostitute and thief. These terms signifying what she has done

provide the only means by which the character identifies herself, and even form the title given to the work.

Social Hierarchy

This anonymity also allows Moll to advance socially in England through her activities in the Americas because no one in England can link her new character with her past incarnations of self. A removed space, the Americas provided Britons with a detour around the constraints that precluded social advancement. This fact was remarked upon by a British official[16] in the Americas who wrote home about people from the lower classes there assuming the dress of their social betters:

> Nowe that your lordship may knowe, we are not the veriest beggers in the worlde, our Cowe-keeper here of Iames citty on Sundayes goes acowterd all in freshe flaming silks and a wife of one that in England had professed the black arte not of a scholler but of a collier of Croyden, weares her rough beuer hatt with a faire perle hatband, and a silken suite thereto correspo[. . .]ndent. (*Records* III 221)

[16] This does not mean to imply that conceptions about social advancement in the Americas were uniform. Opinions on this topic widely diverged, and the opinion expressed by one colonial official is not intended to suggest this should be interpreted as the common consensus of British governmental representatives. As Ann Lara Stoler argues, the anthropology of colonialism has traditionally been conflated and misunderstood: "the makers of metropole policy become conflated with its local practitioners. Company executives and their clerks appear as a seamless community of class and colonial interests whose internal discrepancies are seen as relatively inconsequential, whose divisions are blurred" (35).

Promoters of the Americas depicted it as a land of opportunity whereby even cow-keepers and colliers could improve themselves and raise their social standing, yet this social mobility caused qualms for those who worried that financial success in the Americas did not qualify such to be raised socially. The American colonists able to rise in social station were like the rough beaver hat bedecked with inappropriate class signifiers. The Americas might add a fair pearl hatband, but the hat beneath remained rough beaver and the adding of signifiers of a higher social class to something with a core identity of such low-class material served to make the whole outfit inappropriate and ridiculous.

Moll's fourth husband Jemy embodies this phenomenon of transplanting indicators of higher social standing from the Old World to indicate gentility in the New. Moll says of his activities in the New World that her highwayman husband

> was bred a Gentleman, and by Consequence was not only unacquainted [with work], but indolent, and when we did Settle, would much rather go out into the Woods with his Gun, which they call there Hunting, and which is the ordinary Work of the *Indian*, and which they do as Servants; I say he would much rather do that, than attend the natural Business of his Plantation. (405)

Jemy is attempting, through spending his days hunting, to live as a gentleman would in Europe where hunting was a right reserved only for those land owners

of considerable estate.[17] Living a life of ease shooting on his own property was probably Jemy's idea of being a gentleman, just as much as Moll's concept of being a gentlewoman only encompassed not having to earn a living as a servant. But Jemy's simplistic understanding of what it means to be a gentleman does not translate to the Americas and only makes him appear ridiculous. Far from indicating gentility in the New World, hunting is an activity carried out by Indians acting as servants, the very lowest of the low. By failing to adapt to appropriate status symbols in the Americas, Jemy enacts the behavior that he thinks distinguishes the highest classes but his actions, instead, confirm his identity in the lowest classes.[18]

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[17] Jemy claims the right to be considered a gentleman because he was a highwayman, a criminal position commonly referred to as "a gentleman of the road." Though he claims to have an Irish estate, this claim is no doubt as spurious as Moll's own claims at this point to be a wealthy heiress to an American fortune. Moll, with her own deep-seated desire to be a gentlewoman, maintains Jemy's rights to the claim to be a gentleman. Jemy's behavior attempts to match that of the gentry in England (which his actual status does not support) and ends up looking as odd and as socially inappropriate as a pearl hatband on a beaver hat, equally a sign of the inappropriate blending of status signifiers.

[18] Jemy wanted to participate in the colonial experience in Ireland, urging that all the advantages Moll outlines for a life in the Americas equally applies to Ireland. He insists on the merits of colonizing Ireland, she persists in advocating for colonizing the Americas. Jemy is not nearly as adaptable as Moll and is far less willing to leave England behind. Moll has already experienced eight years of living in the Americas at this point, so part of her preference may be familiarity. However, a more considerable part may be that the Americas allow an even greater anonymity, that the distance allows those in England to entirely forget a former identity so that an individual may return more completely able to claim a new self. As she says later, they can think about the crimes for which they were convicted with complacency since the Americas allow them the opportunity to erase this blot and present themselves as new people in the new land: "we should look back on all our past Disasters with infinite Satisfaction, when we should

This destabilizing of social status would not have been a problem had migration been unidirectional. However, a considerable number of emigrants to the Americas became discouraged or disenchanted with life there and returned to England:

> Many gentlemen who came to Virginia before 1620 returned to England when they discovered that sickness, death, and Indians lurcked everywhere. Other Virginians wanted only "a present crop, and their hasty return." As early as the 1630s, discontented New Englanders, unwilling to abide the rule of the saints, returned to England. […]. As many as a sixth of immigrants who arrived in New England from London in 1635 moved to the West Indies or returned to England in the 1640s and 1650s, as did a twelfth of Watertown's early settlers. (Kulikoff 54)

This movement within the empire meant that questions about how people who had been to the Americas should be reincorporated into English society became a pressing issue. The issue also becomes critical if the Americas negatively affect the colonists, for this would have consequences for England when the colonist returned.

Moll returns to England twice within the text: the first time she leaves her husband / brother to begin a life of crime; the second time she returns immediately following the conclusion of her criminal sentence, having used her

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consider that our Enemies should entirely forget us, and that we should live as new People in a new World, no Body having any thing to say to us, or we to them" (375). The anonymity of the Americas allows Moll the opportunity to convert her base actions in England to wealth in the Americas, and by concealing her former identity she is able to dissociate her new wealth from its tainted origins.

banishment to vastly increase her wealth and status so that she returns to England determined to gain the higher social status she has always sought. Moll's story concludes before this reintegration is detailed, but an authorial voice narrates that

> her Husband's Life, being written by a third Hand, gives a full Account of them both, how long they liv'd together in that Country [America], and how they came both to *England* again, after about eight Year, in which time they were grown very Rich, and where she liv'd, it seems, to be very old; but was not so extraordinary a Penitent, as she was at first; it seems only that indeed she always spoke with abhorrence of her former Life, and of every Part of it. (xiii)

This quote makes clear that the eight years of Moll's criminal sentence was the period of her life when she grew rich, profiting from her time there.[19] The text suggests that what Moll abhors her former poverty and lack of cultural capital, that the only reform to Moll's character caused by her punishment has been to

[19] Many scholars who see Moll's success as a positive depiction of opportunities in the Americas do so because they compare the advancement Moll makes with the statements about the colonial project made elsewhere by Defoe, mainly in promotional materials he wrote about the empire and in other works of fiction such as *Colonel Jack*. Jack frequently makes statements that seem positive about opportunities in the Americas. Some statements do sound quite similar to those espoused by Moll's mother, for Jack says, "In a Word, every *Newgate* Wretch, every Desperate forlorn Creature; the most Despicable ruin'd Man in the World, has here [in the Americas] a fair Opportunity put into his Hands to begin the World again, and that upon a Foot of certain Gain, and in a Method exactly Honest; with a Reputation, that nothing past will have any Effect upon; and innumerable People have thus rais'd themselves from the worst Circumstances in the World; Namely, from the *Condemn'd-Hole* in *Newgate*" (153). *Colonel Jack* is not as unambiguously supportive of the colonial project as such a statement would indicate, for "Although Defoe eagerly supported the economic and social advancements of traders and merchants (such as himself), his views toward the increasingly mobile society that England had become were ambivalent" (Todd 156).

change her financial and social standing but not to cause her to repent the misdeeds that allowed the alterations in her standing. What Moll abhors is her former poverty and situation in life, not the crimes she committed that enabled her to achieve this success. Like these words spoken by her mother before her, Moll could say of her evil acts committed in England, "they give me no trouble at all now, nay I look back on them with a particular Satisfaction, as they have been a means to bring me to this place" (103). Whether the reader will celebrate this as the potential of the New World or respond with anxiety will depend in large part on the reader's individual beliefs and character.

Defoe's own interpretation of the potential for advancement in the Americas is complex. Moll first travels to the Americas because it is financially advantageous for her to do so, seeking through legal means and industrious effort to make a good life for herself and advance her wealth and status through a life in the Americas, yet these efforts result in disaster in every way. Moll does not profit financially or socially from this venture, and instead ends up damaged psychologically and morally.

The Americas raise multivalent issues because they foster social advancement, meaning that a host of issues concerning who should be permitted entry into higher society and how this should be accomplished become highly relevant: "colonial policy, spiritual conversion, moral reform, and economic

advancement are more intimately related to one another than they otherwise might appear to be" (Todd ix). Many members of English society suggested that the Americas primarily furthered grasping social climbers who were willing to advance their careers outside of England because they desired extensive advancement for which they were not qualified or because they did not have sufficient loyalty and ties to hold them in England. Promotional materials marketed both the (wildly exaggerated) potential to acquire fortunes in the Americas, appealing to baser instincts of greed, and the comparatively small effort required to attain such richness. In fact, "When the settlers exalted America, they exalted above all the indolent ease they professed to find there" (Zuckerman 123).[20] Though the Americas were presented nearly equally as often as a bare wilderness threatened by lurking Indians, the edenic version of the Americas was likely to attract the lower indolent element from England and the

[20] Claims of prelapsarian ease in the Americas were so rampant that, in summing up dozens of such claims by numerous well-known advocates of the colonies, one scholar suggests, "Indeed, under such circumstances, it was difficult to distinguish between work and leisure. John Smith's Virginia was a land in which planting was a pastime of 'pleasure,' "hunting and hawking' an 'exercise' of 'delight,' and fishing a 'pretty sport' for profit. Anthony Gondy's South Carolina was a country in which 'nobody . . . works more than two m[onths]. The remainder of the time he may go fishing or hunting.' William Byrd's North Carolina was a domain in which 'everything' grew plentifully 'to supply the wants or wantonness of man'; Daniel Denton's New York was a place in which woods and fields were 'dyed red' with strawberries and springtime ardor" (Zuckerman 125).

distance from civilization and intermixing of classes was likely to have detrimental results on moral character.

Freedom from Restraints

The geographic distance from England also suggested freedom from the constrictions of England, both politically and religiously. As Sigmund Diamond observed, the types of blandishments offered to the English to stimulate their migration to the American colonies served also to diminish their susceptibility to the constraints of discipline: "Instead of docility, there was disobedience; instead of stability, disorder. […] Disobedience and disorder were both consequences of the means by which the country was peopled" (8-9). Such traits led to both the potential for revolt against English society and the lack of productivity needed to build the empire.

Descriptions of the delights to be found in the New World did not feature wealth as frequently as they emphasized the potential for hedonic indulgence and relief from labor. In fact, "When the settlers exalted America, they exalted above all the indolent ease they professed to find there" (Zuckerman 123). America, depicted as specially exempted from the Adamic curse, would lavish its largess upon even the most unprepared and disinclined to "toil or labor" (Bullock, *Virginia Impartially Examined* 7). Fish in America swam "in numbers

inexhaustible" while birds congregated in numbers "so numerous […] that [one] might see millions in a flock" (Barlowe 1: 108; Lawson, *New Voyage* 69, 115). Those in the New World reported that migrants managed "very easily," though unwilling to work "above two or three hours a day" or more than "three days in seven" (Leary 16-17). Such Edenic imagery of "a place where food [would] drop into their mouths" (Bullock 14) caused remonstrant in Ireland and Scotland, as well as England, against "the misrepresentations of designing men" whose blandishments "induced and inveigled" people "to leave their native country" to seek the promised life "without labor and industry" (*Belfast* 29-30). These qualities in the emigrants to the Americas became serious issues for the British Empire when the low moral character implied by the above traits was then influenced by one who had so violated the laws of society as to require transportation from England as a criminal.

These traits, because of the intermingling between classes in the Americas, could then spread throughout all the society in the Americas, and from there potentially back to England. Moll's many conversations with the mother hint that social intercourse between classes, the criminal and the members of the lower social orders with those of better birth, could be morally dangerous, especially given that the Americas were so distanced from the influence of moderating civilization. This was the fear expressed by an Act in Maryland of

1723 which lamented that transported criminals "Debauched the minds and Principles of several of the Ignorant and formerly Innocent Inhabitants" (Archive of Maryland 28: 320-2). The concern was that mixing with criminals would lessen the psychological horror of transgressing the laws, that servants would learn to disregard proscribed punishments as deterrents because punishments inflicted on criminals were not that different from the fates of the indentured servants and lower classes.

This is, in fact, a lesson Moll learns from her mother. Moll seems to spend much of her days alone with the mother so that Moll's thinking becomes influenced by her ideas, her words echoing through Moll's mind for years to come. Moll has longed for the kind of social and financial advancement the mother exemplifies, for she is now the successful and respected owner of three American plantations. Moll's mother suggests through both her words to Moll and the example of her own life story that being transported as a criminal to the Americas can lead to success in life beyond what could be obtained by honest living in England.

Moll's life illustrates this contrast, for before she turns criminal she repeatedly tries the most common means for a woman in her social class to advance--through affairs and matrimony. She served as mistress to the eldest son of a mayor's family, but the lover did not further her social advancement and

the funds she received from him were insufficient to increase her cultural capital. She then married her first husband, a younger son, who leaves her in a moderately better situation, though not yet elevated to the social position she desires upon his death. Her second marital venture, to a man she insists (at five different points in the text) was a gentleman, is an even more considerable failure for Moll's social advancement. Her husband spends her fortune—and far more—on a coach and six, servants, and other indicators of wealth. Moll relishes these symbols of her coveted status in the brief moments before she and her husband are bankrupted. This second husband abandons Moll, without getting a divorce, when the money runs out, so that all her subsequent marriages are probably polygamous. Her third husband (who proves to be her brother), fourth (a destitute highwayman pretending to great wealth), and fifth husband (a banker who loses his nerve and all their funds) also fail to give Moll the cultural or financial capital she desires, forcing her repeatedly to start amassing her financial and social status anew.

As she advances in years and realizes that her various marriages and affairs have not appreciably advanced her desired status and that such opportunities for her will soon come to an end, Moll recalls the only example she knows who was able to achieve the social and financial advancement she so covets. Her only model for achieving such success was her mother in the

Americas who secured a respectable estate for herself as a result of her life of crime.[21] In actuality, thousands of socially marginalized Britons hoped to return as wealthy Englishman able to buy their way into social recognition, through wealth accumulated in the Americas, into a higher strata of society in Britain. Defoe provocatively tests these limits in *Moll Flanders*, though, because those who achieve this success are the very criminals whom England had exiled.

All of those individuals shown in *Moll Flanders* to prosper and advance their social station are criminals. When Moll travels to the Americas the first time, she is unsuccessful at leveraging her experiences into social advancement in England. The goods that embody her financial profits from the Americas are spoiled by a storm in transit, arriving in England in ruins from which little can be salvaged. These spoiled goods prevent Moll from translating her tangible wares into financial gain, but she does profit intangibly when she invents a mythical American wealth. This invented windfall is used to increase her social standing

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[21] *Moll Flanders* does not, however, seem to genuinely advocate for a life of crime as a means to advancement. Moll spends many terrible weeks in jail anticipating each moment her life being forfeit for her crimes against the state: "it was not without great difficulty, and at last an humble Petition for Transportation, that I avoided it" (361). Further, Moll and Jemy both do insist that transportation is a harsh punishment. Moll remarks that transportation is not a pleasant fate, even for one who had lived in America and learned to adapt there, but "we shall all choose any thing rather than Death, especially when 'tis attended with an uncomfortable prospect beyond it, which was my Case" (361). Jemy assures Moll that he would have willingly gone voluntarily with her to the Americas (though in point of fact he refused to do so), but insists that he "thought he could much easier submit to be Hang'd" than transported there (301). Perhaps Defoe depicts Moll and Jemy attaining success in the Americas as transported criminals because this raises so many social issues.

with her landlady and to ensnare a new romantic liaison. The actual, very modest, cargo dispatched to her on a second ship provides sufficient substantiation to allow Moll to attribute to herself a considerable American fortune that gains her a fourth husband, a highwayman.

Though Moll's actual state of affairs has hardly improved, Moll has learned to use the Americas to vastly inflate her reputed fortune. Her third husband, whom she meets before venturing to the Americas, assumed she had a thousand pounds, maybe two, as her fortune. Jemy, her fourth husband whom she meets after the Americas, is assured she has a fortune of 10,000 pounds or more to her name. The Americas allow her to inflate her delusory net worth because an American fortune is so difficult to verify or disprove. Thus Moll can profit more by the invented wealth she claims from the Americas than from the sale of her actual goods. The stories Moll constructs, her invented history and exaggerated tales, bring her more profit than her experiences and provide the actual foundation for her success.

The mother's hyperbole that criminals "half peopled" Virginia expressed the prevailing computations of many on both sides of the Atlantic. Virginia and Maryland, especially, were thought to be peopled by, in the words of one colonist, "abandoned Outcasts of the British Nation" ("Philanthropos"). The criminals transported there were not the only ones considered to have low moral

character. Disparaging the immigrants who left England for the American colonies, William Berkeley, governor of the colony of Virginia, wrote in 1663, ''None but those of the meanest quality and curruptest lives go [to Virginia]'' (iii). Defoe makes use of such general perceptions, highlighting this issue through several scenes in the novel.

Caliber of Character

As Moll's mother explains, there are two kinds of emigrants to the Americas, though her descriptions somewhat conflate the two groups and treat them as though they are of the same moral caliber:

> she often told me how the greatest part of the Inhabitants of the Colony came thither in very indifferent Circumstances from *England*; that, generally speaking, they were of two sorts, either (i.) such as were brought over by Masters of Ships to be sold as Servants, *Such as we call them*, my Dear, *says she*, but they are more properly call'd Slaves. Or, (2.) Such as are Transported from *Newgate* and other Prisons, after having been found guilty of Felony and other Crimes punishable, with Death. (100-1)

It would seem that Moll's mother ought to describe the fate of a transported criminal as that of a slave, but that dreadful state she assigns to the indentured servants.

Moll's mother merely reflects the prevailing attitude of the English in her sentiments, for those who described the emigrants to the New World often conflated all those of lower social class into one group, regardless of whether

they were free or indentured servants, or even transported criminals. Summing up these beliefs, one scholar states that the common view was that all the poor traveling to the Americas "were irresponsible, dishonest, dissolute, and disloyal, a 'detested Race' of idlers and rogues who had come to the New World because they were incapable of living decent lives in the Old" (Todd 144). These new immigrants were perceived to lower the quality of each of the original colonies.

Those willing to indenture themselves to get a new start in the Americas sell their freedom and their very selves, becoming the property of whoever chanced to purchase them. Regarded by society and the legal machinery as "replaceable goods rather than individuals to be incorporated into families" (Games 89), the indentured servant literally lost status as a citizen of the empire and became property like any other colonial good:

> "On tax lists, they were assessed as personal property; in probate inventories, they were listed among livestock and household furniture and were distributed after the death of the master like other items of personal property. […] He could be used to purchase goods. He could be gambled away at a card game" (Todd 139).

To be a servant in the Americas is to be a slave, to lose status and right to an individual identity. Transported felons, however, attain through the Americas a new chance at life.

A small smattering of examples from contemporaneous sources provides a general guide to the kinds of comments made in public forums about the state of the colonies as a result of the caliber of emigrants. The Reverend William Stith, historian at the college of William and Mary, voiced the sentiment of the majority on both sides of the Atlantic when he stated in 1747 that Virginia was "a mere Hell upon Earth, another Siberia, and only fit for the Reception of Malefactors and the vilest of the People" (Morgan 168). According to the common conception, Virginia had become "a Sinke to drayen England of her filth and scum," and likewise Maryland a midden of Britain's "Scum and Dregs" (Nicholas Spencer qtd. in Morgan 168; Calvert 6.329). These pariahs were still English, yet England would not wish to grant equal status to a collection of undesirable persons who only contributed to England by departing her shores. *Moll Flanders* examines, among many other themes, the effects that exposure to the criminal element in the Americas have on a British subject and the problems this causes for England upon their return.

Importance of the Americas

Though many scholars see *Moll Flanders* as a promotional piece espousing the colonial project, the overall role of the Americas is somewhat ambiguous in this novel. Moll does eventually make her fortune there, which may allow her to

fulfill her lifelong dream of being a gentlewoman, but by this she still seems to mean her childish understanding of not having to work for others. She has acquired considerable survival skills that allow her to maneuver her way to financial success with increasing dexterity, but she has not acquired other exalted attainments that would contribute to the society of England.

Texts that portray movement between England and the American colonies present a complicated, and frequently troubled, depiction of the permeable borders within the empire. Many characters acquire traits unconducive to life in England that make them unsuccessful at readapting to English life. Moll Flanders, on the other hand, learns coping mechanisms highly successful for her personal financial advancement but that are quite destructive for England. Defoe remarks on this phenomenon throughout *Moll Flanders*, giving consideration to ways in which England's relationship with the Americas changes Moll's life, and how these alterations to her character have serious ramifications for English society.

As Paul Giles points out, this endeavor challenges the incomplete and erroneous assumptions instigated by the traditional constructs of national literatures: "To restore a transatlantic dimension to English literature is thus to problematize the nationalist teleologies which have encumbered the formation of both English and American literary canons, and which have often produced, in

institutional terms, highly simplistic and at times implicitly authoritarian assumptions about the ethical values of literary works" (7). *Moll Flanders* provides a much more nuanced and insightful commentary on the relationship between England and America than is typically recognized by scholars who see the work as primarily imperialist propaganda.

Because the Americas existed, Moll's mother was transported instead of being executed, leaving Moll without a place. Had her mother died, Moll would have become a ward of the town or of England and she would have belonged and been a recognized member. Her mother's separation from England cast a shadow over Moll's early life. Because the Americas existed, Moll's mother was able to change her identity so that Moll's life was violently wrenched into a different path when she learned she had unknowingly married her own brother. Because the Americas existed, Moll is able to avoid penance for her crimes yet return to England wealthy and esteemed. Because the Americas existed, English society was changed.

CHAPTER THREE

The Best of Both Worlds: The Birth of a New Identity in *The Female American*

Not long after the celebrated marriage of Pocahontas to John Rolfe in 1614, several colonies enacted miscegenation legislation. Laws preventing "abominable mixture and spurious issue" mandated that mixed couples "be banished forever" (Hening 7: 86-7). The British took pride in the fact that, unlike other European nations, they did not dilute or pollute their lineage by intermixing with barbarians.

Illustrative of this fact, in 1717 the governor of Virginia told the Commissioners of Trade and Plantations that one could not "find one Englishman that has an Indian wife, or an Indian married to a white woman" while a few decades later (possibly in 1757) John Bartram penned to Peter Collinson that even in his time he could not "remember […] one English man to have married an Indian nymph. It would [be] reckoned a horrid crime with us" (Jacobs 91-2; 457). English outposts, unlike other European settlements, execrated concubinage and forbade intermarriage because "[i]n Anglo-American imagination, the 'mixed blood' was the embodiment of the erasure of the distinction between 'civilized' and 'savage,' colonizer and colonized, the very binaries that inscribed colonial identity as dominant and 'superior'" (Rex 162-3).

For this reason, the colonists sought to circumscribe their encounters with this wildness within boundaries as finite as the protective enclosures that encircled their communities.

The eponymous heroine in *The Female American: Or, the Adventures of Unca Eliza Winkfield* shatters these binaries and calls these boundaries into question.[1] Unca Eliza Winkfield, the offspring of a fortune-seeking English colonist and a captivating Indian princess, provides an instantiation, a visceral representation, of the relationship the British most feared: the blending of Indigenous and British bloodlines to create a *tertiam quid* that is neither colonizer nor colonized but able to function in both worlds. Born in America, Unca Eliza Winkfield nonetheless considers herself British. She can claim this identity because of her paternal connection, bolstered by the fact that she was educated and raised in England—

[1] Though this novel is not well-known to modern audiences in the same sense as Defoe's *Moll Flanders* or Smollett's *Humphry Clinker* and may therefore seem inappropriate for this study given the earlier outlined objectives to consider only enduring novels with widespread cultural influence, still it must be taken into account that the myths that this novel perpetuates have entered into both the American and the English consciousness. Along with John Smith's account, as well as that of several others, this text has helped to establish the story of the beautiful Indian princess whose tenderness for an English captive led to an enduring love. It also helped establish early on the genre expectations of a Robinsonade survival story. More important to the purposes of this study, this text contributes significantly to British considerations of their identity as a result of questions raised by the Americas. As John Plamenantz argues, "Nationalism […] arises when peoples are aware, not only of cultural diversity, but of cultural change and share some idea of progress which moves them to compare their own achievements and capacities with those of others […]. Thus nationalism is the reaction of peoples who feel culturally at a disadvantage" (qtd. in Newman 56). Given the violent reaction to this text in England, and the many reviews and newspaper articles it sparked, this chapter will argue that *The Female American* raises questions which cause the English to feel a need to redefine their status against that of the American British and stimulated the continuing dialogue about British identity.

and also, very crucially, because she follows the Christian faith. Through this bold choice to create a main character who is a female of mixed race, the author is able to examine the relationship between England and the American colonies in a very provocative manner. *The Female American* forces the reader to consider what it means to be British.

