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THIS ONCE SAVAGE HEART OF MINE: RHETORICAL STRATEGIES OF SURVIVAL IN EARLY NATIVE AMERICAN WRITING

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ABSTRACT

THIS ONCE SAVAGE HEART OF MINE:
RHETORICAL STRATEGIES OF SURVIVAL IN
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By

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The focus of this dissertation is the recovery and study of early Native American writing. I concentrate on the rhetorical strategies used by these early Native American writers to create something wholly different from what was expected or desired by Euroamerican society. Each writer responds to a specific moment in Indian/white relations and each text enters the dialogue between colonizer and colonized.

For example, there are questions that surround the issue of Native Americans and Christianity, questions dealing with issues of identity, cultural transformation, cultural conflict and racism. Many have deemed native religious adaptability a "tragic acculturation"; it is, however, an attempt to create a cultural system in which native communities could survive and prosper. Writers such as Joseph Johnson, Hendrick Aupaumut, Peter Jones, and William Apess have left us a written account of the struggle of the individual, as well as his community, in their attempt to carve a place in changing world.

For my son, Christopher Schneider, and my mother, Lorna Charron.

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To Joseph Johnson, Hendrick Aupaumut, Peter Jones, and William Apess. To those who came before. I stand on the shoulders of giants.

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INTRODUCTION

The focus of this dissertation is the recovery and the study of early Native American writings of the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, some of which are relatively unknown. I have focused on the writings of Joseph Johnson, Hendrick Aupaumut, Peter Jones, and William Apess. Although these early writers have received some attention within the academic community, relatively few literary scholars have attempted to frame this work within the American literary tradition. Furthermore, early Native American studies focus less on the Indian writers and more on their Euroamerican colonizers. In doing so, scholars, in true western tradition, place the Indian response (to colonization, conversion, or cultural difference) seemingly below the response of their European counterparts.

My response to the scholarship that exists is to focus on the rhetorical strategies used by these early Native American writers to create something wholly different than what was expected or desired by Euroamerican society. For example, each of these writers creates the political subject using the rhetoric most available to him. Joseph Johnson and Peter Jones use theological arguments. Aupaumut, the idea that the rhetoric of justice is said to be available to all, yet Indians are placed outside that ideal. William Apess uses the idea of the hero and Christianity to argue that the Indian is more "American" and more "Christian" than white people. By doing so, each writer positions himself in canny and subtle ways to determine his place in a changing society.

In addition, I must explain what this project does not do. I do not attempt to define what is "authentically" Native American and what is not. Scholars who have attempted to do so have based their opinions on parameters that have no merit. I do not

reinforce the idea of racial differences between Native Americans and whites. I do not argue that certain literary forms are tied to a culture, a people, or an ethnic group. What I do attempt to do is show how each text responds to a specific moment in Indian/white relations, how each text enters the dialogue between colonizer and colonized.

Scholars working in early Native American studies fall into roughly two categories: literary essentialists and ethnohistorians. The literary essentialist attempts to categorize these early writers into the "authentic Indian" and his/her polar opposite: the "assimilated" or "acculturated" Indian. For example, Arnold Krupat attempts to define these categories through the Native American autobiography which he separates into "individually written (autobiographies by Indians)" and "compositely produced (Indian autobiographies)" texts (133). According to Krupat, these writings create a dialogic self, a self that exists only in relation to those around it. I would argue that no self exists in isolation, that we all create ourselves in relation to others. What Krupat is driving at, however, is that the Indian self exists *only* in relation to the dominant culture, "the textual representation of a situated encounter between two persons . . . and two cultures" (133). In other words, the dialogic self, for the Indian, is created biculturally.

He goes on to say these autobiographies illustrate a collective self that is a "result of specific dialogical or collective sociocultural practices" (134). How does this differ from any autobiographical self? No matter one's cultural affiliation, the written self is always created dialogically. Rather than acknowledging this obvious misstep in his argument, Krupat moves to his thesis that Native American autobiographies work to suppress the dialogic voice. Again, isn't this true in *all* autobiographies? Doesn't the definition of autobiography loosely mean a story written by oneself about oneself?