Eliza's British Identity

Had Eliza been raised in the Americas, though the colonists there still consider themselves members of British society, her British identity would not have been as secure.[2] She is basically raised by her father's English family whose only exposure to anything American is through Eliza. They have maintained their uncorrupted English identity and so are able appropriately to socialize Eliza, though never completely as she remains intensely attached to the Indian bow bestowed upon her by her Native American aunt. Had her mother lived, had she not been so decisively removed from any American influence at such a young age, her English identity would not have been so assured. However, Eliza, the English characters in the text, and the text itself all confidently assert Eliza's English identity. Her acquisition of English culture suggests that civility

[2] Eliza's qualifications are not solely dependent on her birth or inherent nobility, however, for Eliza has been given the same thorough English education as her cousin, the daughter of a clergyman, from her earliest childhood until entry into adulthood at age eighteen. She knows the English culture and has the polished manners of a well-bred English lady because of her total immersion in English life from a very young age to adulthood.

is a learned behavior and that being English is more a matter of training than birth: another countercultural assertion certain to threaten many assumptions.

Source Usage

Though the work was published in 1767, long after marriages between Britons and Amerindians were considered scandalous, even taboo, *The Female American* subverts many cultural conventions. While this novel clearly draws from the mythic story of Pocahontas and John Smith, it does so more like the Disney retelling and unlike the historical event, with the princess marrying the captive whose life she saves. Yet grafted onto this re-envisioning of the Pocahontas myth is a version of Daniel Defoe's axiomatic *Robinson Crusoe.* Using the novel genre to rewrite such an already well-known novel in order to make extensive and blatantly counter-cultural alterations makes a significant statement, possibly explaining why the author chose to remain anonymous.

Since *The Female American* is set in the 1630s, though not published until 1767, the author audaciously usurps Defoe's place as a "founder" in the novelistic tradition by suggesting that *Robinson Crusoe* (published in 1719) was but a derivative imitation of her own earlier recounting of a true event:

> Nor do I wonder that events so extraordinary should attract [...] attention; and if they should be published in any country, I doubt not but they will soon be naturalized throughout Europe, and in different languages, and in succeeding ages, be the delight of the ingenious and inquisitive; and that some future bold adventurer's imagination, lighted

> up by my torch, will form a fictitious story of one of his own sex, the solitary inhabitant of a desolate island. (164)

The asterisk appended to this passage directs the reader to a textual footnote, where a pseudo editor (similar to the one Defoe inserts in some of his texts) slyly adds: "Our authoress here seems to please herself, with the thoughts of the immortality of her history, and to prophecy of that of Robinson Crusoe, which is only inferior to her own, as fiction is to truth" (164). The text deliberately parallels many of the details from the source text of *Robinson Crusoe*, all the while maintaining the fiction that Eliza's story is the original that was later plagiarized by Defoe's inferior copy, cleverly surrogating the eminence of the Crusoe text.

Using such a formative narrative as a source text invites readers to hear echoes, to see the second text in dialogue with the first. *Robinson Crusoe* had made its mark on the world: *The Female American* used this as a vehicle to deliver a new message clearly meant as a response. Performance theory offers insight into the dynamics of similar relationships of addition and displacement. As Joseph Roach argues in *Cities of the Dead*,

> Into the cavities created by loss through death or other forms of departure [...] survivors attempt to fit satisfactory alternates. Because collective memory works selectively, imaginatively, and often perversely, surrogation rarely if ever succeeds. The process requires many trials and at least as many errors. The fit cannot be exact. The intended substitute either cannot fulfill expectations, creating a deficit, or actually exceeds them, creating a surplus. (5)

The Female American frames the text as the original and *Robinson Crusoe* as the surrogate re-visioning; in the differences it enumerates, it claims to exceed Defoe's text and to write with greater accuracy and applicability for the empire.

The similarities in plot and blatant authorial comparisons between the two texts makes those points at which *The Female American* diverges from *Robinson Crusoe* often revelatory of significant philosophical differences. Recasting the role of the protagonist as a female castaway who serves as missionary, rather than as helpless victim of circumstance or exemplary survivor of extraordinary adventures, implicitly suggests that Crusoe was a comparative failure, only modestly succeeding at converting the Indians to English civilization and capitalism but not to the more crucial Christianity.[3] *The Female American* also proposes a very different relationship between the English colonizer and the indigenes based upon a philosophical justification substantially unlike that of *Robinson Crusoe*. Also relevant to this study is the significant revision to whom should be considered British and what it means to be British.

[3] This study relies on the helpful distinction between "culture" and "civilization" outlined in Norbert Elias's text *The Civilizing Process* that "the concept of civilization has the function of giving expression to the continuously expansionist tendency of colonizing groups, the concept of *Kulture* mirrors the self-consciousness of a nation which had constantly to seek out and constitute its boundaries anew, in a political as well as a spiritual sense, and again and again had to ask itself: "What is really our identity?" (Elias 5-6). Both meanings have relevance in *The Female American* and these terms are used accordingly.

Superior Hybrid

Eliza does not meet many of the usual criteria for establishing a standard British identity. *The Female American* presents a strong, competent, admirable woman who insists that she be viewed as nothing less than an Englishwoman, and should even be recognized as something more. Because in this text, Eliza Winkfield combines the best of both cultures and shows herself as superior to the Natives…and to the English.

Significantly, her eminence is recognized by both cultures. Because of her native nobility, she acquires numerous Amerindian slaves willing to die for her everywhere she goes in America, and the English treat her with considerable respect, too. Trained to speak flawless English, she defends her rights both passionately and effectively in trying circumstances, including fending off several unwanted and impassioned suitors. When her virtue and freedom are threatened by the captain of the ship she had purchased, who tries to force her into a marriage with his son, her two Indian companions die horrible deaths in order to preserve her honor. The power of Eliza's story, told through her own moving words, reforms a pirate captain who sails to rescue her, at considerable personal inconvenience, two years after she was marooned. The power of her voice appears most clearly when Eliza's words are so magnified by the echo chamber in the statue that her voice is heard over the entire island, a voice so

loud and powerful that the natives think it the voice of the god. The sailors who come to rescue her are so overwhelmed and terrified by the power of this voice, which her cousin John describes as a "monstrous voice, loud like thunder" (2.3) that they flee the island and refuse to let her cousin back on the ship because they assume she must be the devil's wife. After she converts members of the tribe who visit the island on which she was left, these natives assign six female slaves to accomplish her bidding because they see that she is both one of them and yet clearly superior to them, even still believing her divinely appointed.

Eliza's training in both cultures also prepares her for the special life she is to lead so that she is more qualified for success than any monocultural Amerindian or Briton could ever be. Having been born in America, Eliza has learned the language of the natives—the book clearly indicates there is only one native dialect—so that she is able to fluently converse with the unknown tribe she encounters and reshape their whole culture by use of her clever speech.[4]

These language skills give her an unusual facility with language in both cultures and permit her mastery over her fate in both England and the Americas. Endowed with unusual brilliance, Eliza is able to hold her own mentally and

[4] Though she leaves the Americas as a young child, and has no further exposure to native culture or speech, the Indian tongue is indelibly imprinted on her mind. When she writes a touching tribute to her mother a decade after moving to England, she composes and perfects the words first in the Indian language that are then translated into Latin and English. The native writing comes first, however, because her mother's influence is as strong as the monument created in her honor.

verbally against her male cousin John and all her noble suitors, as well as to cleverly manipulate the native tribe on her island to accede to her bidding. She facilely converses with them about politics, religion, and the Native social structure with no translation difficulties whatsoever, saying, "As I was well acquainted with the manners of the Indians, I adapted my discourse to their own way of reasoning, and avoided all such terms, and modes of speech, as are intelligible only to Europeans" (2.20). She later translates the Bible, Book of Common Prayer, and other essential religious texts in the time span of about a year. Her language facility gives her power in nearly every situation, but her superiority extends to other skills as well.

Because of her native ability, she rides a horse better than any English subject, while using a proper English bit and saddle to demonstrate her civility. Because of her proclivity with the bow and arrows, Eliza repeatedly reports that she finds English men inferior because they cannot compete with her in the endeavor of archery. She is unmatched in this sport in all of England, stating, "I frequently diverted myself with wearing the bow and arrow the queen my aunt left me, and was so dexterous a shooter, that, when very young, I could shoot a bird on the wing" (43-4). She, like the heroine in the Odyssey, sets a nearly impossible task for a future partner and makes skill with a bow a condition for marriage; any husband she would accept must be an English gentleman who can

outshoot her prowess in archery, meaning he, too, will have to be proficient, even admirable, in both cultures.

She has learned to excel at all the skills considered most useful by both sides of her heritage. And so when she is betrayed and marooned, Eliza not only survives on the island but thrives, discovering, through the combination of her scientifically trained mind and superior knowledge of native lore, a vast treasure of gold and diamonds long forgotten by the island inhabitants. Eliza shines triumphantly in every situation, greatly surpassing everyone else— whether native or English. [5]

Contemporaneous Depictions of American Indians

Presenting any contemporaneous people as superior to the British was not uncommon. In the tradition of Montaigne and Voltaire native people groups were frequently held up as examples for the correction of corrupted civilizations. However, these accounts virtually always present natives as superior only when they permanently remain in the Americas, never travelling to England or

[5] As Norbert Elias argues, "The social units that we call nations differ widely in the personality structures of their members, in the schemata by which the emotional life of the individual is molded under the pressure of institutionalized tradition and of the present situation" (33). This process becomes even more complicated in discussions of an empire spanning multiple colonies, some which formerly functioned as individual countries and others which were only beginning to form a separate identity. Though America is never treated as, or even considered to be a separate nation, *The Female American* does tentatively consider the British living in America to exhibit certain traits to a different degree than those remaining in Britain and to posit a possible intermediate category in Eliza, the "Female American" who is neither English nor native.

interacting with English culture in a significant way. America can be a utopia and the savages noble only when the idyllic land is distant, removed both geographically and socially, and disconnected from England so that travel between the two lands is essentially precluded. Like Unca Eliza's island at the end of the story, such works often present the impossibility of creating a paradisiacal space except as separate, topographically isolated, spaces which are not, then, really "American" except in the sense that they are undiscovered lands distanced from Europe. These texts usually further minimize the possibility for cultural exchange with the more advanced natives by concluding the story with their tragic deaths.[6]

While brave and noble Amerindians may intermarry with other virtuous people of their own or other native tribes in eighteenth-century texts, intermarriage with the English is strongly and continuously discouraged. Yet *The Female American* depicts a strong interracial love and illustrates that differences between the two races and people are external—that, as Eliza affirms, the Indian princess is worthy of the Englishman's love:

> Though a complexion so different, as that of the princess from an European, cannot but at first disgust, yet by degrees my father grew insensible to the difference, and in other respects her person was not inferior to that of the greatest European beauty; but what was more, her

[6] Aphra Behn's *Oroonoko*, John Dryden's short poem "Ynunca," and John Shebbeare's *Lydia* are a few contemporaneous illustrations of this trend.

> understanding was uncommonly great, pleasantly lively, and wonderfully comprehensive, even of subjects unknown to her, till informed of them by my father, who took extraordinary pains to instruct her; for now he loved in his turn: and sure he must have had a heart strangely insensible if such great kindness, joined with such perfections, had not had that effect. (19)

Not to love so intelligent and engaging a person would have been unnatural, for the superficial distinction of a darker complexion only temporarily detracted from her merits. In every other way, nature endowed Eliza's mother Unca with abilities and gifts equal to her English husband: she lacks only education on the "subjects unknown to her." Even then she is depicted as easily mastering this information, as though innately meant to be his equal in knowledge and intelligence as well.[7]

The Female American depicts a relationship between the races that elsewhere is typically only theoretically described and not fictionally enacted in the eighteenth century. One of few exceptions, the "Inkle and Yarico" story

[7] Also important in this relationship is Princess Unca's disgust of travelling to England. She willingly adjusts her clothing, and that of her child, to reflect many of the English conventions and quickly learns the language of her husband. However, she determines not to travel to England and finds the very idea repulsive (). She then dies, ensuring that she will never have any direct interaction with England herself. This illustrates the trend in British literature that theoretical examples of brave and true indigenous peoples are more acceptable as models for emulation when they remain metaphysical abstractions who do not interact with depictions of normal English culture. Unca can interact with a few representative of English culture over in the Americas, but never visit England unless she had first developed a few serious character flaws. Much knowledge can be gained from an anthropological study of foreign lands, English scholars argued, but they also usually implied that this should be a systematic and academic study of the indigenous culture in their land; a native, no matter how heroic or virtuous, tromping through England pointing out the superiorities of his or her own native culture would be far less welcome. Also important is the fact that Unca is rapidly acquiring knowledge but dies before she can equal or surpass her husband's understanding, representing always the potential for but never actual displacement of a representative of the British culture.

became popular and was recounted in three significant versions. The story first entered Britain as a brief account in the *True and Exact History of the Island of Barbadoes* published in 1657 when Richard Ligon told a tale of the faithful Native American Yarico's betrayal by her English lover who sold her into slavery, asking a higher price because she was pregnant with his child.[8] Indicting crass commercialism and the exploitation of the Americas, this version of the text condemns the British colonial enterprise that commodified the Old World through deceit. Richard Steele's version of this story in the eleventh paper of the *Spectator,* published March 13, 1711, broadened the audience of the tale to somewhere between 60,000 to 80,000 readers, making it a widely popular tale of a betrayed noble Indian and her base English lover. Probably the most successful version of the Yarico and Inkle legend was the three-act opera by George Colman the Younger which opened at the Haymarket on 4 August 1787, nearly two decades after the publication of *The Female American*. Not entirely singular, then, in depicting Indian and English relations, *The Female American* is still uncommon: even more rare is the text's depiction of an admirable child of binary English and Amerindian heritage.

[8] Most scholars consider Jean Mocquet's *Voyages* (1616) to be an earlier analogue. In this version, the Indian woman, outraged by the Englishman's desertion, dismembers her child and flings parts of its body after her seducer's departing ship. English authors did not include this in their adaptations, preferring to emphasize instead the tragic betrayal of an Indian woman who has been loving and loyal to her faithless English consort.

While noble savages are marginally allowable, positive depictions of those of mixed descent are generally not. Eliza is, therefore, a rare occurrence in literature as she is able to traverse successfully both cultures and demonstrate qualities that allow her to rise to the pinnacle in both English and native cultures. Unca Eliza Winkfield is provided as a model for emulation: her native characteristics and ties to those with native status only add to her strengths. Though she ultimately does not return to England, multiple pirate attacks and being marooned on the voyage home having prevented her arrival, her youth is spent in England, and she eventually establishes a society that blends the best of both English and native cultures.

Social Integration

Her early upbringing in England seems, in the text, to require little adjustment on her part and to be acceptable to all. In fact, integrating into English society and finding universal acceptance socially is facilitated by her exotic heritage. After her mother's assassination, Eliza's heart-broken father takes her to be educated by his brother in England where her foreignness is alluring to those she meets, making her both rare and appealing:

> If I was kindly entertained by my uncle, I was little less caressed by the neighbors. My tawny complexion, and the oddity of my dress, attracted every one's attention, for my mother used to dress me in a kind of mixed habit, neither perfectly in the Indian, nor yet in the European taste, either

> of fine white linen, or a rich silk. I never wore a cap; but my lank black hair was adorned with diamonds and flowers. In the winter I wore a kind of loose mantle or cloak, which I used occasionally to wear on one shoulder, or to cast it behind me in folds, tied in the middle with a ribband, which gave it a pleasing kind of romantic air. My arms were also adorned with strings of diamonds, and one of the same kind surrounded my waist. (43)

This passage implies that wealth can provide an entrée into society for those who also have the more important distinction of cultural capital: "The status of belonging to the upper class accrues, then, to those who possess cultural capital, but not automatically to those who possess great financial capital […]" (Gardner 207).[9] Eliza, though, has a plethora of both. The text invests her with several fortunes, though these are less emphasized than her cultural dominance. Her innovations to style are approved by the local gentry, for her distinctions apparently mark her as a member of the cultural elite through both money and taste.[10] Though her father had little social standing to begin with in England and

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[9] *The Female American* is very sensitive to the multiple layers of cultural superiority and is careful to invest Eliza with each of these according to their relative social importance. While Eliza has several vast fortunes, to meet this qualification, she never makes use of these in the text and they influence the text in no significant ways. Her title and pedigree are far more important to the text, which emphasizes these repeatedly. Eliza would not have been able to accomplish her role without her royal lineage. This novel demonstrates that, as in eighteenth-century theater, "Most valuable of all, however, is that capital which is least visible, especially a title and genealogy" (Gardner 205). Eliza cannot merely be a social arbiter because of her superior moral qualities; she must also be a princess invited to be the queen of two separate peoples, for "Such symbolic goods may be less tangible than material goods, but they are even more important culturally" (Gardner 206).

[10] Eliza backs this claim with considerable detail, a sampling of which is here included. She announces that the blending of her two cultures in her dress makes her overall appearance more attractive: her hair is not bound or covered as in English convention but free-flowing and entwined with diamonds. Her winter mantle, worn differently, "gave her a pleasing kind of

her uncle is a relatively poor clergymen, her status as an Amerindian princess, and the vast wealth this provides her, raises Eliza's social standing to nearly the equivalent of English royalty.

These marks of aristocracy do not come from her paternal connections, for in Gerald Carson's pithy phrase, "dukes don't emigrate" (3). But nephews and younger sons, grandsons, and cousins of the respectable gentry do. Eliza's father began life as a younger son of an undistinguished middle-class family. This depicts an actual historical trend in this time period. Bannet notes, "by the middle of the eighteenth century, the numbers seeking posts and preferment abroad had reached proportions which elicited public comment" (Bannet 77). Eliza's father, once a young fortune-seeker who accompanied his father in search of fame and untold wealth through the exploitation of resources in the Americas, originally had little social standing in England, and her uncle is a relatively poor clergymen, yet her Amerindian heritage raises Eliza's social standing to nearly the equivalent of English royalty:

> My uncommon complexion, singular dress, and the grand manner in which I appeared, always attended by two female and two male slaves, could not fail of making me much taken notice of. I was accordingly

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romantic air." In this the text suggests that emphasizing her distinctiveness and selecting the best fashions from both cultures allows Eliza to be welcomed by both. Of course, besides her tawny complexion, these signifiers of difference are also signs of immense wealth: white linen or rich silk and ropes of diamonds on every available surface. Wealth provides an entrée into English society that takes precedent over other factors.

> invited by all the neighboring gentry, who treated me in a degree little inferior to that of a princess, as I was always called […]. (45)

Thus she advances the idea that her royalty, even of another race, innately elevates status. Unca Eliza Wingfield argues that her differences in appearance are "uncommon," "singular," and "grand," linguistically marking herself as different using adjectives that imply superiority. The text supports her view. All of this raises a troubling cultural issue because it destabilizes the entire European social hierarchy of long standing, if wealth and a title in the Americas merits recognition and honor in England.

If money makes her welcomed by the upper ranks and wealth buys social position that would otherwise be inaccessible, this destabilizes the entire European social hierarchy. Equally problematic to the English conception of social hierarchy is the suggestion that a title from a small native tribe in the Americas merits recognition and honor in England. The dual requisites for social status—financial capital and noble blood—have been met, but in a process that subverts the traditional English system. The text proposes that a younger son of an undistinguished family can acquire all the accoutrements needed for his progeny to attain a significantly higher social status, bypassing the class hegemony processes firmly established in England. Contemporary readers may not have been as sanguine about this alternate, foreign, means of preferment.

American Royalty

The appropriate status of American royalty was an issue of considerable importance after the visit of the four American kings feted by all of London in 1710.[11] One of the stranger social events ever to cause a furor in the English metropolis, the royal visitation generated so much interest that, as one scholar notes,

> Gulliver in his travels experienced scarcely anything more preposterous than these Indian kings who endured a continual round of English pomp and publicity. The four silent savages sailed the Thames; they went to the theatre, Bethlehem Hospital, and the Work-House; they reviewed troops; they met dukes, dames, diplomats, and divines. They even sat impassively in the very coffee-houses where the wits were gathered. From all that was printed about them one feels they were virtually in four places at once. (Brengle 12)

Eliza merits less attention being only a princess, never officially ruling as a monarch (not unlike the four "monarchs" who, despite the English uproar, really had little actual power in their tribes and certainly did not rule in any capacity congruent to an English king). To be invited to be queen certainly qualifies her for some measure of the attention garnered by the American Kings. And Eliza is doubly qualified to be graciously received, for she is twice tendered a crown. She says, "indeed I might have been a queen, if my father had pleased, for on the death of my aunt, the Indians made a formal tender of the crown to me; but I

[11] For an excellent account of the visit, see Richmond P. Bond *Queen Anne's American Kings* Oxford, 1952. 1-16.

declined it" (45). After she rejects this offer, an entirely unrelated group of Indians on the island she Christianizes urge her to become their queen. Again she rejects the offer.

Though the story never explains why Eliza would turn down these offers to be queen, the underlying implication is that if she were to become ruler of these people, she would become united to them in a way she is not when she merely lives among them. More philosophically, Eliza's refusal to rule the native people even at their invitation reflects changing sentiments toward appropriate justification for colonial policies. English explorers and colonists were becoming increasingly uncomfortable justifying their domination by force. Richard Frohock examines, in his insightful study *Heroes of the Empire*, the changing justification for English colonial domination, showing the movement from economic justification to a more humanitarian vindication:

> As I trace images of conquering colonial protagonists from Raleigh's chivalric model to the Puritan idea of a holy warrior to Dennis's republican champion, I chart the submersion of profit motive behind increasingly inflated characterizations of the conqueror's generosity and benevolent intent. The progression illustrates the role of imaginative fiction in the formulation of colonial apologetics. (Frohock 25)

Having Eliza refuse dominion over the native tribe, even when their servitude would have been voluntarily undertaken and justified by her lineage, separates her from the actions of her father and grandfather who initially tried to take the native's land by force as they colonized the Americas. This act simultaneously

reinforces her English heritage, for she would not be willing to be a native even if she could be queen, but differentiates her from the corrupt versions of the English who more typically populate the Americas. While she would not be queen of the Indians, she willingly lives among them, bringing religious enlightenment. Eliza, then, proves her motives to be genuinely pure. She would not take a kingdom, even when freely offered, but devotes her life to Christianizing and serving the people instead.

Right to Rule

This establishes an entirely distinct dynamic from earlier texts like *Robinson Crusoe* that justify right to rule because of European superiority, for whereas Eliza justifies her position among the natives by the benefits she can bring to them, mainly Christianity, she turns down the offer to be their queen and teaches them to respect her as a teacher, not a goddess. She considers their wellbeing and concerns herself with converting their souls because her desire is to spread Christianity.

Her speech throughout the text suggests that she considers herself innately equal with the natives, and that only the advantages of her education and religion give her any claims to superiority. Her superior knowledge alone allows her to "preserve a superiority over them"; "[B]y keeping them ignorant of who I was, or how I came to them, I might preserve a superiority over them,

sufficient to keep them in awe, and to excite their obedience: yet I determined to speak no untruth" (110). Only by omission bordering on outright deception can she rule, but once she educates the people she will mitigate any distinctions and undermine her right to rule. If superior knowledge provides the only justification for ruling, a native people who quickly and willingly assimilate knowledge will soon close the gap. Only deception that she speaks for the sun god they worship allows her initially to establish her superior status, and she must perpetuate this particular misperception until the moment of their complete conversion to Christianity but correct all others under which the natives labor. This highlights the particularly fine line Eliza navigates.

In point of fact, that fine line is more akin to a razor's edge, and Eliza finds herself placed in a most untenable position that requires her to move into problematic grounds, ethically. By hiding in the base of the statue that the natives worship as their god, and using the echo chamber inside to project her voice so that her words seem to originate out of the mouth of the idol, Eliza begins her relationship with the Amerindian tribe based upon deception. She continues to enact this deception, speaking as the voice of this god and encouraging the false attribution of her words to a deity without technically violating her injunction against speaking untruth until such time as she has taught them true Christianity. This transition could have been tricky, but

fortunately for Eliza the natives all convert en masse and never question that they did so because they accepted the authority of her words based upon their reverence for the god whom she supersedes with the Christian God.

The conversion of the natives justifies her sophistry in the text, for now her encounters with the natives seem foreordained, as though she was sent by the true God to speak with His authority. The text implies that the underlying meaning of her actions was always, from a certain perspective, true. Given the rather shaky grounds of this argument, the text deemphasizes the justification and emphasizes the purity of her motives, for she risks her life to speak with the natives mainly out of a desire to convert them to right Christian worship. In prioritizing her Christian faith above all else, yet being sensitive to and respectful of the natives she encounters (excepting the tenuous beginning), Unca Eliza Winkfield proves herself an excellent cultural ambassador, ably representing each of her dual cultures.

The Ideal Briton

How Eliza is able to navigate two cultures and embody the highest ideals in each is not well-defined in the text. *The Female American* simply asserts that she does, and provides the reader with a few potential explanations of how and why she is able to accomplish this. The text seems to weight biological inheritance and birthright equally with social education, nature and nurture both

crucial to the equation. It is not surprising that the novel does not offer a clearer account. Behavioral theorists to this day have not reached agreement about the processes by which a culture forms. No consensus has been established over the individual actions that contribute to a society, or the cause of such actions. Norbert Elias observes that "The sociogenesis and psychogenesis of human behavior are still largely unknown" (Elias 31). *The Female American* suggests that, undefined as "British" attributes may be, Eliza more than meets the qualifications.

The Female American would suggest that being British does not involve conformity to any physical ideal. Her physical body does not look British; repeatedly she is described as dark and tawny with lank hair, so that genetically her native inheritance seems to supersede the genetic encoding from her British father. The text treats her physical differences as a non-issue: everyone fêtes Eliza and welcomes her as a member of her uncle's family and of their community.

In fact, numerous proposals from eligible gentlemen suggest that the local gentry are not concerned with keeping her mixed blood separate and that she could have chosen to remain among them as a full member of the English gentry. However, Eliza's standards for a matrimonial match are stringent: he must be her equal in social standing and prominence in England yet must also be her

superior in prowess at skills most associated with Native Americans, outshooting her with the bow and arrow. Unca Eliza Winkfield is unique, however, and none can be found to be her equal. Everyone else is limited by being monocultural, whereas Eliza is able to move gracefully in both cultures as a fully accepted member of two peoples.

She is not less than British, needing a British husband for legitimacy, but rather more than British. The end of the story makes it clear that she stoops when she finally marries her cousin. The cousin cannot win her, for even at the end he fails to meet her expectations and standards for a husband, but he is victorious by default because he follows her to the ends of the earth, as it were, and insists on remaining with her. She does not love him; he has not merited more than brotherly feelings because he is not exceptional the way that she is, but she feels honor-bound to marry him because of English social conventions. Eliza condescends to the marriage because no other candidate more suitably her equal could be found: Eliza is unique.

The Ideal Blend

Neither of her cultures alone could have qualified Eliza to face multiple pirate encounters, attempted forcible abductions, marooning on an island, a pagan Indian tribe, and the other vicissitudes of her young life: the hermit, though a wise man was able to survive on the island but hid in fear from the

natives, with whom he could not communicate. However, between her inheritance and training in both cultures Eliza is more than a match for any and all challenges that come her way. Using her superior attributes in extraordinary ways, Eliza reforms a pirate captain through the recital of her life story and converts an entire pagan tribe using the sum of all her natural and learned abilities. Educated as a Christian, Eliza proves an effective advocate for her faith, able to effectively proselytize using means only available to her because of her biracial identity.

Her facility and joint heritage in two cultures is just one of the many ways in which the tale of Eliza Winkfield differs from similar tales of castaways, positing a dynamic tension between *The Female American* and its primary source of inspiration: *Robinson Crusoe.* The hero of *Robinson Crusoe* is decidedly English, and the barrier between his identity and that of the natives, who are all savage cannibals, is much more secure because the natives in this story are so clearly inferior. The variant interactions are not solely the result of the contrast between the personalities and motives of Unca Eliza Winkfield and Robinson Crusoe, for the nature of the native peoples they encounter are presented as distinctly different as well.

Robinson Crusoe must quickly dominate the natives and maintain his ascendancy in order to survive; Eliza must use her wits to procure an ascendant

position among the peaceful and highly religious, though pagan, natives in order to bring Christianity to the tribe. These major distinctions between the indigenous people groups each protagonist encounters set up a subtly different motivation; Crusoe must wean his natives from cannibalism and civilize them in order to survive, whereas Eliza could have survived alone on her island but considers it her duty to bring enlightened religion to the natives.

Though religious considerations are her primary concern, Eliza makes personal sacrifices to maintain her English culture. Dress, language, and diet changes do not concern her, but living and working alone with her male cousin is unacceptable to her—even though she acknowledges that this is a cultural, not religious, injunction as their relationship is merely that of avocational comrades. The native tribe has no conventions against a man and a woman working alone together and does not consider it improper. But because Eliza decides that the situation lacks propriety according to her English moral strictures, she marries a man she does not love even though the thought of it, she says, "gave me no pleasure" (124). She makes this choice because her English culture "obliged" her to give him her hand (127), even though she intends never to return to England and expects never to meet another cultural representative from England. In this Eliza presents the complexities of being a female representative of a culture.

Cultural Authority

The relationship of gender to cultural identity gained increased import during this time period. Though Gardner evaluates the theater, his comments equally apply to the novel: "One of the prominent issues which the early eighteenth-century theatre explores is a rising tide of national identity and its relation to gender identity" (Gardner 137). If Eliza represents the dominant culture bringing spiritual enlightenment to a less-advanced society, her female gender makes her status as social arbiter less secure. However, the text also, then, offers a sharp break from the traditional Founding Father figure so laden with patriarchal overtones. Her cousin John provides a somewhat satisfactory compromise, for he will join Eliza in her work, solidifying her access to cultural hegemony without detracting from her own power or identity because she so clearly dominates in the relationship. [12]

In the future, whenever Eliza is constrained by available resources to dramatically alter a cultural signifier, John will be an equal participant, thereby lending the weight of his presence to authorizing the changes. Their marriage ceremonies demonstrate how Eliza navigates this process. Of her wedding she

[12] John's is actually the adjunct personally; though social conventions would invest him with the cultural authority due to his gender, in actuality his role in the text is limited to bolstering Eliza's authority, investing increased influence to her activities through his masculine, and therefore authoritative, gender and his unquestionable identity in the dominant culture. He has proven himself loyal, seeking Eliza for two years in order to rescue her, then adapting himself to remain on her island since this is where Eliza chooses to remain.

says, “We first married ourselves according to the church rites, the high-priest acting as father, who died a week after” (127). Her wedding is clearly an adaptation of the formal Church of England ceremony, though it is unlikely to have been officially recognized as such by those in England because of the extent of the modifications that must have been made to the rite. The only ordained minister on the island was her husband, so when she says, “we married ourselves,” it may literally mean that her husband officiated at his own wedding ceremony, performing the parts of both minister and groom. More probably, John did not perform his own ceremony, but designated the high priest, who lacks official sanction, to do the honors.

While this is reminiscent of early Christianity when pagans converted and quickly became spiritual leaders in the Christian Church, before many ceremonies were formalized, modern English audiences would have more trouble accepting such a deviation from the modern norm. The text is rather ambiguous on the adjustments made to the ceremony, for Eliza is satisfied she was married in an English wedding ceremony and does not dwell on the details. However, the text does say that the former pagan high priest acted as “father.” This suggests that either he stood in to represent her entire family *in absentia* or, possibly, served as “father” in the religious sense of representing the Church and conducting the ceremony. Since until two years previously he has been a

devout worshipper of a sun idol, and has, during her tenure, often been too sickly to attend her religious instruction, many back in England might not be willing to consider him "Christ's representative" on earth.

Whether the chief priest represented family or church, the conventions of the traditional English ceremony would have been modified, a fact further reinforced when the reader recalls that none of the tribe spoke English. In order for anyone else on the island to participate, the wedding ceremony would have been conducted in the tribal language using translations of the English service which Eliza herself translated. They have no sanctified church building, no way to post the banns, no registry to sign or paperwork to file. In fact, they probably were able to adhere to few of the standard English wedding customs, for these would have been meaningless to the tribe and quite impossible to fulfill so far from England.

Ceremonies such as these are meant to be customs that are shared with a group who understands their meaning; without such a common context, they are merely rituals to be performed, and, in this instance, rituals considerably adapted due to the limitations of circumstance. Like her self-identification as British, though in many ways she was unlike anyone else so categorized, this amalgamated marriage ceremony is accepted as genuine. Eliza makes numerous external changes to the core English understanding of a wedding ceremony but

is satisfied she met the obligation of English law and custom and considers herself and John to be properly married.

Then, because marriage is meant to be a community event and this ceremony would have meant little to the community of which they were a part, Eliza and John hold another wedding: "We were also married according to the custom of the Indians, that they might the more perfectly be satisfied, their form having nothing in it contrary to our religion" (127-8). Though these customs would have been entirely foreign to her husband, who barely speaks the language, they are married again in the native manner. Like her identity, the wedding is not a blending of cultures but two separate and distinct events. She is equally married in both cultures, and went through two ceremonies to ensure that both cultures of which she was a part would recognize her union to the man she did not even want to marry.[13]

[13] She maintains, therefore, her moral and religious convictions, and what she considers to be the essential elements of English culture, while adapting sufficiently to the tribal culture in order to live among them and effect their conversion. Her mediating position allows Eliza the opportunity to influence both cultures in important ways. The natives become Christian and civilized, but the English learn to appreciate aspects of native culture. Her English neighbors primarily appreciate the wealth which Eliza inherited from her mother's people and the status it brings. They respect her, despite her tawny complexion, because of the ropes of diamonds and rich ornamentation of her person. Those like her cousin John, who spent more time with her, come to love her for her exotic distinctiveness. She is superior to the rather anonymous English crowd because of the differences in her appearance and manner, distinctions that are Native American in origin.

Thus, in *The Female American* the expansion of empire has broken down spatial and racial barriers. By her very presence in England, with her Indian appearance and connections, Eliza has influenced the way those living in that region of England conceptualize the Americas and its native peoples. Emile Durkheim "posited that there is, at the basis of every social order, a set of commonly held values and orientations to social action, or norms, which together make up the *conscience collective*. It is through the action of the *conscience collective* that separate individuals become, in effect, socialized, or made fit for collective life" (Hechter 4). Eliza is socialized in England and "made fit for collective life" there, but the process is inversely reciprocal. No society that accepts and adores an individual as distinctive as Unca Eliza Winkfield can ever be entirely the same after the experience.

By her presence in England, she leaves a permanent sign that forever marks a small part of England as influenced by natives, a presence memorialized by the enduring stone monument to her Amerindian mother she erects on English soil:

> And as I found it was the custom in England to erect monuments for persons who often were interred elsewhere, I desired my uncle to erect a superb mausoleum in his church-yard, sacred to the memory of my dear mother. It is a lofty building, supported by Indians as big as life, ornamented with coronets, and other regalia, suitable to her dignity. The form is triangular, and on one side is cut an inscription in the Indian

> language, containing a short account of her life and death. This I drew up and translated into Latin and English, which fills up the two other sides; on the top is an urn, on which an Indian leans, and looks on in a mournful posture. The whole is surrounded with iron pallisadoes. (48)

This unique structure is a fenced enclosure in the heart of England that surrounds and protects lifelike statues of natives. These support and mourn over an Indian princess who is honored by the symbols—"coronets, and other regalia"— proclaiming her royalty. More than this, though, Eliza transcribes the life story of her mother "in the Indian language" despite the fact that this language would have no meaning for anyone else in England. The mausoleum is designed in a very unusual triangular shape, investing the Indian language with equal stature to Latin and English.[14]

To build this "lofty" monument, at a place where it will remain a perpetually visible marker of the foreign element that entered the family, makes it a constant reminder of the foreign-born girl of dual ancestry who spent more than a decade of her life making her presence known among the neighborhood. She has, in a small but significant way, permanently brought something of the

[14] Though her parents fell deeply in love before their marriage, this monument in England is to an Indian princess of a tribe who killed Eliza's English grandfather and killed the other imprisoned English colonizers, except her father. Though the captives were well-treated before their executions, her father's marriage to her mother was voluntary and apparently quite happy, and her mother's conversion to Christianity appears to have been entirely sincere, the initial interactions between her mother's tribe and her father's people denotes an English defeat at the hands of the natives. The bloodshed in the colony is only partially redeemed by her parents' union.

native identity and experience to this tiny corner of England. This physical sign of the effects she has wrought pale in comparison to the philosophical changes she represents.

In *The Female American*, the colonist legitimately rules only when her goals are to bring Christianity and civilization to the people, when her rule is limited and extends only so far as is necessary to maintain the respect needed to effectively teach the people, and when she lives among the people and adapts to their ways as much as possible without violating her own moral or religious convictions. It is significant that she does not claim the land either for herself or for England and is part of the colonizing project only in so far as she spreads English culture and civilization but claims no geographic territory.

Eliza characterizes the first island on which she was marooned as "home" or "my island," yet the novel does not appropriate the island as personal property in the way Crusoe did for future settlement by Europeans. When her cousin and the English sailors who accompany him first “discover” her island, not knowing if the newcomers are pirates, Unca's first fear is for her safety. However, she nearly immediately considers the plight of "the Poor Indians, who would [...] no doubt come upon the island, in search of me, and be taken for slaves. Nor might the evil stop thus; their country might be discovered, and probably invaded, and numbers of the people be carried away into slavery and

other injuries committed" (199). Eliza implies that, despite her presence, the island is still undiscovered and still "their [native] country." The mere fact that she was English and set foot on land undiscovered by any previous Europeans did not mean that she could claim it, for she acknowledges the ownership rights of the natives. In this she upholds the beliefs of her uncle who told her father,

> We have no right to invade the country of another, and I fear invaders will always meet a curse; but as your youth disenables you from viewing this expedition in that equitable light that it ought to be looked on, may your sufferings be proportionably light! for our God is just, and will weigh our actions in a just scale. (8)

This makes territorial claims a matter for God's control and unjust usurpation subject to His punishment. The death of Eliza's grandfather was, from this perspective, the result of forcefully taking the lands from the native peoples whereas her father's captivity, and subsequent hardships, the result of his lesser culpability.

Justification by Conversion

Coming nearly fifty years after *Robinson Crusoe*, the Winkfield text's reversion to moral and religious justification for colonization rather than the mercantilistic and imperial approach makes a dramatic statement about proper priorities and the universal rights of all humankind. Eliza views the world not only from an English point of view but equally from the perspective of a native individual, so she is sympathetic to their position. Her standing in the dominant

culture provides her with an advantageous position from which to share this perspective, better than any native would have been able to effect. She can speak their language, but she can also speak for them in another language as well.

Her success at converting the native tribe is especially extraordinary because after 1621, following a particularly violent encounter between natives and colonists, English missionary organizations despaired of ever accomplishing this goal. The frequent refrain from members of the religious communities in both England and the English colonies lamented that "Many *English,* instead of gaining Converts, are themselves degenerated into Heathens […]. There can be therefore, in no Part of the Christian World, a greater Want of spiritual Things than in our Plantations" (Berkeley 7.359). "White settlers" in South Carolina, according to an American traveler named Samuel Thomas, "were making near approach to that heathenism which is to be found among negroes and Indians" (qtd. in Pascoe I.21). The majority of colonists were unsuccessful at reaching native peoples because they insisted on seeing them as inherently different, so different that even those who became Christians could never become equals; the English considered the natives in need of cultural as well as spiritual reform, denigrating Amerindian ways of life that were far more practical than transplanted English customs.

Eliza successfully reaches her chosen Indian tribe because she can live among them without surrendering anything of her identity. She already feels comfortable in Indian attire, so dons the vestments she finds among the treasure without any discomfiture. She speaks the language with the fluency of a native and knows their culture thoroughly enough to maneuver within it effectively. She makes every reasonable effort to adapt her ways to their culture, living with them, speaking their language, and translating the Bible and religious texts into their tongue. She becomes culturally much like a native, excepting her moral and religious principles that she carefully maintains. But she is also grounded in her Christian faith and agonizes over morally ambiguous decisions, even when her motives are pure. [15]

[15] The text offers commentary on what is superficial about cultural transpondence and what is essential. This leads to a very different perception about the proper interactions between cultures than the view more commonly offered by English texts. Eliza is careful to adapt her ways to the culture in which she participates, so while she lives in England her ways are much more English. She adopts her behavior to be more like the native ways when she lives with them. She never expects, or even encourages, the natives to adapt their social mannerisms or customs to hers, even adapting religious practices to conform as closely as possible to their native form of worship by translating texts and participating in their form of wedding ceremony. The text strongly implies that when a native adopts European mannerisms, this usually indicates a potential corruption or the intent to do evil. This viewpoint reflects the belief that "the problem of the savage […] for colonial Americans towards the middle of the eighteenth century … [was their recognition that] the virtues of high civilization, as well as its vices, destroyed savage life, destroyed what could be frankly admitted to be savage virtues" (Pearce 41). The most prominent example of this in the text is the means by which the assassins kill Eliza's mother. They are Indians who wear European dress to cover their vile intentions: "As soon as they [two Indians sent from the Indian princess's sister] came into the garden my father was surprised to see that they had each of them a great coat on, contrary to the Indian custom: he had scarce made this reflection before one of them, being come close up to him, pulled a short dagger out of his sleeve, and made a push at him, which most probably would have proved mortal, had not he, by a

When Eliza encounters a well-organized tribe that deeply reveres a sun god and the hierarchical order of priests who instruct the people, all she must do to ensure her placement at the top of the social chain is to function as a (possibly) immortal orator for the god. Tormented over whether using the natives' idol worship to speak as a representative of their false god in order to convert them is a serious error, she nonetheless sacrifices the better way for expediency. Desiring to lead them to correct worship of the true God, she prays earnestly for guidance and decides the nearly mystical amplification of her voice and the reverence her words will receive when they come from the idol must be providential, perhaps foreordained by God. Her situational ethics thereby seem justified, because her intentions are pure and her actions benefit both the natives and the Christian faith. The natives she meets are misguided, but anxious to convert once she uses her abilities to lead them away from their idol worship to true Christian faith.

In this *The Female American* sharply diverges from its source text, *Robinson Crusoe.* Crusoe encounters representatives of warring factions of cannibals who recognize only the authority of superior physical might. The natives in Crusoe are subhuman and must be conquered, tamed, taught, and controlled. At the

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sudden motion, avoided it" 36). The adaptation of the great coat provides the natives with a place to hide their weapons, and is a mark of increased savagery rather than refinement.

end of the novel any religious conversion is minimized and certainly disputable. This divergence between the two texts arises from the disparities in the types of natives each book initially presents. This distinction between a primitive but reasonable and immanently teachable native society in one text, and the savage, warring, cannibalistic tribe in the other, indicates far more than dietary preferences.

Cannibals

The sensational effect generated by including cannibals in the story could certainly account for the presence of cannibals in Defoe's text, as could the island's location in the Americas. Since Columbus' voyage to the New World, gruesome descriptions of cannibalism had been circulating among the Europeans. European mapmakers usually represented the inhabitants of the New World by depicting acts of cannibalism or covering maps of the Americas with severed body parts, demonstrating the widespread belief that America was a land of cannibals (O'Brien 40). Indeed, the first known European representation of Native Americans "depicts cannibals eating parts of the human bodies and smoking limbs and a head for further use" (Arciniegas 213-214). Reports of the Aztecs who sacrificed living hearts to their gods and then held cannibal banquets (Tannahill 254-55), and the Fiji islanders who served leaf-

wrapped roast human (Tannahill 305) would have been known to most of Defoe's readers.

Amerigo Vespucci's colorful accounts of American cannibals, and the illustrations of cannibals accompanying Sabastian Münster's influential *Cosmographia Universalis* (published in 1544) which appeared in forty-six editions and six languages (Penrose 309), as well as many other books, made the association between the Americas and cannibalism so strong that "few educated Europeans [. . .] could think of man-eaters without thinking of Native Americans" (O'Brien 40). Accounts of American Indians eating their enemies or their children scandalized and delighted audiences throughout England; Defoe may have tried to capitalize on these tales by incorporating savage cannibals into his tale.[16] However, titillation and location are not the only, and probably not even the primary, reasons why Defoe's natives are cannibals.

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16 Garcilaso de la Vega's "Los Comentarios Reales de los Incas (1609-1617)" claims to be a detailed account of the cultures of Peruvian peoples and the Incan Empire wherein Vega describes at length "ancient Indians" deliberately breeding with captured slave women, and then selling these children in the market for consumption when they reach the age of twelve (Vega). Published in 1557, Hans Staden's gory tale of murder, dismemberment, cooking, and eating of victims at cannibal feasts in the evocatively titled "Veritable History and Description of a Country Belonging to the Wild, Naked, and Terrible People, Eater's of Men's Flesh Situated in the New World, America," published in 1557, sold out and was reprinted in over seventy editions. Maritre's description of American natives as "manhunters" and "mantrappers" who lick their lips when they see a European, as well as dozens of accounts that depict the Iroquis, Huron and tribes around Boston as eaters of man-flesh were immensely popular. The setting, too, of the island in the Americas would have made cannibalism a more likely feature. Although there were a few tales about cannibalization among other people groups, including the Irish in Edmund Spenser's *A View of the Present State of Ireland* and the English in Richard Haklyt's "The Voyage of

The reason lies much deeper. Cannibalism signifies an irreconcilable break from humanity, the obverse of the psychological conditions configured by civilized humanity. Any eighteenth century philosopher would have posited that "the powerfull discourse of divine Reason" alone "makes us […] men, and distinguisheth us from beasts" (Strachey 24) by extricating the self from savage nonreason. Therefore, Defoe does not need to worry about the moral justification of taking land from the native peoples because their classification as cannibals made them beasts, not humans.[17] By participating in cannibalism, they automatically lose their status as fellow men. It therefore becomes incumbent upon Crusoe to raise these savages out of their cannibalism and invest them with proper humanity. Their former participation in cannibalism remains a permanent mark against them, however: Friday can be converted into a trusted servant and close companion, but he can never be an equal or a legitimate friend. Despite his reformation, he will always be Crusoe's dependent, obeying the will of his superior and master.

Master Hore," the theme of cannibalism is much more likely to have brought the Americas to mind for eighteenth-century Europeans.

[17] This was actually a legal reduction in status, though there were certain notable exceptions. The "law of the sea" stipulated that shipwreck victims could resort to cannibalism—even going so far as to kill a shipmate selected by lottery in order to eat him—without fear of legal ostracism once they returned to civilization. Texts often use rejection of cannibalism in direst exigencies as the ultimate indicator of civility.

The kinds of natives each protagonist encounters delineates the differences between the protagonists considering the model society each set up on an isolated island. The actions used to accomplish this task, and the nature of the relationships they maintain with the peoples, also sharply differ in ways highly significant. Robinson Crusoe washes ashore onto his island, having survived a terrible shipwreck that destroyed the vessel and killed everyone else aboard. Becoming more self-reflective during his twenty years of solitude, Crusoe comes to the conclusion that his time on the island is a just punishment for the errors of his ways, those errors being his discontentment and restlessness that cause him to desert his family in pursuit of his own personal fortune. Providence forcibly constrains him to a small island separated from all civilization until Crusoe is certain he has mastered his wayward impulses.

The Island Retreat

He is alone on the island for nearly two decades, forging a home out of the wilderness, conquering and claiming the island through his hard labor. His efforts meet success and others begin to join his self-regulated island territory, eventually making it a populated colony under his rule. At the first opportunity, however, Crusoe abandons the island and the colony of natives, Spaniards, and English mutineers that he was given to govern. After his departure, his wanderlust overcomes his self-control and he again sets out in search of vast

treasure: in his subsequent adventures the sequels show him unhappily wandering the vast seas and foreign lands, unable to settle as a contented citizen in England after ruling as a governor of his island. The island, in turn, reverts from the civility he has brought to it, becomes economically unprofitable, and descends into chaotic factions.

Eliza, by contrast, is marooned on her island as a result of the depravity of her ship captain who tries to force her to surrender control of herself and her fortune and marry his son. Though Eliza is fully aware of the consequences of her choice, she accepts being marooned alone as a fate preferable to that offered by the captain. As she has done no wrong and does not deserve her dilemma, she trusts that God will guide her steps and that even being deserted on an island will work toward His ultimate plan.

Because Providence has not directed her to this island in order to overcome a personal flaw as it did Robinson Crusoe, Eliza spends far less time than Crusoe's twenty years in isolation. Upon her arrival, she immediately finds a hermit's cave well-provisioned for her survival, complete with a thorough instruction manual. After only a few months on the island, Eliza is joined by the hermit who is making the rounds of his numerous island habitations. After benefiting from his personal instruction and sharing companionship with a fellow human being, Eliza is once more left alone when the hermit passes away,

bequeathing to her the entire island and all that his efforts have created. Having inherited her island from the hermit whose claim to entitlement resulted from Crusoenian domestication of the wilderness, legitimate ownership is also bestowed upon Eliza by the native inhabitants who, equally with the hermit, grant her sole title.

Doubly entitled to the island, Eliza deliberately refuses to claim the land for king and country, as Crusoe so elaborately does with his planting of the flag. Though a native people who have been taught to follow Christian principles and respect two influential British members of their community (Eliza, and later John, as well) may, in time, voluntarily join the British empire as loyal subjects, this would be the result of ideological reshaping that closely aligns the two ethnic peoples, not a territorial dispute in which the victor gains the spoils. This is dearly demonstrated in the text, for after Eliza sails with the natives to the nearby island on which they live, she uses the island where she was first marooned as an occasional retreat so that she can return more determined and prepared to guide the native peoples. She leaves the island upon which she first landed soon after her arrival, but not as the result of an unconquerable wanderlust and desire for gain as in Crusoe's case but so that she may more conveniently and efficiently minister to and teach the native peoples in their village on their island.