What Krupat is attempting to do, along with others like him, is to locate the "authentic" Indian within the text itself. Such work implies that something exists within the text that allows us to recognize ethnicity and, as such, allows us to establish a hierarchy in which we can categorize texts on some sort of sliding scale of authenticity. The mindset of the literary essentialist works in such a way that it eliminates or discards texts that do not meet the defined criteria.

Krupat's move, to explain his "reading" of Native American autobiographies as either dialogic or monologic, is an attempt to define his terms by way of Bakhtinian theory and dialogical anthropology. In other words, the autobiography is a genre standing in direct opposition to all that "Indianness" implies – tribal nature, the denial of the individual, the affirmation of the communal. Thus, according to Krupat, and other literary essentialists, there is no "I" in Indian.

Yet what happens is Krupat attempting to justify his own position as a member of the dominant culture constructing his own "analogical anthropology": replacing the Indian text with his "autobiographies by Indians" and "Indian autobiographies." Krupat does this in an attempt to deflect any criticism that sees his work as an act of imperialism. He goes so far to say that "the use of appendixes and footnotes" does not affirm imperialism or function in the service of domination" (139). Noting the footnotes on the bottom of the page, one is forced to smile.

Krupat argues that Indian autobiographies (those written with others), although literally dialogic, read as though monologic, and that single voice is the voice of the dominant culture. He goes on to generalize that the "commitment to dialogue in autobiographies by Indians is no more universally present in them than a commitment to

monologue is universally present in Indian autobiographies" (141). What he is saying, in effect, is that he cannot argue, with any degree of certainty, that his artificial distinctions can be maintained. In other words, both the monologic and the dialogic voice can be found in Native American biography.

Krupat's reading of Apess's *Son of the Forest* lacks an even basic understanding of the conversion narrative as genre and actually tends toward a dangerous essentialism. He argues that Apess's autobiography does not differ from earlier Puritan religious writings, nor does it differ from the writings of Catherine Brown, who defines herself as "a Christian Indian of the Cherokee nation" (145-147). Evidently, Krupat is unaware of the specific tenets of Protestant religious writing. Krupat claims that he is unable to locate "a Cherokee dimension" in Brown's writing or "a Pequot dimension" in Apess (147). Thus, Krupat believes the reader can locate in "authentic" Indian writing something that defines that writer's "Indianness."

Furthermore, he claims there is no representation of the "secular, Anglo world" in these texts. What he fails to understand is religious writings were not meant to represent the secular world, only the religious conversion of the writer. In addition, he earlier condemns the monologic voice of the dominant culture in Native American autobiographies and then turns around and condemns Apess for his lack of that voice.

Consequently, the literary essentialist acts as the gatekeeper of Native American studies, determining which texts are worthy of our consideration – because they represent the "real" – and which texts should be ignored – because they represent an individual's failure to resist assimilation or acculturation. Such categorization reflects the dominant society's unwillingness to look unflinchingly at those moments that create the texts the

literary essentialist works so hard to ignore. Thus, according to Krupat, eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Native American writings should be dismissed since they do not fit his idea of authenticity. For Krupat, the "authentic" Indian is not Christian, the "authentic" Indian does not even write, at least not in the nineteenth century.[1]

In many cases, the literary essentialist turns to works written about Indians, or to works written by Indians but with significant input from whites. For example, Krupat finds evidence of authenticity in *Life of Black Hawk*, written by J.B. Patterson, an Illinois newspaper writer, from a translation by Antoine LeClair, government interpreter for the Sauk and Fox. Krupat bases his finding on the opening of Black Hawk's narrative, where Black Hawk relates a prophesying dream. According to Krupat, relating this dream is much more "Indian" than relating one's childhood experiences, as, for example, does William Apess.

Krupat, therefore, would argue for nativist side of things, claiming that in order to be the "true" Indian, the "authentic," one must commit acts in one's writing not required anywhere else. To locate the authentic Indian, we must subscribe to idea of the New Age tree-hugging Indian, weeping at pollution and speaking monosyllabically. Any other attempts, according to Krupat, bans us from the "Indian" table.