When a ship arrives that can take her back to England, she rejects the opportunity and determines to live out her life with the small tribe so that she can encourage them to grow in their Christian faith. No longer cut off from the rest of the world, Eliza is joined by her cousin—whom she marries—and could expect frequent supplies and interaction with her uncle's family in England, yet determines to forego contact to avoid contaminating their society with European contact. Having discovered caves heaping with jewels and precious metals affording her untold wealth, Eliza bestows some of it upon the native people (the original owners who long ago misplaced and forgot about it, making light of the fact (which is never explicitly stated) that she is actually regifting a small part of the treasure to those to whom it originally belonged). Whereas Crusoe spends his life traipsing after illusive treasure rather than cultivating his island, Eliza finds a vast treasure during her earliest days on her island, and yet squirrels it away into an accessible corner in order to concentrate on the more important task of developing the religious faith of the islanders. If money provides a standard for success, Eliza certainly qualifies, but the two vast fortunes she has amassed—one her inheritance and one her serendipitous discovery—never reappear in the text. To dwell on financial gain would emphasize the greed motive of colonization. The text bestows vast riches on the heroine but concentrates on the more important benefits of cultural relations with the native peoples. Eliza's

clear conscience ensures she benefits from and need no longer fear the indigenous tribe. This explains, in part, why her natives are benevolent but those encountered by Crusoe are cannibals.

Continuing the afore noted contrasts, Eliza encountered a native people in need of guidance to correct their primitive, though sincere, worship of a false idol. Crusoe encountered dangerous subhuman cannibals who needed total transformation to make them human. The purpose for the cannibalism extends even further, however. The two notable features of cannibalism, dismemberment and incorporation, represent the dual fears of one body being swallowed up by another. Crusoe's island is threatened by cannibals because his identity is in danger of being lost to the native tribe. Because he lacks assurance in his own identity and does not truly know himself, even after two decades alone on the island, he is in danger of losing himself and being metaphorically swallowed up by the tribe and their uncivilized ways.

Cannibals invading his island also signify Crusoe's internal conflict at again interacting with representatives of humanity. He reacts with terror not at encountering a cannibal but at discovering a single human footprint in the sand. Crusoe has managed to conquer many of his personal weaknesses through redeeming labor in isolation: rejoining society will test whether these base instincts have been reformed or repressed. His extreme alarm is a response to

the test of his own convictions nearly as much as a fear for his own physical safety: "Cannibalism signifies for Defoe a myriad of inborn energies and appetites which, like hunger, are aggressively self-satisfying […]" (Todd 65). To the degree that his untamed appetites and passions govern him, they produce a fragmented self that can tear his carefully constructed identity asunder: "The passions and appetites are blind, they will satisfy themselves no matter what the cost, and if they are not controlled by reason, they rule as alien energies that in the end swallow up and dismember the self" (Todd 68). Crusoe's continued failure truly to understand or control the internal passions that motivate him means he is ruled by a frightening and only dimly understood internal other, that his self is potentially being cannibalized from within by his uncontrolled emotions and impulses. Therefore he projects cannibalism onto multiple encounters, which turn out to be benign, even before the shipwreck. The presence of actual cannibals on his island allows him to legitimately externalize and defeat an internal disorder in himself.

Power Dynamics

Projecting internal failings on an indigenous people group also explains why Eliza's father and his companions similarly fear that the natives who captured them will prove to be cannibals. They have brought this fear upon themselves by allowing their passions to rule them, greedily usurping land that

belongs to the natives. They have mistreated the tribal peoples because they needed to view them as inferior in order to justify stealing from them for personal profit. Therefore, because they themselves do evil, they expect the very worst from those they consider inferior: "They [her father and his companions] had heard that some of the Indians were men-eaters, and thought these such, or that they would not have fed them so plentifully but to render them, as we do hogs, the better food: however, in this they were mistaken" (10). Their fears of cannibalism indicate more about their own character flaws than those of the natives. Because they have misused the natives for their selfish profit, they erroneously conclude that the natives intend to misuse them once the tribe has power over them.

Instead, the Indians give them as fair and impartial a trial as they would have received at the hands of any other sovereign nation, though the verdict results in a death sentence for their treachery and encroachment. Though the other captives are swiftly executed, Eliza's mother intercedes on her father's behalf and has him spared. In *The Female American* the natives gain ascendancy over the English; only an act of mercy on the part of an Indian princess spares the life of a helpless Englishman.

Unlike in John Smith's account, in which Pocahontas's intervention resulted in a political union but not a marriage between the two (John Rolfe

eventually becoming her husband), in *The Female American* Unca claims the Englishman she saves as her love. Both before and after the marriage, the Indian tribe, and the princess in particular, maintain primary control over the Englishman. For instance, contrary to English cultural expectations the female native proposes marriage to the English man:

> They had now lived together six months, and understood each other tolerably, when Unca, for that was the princess's name, proposed their marriage. As she was a Pagan, though my father sincerely loved her, and wished for that union, he could not help shewing some uneasiness at the proposal. (20)

Unable to refuse the princess outright, which Eliza says he did not wish to do anyway, he must show his hesitancy through nonverbal means. Fortunately, their bond and her reasonable nature make the princess amenable to religious conversion, resulting in Eliza's father's ability to accept her mother's marriage proposal. His qualms result from prioritizing his religion over his personal inclination, which Eliza also does, but in all matters of a personal nature the Indian princess's wishes rule.

After their marriage, the native culture continues to dominate and they remain among her people. Eliza's father has, perforce, adopted native culture and is more than content to spend the rest of his life living as a native among her tribe. In fact, the text says,

> so happy was my father with his princess, that he almost forgot his former situation, and begun to look upon the country he was in as his own, nor

> indeed did he ever expect to see any other again; and he now loved Unca as much as she did him, and was therefore willing to make her and her country his for ever […]. (21)

His emotional attachment to his wife overrides his connection to England and his own country to such an extent "that he almost forgot" his own people, way of life, family connection, and ties to England. He willingly surrenders his cultural identity and subsumes his life in hers.

The Indian princess and the Englishman develop a mutual love that erases the barriers between them. Whereas in *Robinson Crusoe* the hero must quickly gain ascendancy over the natives and maintain a master-servant relationship, Unca Eliza Winkfield's father is a powerless but willing captive. While his Indian bride remains alive, her wishes dominate the relationship.

Even after circumstances force the princess's father to suggest that Unca and her husband leave the tribe for their safety and live within the English colony, Eliza's father forfeits his desire to return to England, whether due to his own personal inclination or the preferences of his Native American wife: "[…] for it seems he had no inclination to leave his habitation [in America], and the thoughts of it were highly disgusting to his princess: but had his own desires been ever so much for a removal, he would have sacrificed them to those of the princess, whom he passionately loved" (34). After his wife's assassination, he reverts back to his less admirable self and overvalues his fortune. He takes his

very young daughter to England where he leaves her with his brother's family and returns to America to spend the rest of his life turning the considerable wealth given him by his wife's family into untold riches, seeing his daughter again only briefly at the close of his life when she has reached maturity. His connection to the Americas is too strong, and his livelihood too closely linked to his plantations there, for him to be able to remove himself, and without directives from his wife he again incorrectly prioritizes possessions over people. After his wife's death he is left with only his love of money. He is exactly the type of industrious and profitable worker who successfully builds the empire that Defoe exalts, but *The Female American* suggests this pursuit is empty and ultimately void of worth.

The American Identity

This may be because, though the text speaks highly of English citizens in England and Native Americans in America, the text is exceedingly critical of nearly every British colonist living in the Americas. The text suggests that Eliza's grandfather and her father's fellow captives deserve their fate because of their ill treatment of the Indian peoples whose lands they dispossess. Greed and disrespect for native peoples lead the British who come to the Americas to a cultural arrogance and rapacity that corrupts their souls and eventuates in harsh realities.

Unca Eliza Winkfield's father only escapes the just punishment of death because he was initially too young and influenced by his father to realize that his actions were unjustifiable, and then his union with an Indian princess he deeply loves make his subsequent profit from the Americas marginally acceptable. However, he does not earn the right to a happy life in England and spends the remainder of his lonely life as an exile building his plantation in the Americas. The text does not permit him a second return to England. His daughter and beneficiary has no use for the fortune he spent his life accruing, so she sends his wealth to England while she lives elsewhere. The fortune in gold and jewels she found in the temple caverns far exceeds the comparatively paltry sum her father leaves her.

Her father's exploitation of the Americas in the end availed him nothing because Eliza did not want or need it and he had to keep it hidden:

> However, my father thought it prudent to conceal the greater part of his riches from the knowledge of his neighbors, not knowing how strong a temptation a display of them might prove, as many of the colony were not only persons of desperate fortunes, but most of them such whose crimes had rendered them obnoxious in their native country. (33-4)

This flawed necessity ultimately cost him his real treasure, a close relationship with his daughter. His avarice makes him a fit compatriot for the "many" English colonists who were fortune hunters like her father. However, his moral failings pale in comparison to the other colonists, "most" of whom are

transported criminals or fugitives from English law. Fleeing from or forced out of England due to their criminal pasts, these English colonists in America are of generally low moral character to begin with and the aggregate effect of their congregating in the Americas magnifies the effect.

The Role of the Americas

The Female American reacts to the very relevant concern over imperial expansion, for the whole concept of British empire is thereby undermined. During this time "England was stepping up its global trade, hoping for colonial parity or even superiority […]" (Gardner 27). Unca Eliza Winkfield's story minimalizes the mercantile interests of empire and insists instead on moral superiority. Stripping colonies of their wealth corrupts the colonists and exacerbates the greed of the low moral characters who are the most likely to emmigrate. Those who profit most by giving least back to the colony from whence they take their spoils become almost subhuman in their corruption.

The most evil character in the novel is the American ship captain who would greatly profit from transporting from the Americas to England the worldly wealth acquired by Eliza's father. Instead, he butchers Eliza's protectors and maroons her on a deserted island, viciously destroying the lives of others to gain profits for himself and his family. But he only demonstrates in extreme the tendency in all English imperialists. All British immigrants to the new world are

presented as, at minimum, greedy and more often entirely morally bankrupt. The root malady is the unjust profiteering enacted by disregarding the rights of the indigenes who possess the land and to whom, by right, the wealth belongs.

Thus Eliza and her husband determine that complete separation from the rest of the world provides the only solution. Representatives of corrupt civilization are kept separate, so as not to contaminate the tribe. They offload their goods onto Eliza's uninhabited island, so that they never even learn about the neighboring island on which the natives live, permanently and effectively cutting off all correspondence, except for Eliza's account of her adventures—their last interaction with the outside world:

> We did not suffer the sailors to come any further upon the island, than just to land the goods, that no discovery of our habitation might be made. As we intended never to have any more to do with Europe, Captain Shore and my husband ordered a person who came for that purpose to return to Europe with the ship, by whom, for my father and mother's satisfaction, I sent over these adventures. (270)

Though the text suggests Eliza and her husband John determine that only complete rejection of and isolation from the outside world will allow them to cultivate the ideal society, giving mythic status to this idyllic land that cannot survive encounters with the real world, the text does offer some hope for

improving the actual world, in which England and the Americas geographically coexist, through the character of Eliza.[18]

In this text the vileness England should fear from contact with the Americas is not degenerate blood from interracial offspring, for the character who results from an intermixing of the native and English cultures in this novel is of strong moral composition and superior to all others in every way. The danger of the Americas is also not in the natives themselves, for they are generally a loving and decent people merely in need of religious guidance. But the English colonists in America are to be shunned as the abominable mixture that could pollute England.[19] These pose a danger to both the wealth and

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[18] Ideal Americans are only ideal when they are depicted as existentially removed, a separate people in an idealistic society in an impossibly distant land. A foreign people can only remain unambiguously admirable when European sources of contamination are removed and, conversely, when the native culture only rarely interacts with European culture. Texts that portray movement between England and the American colonies present a much more complicated, and more frequently troubled, depiction of the potential dangers involved in the blending of cultures and of ideological transmission of foreign ideas unconducive to life in England. Eliza and her husband John cut off future interactions with England because a superior society cannot exist in the same geographical world as the real England.

[19] The novel offers a commentary on geopolitical realities in the early eighteenth century. When there is travel between Britain and American colonies, those who have been to the colonies are at increased risk to be carriers of deformities of the mind, to carry contagious ideas. The freer the border between the Old and New Worlds, the more violent and massive the changes against the traditional English way of life that threaten in the text. In these texts the American colonists can bring ideological contamination back to Britain that hastens and makes more severe the corruption that pollutes the binding ties between England and all her colonies, between the social hierarchy and the natural order of classes, and more specifically the connection to wealth and land. Though the dangers posed by ideas flowing back over the Atlantic are explored in every media, from hackneyed pamphlets to more thoughtful art such as theater productions, from fervent sermons meant for broad audiences to letters intended for a specific person, the novel is often particularly interested in this phenomenon. It is clear that long before the colonists declared their independence and began a war to throw off British rule, their ideas were returning

persons of admirable citizens of the empire. Perhaps this explains the title of the book—*The Female American: Or, the Adventures of Unca Eliza Winkfield.*

The American held up for emulation is not the Amerindian who lacks the education that indicates complete refinement. Most definitely it is not the British subject who immigrates to America, for all of these are either vilely corrupt or at least implicated in the inherently evil imperial project. The blending of cultures, which so terrifies and threatens the English, provides the ideal American (who remains a British subject) and would actually morally justify their presence in the land and strengthen both cultures.

While the text expresses hesitancy over allowing the mixed offspring permanent access to England (Eliza does, after all, determine to spend the rest of her days guiding and ministering to the natives), her story returns to England in the form of the novel. Though physically she may not again be present in England, the memory and resulting influences from her will be present, interacting with the culture whenever the book is read. Appropriately, this novel has remained anonymous in the centuries since its publication, for with each reading the life of Unca Eliza Winkfield is again retold as supposedly the author's own story.

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home over the water and were already seen as strange and often unconducive to life in Britain.*The Female American* implies that civilized corruption can be equally dangerous to the native Americans and always is corrupting to the British who sail to the New World.

Her tale teaches that a good colony will be founded upon principles of bringing Christianity to a people, providing moral guidance and education to the indigenous tribe, and blending the best of the two cultures. The ideal society she founds is free from societal corruption, yet based upon a commitment to Christianity. These are Eliza's goals: the vast treasure she gains en route or as a consequence is merely incidental. Though the cultural advantage of an English husband is a gift she does not want, nevertheless her abilities and actions allow her to merit union with a representative of English culture. He promises to further the "great work" she has begun, saying,

> I will learn their language, and end my days in carrying on the great work you have so wonderfully begun amongst them; for never shall I be able so successfully to fulfil the duties of my function as among a plain, uncorrupted, honest people as these I find are; for since I saw you, Unca, I have entered into holy order. (111)

Unca Eliza Winkfield is the ideal colonist, suffering from none of the corruption that afflicts the "civilized" English who participate in an imperial endeavor. Free from the love of money herself, she nevertheless acquires several fortunes. Respectful and sensitive to native culture, she receives multiple offers to rule as queen or goddess of the indigenous people. A member of the female gender, she tactfully affirms her right to respect and even equality. Born into two cultures, she evokes and surpasses the best in both. She is the ideal Female American.

CHAPTER FOUR

Scars of the Americas: Shaping an Identity in *Humphry Clinker*

Tobias Smollett's episodic novel *Humphry Clinker* (1771) follows the travels of the Bramble family from Wales, to England, to Scotland and back to Wales. The format of the novel is a series of letters penned by characters—Matthew Bramble, his sister Tabitha, their niece Lydia, nephew Jery, and Tabitha's maid Win Jenkins—who each write letters recounting their experiences. Two characters outside this group appear in multiple letters penned by more than one Bramble party member: the Methodist Humphry Clinker, penurious servant to Matthew Bramble, and the superannuated Lieutenant Obadiah Lismahago, native Scotsman who lived the majority of his adult life amongst a cannibalistic tribe of Native Americans in Florida.

Although the Bramble party does not travel to the Americas, *Humphry Clinker* has plenty to say about the relationship between the domestic colonies (Scotland, Wales, and even Ireland) and the foreign colonies in the Americas.[1]

[1] Smollett implicitly labels Scotland a colony of England, listing its advantages over "any colony in her [England's] possession" (3.108). Smollett gives careful consideration to the nature of the relationships between each of the subordinate parts of the British Empire. According to Robert Crawford, Smollett's novel involves "a continuing examination of, and response to, the strains and possibilities of Britishness" (46).

Michael Hechter's terms are helpful here to distinguish participants in England's "internal colonialism" of Britain's domestic territories—the "Celtic Fringes"—in contrast to the "external colonialism" of overseas empire. Smollett depicts the complexity of the interrelationships, influences, and interactions of the Americas on the internal colonies and on England itself through Lismahago, a character who has been, to use the helpful term of anthropologist Fernando Ortiz, "transculturated":

> Transculturation does not consist merely in acquiring another culture, which is what the British word *acculturation* really implies, but the process also necessarily implies the loss or uprooting of a previous culture, which could be defined as a deculturation. In addition, it carries the idea of the consequent creation of new cultural phenomena, which could be called neoculturation. (Ortiz 102)

Transculturation involves the transgressing of borders between and within cultures, the forming of a bridge over the cultural divide that connects both and maintains an uncomfortable presence in each, yet belongs in neither. This process yields a powerful sense of cultural dislocation. However, *Humphry Clinker*, like many novels in the eighteenth century, pushes this phenomena even further to explore a process of double transculturation, during which a British subject becomes Americanized and identifies significantly with a different culture in the Americas, then returns to England and undergoes a second transculturation. This individual then becomes unlike members of either society,

culminating in a very different identity from that with which he began, causing serious social and personal upheaval on various levels.[2]

Lismahago's lack of stable identity and his shifted cultural identification emblematizes the ontological questions posed to the British identity by the presence of the Americas. This early novel responds to serious concerns about how interactions with the Americas essentially reduced a British identity or, at the least, altered the long-standing British self-identification in important ways. This unease concerning the reduction of the British character as a result of prolonged exposure to the distorting effects of the Americas reflects a dilemma invoked by the intersection of these disparate cultures.

Insight into this process of cultural collision can be gained from Edward Said's landmark text *Orientalism*, in which he examines how the West constructs the "Orient" through various cultural, historical, and literary discourses, which

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[2] In the eighteenth century many novelists depicted an ambiguous and potentially destabilizing third category of cultural identity that resulted from the colonization of America and assumed a position of increasingly paramount concern: the British colonizers—who neither remained like the British back home nor became like the colonized peoples, but variously both and neither. Within the apparently, but not actually, impermeable interstices of negotiated incremental assimilation into the complex identities of the hypothetical monoculture of Britishness a third category of the "British other" began to materialize. Therefore, while Edward Said's binary of savage "other" opposing civilized "center" is helpful, even essential, in illuminating some of the reciprocally defining complexities in relations between British colonists and the Amerindians, applying Said's model anachronistically fails to sufficiently account for crucial elements of the dynamic relations in the early American colonial context. Lismahago is invested with the cultural markers which categorize him as a member of this mediated group between the British and the savage Americans. His deformed scalp and savage temper are merely two indicators of his membership in that *tertium quid* which cannot be categorized as a part of either main group, yet claims some affinity with both.

enabled the colonial conquest and subjugation of the East. The resultant Western "Orientalist" fantasy reveals the fears and ideals of the West, Said argues, rather than gives true insights into the East. Conceptualizing the colonial center of the West as "self" by virtue of the Orient's assigned position as "other" defines binary categories mutually interdependent for their existence. As Homi Bhabha has observed, like Edward Said before him, the relationship between the colonizer and the colonized is a complex mix of attraction and repulsion, recognition and disavowal, fascination and antipathy.

This same process is equally recognizable in early British constructions of the Amerindian other. Outside the superimpositions of colonial dominations, there flourished a native American culture from which the American experience—and ultimately the experience of Britishness—was formed and transformed. While not strictly within Said's scope of *Orientalism*, the earliest British colonists in America similarly conceptualized the natives using many of the same methods outlined by Said.

This process is significant, for the British in America defined the Indian in various ways in order to affirm their own identity: "It was not merely that imperial power, springing from many sources, classified, defined and sought to dominate indigenous people, but that equally the identities of Britons themselves

took shape in relation to the colonized 'other'" (Daunton and Halpern 6).[3] The British alone, among the European nations settling the American continent, "prescribed punishments even unto death for flight to the natives. And they consigned those who deserted in defiance of these penalties to a kind of cultural death even if they could not inflict upon them a literal one" (Canny 145).[4] So many British soldiers had been assimilated into tribal culture that a rescued or ransomed soldier could face court-martial, writes Colley, "unless he could somehow prove that he really had been forced to cross the culture line against his will" (196).

The perception that the Englishman was highly inclined to "go native" if exposed too long to their corrupting contiguity was shared by many. Members of the "civilized" cultures on both sides of the Atlantic were deeply troubled by

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[3] Dr. Sarah Ford has pointed out this same phenomena in a much earlier text (1708), Ebenezer Cooke's *The Sot-Weed Factor*, about which she says, "the reason the factor may be working so hard to pose the planters as the Other is because they are not so different" (Ford 6). *The Sot-Weed Factor* more unambiguously presents the American colonist as distinct:

> In fact, the factor goes to great lengths in his satire to portray the colonists as the Other because in his eyes they have deviated so drastically from their English cultural roots that they are no longer even remotely related to him. In the course of the poem, the narrator uses almost every image of Otherness his eighteenth-century audience would recognize, from the suggestion of religious damnation to the indication the colonists have "gone native." (Ford 6)

This particular work is written from the viewpoint of an English visitor to the Americas who has remained determined not to be transculturated. The poem takes place in America before the Factor has returned to England and attempted to rejoin society there, where he might have found himself treated like the foreign Other as a result of his time in the Americas.

[4] See Sheehan's *Savagism and Civility*, Kupperman's *Settling with the Indians*, and Axtell's "The White Indians of Colonial America" for more extensive treatments of this cultural phenomenon.

this trend. A 1753 letter from Benjamin Franklin recounts the recidivism of rescued captives:

> […] tho' rescued by their Friends, and treated with all imaginable tenderness to prevail with them to stay among the British, yet in a short time, they become disgusted with our manner of life, and the care and pains that are necessary to support it, and take the first opportunity of escaping again into the Woods, from whence there is no reclaiming them (qtd. in Heard 10).

An exasperated Cadwallader Colden made similar remarks in 1717: "The British had as much Difficulty to persuade the People, that had been taken Prisoners by the French Indians, to leave the Indian manner of living, though no People enjoy more Liberty, and live in greater Plenty, than the common Inhabitants of new-York do" (263). Even the notables of society in America felt this concern obtruding on colonial life: "New England leaders worried over the European captives who refused to return to 'civilized' society, since Indian life appeared attractive to some in contrast to the discipline and drudgery of life for the majority of British colonists" (McLeod 152). In fact, "Writers on American colonial history point out that in an ironical reversal of British fantasies about the conversion and assimilation of indigenous populations, native Americans were distressingly successful at converting colonizers to their way of life" (Wallace 236). This threat of the savagery of the American Indians is a threat the British have inflicted on themselves. The danger is the direct result of encroaching on wild and unfamiliar territory in order to gain more land and more influence for a

government who was already mismanaging her Irish and Scottish colonies closer to home. Lismahago is a representative depiction of the lingering deleterious effects wrought by the Americas on the figure of a British man as depicted in early British novels.

The British came to recognize that in cultural exchanges the typical mode was that the British individual adapted while any alterations in the native identity were negligible. Lismahago commends this and other characteristics of the Indians. In fact, he may feel empathy for their plight and admire their cultural integrity. The story of the Scot living with an Indian tribe deliberately enacts a double colonization, as a member of a virtually colonized country invades the American colony on behalf of the country which colonized his own home country. The Irish and the Scottish were never fully integrated as equals with the English, yet those who went to the Americas were distanced by the vastness of the ocean and the considerably different life there to be even less able to reintegrate into society.

The appeal of this native life and the permanence of the reconstituting of the British identity assert that the descent into savagery persisted as a menace despite the constraints placed upon interactions with the contaminating barbarians, and as a result always remained potentially insurgent. The modern historian James Axtell notes that "Most of the Indians who were educated by the

English—some contemporaries thought *all* of them—returned to Indian society at the first opportunity [...] . On the other hand, large numbers of Englishmen had chosen to become Indians" (170). Even in those circumstances when the British cultural identity achieved dominance and the native identity moved toward and adopted the "superior" ways of the British colonists, acculturation never entirely flowed unidirectionally as colonial consciousness desired and demanded: alterations occurred in the supposedly unchangeable, essential British core identity.

However, if British colonists to the Americas created their identity at least partially as a group distinct from the native peoples already there, the British in England and the domestic colonies who had little direct interaction with American natives began to conceptualize their own identities increasingly using the British citizens returning from America as the "other" against which they defined themselves, though this process was further complicated because British citizens returning from the Americas were still identified as British. Smollett's character, Obadiah Lismahago, illustrates this dynamic tension of inverse self definition that was necessarily negotiated and continually in flux.[5]

[5] Lismahago has learned to adapt with such facility to new roles expected of him by others that he seems, to the onlookers, to become whatever part they have given him. Jery says that in a play Lismahago was given the part of the character of Pierot, who represents Consumption, being chased in lively horror by Death (331). Of Lismahago's performance Jery says, "He appeared with a ludicrous stare, from which he had discharged all meaning: he adopted the impression of fear and amazement so naturally, that many of the audience were

Through the character of Lismahago, Smollett illustrates the ways in which the identity of a British individual could be permanently changed by experiences in the Americas, and how this individual could then extend this identity change to other British citizens in England and the domestic colonies of Scotland, Wales, and Ireland. Lismahago allows Smollett to make pointed remarks about the effects of the Americas on individual characters who experience life in the American wilds; the ability that individual then has to influence and change British citizens at home who have not directly experienced the Americas; the alterations this individual can signify for England, Wales, Ireland, and Scotland; and the changes made to the very nature of the British Empire by interactions with the Americas.

America represented a plentitude of possibility, a space where individuals most palpably felt the enticement and repulsion of the distancing from civilization and all that such a removal entailed. Despite their desperate attempts to separate themselves from the allure of nativization, settlers were keenly sensitive to the perception that "only a thin veil of culture kept Englishmen from descending the great chain of being to the barbarian and

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infected by his looks […]" (331). This infection leads the audience to emotionally respond as though Lismahago really were the character whose identity he has assumed for the purposes of the play; some "shrieked aloud, and others ran out of the hall in consternation" (331). Lismahago's character is pliable, yet somehow more able to infect others with the force of his character portrayal.

animal" (Earle 36). Food consumption played a role in this as well. Native American foods were thought to be too coarse for the refined British palate, and eating such indelicate fair could turn the British coarse as well. The great fear was that the wilderness, depicted by the dark and menacing forests and the natives who were concealed there, would move inside the enclosures erected as fragile barriers against such intrusions, that the savagery of the American wilderness would move inside the hearts and minds of the British who dwelt in the carefully cleared and cultivated fringes of the wilds.

Lismahago embodies the danger that the British in America continually confronted which could deconstruct the British identity and make it "other": the close proximity to an alien race of savages who posed both a physical, and more seriously, a psychological threat. These neighboring aliens presented numerous challenges to the psychic integrity of the British in this new land:

> The colonists, already apprehensive about their great distance from England and the subsequent cultural alienation that that entailed, were anxious to maintain their British ways while appreciating the many freedoms that accompanied life in the colonies. The threat of becoming something else, something barbarous, was very real for the colonists, because in equal measure to their distance from England was their closeness to the Indians. (Rex 23)

The proximity of the native was not merely geographical, for many were concerned that the British in the Americas became like the Indians in other ways they considered exceedingly problematic.[6]

Many accounts, both fiction and purportedly "real, true" adventures, were deeply concerned that sojourns in America could introduce racial instability and change what had previously been considered an immutable component of identity. Sheehan writes that contemporaneous accounts reported that "(a)n Englishman who had spent only three years with the Virginians, became exactly like them in colour, and (Captain John) Smith, his countryman, could only recognize him by his language"(20). The concerns expressed about this external shift in ethnic identity convey the underlying concern that the self could be essentially altered, that the English cultural attainments provided only a thin veneer of civility that could be easily and irretrievably shattered.[7]

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[6] *The Sot-Weed Factor* again provides an excellent example of an additional text that implies a similar alteration of the core identity. The factor, disgusted by the provincialism of the American colonists, offers increasingly critical remarks, but "His final insult to this first group of colonists is suggesting that they are the descendants of Cain and marked by his crime, with the implication that the group is damned and took refuge in the New World to 'Heav'n and Hell alike deceive'" (Ford 48). This mark of Cain seems to be an increase in skin pigmentation, for "This passage is a frenzy of shifting ideas about the colonists, from uncivilized and dark-skinned to inhuman or damned; the factor is unable to locate what exactly separates himself from these colonists but tries on different ideas in the effort" (Ford 2-3). Smollett, too, tries in different ways to show how Lismahago has been changed by the Americas and is now unlike those from the British Isles.

[7] Sustained interaction between different ethnic groups who coexisted in the Americas, Europeans from many locales, African slaves, and Amerindians raised questions that the English had not found particularly pressing before. As Barth notes, "the persistence of ethnic groups in contact implies not only criteria and signals for identification, but also a structuring of interaction

The contrasts created by reinforcing the image of the Amerindians as distinctly other "intensified their conviction that they [the British] were poised on the edge of an abyss of barbarism and reinforced their disjunctive definition of the colonial situation as one in which civilized virtue stood always in awful temptation of descending into savage vice" (Zuckerman 150). Unlike the "noble savage" in the tradition of Montaigne, which presented an ideal for which the civilized of Europe could continuously strive, the bestial savage was a condition to which the English could easily revert. Colonists sometimes found native ways so alluring that they renounced their British identity and "went native." Confronted by the alarming and embarrassing spectacle of these members of the British community who chose uncivilized native ways over the supposedly superior British culture, many British writers embarked on a discourse of rationalization that demonstrated why and how such a process could occur. Lismahago joins a whole host of other fictional characters who embody statements on this issue.

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which allows the persistence of cultural differences […] a set of prescriptions governing situations of contact, and allowing for articulation in some sectors or domains of activity, and a set of proscriptions on social situations preventing inter-ethnic interactions in other sectors, and thus insulating part of the cultures from confrontation and modification" (Barth 16).

Lismahago's case is even more problematic, because he began life as a Scotsman. Scotland had only formally joined the British union a half century previously and Scots were considered second-class citizens, less civilized and somewhat primitive in comparison to the British. As one scholar notes, "By the seventeenth century an Englishman who did not look down on a Scotsman would have been only half an Englishman; a Scotsman who did not hate an Englishman would not have been a Scotsman at all" (Kiernan 33). Lismahago's cultural integrity was therefore less assured to begin with, as Scotland was more barbaric than England, so Lismahago's indoctrination into British culture was less complete.[8]

The Scots heightened savagery made them ideal soldiers, so thousands of Scotsmen were sent to the frontlines in the Americas. Smollett, himself born a Scot, highlights how insidious a practice this is. Sending Scottish-born British soldiers off to fight foreign wars results in the exacerbation of the wildness and incivility the British considered inherent in the Scots. Given that geographically Scotland was divided from England only by an arbitrary political line, *Humphry Clinker* questions the wisdom of depleting Scotland of those loyal to the English

[8] Irish subjects seem to be slightly more culturally stable, as the natives end up cannibalizing Murphy to make him a part of their culture. Even an Englishman of impeccable refinement would be susceptible to this form of cultural conversion, because barbarity made the native culture naturally more impervious and British culture comparatively powerless.

crown and contributing to the Scottish decline in civility by exposing them to savagery.[9]

Partly out of governmental mismanagement, partly as the result of underestimating the importance of Scotland, and partly out of thoughtless governmental policies, the English people overlook their unstable neighboring colony that shares their own border and instead focus on bringing civilization and improvements to distant colonies in America. Britain sends immigrants from Scotland and Ireland, and deploys British subjects to further the American colonies, leaving the internal colonies open for rebellion and the population of the center of the Empire too thinly attenuated for the individuals remaining to cultivate the land properly. Those who emigrate often have less loyalty for Scotland, leaving behind the more dangerous and potentially explosive political element with fewer loyal citizens to stabilize the country.

The potential for a bloody Jacobite uprising in Scotland or brutal Catholic insurrection in Ireland, hints Bramble, could be more effectively averted if England poured a steady supply of British emigrants into Scotland and Ireland

[9] Smollett delicately hints that the tenuous control England maintained over Scotland should be justly appreciated and carefully maintained, which deploying Scottish troops to the wilds of America does not encourage, for "if all the Highlanders, including the inhabitants of the Isles, were united, they could bring into the field an army of forty thousand fighting men, capable of undertaking the most dangerous enterprize. We have lived to see four thousand of them, without discipline, throw the whole kingdom of Great Britain into confusion" (3.50). The Scots are a powerful fighting force to be reckoned with, and England ought to give greater consideration to strengthening its presence in Scotland.

to strengthen the tenuous unions. Considering the hardships imposed on the Scots in comparison with the advantages proffered to settlers in the far-flung colonies, Matthew Bramble asks whether anyone could wonder that "our villages are depopulated, and our farms in want of day-labourers?" (1.183). By funneling resources to and focusing attention on the Americas, England loses the increased possibilities offered by a stronger domestic empire. [10]

Contrary to contemporary models of empire in which remote colonies shipped their wealth to the center of the empire, Smollett implies, Britain sends its human capital from the core to the distant peripheries. Eighteenth-century philosophers and writers generally agreed that people were a country's greatest asset. As Defoe wrote in his newspaper, "the Glory, the Strength, the Riches, the Trade, and all that's valuable in a Nation, as to its Figure in the World, depends

[10] Many novelists expressed deep foreboding about expending the finite number of British subjects so that the homeland emptied of humanity as the rural population migrated from ancestral holdings to new opportunities in London, or, even more perniciously, to the American colonies. Brooke, an early novelist who spent considerable time living in the British colonies in what is today known as Quebec, warns in *Emily Montague* that "England, however populous, is undoubtedly, my Lord, too small to afford very large supplies of people to her colonies: and her people are also too useful, and of too much value, to be suffered to emigrate, if they can be prevented, whilst there is sufficient employment for them at home" (228). This emphasis on the people of England being the greatest resource, not to be squandered for mere material goods and luxuries harvested from the American colonies, repeats its refrain in Oliver Goldsmith's emblematic poem "The Deserted Village," which calls immigration to America a "devastation" and "a business of destruction" as "the rural virtues leave the land" (l. 395, 396, 398), for he and Brooke, and most other novelists, propagated the prevailing political philosophy that strength in human numbers measured the health and vitality of a nation. Goldsmith, like Smollett and many others, blames the abandonment of England on "Trade's unfeeling train" (l. 63) that disguises the decay of the nation with the ornaments of luxury, failing to distinguish between "a splendid and a happy land" (l. 268).

upon the Number of its People" (Defoe, *The Review* 3 [2 March 1706], 105b). England itself has already experienced the loss of the laborers necessary for maintaining a healthy nation, the novel suggests, which posits that Scotland should be valued highly for providing England with the human resources it badly needs due to its depleted numbers. *Humphry Clinker* argues that the stability of Scotland should, therefore, be an issue of considerable concern for the English. He develops the idea that the Americas were harmful to England and her geographically more relevant adjunct territories like Scotland because of the effects caused by mass immigration to far-flung colonies in the Americas.[11]

Many contemporaneous commentators suggested that sending loyal British families to colonize the northern sections of the British isle strengthened the British position, while the immense Americas could absorb an inexhaustible supply of people without solidifying the Empire there. Samuel Johnson laments that "all that go [to the Americas] may be considered as subjects lost to the *British*

[11] The mass exodus for the colonies across the Atlantic strips the land of civilization and productivity, endangering the Empire. A land emptied of loyal subjects subduing the territory results in fields that will not produce a cultivated harvest and a land that will revert to untamed wilderness. The lack of the moderating influence of civilizing subjects especially endangered Scotland and Ireland, for these two territories had only recently been brought from states of independent revolt to gain a status as dependent members of Britain. Lismahago represents Scotland as the functional equivalent of a colony, whatever the niceties of the legal distinction: "If, therefore, North-Britain pays a balance of a million annually to England, I insist upon it, that country is more valuable to her in the way of commerce, than any colony in her possession, over and above the other advantages which I have specified" (3.108). These didactic insertions of authorial commentary, purportedly penned by Matthew Bramble are illustrated in the specific case of Lismahago.

crown; for a nation scattered in the boundless regions of *America* resembles rays diverging from a focus" (Johnson 119). Colonists seem to disappear into the vastness; even the tremendous number of colonists vacating England, Ireland, and Scotland cannot co-radiate the light of British civilization in the dark wildernesses of the Americas.

The depopulation of British internal colonies deeply troubled many intellectuals of the eighteenth century, and many thought that England and the domestic colonies were being emptied by emigration to the Americas. For instance, Samuel Johnson and James Boswell, on a sightseeing tour of Scotland in 1773, reported that they repeatedly encountered signs of escalating emigration, including a dance called "*America*" in which "[e]ach of the couples [...] successively whirls round in a circle, till all are in motion; and the dance seems intended to shew how emigration catches, till a whole neighbourhood is set afloat" (Johnson 346). The centrifugal motion of immigration emptied the domestic colonies—Wales, Scotland, and Ireland—to populate the external colonies in the Americas at the extremities of the British overseas Empire. The Americas are a presence, in many eighteenth-century texts, through the absence of the British peoples in the empty countryside.

In this way the Americas detract from the strength of the Empire; by contrast, Lismahago argues that the recent union of England and Scotland

provided innumerable advantages to England, primarily by shoring up the numbers of the populous:

> This was a very considerable and seasonable supply to a nation, whose people had been for many years decreasing in number, and whose lands and manufactures were actually suffering for want of hands. I need not remind you of the hackneyed maxim, that, to a nation in such circumstances, a supply of industrious people is a supply of wealth […]. (3.106)

Scotland supplies subjects to meet the manpower needs in England, while the Americas drain all of Britain of human resources, to less advantageous effect than retaining and increasing the presence in the domestic colonies.

Scotland had been hit hard by the impetus to immigrate. "[B]etween 1707 and 1775," Alan Taylor calculates, "Scots emigration soared to 145,000," "outnumbering by far" numbers of English emigrants (Taylor 294). Traveling through Scotland and the British countryside during a period of an alarming exodus from Scotland as America siphoned off manpower, the Bramble family expresses anxiety at the depletion of the human resources who could otherwise have helped build a strong post-Union Scotland.

As the Bramble family members explore the state of the United Kingdom, they remark on the vast tracts of uncultivated and empty land. Matthew Bramble expresses anxiety over the lack of civilization in northern Scotland, for there are too few Britons to develop the land: "This country is amazingly wild, especially towards the mountains, which are heaped upon the backs of one

another, making a most stupendous appearance of savage nature, with hardly any signs of cultivation, or even of population" (3.43). These unsettled lands disturb the Brambles, seeming "savage" and uncultivated, and they proceed no further in their approach to the Highlands of Scotland. Their unease emphasizes the idea that empty land was an uncivilized wilderness where barbarity and violence could lay claim.[12]

Empty lands were not the greatest threat, however, for colonists returning from the Americas made the country more savage than vast tracts of wildernesss. *Humphry Clinker* demonstrates the issues that result when one who had left Scotland for the Americas returns home. Old and rather broken down, Lismahago attempts to find a place for himself in Scotland where he erroneously feels he should belong but instead finds the land changed and foreign to him. He says he is "utterly unacquainted" with Scotland, "which he had left in his

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[12] Goldsmith's lines describing America reflect a critical tone similar to Smollett's opinion of the Americas. In a Manichean world, America would be Goldsmith's anti-Eden. He describes the lands of the Americas as threatening, with bats and snakes, omens of evil.

> The various terrors of that horrid shore;
> Those blazing suns that dart a downward ray,
> And fiercely shed intolerable day;
> Those matted woods where birds forget to sing,
> But silent bats in drowsy clusters cling;
> Those poisonous fields, with rank luxuriance crown'd,
> Where the dark scorpion gathers death around;
> Where at each step the stranger fears to wake
> The rattling terrors of the vengeful snake;
> Where crouching tigers wait their hapless prey,
> And savage men more murderous still than they:
> While oft in whirls the mad tornado flies,
> Mingling the ravaged landscape with the skies. (l. 346-60)

early youth" (2.197). His time and experiences in the Americas have severed most of his connections to Scotland, and he is unable to feel at home.

The Americas are also responsible for his permanent separation from all living representatives of his family. He is irrevocably divorced from his family, symbolized by the violent leave he takes of his nephew. The nephew has adopted the bourgeois mentality of modern industry, converting the family estate into a center of profitable mercantilistic empire. Angry at the changes made to the family estate during his long absence, Lismahago "being no longer master of his passion," attacks his nephew, clamoring "Degenerate rascal! you have made my father's house a den of thieves" (3.93). "Exasperated . . . to such a degree, that he had like to have lost his senses, [he becomes] transported with indignation [and] being no longer master of his passion, chastised" his own nephew with his "horse-whip" (3.93). He beat and terrorized his nephew so severely that the poor man tells the whole country of his attack and shows the lash marks from the whip, attributing it to a supernatural "apparition" from the grave (3.90)

What Lismahago objected to so strenuously might not be the fact his nephew was now the head of the household, or that the great hall, the heart of the family estate, had been converted into the seat of commercial enterprise, but the radical disjunctions between the home he left and the place to which he

returned: that home had changed and was no longer the home he remembered prior to his time in America.

The natural human desire to cling to a memory or an image of the place left behind was thwarted by the implacable progress of time, so that meant that even if that image of home he maintained had been a realistic image, when he returned from America he found that this reality existed nowhere but in his own internal conceptions. Lismahago remains stuck in the social constructs of his youth. For him, time stopped with his departure. For the rest of British society, progress has continued at the normal pace and the changes seem gradual and normative. His family has forgotten him and moved on with the times; his inability to do so accounts, in part, for the disorientation he feels. His nephew recognizes that he is not part of the modern world and fears that Lismahago is the manifestation of his ancestors, an apparition from the past returned in judgment (3.93).

Though any traveler separated from his home for decades of his life will undoubtedly find that the actuality fails to match his remembrances, this discongruity was likely furthered by *where* Lismahago has spent the years of his absence. Frustrated at the incongruities between his memories and the reality, and feeling alien and dispossessed, Lismahago several times declares his intention to return permanently to live out the rest of his life in the "wigwams of

the Miamis" (3.93). This disjuncture between his ideal and the exigencies of reality cause him to rupture his ties to his native land: as Matthew Bramble writes, "It would seem that the captain, like the prophets of old, is but little honoured in his own country, which he has now renounced for ever —[…]. [H]e had bid it an eternal adieu, and was determined to seek for repose among the forests of America" (3.93). He is angry by the changes made to Scotland, by finding modern industry where he did not expect to find it. Whether or not he returns to the Americas, his American experience has made him permanently disaffiliated from his family and community there. America has become more a home to him than his ostensibly native land.[13]

[13] Though Bramble and Jery suggest that Lismahago is unlikely to return to America given that a union with Tabitha promises a financially comfortable life (3.94), his return to the Americas is not an entirely empty threat on his part. He has a son in the Americas, had embarked on a marriage there, and had felt a sense of belonging and connection in that land lacking with his natural family or former community in Scotland. He is on the cusp of crossing over from migrant soldier to native of America, by choice this time, and not merely because he lacks the power to overcome the will and might of the tribe to break his identification with them. His connection to Britain remains passive: he returns by default because the Amerindians removed his other options. If at this point he had chosen to return to America, he would have been British no longer. He would have ceased to belong to the mediate third category and become indistinguishable from the natives. Strange and foreign as his scalped form may now seem to the delicate eyes of the ladies, he would have become irredeemably alien and inseparable from the savages had he returned. The Americas have a peculiar power over the British that can absorb them and draw them, even after they return to the internal colonies.

Transgressing Social Boundaries

Presenting Lismahago as transgressing social rules is a highly effective technique in revealing his character because "Politeness in the eighteenth century meant more than just etiquette, however important manners and ceremony may have been; it was a matter of civilization. It measured in part the distance a person or community had come from savagery. It was an index of worth […]" (McIntosh 160). The incivility Lismahago has learned in the Americas detracts then from his value, his worth to the Empire.[14]

This offensive, bellicose nature provides the supposed pretext for the publication of the letters that make up *Humphry Clinker*. The prefatory material that precedes the text proper purports to be the correspondence between one Jonathan Dustwich, a Welsh minister, and an editor at the London publishing firm that intends to sell the collected correspondence of the Bramble family to the general public. Concerned that this exposure of the private lives of the family is an inappropriate (and lawsuit-worthy) invasion of their privacy, the London publisher questions the motives of Dustwich in seeking to publish these intimate epistles.

[14] Supposedly written a considerable time after the events in the main text take place, the events recorded in this prefatory letter indicate that Lismahago still retains a remarkable facility for alienating himself from his British compatriots. The Bramble's vicar, clearly not pleased with Lismahago's disruptive presence, suggests that Lismahago does not belong with the group: he does not attend church and may even be disloyal to the state. Dustwich suggests such dangerous foreigners should not be permitted to become members of the state. The vicar would prefer a process of exclusion because Lismahago's violence continues untamed.

The clergyman replies that he submitted these letters as a means of revenging himself upon Lismahago, whom he vituperates (1.IV). He questions Lismahago's Christianity, suggests that stricter qualifications should keep people like Lismahago from British service, calls him a "vagrant foreigner," accuses him of "disaffection to our happy constitution, church and state," strongly suggests he is "a Jesuit in disguise," and informs the publisher that Lismahago has never attended the parish church since his qualification (1.IV). None of the other characters are mentioned by name in these introductory epistles, but Lismahago features prominently. Though Lismahago does not appear in the text proper of the first volume, the reader has been alerted to await anxiously his arrival and to consider him important when he does.

This is ironic, for the prefatory epistles make Lismahago sound important. He threatened Dustwich—who was "obliged to retire" from dinner, as the cowardly vicar says, "not by fear arising from his minatory reproaches, which, as I said above, I value not of a rush" but for some completely other extraneous reason that had nothing, of course, to do with Lismahago's threats of violence (1.IV-V). The reader expects Lismahago to feature prominently, even to be the focus of the tale. Only gradually does the reader come to recognize that Lismahago himself is not central to the story, but that the purpose he serves is important and helps to solidify the meaning of the text.

Lismahago's verbal, and possibly physical, intimidation of Dustwich suggests that his character will not practice the urbane refinement of manners expected at society dinner tables. He is, in fact, known from the preface onward for his violations of social conventions. Though he has resided elsewhere for most of his life and finds he has no current connections in Scotland, his Scottish origins can make interpretation of his distinctive behavior challenging. At times it can be difficult to discern which of Lismahago's aberrations result from his time in the Americas and which are caused by his Scottish origins.

However, the Bramble family encounters many Scots who have not been to the Americas. Their behavior clearly contrasts with that of Lismahago and forms a foil against which to consider his behavior. While Smollett forthrightly touts the beauties and strengths of Scotland and its people, the grotesque Obadiah Lismahago stands in direct contrast to the extensive glowing accounts of his fellow Scots. Lismahago joins the travelers prior to their visit to Scotland, so the travelers' encomiums on Scotland and the Scots serve as a counterpoint to Lismahago's deformities of character and person. Against the background of a bucolic Scotland, his uncivilized behavior and personal oddities are accentuated. Therefore, even if being a Scotsman made him more susceptible to acts of violence, irrationality, and general oddity of character, *Humphry Clinker* would

suggest that it is the Americas that reduce what ought to be considered idyllic simplicity of the Scottish people to barbaric savagery.

Violence and anger are a part of Lismahago's identity from the moment the Brambles first encounter him. As Lismahago arrives at an inn, he bumbles his dismount from his horse so that "His hat and periwig felling off, displayed a head-piece of various colours, patched and plaistered in a woeful condition" (2.155). The text of *Humphry Clinker* relates that "the disgrace of exposing the condition of his cranium," leads to a violent outburst in which Lismahago "forthwith leaped up in a fury, and snatching one of his pistols, threatened to put the ostler to death" for having contributed to his enraging humiliation (2.156).

Being perceived as a deformed object of levity causes Lismahago to explode in almost demented anger, for the bystanders' laughter at his injuries reduces him to a comic figure. His pride injured by the alarm and confusion in the ladies and the spectator's pursuant mirth, Lismahago reacts to exposure of his denuded scalp with disproportionate violence—even threatening to kill those who laugh at the undignified revelation of his scars (2.155-7). His aggression, even violence, are at an intensity inappropriate to the situation, demonstrating his general lack of civilized restraint. More than this, though, his reactions indicate his deep-seated concern over how others perceive him. A self-confident individual might be embarrassed at appearing uncoordinated in front of a group

of strangers and regret having an unsightly injury exposed to public view; Lismahago's extreme anxiety and rage implies his sense of self is overly informed by the perceptions of others.

His discordant interactions draw the attention of the Bramble party, for his inappropriate behavior stands out in this social setting. In fact, his fiery emotions make him seem animalistic and wild, so that he becomes more entertainment than compatriot to the group. Thus after his explosion of rage and humiliation, Lismahago seems at something of a loss about how to pick up the pieces of his constructed patchwork social identity, for the damage has already been revealed: however, the text notes that he "adjusted his wig in great confusion" (2.156) and then requests the opportunity to explain himself and defend his abnormality as actually a mark of distinction.

The Scars of War

A native Scotsman, Obadiah Lismahago enrolled in the British army in his youth and was sent from his homeland into the wilds of the Americas to fight the French and Indian War. Jery's letter tells the reader that at Ticonderoga, Lismahago is left for dead after being captured by Indians who "rifled him, broke his scull with the blow of a tomahawk, and left him for dead [...] so that [his] scull was left naked in several places, but these he covered with patches" (2.157). The naked skull beneath the patches signifies that the natural protective

barrier was removed from his head, leaving him particularly vulnerable to further degradations of self. The cobbled pieces of uneven hue represent a pathetic attempt to reconstitute an identity that never again achieves a cohesive whole.

This hatchet operation inflicted on him during his encounter with a savage American left him physically and psychologically more vulnerable to the further devastations perpetrated on his selfhood during his captivity and subsequent life among the Indians because the epidermal barrier, the external indicator of a discrete physical self, had been stripped from him. The body is the physical material from which the self is composed. The skull protects the core of reason and identity: Lismahago's has been damaged and defiled. The French doctors were unable to repair his "loss of substance" and could only cover over, but never erase, the devastation (2.157). Lismahago's physical damage extends beyond the somatic; scalped and later invaded by the instruments of torture, he reveals that the physical damage has extended throughout his being so that his physical form is somehow weird and shocking to those who see him without the motley trappings of civilization that barely cover the hideous scars.