Yet another facet of early Native American scholarship is ethnohistory. Ethnohistorians attempt to understand early Native American response through the eyes of the colonizer. For example, George Tinker analyzes the impact of Christian missionaries on Native American life in *Missionary Conquest: The Gospel and Native American Cultural Genocide.* Tinker chooses to devote his scholarship, not to the Native

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[1] Krupat does not find fault with Leslie Marmon Silko's *Storyteller*. In it, he is able to locate "Pueblo tradition" which signals, in his mind, its authenticity.

American response, but to the missionaries themselves: John Eliot in New England, Pierre-Jean de Smet in the Northwest, Junípero Serra in California, and Henry Benjamin Whipple in the Midwest. In doing so, Tinker commits the same crime of which many Native scholars are guilty: focusing on the colonizer in order to read the colonized. According to Jace Weaver, readings such as Tinker's destroy both Native agency and subjectivity: "The missionaries are portrayed as the only actors in the story. Indians are passive recipients, merely acted upon" (5). Grounding one's readings, where the primary text becomes the missionary, is reminiscent of those "armchair anthropologists" E.E. Evans-Pritchard criticizes who claim knowledge of a primitive culture through their readings of travel narratives. It becomes no more than an act of cultural relativism.

Several questions surround the issue of Native Americans and Christianity, questions dealing with issues of identity, cultural transformation, cultural conflict, and racism to name a few. The question of one being both Native American and Christian has intrigued scholars in various fields of Native American studies[2]. James Treat writes of the paradox surrounding the terms *Native* and *Christian*:

> Conventional wisdom suggests that 'native' and 'Christian' are mutually exclusive identities: a native who has become wholeheartedly Christian has lost some measure of native authenticity; a Christian who is still fully native has fallen short of Christian orthodoxy. (6)

In other words, consolidation of an ethnic identity, particularly a Native American ethnic identity, with that of a religious identity is fraught with contradictions.

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[2] For example, see Arnold Krupat, *For Those Who Come After: A Study of Native American Autobiography* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985). In his study of Indian autobiographies, Krupat distinguishes autobiographies written by "christianized Indians" as inherently different from "Indian autobiographies" (31). He argues that Indian autobiographies are a collaboration between whites and Indians and therefore, works which do not have that collaboration cannot be defined as such. Thus, he dismisses out of hand the works of numerous early Native American writers whose autobiographical writings allow scholars an unprecedented look into the fundamental struggle to construct a viable identity in a world now dominated by white Euroamericans.

To answer the question surrounding these "mutually exclusive identities, "we must look at the historical moment in which European missionaries were attempting to convert the Indians to Christianity. Besides the inculcation of Christian doctrine, the missionaries were introducing Western "culture, values, and social and political structures, not to say political hegemony and control" (Tinker 4). Therefore, scholars argue that the process of Christian conversion consists of an acceptance of "Indian inferiority and the idealization of white culture and religion" (Tinker 3). Arguments such as these have led scholars to question the credibility of the Native American convert as both a Native American and a Christian.[3]

Whether or not one agrees with Tinker's conclusion (and I do not), it is true that missionaries believed civilization went hand in hand with conversion. Native Americans were considered savages who needed both literacy and morality in order to grasp the implications of Christ's teachings. Arguments ensued between denominations over which should come first: civilization or conversion, but no matter the answer, missionaries indoctrinated the Indians by way of the mission school and Indian "Praying Towns."

Questions surrounding the supposed contradiction between being both Native American and Christian are thus rendered moot. It is not, as anthropologists have argued, that native religious adaptability is a "tragic acculturation," it is, rather, that those early Native American converts were attempting to create a cultural system in which their

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[3] James Axtell, "Were Indian Conversions *Bona Fide*? in *After Columbus: Essays in the Ethnohistory of Colonial North America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 100-121. See also George E. Tinker, *Missionary Conquest: The Gospel and Native American Cultural Genocide* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993). Tinker agrees with Axtell that most Indian conversions were genuine, but believes that Axtell confuses sincerity with a thorough comprehension of Christian doctrine.

communities could survive and even prosper (Treat 9). The world was changing. Writers such as Joseph Johnson, William Apess, and Peter Jones have left us a written account of the struggle of the individual, as well as his community, in their attempt to carve a place in a changing world.