The physical damage sustained to his head hints at parallel psychological damage inflicted by this violent interaction with savages of the Americas. The grotesque deformity of a skull indicates a deep divergence from normality. The

ridges, lumps, and discolored scars composing Lismahago's "head-piece of various colours, patched and plaistered in a woeful condition" implies a damaged covering for a damaged psyche. For centuries, scientific experts had claimed knowledge of character through exterior signs. Though the pseudo-medical practice of physiognomy was no longer regarded as a true science by most medical practitioners at that time, laypeople still considered the shape of the head as a sign of the character of the individual, and unusual protuberances or concavities signified mental abnormalities. An integral piece of Lismahago's self-identity is grossly altered, and his attempt to cover the scarred and gruesome reality with a wig is unavailing.

Neither Lismahago's natural nor his artificial head covering are now sufficient. The merest mischance in dismounting from a horse causes him to lose both the wig (that artificial concealment covering the deformity to his person) and his corollary self control and civility. Wigs were worn by most male members of the upper social classes, and Lismahago responds with agitation upon losing this symbol. The injury is linked from the first with his incongruity in both appearance and manner. The events that happened to him in America permanently separate him from the others; neither the physical marks on his body nor the psychological effects on his selfhood can ever be expunged.

Though he expects British ladies to be "scandaleezed" at his appearance, he hastens to assure them that his misshapenness is "neither the effects of disease, nor the marks of drunkenness; but an honest scar received in the service of my country" (2.157). This remark is revealing in several ways. First, he implies that while disease or drunkenness would merit scorn, a war wound should merit a more positive reaction. And the term he uses, "honest," is a word that he links, not with the service to his country, but with the scar: the "honest scar." Though he tries to keep it concealed, when it is disclosed, the adjective he gives this scar suggests he wants it to be seen as a mark of distinction that simultaneously reveals the truth about him and makes him honorable.

Neither of these interpretations of his scar find support in the text, for the physical changes to his body made by American natives are the source of his immediate exclusion from the other British, a cultural distancing that certainly does not imply honor for his character. Though Matt and Jery both pity Lismahago and feel empathy for the wrongs done him, neither ever suggests that the war wound is a mark of distinction. As to the truthfulness of his scar, the message that it delivers is clearly one he would prefer to conceal. When he explicates the meaning of this scar to change their judgment of him, his explanation reveals that he was permanently altered by contact with savagery in the Americas.

The marks on his body left by his destructive encounter with the Americas are both the immediate cause of his anger (for his rage explodes when his mangled crown is exposed) and the identifying traits that single him out as inherently different: the very sight of him disrupts the normal functioning of the group. The condition of his skull initiates his exclusion from the status quo and is the focus of his shame, for at the sight of it "certain plebeians" "laughed aloud, in the belief that the captain had got either a scald head, or a broken head, both equally opprobrious" (2.155). Their ridicule brands Lismahago as an outsider, an object of derision, for his outward deformity permanently differentiates him from the others.

Identity Shifts

But the Americas are not yet finished placing their mark upon Lismahago. After being treated by French doctors following his scalping, he is returned to duty as a British soldier and is captured once again by natives, this time, a cannibalistic tribe that even more overtly breaks him of his connection with his British identity and re-forms him as a member of the savage community. A victim of England's war with France played out in the Americas, Lismahago was forced to participate in a well-known Amerindian adoption ritual that involved the choice either to convert and become a member of the tribe, or be cannibalized and, in this metaphorical manner, be absorbed into the tribe. As Sanday

observes, "In a fundamental sense, it did not matter whether the victim was allowed to live or was tortured to death, because in either case the victim was physically incorporated into the community" (125). When confronted with barbarian cannibals, refusal to become one of them is not an option: an individual joins the tribe one way or another, and the tribe chooses the method by either devouring or adopting a victim.

During this process the captive's identification with his British culture is broken, and he becomes, by adoption and by practice, a tribal member. *Humphry Clinker* suggests that the savages of the Americas were particularly adept at reforming the British identity because physical violence proved a most effective conversion method.[15] The savages of America have mastered an effective process of transculturation, a process Smollett details at some length. Of this transfiguration Cadwallader Colden remarks in his 1727 edition of *The History of the Five Nations* that

> They [the natives] strictly follow one Maxim, formerly used by the *Romans* to increase their Strength, that is, they encourage the People of other Nations to incorporate with them; and when they have subdued any People, after they have satiated their Revenge by such cruel Examples, they adopt the rest of their Captives; who, if they behave well, become equally esteemed with their own people; so that some of their Captives have afterwards become their greatest *Sachems* and *Captains*. (186)

[15] Violence as a conversion tool features in many novels because of the conundrum the situation presents: if a British individual adopts violence as a conversion tool, he ceases to be civilized and loses his identity. See, for instance, Conrad's *Heart of Darkness.*

The savages had established a definitive method by which "Such native tribes manage to bring foreigners into their culture without challenging their dominant social system, […] while continuing to patrol rigorously the borders of that society" (Sussman, *Transculturation* 601). Lismahago himself remarks on this phenomenon, telling the Bramble party that "The Indians were too tenacious of their own customs to adopt the modes of any nation whatsoever […]" (2.170). He speaks of this unwillingness to conform to another culture as an admirable, even moral, strength that bolsters their resistance to the corruptions of Europe.

Speaking of the graphic tortures in the adoption ceremonies, Sussman argues that

> These rituals, although violent, were seen by eighteenth-century observers as the means by which Native American tribes appropriated and transformed foreign cultures. Europeans saw these rituals as evidence of a tribe's ability to retain its social coherence in the face of a colonizing invasion—a quality they found admirable as well as threatening. (*Transculturation* 600-1)

The effects of this native cannibalism are doubled through the use of dual victims, Lismahago and the Irish Ensign Murphy. The torture of Murphy and Lismahago is typical in descriptions of sustained violence in captivity narratives. Smollett drew upon a wide availability of narratives recounting actual episodes of dismemberments and disfigurements, but he added specific details not found in any descriptions of actual events. The details are consistent with, and do not

exceed in either duration or ferocity, the accounts give by Gyles, Jean Lowry, Peter Williamson, or dozens of others. What is exceptional about the account of Lismahago's excruciating torture is the blending of customary Amerindian torture practices with European technological innovations to more effectively practice barbarity:

> [a] joint of one finger had been cut, or rather sawd off with a rusty knife; one of his great toes was crushed into a mash betwixt two stones; some of his teeth were drawn, or dug out with a crooked nail; splintered reeds had been thrust up his nostrils and other tender parts; and the calves of his legs had been blown up with mines of gunpowder dug in the flesh with the sharp point of the tomahawk. (2.167)

The "crooked nail" and the "gunpowder dug in the flesh" are artifacts of the industrial world brought to America by Europeans, "tools provided to the natives by the colonizing culture, now turned against the imperial power in a fitting though appalling way" (Wallace 245). With the innovation of the nail and the gunpowder, the natives are able to pierce the barrier meant to encapsulate and maintain the body as a discrete unit.

Smollett gruesomely depicts a potential result of the Irish experience in America through the hideous tortures enacted on the body of the Murphy as the flesh is stripped from him and devoured while he roasts, still alive. This explains why the dour Scotsman Lismahago's partial cannibalization was exceeded only by the total absorption of his fellow victim, the Irishman

Murphy—eaten alive by savages of the Americas while defiantly entoning the *Drumandoo*, a chorus about the dear brown cow of Ireland. Encounters with the New World lead to the violation of the bodies of the Irish and the Scots, England's secondary citizens, sent to America to be sacrificed for the Empire in which they would never be viewed as equal citizens.[16]

The Americas more completely absorb Murphy, the Irishman, because he is "the younger and handsomer of the two" (2.168). These appealing qualities mean that he "was designed to fill the place of the deceased, not only as the son of the sachem, but as the spouse of a beautiful squaw, to whom his predecessor had been betrothed" (2.168). But the American cannibals destroy what they admire, breaking him down into severed and disconnected pieces. His very superiority stimulates their frenzy, and they strive so violently to break his connection with his former culture during their adoption ceremonies that his injuries preclude his adoption. Though initially the Irish representative was more appealing and worthy of adoption, he has been damaged too much by the Americas and now must experience a long and agonizing death.

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[16] Jonathan Swift makes a similar accusation against the British government, writing that Irish emigrants to the Americas who have not "Dyed miserably in their Passage" are likely to be settled by the English in the "Tract of Ground, which lyes between them, and the *Wild Indians*" much in the manner that the Romans included "some barbarous People […] in their Armies, for no other service, than to blunt their Enemies Swords"; thus he suggests that the British use of the Irish "as a Screen between his Majesty's *English* Subjects and the savage *Indians*" (*Intelligencer* 211-12; *Works* 12. 176, 1. 179, 12.116).

Using the familiar metaphor of the body politic, Smollett demonstrates that the Irish are atomized and devoured, lost to the Empire through their absorption into the savageness of the Americas. In the confrontation, the Irishman ceases to have a separate identity and becomes merely fodder for the enemies of the Empire, subsumed by them to his destruction. But if the Irish encounter with the Americas results in the total devastation of the Irish, the Scottish encounter results in an outcome just as subtly dangerous for the British Empire.[17]

Loss of Self

Smollett demonstrates both the ease of Lismahago's devolution into savagery and its permanence using the mangled body as an outward sign of loss of self: "Lismahago's North American soujourn provides the basis for a critique of the new world order, with his grotesque body serving as a material sign of its costs" (Evans 484). Lismahago's missing bits of flesh represent losses of self that cannot be reconstituted because they have been brutally and permanently excised in the Americas; Sussman remarks upon the "dispersal of the European

[17] Murphy's identity as a fellow Celt, though from Ireland not Scotland, shows that in some measure the Irishman and the Scots are culturally aligned, each from the domestic fringes of the continental empire, and both peculiarly susceptible to descending into savagery—since British civility was, for them, a thin veneer only recently applied. Lismahago narrates the torments he and Murphy had endured from the indigenous Americans, but Murphy—being the superior of the two—experiences the greater wrath and destruction wrought by the natives.

body in pieces: teeth, fingers, and other body parts disappear into the native community. In this way, the diffuse operations of cultural change are reduced to discrete, physical losses" (*Transculturation* 603). He loses himself both physically and psychologically: never becoming quite native, never returning again to being fully British.[18]

Through the reduction of the European body into pieces, Smollett highlights the powers of the Indians who are "disconcertingly capable of absorbing Europeans into their communities" (Sussman, *Transculturation* 600). The more primitive the culture, the more resistant it is to change and the more power it attains to convert others. The higher culture will always descend to the lower. In capitulation to the savages' stubborn entrenchment in their barbarity, Lismahago abandons his British civility: in the confrontation, the savages have the superior power both to maintain their own cultural identity and to break a Briton's sense of self.[19] Lismahago is still forming much of his sense of self based

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[18] These details are similar to those in other accounts which Colley labels "the pornography of real or invented Indian violence" (177), but it is significant that in this exchange the natives retain all the power, which they only share with those who will both join the tribe and increase its ranks with their progeny. The details of this cannibalism are gruesome, becoming particularly disturbing in the context already established in *Humphry Clinker* that the body "constitutes the base upon which collective cultural categories and social axioms are inscribed and functions as a medium for the production of practices that structure social relations" (Bowers 2). In this figuring, then, the Americas literally absorb the British in order to fuel their own barbaric society.

[19] *Emily Montagu* makes a similar claim about the relationship between the natives in Quebec and the French colonists there: "I believe I have said, that there is a striking resemblance between the manners of the Canadians and the savages; I should have explained it, by adding,

upon his connections to the American tribe, for his self has been irreparably reduced by the encounter: "the paring and grinding down of European bodies provide Smollett's novel with appropriate images for the experience of transculturation on the North American frontier" (Sussman, *Transculturation* 603). He is less than he was in a way that cannot be repaired.[20]

Scalped, rendered alien by adoption into a native tribe and suffering from the physical deformities that were a part of this process, Lismahago is used to exemplify many of the concerns about the contamination by savagery expressed on both sides of the Atlantic. The text makes much of the fact that Lismahago becomes joined with a savage distinguished for her atrocities. His marriage to this Amerindian royal emphasizes that such a union joins the two in a savage

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that this resemblance has been brought about, not by the French having won the savages to receive European manners, but by the very contrary; the peasants having acquired the savage indolence in peace, their activity and ferocity in war; their fondness for field sports, their hatred of labor; their love of a wandering life, and of liberty; in the latter of which they have been in some degree indulged, the laws here being much milder, and more favorable to the people, than in France" (106).

[20] His wounds are social and civic as well as physical. His grotesque deformities are the result of the fragmenting body politic, where Scottish soldiers are sent into the Americas to ensure the security of profits for the Empire and are then broken by the encounter. The rehabilitation of Lismahago through his incorporation into the group, and his social and, presumably, physical union with Tabitha is an attempt to establish the sociocultural axioms that will permit Britain to cohere. Lismahago is permitted to join with the Brambles at the end of the travels and even to join the Bramble family through his marriage with Tabitha. He gifts his collection of American memorabilia, possibly in an attempt to start his new life fresh unencumbered by such trinkets, and enacts the traditions which will firmly connect him to British soil by farming the British land. This proffered hope is undercut by the letters to the editor at the beginning of the text in which the clergyman doesn't like Lismahago. Tabitha was ineffectual at reforming him, for the effects on his person are permanent.

bond, one that reduces Lismahago to the level of his cannibal bride without concomitantly instituting a reform in her identity. Lismahago becomes like a native through their union, losing his civility and even his rationality, becoming savage himself. Smollett was not alone in expressing this view. In fact, "The colonies of Great Britain, unlike those of all other European nations in the New World, refused to accommodate men who mixed with the natives or embraced their ways in any measure" (Zuckerman 145). By denying or restricting contact, they sought to eliminate the alien presence from mixing with and corrupting their identity as Englishmen, to master their own identities by denying any affinity with Amerindian ways of life or thought. As historian Bernard Sheehan has noted, "[t]he ignoble savage always loomed as an external threat to Europeans and as an internal danger because he represented primal urges that, although subdued, remained part of the human condition" (Sheehan, "Savagism & Civility" 2). These urges are strong enough to overcome any pretexts at civilized behavior, for Lismahago condones his wife's inappropriate, bestial behavior. Isolation from civilization has led him to fail to distinguish between civilization and savagery.

Recounting her qualities, apparently in commendation, Lismahago informs the Brambles that his wife demonstrated a superior "genius" at planning and carrying out torture and voraciously eating human flesh, exceeding all

others in devouring large quantities of Lismahago's fellow captive, Ensign Murphy, while he yet lived. The tortures in which Lismahago's bride enthusiastically participated, even creatively improvised, involved emasculation, the crushing of bones, the gouging of eyes and placing a burning coal in each socket, and maiming by cutting, burning, etc. (2.167-8).

The textual linking of the mutilation and maiming of the British subjects with the marriage to savagery is too blatant to ignore. In both the timeline of the story and its recounting in a letter the two events are conflated. Lismahago is honored and Murphy—still somewhat alive—is feasted upon as part of the wedding celebration which is also a death rite. Lismahago's marriage is "consummated that same evening" (2.168) while his wife's stomach was still bloated with Murphy, and parts of Lismahago himself. Such a union violated cultural taboos and British miscegenation laws. More than that, though, it obliterates all pretensions to human decency. His marriage joins Lismahago in the savagery, an identity he brings back with him and bestows upon his second bride, partially marking her as a savage upon their wedding day by the clothes she wears and the parallels drawn to his first wife, the cannibal bride.

That his encounter with the Amerindians has given him a new identity is further represented by his renaming upon adoption. During the ceremony marking his membership in the tribe he was "dignified," as Jery ironically

denominates this distinction, "with the name or epithet of Occacanastaogarora, which signifies nimble as a weasel" (2.169). Jery heavily weights his descriptor of Lismahago's alternate nomenclature, "nimble weasel" of the Badger tribe, implying such a comparison to a dexterous predator qualifies only through irony as "dignified." "Dignified" has the inverse effect of pointing out the indignity of Lismahago's position both in the Americas, where he is powerless to assert even his own name, and in Britain, where his new identity represented by his renaming does not fit and serves only to make him laughable. Furthermore, the foreignness and unpronounceable nature of his Amerindian name distances the audience from any sense of admiration resulting from his American connections.

The Body as Sign

In *Humphry Clinker*, Lismahago embodies the effects that can be wrought upon the individual Briton as a result of the American influence upon him. One of numerous soldiers who bears the monstrous scars of encounters with hostile Amerindians, Obadiah Lismahago illustrates the physical and psychological dangers posed to the British identity by the savages of the Americas. Aileen Douglas, who describes this novel as "Smollett's most sophisticated articulation of the body as sign" (xxvii) asserts that "Representations of materiality are crucial because the body is used to naturalize political and social systems. One of the body's most important functions is to serve as a 'natural symbol' of social

order" (xxii). And Lismahago's physical body is disordered. His first encounter with the travelers around whom the novel centers reveals that he has been rendered physically different by events that transpired in the Americas.[21]

Lismahago's physical form will forever bear the marks of savagery, and his experiences in the Americas perpetually shape his outlook and the ways in which others interpret his actions. His connection to cannibalism shows, in Flynn's words, that "savagery can be learned, or more disturbingly, that the movement from a civil to a savage identity is simple and even natural for Europeans in America" (Flynn 92). His reversal from savagery back to civility, however, is not as complete as his initial identity shift.

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[21] The British American hybrid posed a particular problem to an age endeavoring to systematize and categorize all knowledge. Lismahago no longer has a strong identity of his own, having become alienated and disenfranchised in the Americas, and now functions as a British "other," made foreign by his American experiences. As Simon Gikandi has observed, "the paradox of Englishness is its need to define the national character against a colonial other that it must then disown" (55-6). Forging an appropriate cultural identity is thus no autochthonous act, but must be appropriately communally supported and grounded in the identity-forming social networks that America lacks or distorts, at least from a British subject's point of view. Individual identity is fleeting and constrained. As David Hume, a Scots philosopher, wrote: "For my part, when I enter most intimately into what I call *myself*, I always stumble on some particular perception or other, of heat or cold, light or shade, love or hatred, pain or pleasure. I never can catch *myself* at any time without a perception, and never can observe any thing but the perception. […] If anyone upon serious and unprejudic'd reflexion, thinks he has a different notion of *himself*, I must confess I can reason no longer with him […]. He may, perhaps, perceive something simple and continu'd, which he calls *himself*; tho' I am certain there is no such principle in me" (252). From these conclusions about the workings of his own mind Hume "ventures to affirm of the rest of mankind, that they are nothing but a bundle or collection of different perceptions, which succeed each other with an inconceivable rapidity, and are in perpetual flux and movement" (252). Smollett may not have been familiar with Hume's theories, but concerns about how an identity is formed and maintained troubled many of the intellegencia of the era, and concerns about the deleterious formative effects of the American experience upon a British subject preoccupied many authors, Smollett included.

Uniting Lismahago's identity with that of the cannibals, perhaps participating in cannibalism, even if involuntarily, signified loss of humanity for Smollett's contemporary audiences.[22] In European literature the term "cannibal" was applied to groups to signify they were utterly debased, sub-human, and outside the bounds of humanity. To Europeans, cannibalism was not merely an action but an integral part of identity that made the perpetrator completely *other*, no longer truly a part of humankind. Pietro Martire d'Anghiera says of cannibals, "There is no man able to behold them, but he shall feel his bowels grate with a certain horror, nature hath endowed them with so terrible menacing, and cruel aspect" (70). Cannibalism lies so far outside the bounds of decent behavior that cannibals surrender all claims to humanity.

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22 Smollett dexterously navigates the European ambivalence about the inherent nature of man so that American cannibals are simultaneously horrifying examples of shocking depravity abhorrent to civilized man and, through similarities between cannibalism and certain British policies toward Ireland and Scotland, evidence of the cruelty of British treatment of her protectorates. Lismahago is emaciated in appearance and his character is shriveled at first, a state readers gradually come to attribute to the many hardships he has endured as the indirect end-result of British abuse of his country and his person. Lismahago was literally scalped by native Americans, but brutal treatment at the hands of the British government stripped him of flesh through privation, leaving him an emaciated skeleton, and took from him the life he should have been able to lead in his native Scotland. Lismahago may have seemed a contemptible object early in the narrative, but it soon becomes clear that he has been devalued by the British and that being treated as a commodity that can be sent to America and then have the price reduced damages his humanity. American cannibals tortured him, but his heart and soul have been metaphorically maimed and devoured by the British government who took control of his country, made conditions so untenable in his homeland that he left to seek a profession elsewhere, used him as a soldier in deadly situations, refused to promote him because he was Scottish, and paid him a pittance so small he could not subsist on his pay.

The Badger tribe with whom Lismahago lived demonstrates how depraved people can become when they are freed from the checks of truly civilized society. Cannibalism occurs when a society lacks the moral and religious convictions that make a person fully human, joined to an evil disregard for social and religious behavioral constraints, resulting in total moral and ethical failure. Lismahago's adoption into the heathen tribe gains increased ideological force, for it demonstrates the fragility of civility and the ease with which a rational Briton can be brought to equate himself with barbaric cannibals.

Preposterously, Lismahago lists the honors he attained among these uncivilized man eaters as though they should still merit some measure of respect from representatives of both British and Amerindian culture. Jery writes in his letter that "By this time, Mr Lismahago was elected sachem, acknowledged first warrior of the Badger tribe […]" (2.169). The title sachem has no direct equivalent in England. He earned his title by being "first warrior" of the tribe, but since this tribe with which he identifies fought for the French against the British—and made a habit of eating their British captives—this title fails to impress. Lismahago's pride, as he boasts to the Brambles that among the Badger tribe he became a leader of brutal cannibal men, demonstrates his pathetic inability to recognize the inappropriateness of attempting to translate his tribal prestige. Smollett devalues his pretensions by hinting that not even the

cannibals held Lismahago in high respect, for they gave him the ridiculous name of "nimble weasel" (2.169). Furthermore, the tribe initially selected Lismahago as their meal, judging his companion Murphy to merit adoption into the family instead. Lismahago lived only by default. He lacks the authority over the most momentous events and decisions of his life and, ultimately, finds himself ejected by the tribe so that he can be exchanged for a captured orator of the Badger clan. His persistent confusion over his own status suggests that he has not emotionally or mentally accepted the separation. After his experiences in America he has become an amalgamation; neither British nor Amerindian, he cannot be categorized as either.[23]

Lismahago's personal pride in his status among a native tribe is deflated by undermining the status of all indigenous peoples. Even the most significant of the Amerindian tribes receive little respect or recognition in the drawing rooms of England. The comic transposition and general mangling of the names of the tribes that comprise the League of the Iroquois, by "The Duke of N——," facetiously mocks both the British leadership's ridiculous incompetence and the

[23] This sentiment was also developed in a fascinating novel published around the same time as *Humphry Clinker* in which the eponymous heroine of Charlotte Lennox's *Emily Montague* concurs, arguing that "If this selfish policy continues to extend itself, we shall in a few years be so far from being able to send emigrants to America, that we shall be reduced to solicit their return, and that of their posterity, to prevent England's becoming in its turn an uncultivated desart" (232). Both novels depict England and the internal colonies to be subject to a greedy desire to use the resources of the Americas for personal advancement and the enrichment of the Empire.

pretensions of the native tribes to an elevated stature. Misnaming the "Five Nations—Our good friends the Five Nations" serves as both good fun for Smollett's readers, who undoubtedly enjoy the playful mangling of tribal names to "The Toryrories, the Maccolmacks, the Out-o'the-ways, the Crickets, and the Kickshaws" (1.239-40), but also undermines the conceit of the natives who, though they compose the most powerful united force in the American colonies, are still little more than distant oddities to those back home in England. To the Duke, foreigners outside of England are amusing but hardly significant, except as they provide fodder for conversation that allows him to network with the important people of Britain.[24]

[24] The foreign and risible nature of their pretension to culture are further targeted by conflating their methods of exchange, formulations of peace, and other civilized negotiation strategies: "Let 'em have plenty of blankets, and stinubus, and wampum; and your excellency won't fail to scour the kettle, and boil the chain, and bury the tree, and plant the hatchet—Ha, ha, ha!" (1.239-40). The natives of America have invaded the inner circle of England, but only as distorted echoes of the misunderstood reality. These misperceptions contribute to the facile sense of superiority exhibited by the Duke of N— rooted in the ignorance of the governing class of British society. Rumors of ridiculous oddities and barbaric behavior contribute to inflate the Duke's easy assumption of superiority without leading him to reflect on his own imbecilic customs and behavior. His actions and speech are so bizarre, his perceptions of reality so distorted, that the Turkish ambassador considers him a complete lunatic. Yet his asinine comments on the Americas also satirize the rituals that are crucially important to making alliances with native Americans, thereby reducing their claims to be a civilization. Burying hatchets and scouring pans seem nonsensical, ridiculous customs that lack the pomp and circumstance attendant upon even the dressing routines of an idiotic and declining Duke. Though the majority of the satiric barbs function to ridicule the failings of the Duke, the pretensions of the native tribes to civilization are a secondary target and receive much of the deflected force of the irony.