Bernd Peyer argues that converted Indians, both missionary and writer, "developed a relatively homogenous survival strategy, an Indian theology of liberation" as an adaptation to and survival in the colonial situation. Peyer's thesis seems rather simple: as though one could read the abovementioned writers and discover one inherent quality that connects them all, a quality that is more than Indian identification. Although I do believe that each writer presents a "survival strategy," to use Peyer's phrase, I do not find a connective thread that I can point to, other than what I have mentioned above – the struggle of the individual and community to situate themselves in this colonial world – that I can define as a "theology of liberation."

Joseph Johnson, one of Eleazar Wheelock's prize pupils and most prolific writers, is an outstanding example of the Indian convert who not only accepts Christianity, but refashions it in such a way that it is no longer his teacher's Christianity, but something more. This fact alone sets Johnson apart from William Apess and Peter Jones in his attempts to come to terms with the tenants of Calvinism. Johnson's theological struggle differs, then, from the struggles of Apess and Jones. In one example, we see Johnson as a young man struggling to achieve God's grace and sanctification, something one cannot procure in Calvinist theology:

> I am yet in the Gall of Bitternes[4] and in the bond of Iniquity. I hope that God will yet Enable me to See the Pride of my heart, & the great Sin of Unbelief and the Necessity I stand in of Christ Jesus. I believe that unless God be pleased to Open my Eyes that I may See the wickedness of my

[4] Spelling in this quotation has not been corrected.

> heart I greatly fear I Shall never Obtain the One thing needfull. (Murray 65)

Johnson believes that although God has not yet opened his eyes, He still may. Then Johnson will "Obtain the One thing needfull": salvation. That Johnson is still seeking salvation shows his belief in his own determination to achieve grace. In order to create a specific place in this new world order, Johnson must step outside of Wheelock's Calvinist theology and refashion a theology that will allow him and other Indians to survive and prosper in Christian America. As he struggles to determine his fate, Johnson's understanding of grace, regeneration, sanctification, and justification illustrates a subtle, but important, difference.

In *The Experiences of Five Christian Indians*, William Apess acts as amanuensis relating the conversion experience of himself, his wife, and three other Indian women. However, his reasons behind this text are more than just narratives of conversion, although they do serve that very purpose. Apess makes it a point in this and other writings, that those who profess to be Christians behave in non-Christian ways to those sons and daughters of the forest. For example, Apess includes Hannah Caleb's enmity toward Christianity and those who practice it: "They openly professed to love one another, as Christians, and every people of all nations whom God hath made – and yet they would backbite each other, and quarrel with one another, and would not so much as eat and drink together, nor worship God together" (85). What Apess is doing, in effect, is to show how Christians are less so than those they have deemed "savages." Over and again, Apess illustrates how he and these four women are better Christians than those who colonized America in the name of Christ. We do not see such attempts in Johnson's writings.

Peter Jones, in many ways, strikes the middle ground between Johnson and Apess. As an itinerant Methodist preacher, Jones'ss autobiographical narrative is a journal of his drive to bring Christianity to various Indian nations. Jones does echo Apess's condemnation of white Christian behavior, but unlike Apess it does not color his entire narrative. Jones, more so than Johnson or Apess, is strongly sectarian. In one instance, he attempts to proselytize among members of the Mohawk nation who are Christian but associated with the Church of England. He tells us: "I regret to state that the gospel preached among them seemed to have little or no effect upon their moral conduct. In this respect, they were no better than their pagan brethren" (6). Thus with Jones we do not see the subtle refashionings of Joseph Johnson, nor the cynicism of Apess.

Although it is tempting to see these writers as more "Indian" than "Christian," because to do so would silence those critics who label Christian Indians as "sellouts," these writings resist such an easy categorization. To say that one falls more on the Indian side than the Christian assumes an existence of something completely "Christian" or completely "Indian." It assumes that there is a marked delineation between polar opposites. These writers prove that to be Christian, to be Indian, or to be a Christian Indian, is a fluid state resisting a positivist mentality that demands evidence of the authentic or the genuine.

Jace Weaver, in an attempt to come to terms with two widely divergent views on Christianity and Native Americans, uses two scholarly works in order to set the parameters of an ongoing discussion: were Christian missionaries well-intentioned, as George Tinker claims in *Missionary Conquest: The Gospel and Native American*

Cultural Genocide, or did those missionaries carry with them the knowledge of genocide, both cultural and specific, as Homer Noley claims in *First White Frost: Native Americans and United Methodism*?

Unlike Tinker, Homer Noley focuses on the writings of those impacted by the missionaries: Peter Jones, George Copway, John Sunday, and Harry Lang. Readings such as these situate the Indian as the primary text —a reading that moves away from the anthropological and into the realm of literary scholarship. Whether one wants to argue for acculturation, assimilation, or resistance, it is here — in the writings of these Christian Indians —where Native scholars should look.

No matter where one looks for answers, the questions scholars such as Weaver, Tinker, Noley, and others attempt to answer is how does one come to terms with two such disparate designations: that of Christian and Indian. "Natives are still taught that 'Christian Indian' is an oxymoron. For all too many, to become Christian still means to cease being Indian," says Weaver (6). Although the question continues to be a troubling one, Weaver argues that Native scholars have approached it from a position situated firmly in European intellectual discourse: biblical hermeneutics. Thus, Western interpretations of biblical texts supported and enforced colonialism.

This hermeneutical understanding of the Bible, and consequently, Christianity, has led to the Christian/Indian divide in Native communities, Weaver implies. Furthermore, the "isms" through which we read and interpret texts reinforce the Native American as subjected. Western discourse, Weaver asserts, fails to acknowledge a Native worldview that is vastly different from its own. Thus, to use post-colonialism as a tool for understanding Native American reality is to claim that colonialism is dead when,

as Weaver states, such as assertion is patently false for two-thirds of the world (13). Instead, a more significant approach would be *internal colonialism* which Weaver defines as "a native population . . . swamped by a large mass of colonial settlers who, after generations, no longer have a *mêtropole* to which to return" (13). In addition, post-colonialism is closely aligned with postmodernism, a discourse that denies agency and subjectivity. It is no coincidence, observes Weaver, that these two systems of thought occurred "just as the peoples of the Two-Thirds World begin to find their voices and assert their own agency and subjectivity . . ." (14).

If, at one end we have Tinker, who strongly believes missionaries "did not intend any harm to Indian people," and at the other end we have Noley, quoting both Cotton Mather's and Captain John Underhill's response to the Pequot massacre of 1673 as "a 'sweet sacrifice' to God" and "Scripture declareth women and children must perish with their parents" respectively, where can situate ourselves so as to move away from this ever-present dichotomy of Native and Christian? (Tinker 15; Noley 25, 26). We must usher in a true post-colonialism for Native Americans. To do so, Weaver contends, we must cease teaching Western hermeneutics and theologies (15). Post-colonialism for Native Americans must be such that no division exists in the community between the Christian Indian and her/his traditionalist counterpart.

In order to create this post-colonialism, Weaver believes we need to consider the relationship between Indians and the land. In a purely Delorian move, he propounds that Indians are spatial rather than temporal, and that they view creation as ideal rather than corrupted (Deloria 80-81). Finally, interpretation and understanding must come out of the community, not the individual. Borrowing from Justo Gonzalez, Weaver labels this a

communitist approach —a combination of community and activist —so as to create a "post-colonial we-hermeneutic . . . [possessing] an active commitment to Native community" (22).

Although an ideal approach, it not only falls back on Western discourse —something Weaver seems determined to avoid —but fails to overturn the judgments handed down to those already labeled "oxymoron": the Joseph Johnsons, the Samson Occoms, the Peter Joneses, the Charles Eastmans. However important and viable it is to move beyond the dichotomy of "us" versus "them" in the Native American community, it is equally as important to recover these early works without the negativism of Arnold Krupat or the naïveté of George Tinker.

In a more useful approach, Hilary Wyss focuses on the idea of marginalia to illustrate the writings of Native Americans in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Indians began their dialogue with their own community, as well as the Euroamerican community, by writing in the margins of their Bibles. In so many ways, this symbolizes not only their status within colonial society, but also their status in present-day academia. Wyss attempts to eliminate this marginalization through the critical recovery of both Native writers and Euroamericans writing about Natives. Wyss situates her project from the mid-seventeenth century through 1829 — the year William Apess's narrative, *A Son of the Forest*, was published. She is concerned less with defining the authentically native than with laying out those "cultural influences that define and are in turn redefined by Christian Indians . . ." (5). Wyss terms these cultural convergences "transculturations" and "reculturations."