Being renamed the nimble weasel of the Badger tribe is further confounded by the fact that no tribe by this name ever existed.[25] The appellation "Badger tribe" sounds enough like names of other tribes to give verisimilitude, but when Smollett could so easily have used the name of an actual tribe somewhere in the Americas, the fact that he did not subtly comments on the groundless basis of Lismahago's pride. To those in his audience who had knowledge of the Americas, this particular tribe not only lacks importance or fame, but proves to be an entirely imaginary collection of a few dozen obscure cannibals who, had they actually existed, still would hardly have been worthy of notice by the British. The members of the Badger tribe distinguish themselves only by their horrific brutality; nothing about them would make Lismahago's union with such people an honor.

Social Cannibalism

By showing Lismahago's rather pathetic attempts to bolster his sense of self through his connection to this savage tribe, *Humphry Clinker* makes apparent the adverse effects of this process on the British citizens with whom he spends

[25] Several excellent articles recently argue for Smollett's extensive knowledge of American life, even that he was the editor and often the writer for the *Canadian Magazine* which contained extensive articles on native life in frequent issues. The prevailing view is expressed in the following quote: "characterizations of Lismahago's captivity fail to take into account Smollett's deep knowledge of contemporary discourse about native Americans and the congruence of Lismahago's story with reports about captured Europeans" (Wallace 7-8).

time. Having heard Lismahago's terrible story of his treatment at the hands of American cannibals, the Bramble family increasingly begins to take on some of the characteristics of these cannibals, albeit in a much less extreme and more allegorical form. The language they use to refer to Lismahago makes this clear, as they alternate between referring to him as entertainment and describing him as a food, terms that imply a form of social cannibalism.

To explicate but a few instances among many, Bramble's nephew Jery writes to his friend about the use which the family makes of Lismahago, repeatedly calling him "a fine dish to be savored" and once referring to him as "a high flavored dish," saying that it was their "fortune to feed upon him the best part of three days" (2.162). Similarly, Matthew Bramble compares Lismahago to a food item and suggests that infrequent exposure to such a meal increases the enjoyment because Lismahago is a dish so "highly flavored" that he "could not bear to dine upon it every day of my life" (3.94). The fodder for their amusement is Lismahago's oddity, his incongruity with their polite culture. Lismahago entertains the group because he is rare seasoning and they have acquired a taste for his company.

These joking comparisons of Lismahago to a savory meal would be insensitive, perhaps even tasteless, except that their prevalence in a text that uses cannibalism to demarcate American savagery indicates that the allusions contain

a deeper and more sinister significance, pointing to the unhealthy lack of respect from the English toward the colonies. Metaphorically, the colonies feed the Empire through colonial productions, reducing the colonies to swell the Empire. In this case, Lismahago's purpose is to entertain the group and provide amusing stories that they can recount to friends.

The insidious influence of the Americas upon the Brambles becomes much more acute as Lismahago becomes increasingly involved with Tabitha Bramble. Matthew Bramble's gaunt, old-maid sister, Tabitha, has been desperately searching for a husband throughout the entire narrative. She tries her wiles on any available male the family meets throughout their travels, often to an embarrassing degree, but her unpleasant nature and lack of personal attractions have stymied her matrimonial aspirations. Matthew writes that having reached nearly the end of their travels without attaining any marriage prospects, Tabitha "is making continual advances to him [Lismahago]; and, if I may trust to appearances, the captain is disposed to take opportunity by the forelock" (3.94). Tabitha would gladly take any candidate for her hand, while Lismahago is saved by this marriage from having to return to the Americas. He cannot live in the mercantilistic land Scotland has become, but he can retreat with the family to the rural simplicity of Wales.

However, Lismahago will never be free from the taint of his American experiences, and so contaminates the Bramble family by extension. The marriage settlement he gives Matthew Bramble results from the profits he makes in the Americas:

> This sum arises partly from his pay's running up while he remained among the Indians; partly from what he received as a consideration for the difference between his full appointment and the half-pay, to which he is now restricted; and partly from the profits of a little traffic he drove in peltry, during his sachemship among the Miamis. (329)

Lismahago makes a paltry sum for the losses in the American colonies; this, combined with the profits he made while living as a native and participating in the colonial venture, forms the price he pays for entrance into the Bramble family. The diminishment of the Empire as a direct result of the enervating luxuries of trade, and the social blending and confusion resulting from that trade has been the primary consistent target of the book. By accepting Lismahago's money made from trading in furs in the Americas, the Bramble family are inculpated as well. Even in their rural retreat, imperial activities in the Americas continue to influence their lives.[26]

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26 Despite the weddings in triplicate at the conclusion of the novel that some scholars have seen as hopeful for the various political unions depicted, and regardless of Jery's own optimistic pronouncements about the reformation to Lismahago's character notwithstanding, the purported origins of the book undercut any such tidy resolution. Clearly, despite his legal union to Tabitha and his apparent acceptance by the Bramble family, Lismahago's absorption into "British" society continues to be problematic. The introductory series of letters that preface the novel intimate that the epistles that compose this novel are offered up for sale by one Jonathan

The interweaving of the theme of cannibalism with a European lady's lust for exotic frivolities links British avarice for material goods from exploited colonies with the most horrifying descriptions of the devouring of human beings: "Through this chain of associations, Lismahago's marriage to Tabitha becomes as much an interracial union as his marriage to Squinkinacoosta—he represents the creolized North America on British domestic soil" (Sussman, *Transculturation* 604). Tabitha Bramble's extended response to Lismahago's revelations of his first wife's bridal attire allows Smollett to conflate the American natvies' cannibalism with the social cannibalism practiced by the British.

Having heard Lismahago's description of the savage and revolting appearance of his first wife, Tabitha's rejoinder is that "She wished, indeed, the squaw had been better provided with linen; but she owned there was much taste and fancy in her ornaments; she made no doubt, therefore, that madam Squinkinacoosta was a young lady of good sense and rare accomplishments, and a good christian at bottom" (2.172). Such a ludicrous and inappropriate reaction ridicules modern emphasis on surface ornamentation and treatment of refinement in attire as a moral virtue. It also reduces adornments from the

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Dustwich, a Welch minister, following a violent altercation with Lismahago at a dinner party. The minister, though clearly no impartial judge, denounces Lismahago as a "vagrant foreigner" who "may be justly suspected of disaffection to our happy constitution, in church and state" (1.IV). Lismahago's return to British society is suspect because the text does not present his restoration to the core of the Empire as an active choice but more a surrendering to Tabitha's overpowering desire for a husband.

Americas to bobbins, feathers, grass, and grease. America is, in this figuring, both savage and corrupted by a love of ornamentation, not admirable at all. But Britain's pretensions to superiority are similarly reduced.[27]

Britain prided itself on the superiority of the civilization's refinement in both manners and attire. Smollett, like many others, suggests that this is a false pride that emphasizes external attributes to the degradation of the nation. He is not alone in this lament. Oliver Goldsmith makes similar remarks:

> O luxury! thou cursed by heaven's decree,
> How ill exchanged are things like these for thee!
> How do thy potions with insidious joy
> Diffuse their pleasures only to destroy!
> Kingdoms, by thee to sickly greatness grown
> Boast of a florid vigour not their own.
> At every draught more large and large they grow,
> A bloated mass of rank unwieldy woe;
> Till sapped their strength and every part unsound,
> Down, down they sink and spread a ruin round. (l. 385-94)

Luxury has corrupted both London and Bath, where those who have amassed wealth in the Americas, but not manners or any other admirable qualities, intermix with all ranks of society. In evaluating the extensive list of humanity vilely crowded together at Bath, it becomes clear that "All of these 'upstarts of fortune,' aside from the usurers, brokers and jobbers, have been 'translated' into affluence either in or through colonial and

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[27] "The description of poor Murphy's sufferings, which threw my sister Liddy into a swoon, extracted some sighs from the breast of Mrs Tabby: when she understood he had been rendered unfit for marriage, she began to spit, and ejaculated, 'Jesus, what cruel barbarians!' and she made wry faces at the lady's nuptial repast; but she was eagerly curious to know the particulars of her marriage-dress […]" (2.170).

foreign ventures" (Sussman, *Transculturation* 606). These people resist categorization and classification, a jumble that threatens to make chaos of British social order. The colonial model distributes wealth in the home country in a destructively egalitarian way, when any person of any rank can attain sufficient fortune to intermingle with those of a higher social station. Considering the luxuries flooding in from the American colonies, Matthew Bramble suggests that the moral decline caused by the deluge of excess goods is equaled only by the psychological damage caused by the allure of wealth in these distant colonies and the dangerous social fluidity that results from colonial wealth.[28]

The British stripped colonies like America and Scotland bare for their own ornamentation.[29] In this way, "England's social body incorporates the ill effects

[28] This is an important theme throughout the text, where luxury is also equated with cannibalism through a very vivid description of social intermingling at Bath: "The corrosive effects of these tides of luxury are literalized in the contaminating waters of Bath" (Sussman 607). Americans who have profited excessively from the Americas bathe in the same waters as English citizens from the aristocracy and the lowest ranks of people. A greedy consumption of the luxuries and pleasures provided by the Empire leads to the moral dissolution figured by the vile illnesses causing the disintegration of British bodies throughout *Humphry Clinker.* Many of these people have physical disorders, symbolic of the social disorders they represent, and so skin and body fluids infect the bathwater, which is then recycled into drinking water. This discharging of human material, in conjunction with the massive stacking up of people together in places that used to be reserved for those from the higher social orders but are now full of the riff-raff of society directly linked to the forces of American colonialism, leads the British to inadvertently devour one another. The diseases of the body are synecdochical for the devolution of the mind, the influx of ideas that weakens the vigor and rigor of the British mental acuity. The invasion of the American colonist leads to the degradation of the land.

[29] See, for instance, Belinda's adornment in which the goods of a vast network of colonies are all extracted from their rightful place and shipped to England to smother an English lady beneath the sheer volume of ornaments. The native lands are stripped bare in order to load the English

of commercialism into its public institutions and civic and social life, and […] it produces effeminate men who participate in an epidemic spread of luxury, bodily waste, consumption, and 'cannibalism'" (Weed 615). Smollett suggests that in a comparison between the savage cannibals of America and the grasping consumers in England, the comparison does not flatter the supposedly superior civilization. More than this, though, the text uses Lismahago's two brides to implicate England in the savagery of the Americas.

When Lismahago bestows "a fur cloak of American sables, valued at fourscore guineas" on his bride, he costumes her in garb that suggests his cannibal bride's attire at his first wedding ceremony. Win Jenkins describes this second skin of animal pelts with which Lismahago cloaks his new wife as "a long marokin furze cloak from the land of the selvidges, thof they say it is of immense bally" (3.273-4). This sable pelt is an animal skin placed on top of and obscuring the British clothing and skin of the British personage underneath, hinting that Tabitha's external indicators of her English identity can easily be concealed by products from the Americas.

The sable cloak is a significant gift because it captures the status confusion in the text caused by the American colonies. Lismahago's American adventuring and the planters and traders at Bath all made money in the Americas that they then use to claim the rights and privilege of a higher social strata based upon

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body with excessive embellishment that overwhelms the personage buried beneath layers of fripperies.

their wealth. Through gifting Tabitha with the sable pelt, Lismahago extends this ambiguity to her own identity. Only royalty of Europe and savages of the Americas wore sable, so the gift expresses a doubly inappropriate identity. It both raises Tabby's pretensions above her station, reinforcing an already existent character flaw, while simultaneously connecting her in appearance to the American savage, not a flattering comparison even for the stingy and acrid spinster.[30]

The parallels in clothing and the continual proofs of Tabitha's unpleasant nature strengthen the comparison between Lismahago's first and second wife. Throughout the text Tabitha constantly uses others for her own gain. She underpays servants, skimps on food and clothing provisions for those in her care, resents every gift her brother gives to his dependents, and sells goods from the family farm to increase her personal funds. She is greedy and selfish, making life miserable for others to further her own ends. Though she would never practice actual cannibalism, she is not horrified like Bramble's niece Liddy when

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[30] This corruption caused by luxury items that do nothing but inflate the ego may explain why Matthew Bramble speaks so strongly against luxury:

> Woe be to that nation, where the multitude is at liberty to follow their own inclinations! Commerce is undoubtedly a blessing, while restrained within its proper channels; but a glut of wealth brings along with it a glut of evils: it brings false taste, false appetite, false wants, profusion, venality, contempt of order, engendering a spirit of licentiousness, insolence, and faction, that keeps the community in continual ferment, and in time destroys all the distinctions of civil society; so that universal anarchy and uproar must ensue. (3.111)

Though he speaks of evils to be avoided in Scotland, he describes the state in America exactly.

they hear of Lismahago's first wife, who does literally devour humans. She is like his first cannibal bride in that she sees those in the world as objects to be rendered for her own use.

Not only his bride, but all the others in the party receive gifts that connect them with the natives. Each is demarcated as an "other" to varying degrees, dependent upon the strength of their British character. Bramble and Jery are less susceptible to change, so being invested with the products of the Americas seems less threatening to their identities. Win Jenkins, though, is much more vulnerable to this process. Jery details the mirroring between maid and mistress:

> Nature intended Jenkins for something very different from the character of her mistress; yet custom and habit have effected a wonderful resemblance betwixt them in many particulars. [. . .]. but then she seems to have adopted Mrs. Tabby's manner with her cast cloaths.—She dresses and endeavors to look like her mistress, although her own looks are much more engaging.—She enters into her scheme of oeconomy, learns her phrases, repeats her remarks, imitates her stile in scolding the inferior servants, and, finally, subscribes implicitly to her system of devotion. (2.200)

Jenkins becomes more connected to the cannibal bride herself because the lower classes reflect the other and modulate their manners accordingly. The grass purse Winifred Jenkins receives was woven by Squincanacoosta's own hands. Her money, metonymic for her service to Tabitha, will now be contained in a product of the Americas that has been linked to Lismahago's savage bride, who herself "wore a curious pouch, or pocket of woven grass, elegantly painted with

various colours" on her wedding day, right next to "the fresh scalp of a Mohawk warrior" (2.171). Tabitha, then, parallels the cannibal bride, and her dependent does as well because of the derivative nature of her identity. Both historical and literary accounts, then, attest to a disturbing inversion: instead of "civilizing" the native population, British immigrants in America manifest a tendency to admire and assimilate into tribal culture and bring, like a contagion, these undesirable tendencies with them.

No Voice of His Own

Lismahago's dependence upon others for his identity forms a repeated refrain initiated from his first description in the text. The manner in which Lismahago is introduced links him to the well-known lanky and emaciated clown figure, a type of character whom M. M. Bakhtin asserts "cannot be taken literally, because they are not what they seem […] their existence is a reflection of someone else's being—and even then, not a direct reflection" (Bakhtin, footnote 8). Lismahago serves as a severely distorted caricature of a Scotsman stripped of his self-control and dignity. His existence, more so than with the other characters, is less individualized and more a literary symbol. Jery's initial description compares Lismahago to "Don Quixote mounted on Rozinante" (2.154), another fictional depiction of a deluded and often ridiculous comic character. The Lieutenant receives a reflected identity through this resemblance.

His literary nature is further reinforced by his dependence upon the other characters to present his life story.

Lismahago's character is distanced from the reader by the epistolary text's insistence on the distorted and mediated nature of the reader's encounters with him. All the original members of the Bramble party, including Tabitha's nearly illiterate maid, are permitted to compose the letters that make up the narrative—and even the words of Humphry Clinker are recorded verbatim in letters by multiple authors so that he, too, is given more of a life of his own. By contrast, the other characters listen to Lismahago's life story, then interpret it for the reader and pass judgment upon it: Lismahago is unable to contextualize his own life either to himself or to others and remains entirely vulnerable to and dependent upon others to judge the meaning of his life and to preserve his story. Lismahago is discursively constituted and functionally disembodied by being presented, even translated, through the letters of the others; when his voice is briefly heard, it becomes clear that Lismahago's speech is quite different from those who speak for him in the text.

Though Lismahago features frequently in the text, he has limited opportunities to intrude his own voice. No letters of his own are inserted and his words and ideas are transcribed, considerably paraphrased and accompanied with appropriate commentary from Matthew Bramble and Jery. Lismahago's

comments are transcribed into standard British, stripping him of his Scottish speech markers. This is highly significant because speech markers function in the text to provide a unique identity for each of the characters, permitting a greater actuality. Syntax, grammar, word choice, and other elements of style function to give an identity, a distinct character and life, to each of the members. These individual writing styles are sufficiently distinct that a reader can identify, without difficulty, which character purportedly penned any particular letter. To minimize linguistic characteristics indicative of a Scots heritage diminishes Lismahago's unique identity, as well as his essential identification as a Scotsman.[31]

Only twice do the letters record what appears to be his actual speech act, and both these instances are exceedingly brief and serve mainly to emphasize that his voice is not otherwise heard within the text except secondarily through another character. Jery first attempts to transcribe Lismahago's words to establish the oddities of his speech when Lismahago is introduced into the body of the text, emphasizing his linguistic difference from the rest of the group; Jery's second insertion of Lismahago's distinctive Scottish brogue allows the

[31] Smollett, a transposed Scot, was sensitive to the British prejudices against the Scottish dialect and has both Bramble and Jery write at length about the comparative advantages and disadvantages of the Scots dialect, yet eradicate Lismahago's Scottish voice from the text.

Lieutenant to respond pithily to derogatory English doggerel abuse of Scotland. For this, his Scots voice is essential to show he represents, even speaks for, Scotland. Therefore, the linguistic markers of his speech emphasize his Scottish connection: "It is vara terse and vara poignant (said he); but with the help of a wat dish-clout, it might be rendered more clear and perspicuous" (2.177). Here much of the impact of his words results from his Scottish terseness and incisive humor. This brief particularity of speech, which continues for only a few more lines, gives Lismahago a reality denied by Jery's more typical linguistically generic summation of the Scotsman's speech.

Following the interjected speech act quoted above, the words Jery pens continue as though he still speaks for Lismahago, with no acknowledgment that he subsumes Lismahago or that Jery's language contrasts sharply with that of Lismahago just preceding. He continues,

> The captain, with an affectation of candour, observed, that men of illiberal minds were produced in every soil; that in supposing those were the sentiments of the British in general, he should pay too great a compliment to his own country, which was not of consequence enough to attract the envy of such a flourishing and powerful people. (2.178)

Though Jery claims these words tell his reader what Lismahago said, the contrast between the two styles of speech implies that on all the other occasions when Jery makes similar claims to speak for Lismahago he has similarly paraphrased and rewritten him. He also interprets not just the speech but also Lismahago's

behavior, labeling his "candour" an affectation. This cues the reader to note the irony of his speech, but it also suggests that the reader should consider Lismahago's words an act designed to manipulate a particular response from his audience.

Dinner and Entertainment

Relying on others for an identity partially explains Lismahago's excessive emotional responses to situations in which he appears ridiculous to others. At first these aberrations seem merely to be matter for fun, both for the characters in the story and for the readers. Lismahago's absurdities provide entertainment value for the onlookers. His lanky shanks and fiery outbursts seem ludicrously outrageous and inappropriate, not menacing. However, Lismahago's threats are not always empty and his temper sometimes leads to real danger for those around him, as evidenced by his attack upon his nephew with a horse whip.

While these examples point to a temper poorly controlled, near the end of the novel, after he and Tabitha have agreed to marry and he has spent considerable time with all the Bramble party, he is able to control his anger so that it smolders until he can arrange a suitable revenge.[32] When Brambles's

[32] The civilizing aspects of England and the reassurance that his basic needs will be met partially soothe Lismahago's unreasonable ways, and soon "His temper, which had been soured and shriveled by disappointment and chagrin, is now swelled out, and smoothed like a raisin in plum-porridge" (3.261). Marrying Tabitha will remove the external pressure that would lead him

friend and their country host Squire Thomas Bullford enlists his household to enact a staged alarming midnight rescue scene in which Lismahago appears ludicrous, Lismahago's response demonstrates that he cannot tolerate any public ridicule, especially regarding his physical person—which was indecently exposed during his climb down a high ladder. While his ire does not immediately express itself in a fiery explosion of temper, Lismahago is not willing to forgive and forget until after he has more than equaled the score.

Lismahago tenaciously maintains his anger and resentment until he is able to revenge himself for his embarrassment. He rejects all offers of conciliation, refusing to shake the squire's hand or accept his apology, and he returns the expensive gift the squire had given him in recompense for the entertainment he provided. Social conventions would dictate that Lismahago accept Baronet Bullford's treatment. But Lismahago does not follow social conventions, especially when this would mean accepting being made an object of

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to surrender his British identity, return to America, and conform to their culture, but there is no reassuring cure that his inward character is reformed. He will always conform to the society of which he is a part, so the only guarantee of his urbanity is that he will have no cause to be removed from sane social life. "From being reserved and punctilious, he is become easy and obliging. He cracks jokes, laughs and banters, with the most facetious familiarity; and, in a word, enters into all our schemes of merriment and pastime" (3.261). Though Tabitha has partially and at least temporarily succeeded in taming the incivility of Lismahago, these changes are superficial and exceeded by the changes he, in turn, brings to her.

lightheartedness.[33] Baronet Bullford says Lismahago "must be a Goth and a barbarian, if he did not enter into the spirit of such a happy contrivance" (3.157). The squire's other victims accept his practical jokes because they recognize that this is the role they are expected to play. Lismahago seems to be the first ever to repay his host in kind.

In spite of the fact that Lismahago's resentment results from being considered entertainment for the company, Jery and the others continue to see him as such, though they have learned to be more wary of his responses. After this event, Jery compares Lismahago to a "tame bear, very diverting when properly managed" that can "become a very dangerous wild beast when teized for the entertainment of the spectators" (3.166). Lismahago, like a dancing circus bear, provides amusement because of the discrepancies in his nature, but whether his reaction is an immediate explosion or carefully planned revenge, he will not allow any slight to his dignity.

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[33] Lismahago is a lowly, impoverished Scottish lieutenant with no family connections, released from the army on half-pay that is insufficient to live on in England. Conversely, Bullford is a rich and connected baronet, Bramble's close friend, and Lismahago's host—all reasons why Bullford and his household expected Lismahago to quietly endure his treatment. Given their relative social positions, it was Lismahago's place to provide entertainment and accept the lord's treatment. Therefore, Baronet Bramble is "disconcerted" by Lismahago's response. Regardless of Lady Bullford's pleading, and Bramble's attempts at smoothing the situation on behalf of his friend, Lismahago rejects Bullford's peace offering and exacts a public revenge. Lady Bullford is "thunder-struck," "the rest of the company gazed in silent astonishment," and Squire Bullford is speechless at Lismahago's response (3.165), for it shatters social conventions. Lismahago requires that sufficient reparations be made him for his humiliation not in money but in equal embarrassment.

Jery's comparison of Lismahago to an animal who performs on command, commenting on his ungainly mimicry of his masters, demonstrates how ridiculous and inappropriate this behavior is for someone like Lismahago. The bear may stand on its hind legs; it can even be dressed like a human and follow choreographed dance moves. It is, however, still a bear. The contrast between its nature and its behavior provides the humor, for it is still a dangerous and untamed animal. Lismahago's ire can be powerful and dangerous when aroused, and like the bear he may seem tamed when calm but can quickly wreak havoc and devastation upon arousal.

This danger lurking underneath Lismahago's ludicrous exterior never fades. Even after his marriage to Tabitha Bramble, Lismahago still physically threatens anyone who damages his sense of dignity. The calumnious Welsh vicar, Dustwich, implies Lismahago continues upsetting dinner parties with outbursts of temper and threats of physical violence long after the events recorded in the novel are concluded. Though Lismahago has been married into the Bramble family for a sufficient length of time to obtain membership in the parish, Dustwich indicates that Lismahago's temper continues to manifest itself in threats of physical violence that upset social occasions and ruffle the feelings of the local vicar. Having been reduced in the Americas to the level of a beast, Lismahago remains forever untamed—even after a marital union with a

respectable British family. Thus, his American encounter leaves Lismahago permanently altered so that when he perceives himself to be mistreated, his response is to use violence in speech and even in action until he believes he has restored his good name.

American Degeneracy

By no longer responding in ways that the English society deems appropriate, Lismahago embodies British fears regarding the ease with which contact with the Americas could corrupt the British. As one example among dozens, "An Account of the Missionaries Sent to South Carolina" expresses the commonly held view that many British colonists earnestly believed that those living in isolation from continental Britain, even apart from contact with the Amerindians, would "decay insensibly" (qtd. in Carroll 2: 566). This view was not held solely by missionaries working with the dregs of society.

A group of elite gentlemen, accounted the arbiters of Charleston society, conceded it "impossible […] to reflect without very mortifying sentiments" how essentially their inherent nature differed little "from the brute" (*Short Description of South Carolina* 2: 489-90). Other settlers reported their extreme unease that they would "lose the essential badge of Christianity" or even "suffer a sort of transmigration of the wolfish and brutish nature to enter [their] spirits" (Archdale 309, 306). Dreading "how apt human nature is to degenerate"

(Lawson, *New Voyage* 69), authors like Tobias Smollett indicate that essential Britishness, and even rational civility, is somehow irreparably damaged by exposure to the Americas.

To further stress Lismahago's mental aberations, Matthew Bramble and his nephew Jery pen critical commentary about the dour, disputatious, and often uncongenial man who is "so addicted to wrangling, that he will cavil at the clearest truths, and, in the pride of argumentation, attempt to reconcile contradictions (2.160). Valuing disputation over truth, Lismahago has become so "polemical, that every time he opened his mouth out flew a paradox, which he maintained with all the enthusiasm of altercation" (2.184-5). The terms "enthusiasm" and "zeal" were usually reserved for those who had renounced the Church of England to become a Dissenter. This term "enthusiasm" was loaded with weighted connotations for "In the seventeenth century 'enthusiasm,' and especially the religious variety, was a state of mind to be avoided by all sane men" ("Swift and Some Earlier Satirists of Puritan Enthusiasm" 1141).[34]

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[34] Matthew Bramble, sensitive to the currents of the culture, dislikes the Puritan religion to such an extent that he abridges his name to avoid any suggestion of the Puritan religion: as Jery writes, "You must know it is one of our uncle's foibles to be ashamed of his name Matthew, because it is puritanical […]"'; Matt Bramble himself confirms this, telling Lismahago "The truth is, [I] have a foolish pique at the name of Matthew, because it favours of those canting hypocrites, who, in Cromwell's time, christened all their children by names taken from the scripture'"(2.164). Clearly, Matthew Bramble strenuously objects to covenanting Nonconformists if a possible chance association with them causes him to alter the name by which he is known.

Many Dissenters migrated from England, Scotland, and Ireland to the colonies in America, abandoned their homes and communities in the British core to gather in America where the British government did not attempt to impose religious restrictions on them. In America, the Nonconformists were permitted to have governors and officials who reflected their political and religious beliefs. The British government rarely interfered with their governance, and preachers in America were not required by the British government to take any oaths or conform to the Act of Uniformity. Through his emphasis on Lismahago's irrational addiction to argument, regardless of whether his position represented truth, Smollett links concern over religious failings to the American experience, implying that the religious condition of America was not healthy for British subjects.[35]

In this view, Smollett's depiction of Humphry Clinker was following typical ideas of the Anglican rationalists. Dissenting religions were considered by many writers to be cannibalistic, in a way, because they devoured the

[35] The British identified themselves as unlike all other groups because of their society's advancements: most thought this superiority was due to the correct interpretation of divine revelation. The increasing number of Britons in America who aligned with the Dissenting or Nonconformist religion or, even worse, cast off all religion entirely was a danger to the social order and also exposed the individual to mental disorders because it isolated him from stabilizing cultural traditions. The irreligion of the Americas is therefore very disturbing, even for the Dissenters in *Humphry Clinker*. "Then she [Tabitha] asked whether his consort had been high church or low-church, presbyterian or anabaptist, or had been favoured with any glimmering of the new light of the gospel? When he confessed that she and her whole nation were utter strangers to the christian faith, she gazed at him with signs of astonishment, and Humphry Clinker, who chanced to be in the room, uttered a hollow groan" (2.172).

foundations of the society and religion of which they were a part. Smollett suggests that moral relativity, even the acceptance of cannibalism, seems to be the end result of leaving the moderating influence of civilization and the established Church of England to set up systems of government and religion that were unregulated in the Americas. Freed from the checks of Church and State, a solitary Englishman such as Lismahago acculturates to the depraved society of cannibals. In this way, the freedoms of America appear to lack order and control, a dangerous disregard for traditional social controls, a cannibalistic approach to life.[36]

Dissenting religions, like that espoused by Lismahago's great-grandfather, erode the foundations of the society and religion of which they were a part. The nonconformity practiced by Lismahago's grandfather could, in the space of a few generations, lead to a rejection of all religious authority and a lack of necessary moral standards. This suggests one reason why Lismahago is presented as a rationalist, a man who has cast off the shackles of unreasonable religion for the superior guidance of logic…a man now mentally unbalanced by

[36] Though Lismahago's experiences make maintaining cultural integrity important, and his suggestions that comparisons of the two societies are favorable to the savages allows Smollett to humorously castigate the British nation, there is something unbalanced about Lismahago's concept of right and wrong. Devoid of religious guidance, Lismahago joins a tribe, and possibly even participates in future cannibalistic events. He lacks the moral awareness that the tribe is vicious and animalistic, deeply mourning the loss of his cannibal wife. He would never have left this tribe, considering himself one with them, if he hadn't been forcibly ejected back to civilization by them.

the distortions of America. Without the guidance of British culture, supported by organized religion, Lismahago is quickly reduced to accepting the practices of the cannibal society in which he lives. His rationality is not a sufficient defense from these acts that are so morally repulsive, bringing into question what moral or ethical standards are left after a person leaves the Church of England and societal constraints, and how strong the human mind can be without these supports.

The colonies were dominated by single men who lived in remote locations, isolated from the institutions of authority and public order that structured life in England. The general perception was that these migrants were "degenerate[ing] into heathenish ignorance and barbarisme" (General Assembly of Connecticut in 1677 qtd. in Axtell, "Scholastic" 359). In *Humphry Clinker* moral relativity, even cannibalism, seems to be the end result of isolating a Briton from the moderating influence of civilization and the established Church of England to set up systems of government and religion that were unregulated in the Americas. The proposal of cannibalism makes logical sense—in fact, without ethical or moral considerations, this would seem to be an acceptable and effective solution. Smollett demonstrates how faulty a conception it is to hold the American colonies up as the epitome of all good things. Scotland, more civilized

than the wilds of the Americas yet less corrupted by the luxuries at the heart of England, should be the ideal.

Lismahago's family has flowed down the slippery slope from religious noncomformity to total depravity and the overthrowing of social norms. This process is accelerated, perhaps even caused, by his exposure to the corruptions of America. Pure reason is insufficient to reject cannibalism. Lismahago himself had body parts devoured by the cannibal tribe and watched his friend Murphy suffer the extreme exigencies of bodily suffering, yet he never condemns cannibalism. Cannibalism is a practical means of subduing the enemy, causing him to conform, and providing sustenance for the tribe, so logically he cannot disapprove of such a utilitarian means of maintaining culture.

Through certain similarities in plot and character, Smollett conflates the attributes of Lismahago, whose great-grandfather was a covenanter, with those of the titular character Humphry Clinker. Lismahago was probably already especially susceptible to mental disorder as a result of his canting grandfather, but the rationalist worldview that rejects religion makes him even more susceptible as it holds no external standard but relies on the guidance of reason. Clinker is a Methodist, but equally zealous in his pursuits. The fact that these two were both pursued by Tabitha draws parallels between them.

Physical Imbalance in the Americas

The attempt to civilize the New World, implied many who wrote on the subject, is inherently doomed because the Native Americans will not be civilized and, more problematically, those cultural ambassadors who spend any length of time in America return to England markedly changed, often symbolized by external disfigurement from clashes with the natives but demonstrated more significantly by internal disarray. Somehow the American physical environment, attendant with risks and dangers, was particularly potent in unbalancing the minds of Englishmen.[37] This unbalance resulting from climate changes was numinous throughout British novels. Therefore Smollett would have been concerned about the effects of America on physical health and the current medical speculation that relocating to America could unbalance the body and mind. Karen Kupperman has concluded that British authors of this time period generally believed not only that extreme heat caused disease, but that the very

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[37] *Emily Montague*, another novel about the Americas penned at about the same time as *Humphry Clinker*, suggests a similar mental and physical disorder resulting from encounters with the Americas. The author posits, as an explanation, that the drastic changes in climate in the New World shocks the British system. This story takes place in the southern region of Canada, around what is now Quebec, which would provide far less of a shock coming from England than the southern portion of what is now Miami:

> I must, however, observe, as some alleviation, that there is something in the climate which strongly inclines both the body and mind, but rather the latter, to indolence: the heat of the summer, though pleasing, enervates the very soul, and gives a certain lassitude unfavorable to industry; and the winter, at its extreme, binds up and chills all the active faculties of the soul. Add to this, that the general spirit of amusement, so universal here in winter, and so necessary to prevent the ill effects of the season, gives a habit of dissipation and pleasure, which makes labor doubly irksome at its return. (Brooke 203).

act of moving from place to place unbalanced the humours and could lead to ill health. Even Michel de Montaigne believed that, like plants, men would assume entirely new characteristics, as an unavoidable result of natural adaptation if they migrated from their native land.[38]

Following another trend in thinking that would have interested and impacted Smollett, John Locke's *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* "argued that the mind is entirely dependent for its simple ideas—the basis of all thought, all mental activities—on the contact of the senses with the physical, objective, external world. It has no ideas apart from those originally provided by sensational experience" (West 1201). The mind and body reciprocally influence each other, and both are affected by environmental factors:

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[38] As Jill Lepore has noted, this potential for alteration in the purportedly immutable identity aroused serious doubts for the colonists about their own ethnic identity, especially given that speculation about the origins of the Amerindians was rampant. Early British ethnography reveals why this potential destabilization of ethnic identity was cause for concern, for ethnologists suggested that "Indians" "were migrants from Europe or Asia [. . .]"; who "had changed since coming to America and had been contaminated by its savage environment. If this were the case, as many believed, then the British could expect to degenerate, too" (Lepore 5-6). The suggestion of racial alteration was not uncommonly used as an aspersion on American characters. For instance, the factor in *The Sot-Weed Factor* "suggests they [Americans] are of a different race when he describes them 'in Hue as tawny as a Moor'" (Ford 28). Several components contributed to racial variety, most importantly climate, "mode of life and bringing up," and "the conjunction of different species, and the hybrid animals thence produced" (Sheehan 19). Blumenbach attempted to establish firm racial categories, but his constant revisions to the schemas, even adding a racial group, together with his insistence on "transitional" races, kept instability an integral part of emergent schemas of human categorization. In fact, some members of the British community saw the instability of racial indicators as confirmation of their fear that the British culture and civilization were easily shattered.

> The mind's subservience to the physical world was, then, part of the philosophical and medical tradition that Smollett would have taken for granted along with the tradition of humoral pathology. The mind received its health from its physical environment just as it received its ideas from the physical senses operating upon physical objects. (West 1201)

If America was unhealthy for the body, it was unhealthy for the mind, and vice versa.

This need for a change of locality to bring about an improvement in health provides the purported impetus for the Bramble family travels. Changing the external geography "was also thought extremely beneficial in improving physical and thereby mental health" (West footnote 16). As Matt Bramble writes, "I find my spirits and my health affect each other reciprocally—that is to say, every thing that discomposes my mind produces a correspondent disorder in my body; and my bodily complaints are remarkably mitigated by those considerations that dissipate the clouds of mental chagrin" (2.80-1). This principle applies not only to Bramble but also to other unhealthy individuals encountered in their journey. Bramble analyzes his physical and mental states, remarking, "the pain and sickness continued to return, till the anxiety of my mind was entirely removed, and then I found myself perfectly at ease" (2.81). Of the irritating influence of his sister, Mathew Brambles notes, "I am equally distressed in mind and body" (1.1). Prevailing attitudes about the relationship between physical health and psychological wellness would have interested

Smollett, who was himself a doctor trained at the University of Edinburgh, a highly esteemed medical school second only to Leyden. It is therefore not surprising that *Humphry Clinker* depicts the overall ill health of the British nation using metaphors of a sick body.

Smollett emphasizes this disordered mental state in a way that modern readers are not as culturally attuned to recognize, for the eighteenth century often considered reason and emotion to be conflicting forces. Zeal, enthusiasm, or excessive emotion was often a mark of the mentally unbalanced. Lismahago allows his emotions to dominate him, expressing intense feelings about topics regardless whether his zeal and fervor made him appear irrational, a pattern that to the eighteenth century suggests that the social and physical environment of America can make savages of the civilized.

CHAPTER FIVE

Conclusion: The Transatlantic Identity

> As I had written between two and three hundred pages of *excellent* history of the British Colonies in North America, I long flattered myself that the war might terminate so favourably for G. Britain, that I might go on with my work. But alas America is now lost to the Empire and to me, and what would have been a good introduction to the settlement of the British Colonies, will suit very ill the establishment of Independent States.
>
> (William Robertson, *The History of the Discovery and Settlement of America* 70)

When William Robertson's hopes for his masterpiece were dashed by the Revolutionary War, he lost not only "two or three hundred pages of *excellent* history" but the formulated ideological space the Americas represented. For him and for many other writers, America had a textual identity distinct from the geopolitical actuality, which allowed British authors unlimited potential for rewriting the British narrative. America was simultaneously a geographical reality and an emblematic abstraction that impelled British colonists to innovate British identity and social constructs.

Though the contrast between more realistic accounts of America and those inaccurate images conjured by the early novelist would provide interesting analysis, this study has concentrated on the ways in which America functions as

a vital supplementary space for Britain's national literary tradition. *Moll Flanders, The Female American,* and *Humphry Clinker* each consider the discursive figure of the English American strategically deployed to present different rhetorical possibilities in debates over potential political reforms, social progress, and English national identity. *Moll Flanders* envisions the Americas as a space encouraging individuals to dissociate from former connections, even previous identities. This allows individuals to manipulate their lives to achieve increased financial success and cultural currency, but furthers moral dissolution that can have repercussions throughout the empire. Eliza, by contrast, created an ideal world at the conclusion of *The Female American.* Her small island paradise foregoes any future commerce or interaction with England to avoid corruption and colonization. Unlike most such idealized conceptions, Eliza's vision amalgamates English with native tribal culture. Obadiah Lismahago claims to have found a similar idyllic tribal culture free from corrupting luxury and modern industry; however, the text of *Humphry Clinker* undercuts all such assertions through depictions of his bride, lavishly adorned in her savage finery. Though initially Lismahago expresses his intent to retreat from the mercantilism infiltrating even his family home in Scotland, the text substitutes a rural estate in remote Wales as infinitely preferable to the psychologically, spiritually, and physically damaging effects of the Americas. . .even when this Welsh retreat

must be encumbered with the likes of Tabitha Bramble. In this way Tobias Smollett represents Wales as a withdrawal into the past in ways contemporaneous colonists were more frequently attempting in the Americas.

Whether in Wales or in the Americas, conceptualizing England's past to have been unlike the real past and attempting to reconstitute that conception of the historical England elsewhere proves impossible from the start. One cannot recreate the past, or even a fictional past. Discussing this attempt to relive English traditions in the wilds of America, Zuckerman notes that this further differentiated the Englishmen living in America from the English citizens back home, for

> Archaic ideals could be carried across the Atlantic and reconstituted in America from the models in people's minds, but such deliberate recourse to tradition was, at bottom, the antithesis of tradition. The rich particularity of the past could not be remade from models. In the very effort to defend ancient insularities, settlers shattered the continuity with the past that was a hallmark of the localism they sought to conserve. [. . .]. Traditional ends had therefore to be achieved under novel circumstanced by novel means. (Zuckerman 117)

Concurrent with, and quite likely in response to the settlement of new English lands in America, the novel gained life as a genre. Protonovels and novels written while the American colonies were still considered English outposts show contrasting ideologies, often far removed from the actualities of the experiences

in the Americas, for the image of America in British writing is frequently a "reflection of metropolitan preoccupations rather than of colonial realities" (Elliot 393). The nature of this fictive America to the reality is complicated, for reality sometimes changes to reflect the world an author envisions. Reality is a construct shaped by perception, which may be trained by fictive literature sometimes masquerading as a strict recounting of reality. While colonists explored making their conceptions a historic and geographic reality in the New World, novelists in Britain continued to experiment with similar pursuits in the various Americas they idealized or anathematized in their works.

While Defoe, and the author of *The Female American*, and Smollett made use of the ideological potential of the New World to inaugurate different conceptions of the empire, the actual British colonists living in the Americas were also revising the British identity. The massive environmental and geographical distance from the center of the empire caused the British colonists in the Americas to experience a separate daily reality from their compatriots in England and the internal colonies, though these colonists still self-identified as British. Because the British identity included subjects who had considerably different experiences from those on the other side of the Atlantic, the concept of what it meant to be British required redefinition to account for this phenomenon.

Until the British identity crisis precipitated by the prominent rise of the American and British hybrid whose role in the empire needed clarification, the nature of what it meant to "be British" could remain relatively unexamined and undefined—though internal colonization of Ireland and Scotland had begun this process. As the awareness of the English in America, and emigrants from the internal colonies, began to receive increasing attention, so too did questions about cultural identity generated by the difficulties in distinguishing these British from those who were "other." All other groups, even temporary allies such as the Dutch, had linguistic markers that demarcated them as a distinct people: the British colonies in America created intense identity issues because their members spoke the same language and their bodies were indistinguishable from those of the British at home. These factors identified the American colonists and the continental Britons as one people, yet the British in America were essentially altered.

The British subjects who spent time in the Americas served as impetus to those in England for establishing the true British identity. Their presence both on the American continent (claiming that small clusters of British in the precariously contained foreign wilds had formed from the wilderness another England) and their propinquity (if they returned to British soil, insisting as they did that they were equally British despite the general perception that they were

intrinsically no longer the same), called the borders of Britishness into question. The British found themselves, and in truth created themselves, in the counteridentities they conceived to define their very sense of selfhood in opposition to the traits they increasingly discovered in the migrants returning from America.

The different experiences and distanced perspective that reformed the British character in the Americas changed the mental construct of England and the domestic territories, too. Colonists sailing from divergent places throughout England determined to self-identify not solely by their destination (the American colonies) nor by the various diverse regions and towns from whence they originated, but instead to claim an identity as "the British" in America. This attempt resulted in a third category of subject who was neither British nor fully not British.

Moll Flanders shows the eponymous character to be a detached observer of society in both England and the Americas. She maneuvers through both worlds with increasing dexterity and confidence, but the isolating influence the Americas have had over her from her birth have made her too conscious of her distinctions to incorporate into society. The Americas help her achieve her life goal of becoming a gentlewoman, which to her signifies self-actualization freed from the necessity of service to others. The titular Female American is separated

from both English and Native American society because of her dual heritage in both. She stands apart from each culture, able to judge both and to adopt the best features of each. Eventually she chooses to belong in neither separate culture but to form her own society that, like herself, blends the highest qualities available in each. Lismahago, by contrast, attempts to rejoin British society, but the American taint has reduced his ability to operate in the civilized world. Though at first the other characters exclude him because of these oddities, his marginalization is partially mitigated—though never erased—by his marriage into the Bramble family. However, his union with the family marks them as now unlike the English culture and more American by the gifts he bestows upon them. Both *The Female American* and *Humphry Clinker,* then, raise ideas of relations with the indigenes of the Americas that both reflected and revised typical ways in which American colonists attempted to distinguish themselves simultaneously from the European and from Amerindian corruption. They explore the idea of reciprocity: that the British could adopt and adapt features of the Amerindian, while the savage native could assume traits associated with Britishness, lessening the distance between the civilized and the savage.

The distancing effect of the Americas on the characters in each of these three novels, and the influence the Americas have on their fictive lives, makes each one consider his or her individual identity, because they do not conform to

British society. This also raises the question, within the texts and for the reader, of what is means to be British. English citizens in England at this point would not have conceived of themselves primarily as English, or British. Likewise, the Scots or the Irish would never have conceived of themselves as English, and only rarely as British. Those who remained in their homelands characterized their identity by their family, station in life, occupation, religion, and region of origin. While still in the homeland, the potential immigrant would have viewed his fellow countrymen as a multiplicity of identities rather than a unified solidarity. Yet after making the terrible crossing of the Atlantic, a crossing of a geographic space deeply symbolic of the separation of the old life from the new, the British in America, more than other groups, insisted on viewing the world in static binaries of "British" and "Other." Yet those British who became somehow Americanized demonstrated the futility of this attempt.

Colonists in the Americas needed a civilized identity to cling to in order to maintain the notion of civility in the wilds of the Americas, in order to increase the distance from the indigenous savages and to minimize their distinctions from their fellow subjects across the Atlantic. They required an identity that was more cohesive than that provided by their numerous points of origin in England. This was especially true because many emigrants to the New World were already migrants in the Old, having left behind homes and ties of both propinquity and

consanguinity for increased financial opportunities in London or other large centers of commerce.

Moll's first memories are of travelling with gypsies; she never identified any particular place in England as home. Unca Eliza was born in the Americas and, though raised in England during her formative years, she always had connections and family on both sides of the Atlantic. Lismahago has been absent from his native land for such an extensive period of time that he cannot feel a connection to any place. However, none of these characters, or the texts, suggest any recognition that they might be representatives of a new nation. The characters, and the texts, consider the characters Britons influenced by the Americas—not Americans.

Therefore, for these three characters (as well as for actual American colonists), their connections to their individual regions of origin were weakened while simultaneously their attachment to a broader concept and framework was strengthened. Their worldview became more cosmopolitan, at the same time making their British identity of increased importance to them. Moll could never have been content to remain in the Americas, despite her success there. Her desire was always to return home to England after her stint in the Americas, transporting her wealth and increased privileges with her back to England. Eliza rejects two offers to be an Indian queen and marries a man she does not love in

order to maintain her identity as a Briton. Even alone on her island or later among the natives on their adjoining isle, she always considers herself a source of British religious enlightenment for the native peoples. Poor Lismahago finds he can't go home again, at least to the actual Scotland so different from that of his remembered youth. However, he can conceive of the Welsh countryside as an acceptable alternative.

Forcing Moll, Eliza, or Lismahago to fit within the postcolonial binary system of British colonizers and an "other" people group indigenous to the land Britain claimed as a colony reduces what *Moll Flanders, The Female American,* and *Humphry Clinker* suggest about the complex interactions between cultures. These texts present a third, even more ambiguous and potentially destabilizing, element in the colonization of America: the British colonizers who became neither like the British back home nor like the colonized peoples, but variously both and neither. This third group was a source of discomfort to those in England, for members of this intermediate category claimed to be British yet enacted roles increasingly differentiated from other recognizable identities.

Moll, Eliza, and Lismahago occupy a space between the colonizer and colonized, transforming both without fully resembling or embodying either one. These depicted colonists shatter the binary sensibilities of difference that inflect and simplify social constructs of the British identity. The colonists amalgamate

traits that made them "other," personal characteristics that the British had demarcated as separate and opposite, yet all three still maintain a self-identity of a British citizen. They were not fully "other," yet were uncomfortably unlike the British who remained at home in both their mental attitude and status. The British conceived their very sense of selfhood in opposition to the traits they increasingly discovered in the migrants, both real and fictional, returning from America.

This concept can be identified in the experiences of actual colonists who were very anxious to establish that they were essentially unchanged by their experiences in the American colonies. Colonists frequently insisted that they were British, just the same as their counterparts in England, only in a "New England." However, in this conception, home became "England," a cohesive singular place of monolithic composition. Through this very insistence on solidarity, the British colonist in America formed a conception of England, a conceit often distinct from the reality of England.

British colonists who landed on the uncharted shores of the American continent "were neither able nor willing to see themselves as people with a cultural identity of their own, [though] they faced a far different world than those they took for fellows across the Atlantic, and they faced it in very different ways" (Zuckerman 115). The American continent signaled the failure of all

formulas of British order to constrain the frontier between the tenuously held British outposts and the indefinable disorder of the unknown, what more than one traveler in America demarcated as the "vast and empty chaos" (Washburn, "Moral and Legal Justifications" qtd. in Zuckerman 154). This partially accounts for the vitality of their affirmations that they formed a mental cohesive whole with their comrades back home despite the physical separation from England and provides insight into the violence of their adjurations against adopting the more practical modes of life modeled by the indigenes of America.

Moll's highwayman consort demonstrates this trend ironically. Unable to adapt to the New World, he continues to live out the English conceptions he maintains from his youth of the acceptable gentlemanly pursuits. Unfortunately for him, as Moll remarks, indolent hunting, riding, and fishing are signifiers in the Americas of pursuits of Indians and the lower order of servants and slaves. He does, in fact, spend his days as an Indian would, which demonstrates his failure to alter his perceptions according to the different realities in the Americas. Eliza, in sharp contrast to usual practices, adapts to indigenous culture except in nonnegotiable matters of morality, civility, or religion. She adopts the most useful features of both her worlds in order to navigate the many vicissitudes of her life. Lismahago has adopted indigenous ways, embodying the more typical British conceptions of the unfortunate results. My intent in tracing these themes

has not been to argue for the emergence of a new character in order to prefigure the rise of the separate American consciousness and national identity, leading up to the Revolution, but to consider how the encounters with the Americas in each of these texts are presented as affecting British experiences for those who travel to the Americas and for those who remain at home in the center of the newly forming empire.

Though the dangers posed and opportunities offered by ideas flowing back across the Atlantic are explored in every media, from hackneyed pamphlets to more thoughtful art such as theater productions, from fervent sermons meant for broad audiences to letters intended for a specific person, it is clear that long before the colonists declared their independence and began a war to throw off British rule, their ideas were returning home and were already being seen as strange and often unconducive to traditional life in Britain. America was a profoundly transformative catalyst of the cultural transformation throughout the entire empire. The British character's separation in the Americas from cultural origins in England paradoxically defines what and who that individual is, even after a return to friends and family.

The typical scholarly concern considers the ways in which British culture impacted America, defining it as a nation. This study is more interested in the reverse: understanding the ways in which the Americas registered in the British

literary imagination and the effect that this had on the formation of the British identity. Print culture was an active participant in defining, revising, categorizing and creating this construct, in effect transforming the empire. Considering the influence that the Americas had on the founding of "Britain" as a metaphysical construct allows for a more nuanced understanding of the reciprocal nature of the relationship and allows for a more complete interpretation of the literature crucial to the process of creating a British identity.

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