Noting the argument surrounding the term "autobiography," Wyss categorizes these writings "auto-ethnography," preferring to situate these writings in the writer's attempts to define various traditions rather than define him or herself. This definition, according to Wyss, became an amalgamation of both Euroamerican and Native cultures.

Similarly to Weaver, Wyss examines the assumptions surrounding the terms "Native" and "Christian." For too long, scholars have either ignored or dismissed these early Native writings, labeling them as inauthentic because of what these scholars see as no more than physical manifestations of assimilation. Wyss analyzes letters, narratives, and manifestos written by Natives as well as missionary tracts and captivity narratives written about Natives that illustrate the cultural negotiations taking place between the indigenous peoples and their colonizers.

Wyss breaks down her examination into five separate scenes of writing: the events surrounding King Philip's War; Experience Mayhew's *Indian Converts*; the missionary efforts at Stockbridge; the Native Christian community at Brotherton; and William Apess's conversion narrative. In doing so, she sets up a continuum beginning with John Eliot's bid to Christianize "a local Algonquian community in 1643" and ends with William Apess's 1829 narrative designated by scholars as the "first" published Native American autobiography (19).

Although she grants the significance of Apess to the Native American literary canon, Wyss attempts to change our perceptions as to how and when Natives entered the American scene of literacy and literature. By situating Apess at the end of her study, Wyss forces us to acknowledge his predecessors and, in doing so, challenges us to rid

ourselves of any essentializing tendencies which would effectively erase the writers who laid the foundation upon which Apess stands.

Wyss forces us to acknowledge the Native American writings that came before Apess; yet, she assigns him a prominent position, devoting the last chapter to *A Son of the Forest*, *The Experiences of Five Christian Indians of the Pequot Tribe* and *The Eulogy on King Philip*. It is his rhetorical power, Wyss claims, that has all but obscured the earlier writings. Nevertheless, he is writing out of a tradition and uses familiar discourses —the captivity narrative, the rhetoric of the revolution, and the conversion narrative —to shape his texts. Although these discourses are firmly established in the Euroamerican tradition, Apess's appropriation marks them as fraudulent: the captivity narrative describes his removal from his community when but a child; the revolutionary rhetoric establishes King Philip as a hero equal to George Washington; the conversion narrative establishes the close connection between missionary and convert. Apess, like those before him, was engaged in the constant redefinition of the Native Christian.

For those who are determined to categorize these early writers as either nativist or assimilationist, I would refer them to Eastman's final paragraph in *From the Deep Woods to Civilization*:

> I am an Indian; and while I have learned much from civilization, for which I am grateful, I have never lost my Indian sense of right and justice. I am for development and progress along social and spiritual lines, rather than those of commerce, nationalism, or material efficiency. Nevertheless, so long as I live, I am an American. (195)

Eastman speaks eloquently for those labeled "Wheelock's Indians," who struggled to exist in a world that considered them no more than savage beasts[5]; for Hendrick Aupaumut, who was rewarded for his efforts on behalf of the United States government with the loss of his people's lands; for William Apess, whose writing rivals that of the leading abolitionists of his time, but who has spent a century in relative obscurity[6]; for Peter Jones, who writes one of the most detailed spiritual journals of his time, yet who is only known to a handful of "Native American scholars"; for Eastman himself, whose epitaph amounts to no more than a racial slur.

In order to combat such erroneous perceptions, pre-nineteenth-century Native American scholars must move away from the school of thought in which we read these texts from a position of cultural relativism, a position that cannot be avoided if we continue to read through an anthropologist's lens. We must look at these writings within the historical moment in which they were created. We must desist from attempting to categorize these works in such a manner that refuses fluidity. Of course Native Americans were impacted by white society. But, we must remember that any transactions that occur between cultures move bidirectionally.

Eighteenth and nineteenth-century American Indians wrote in a variety of forms. For example, Joseph Johnson's writings are a collection of letters and diaries; Hendrick

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[5] James Dow McCallum, in the Introduction to *Letters of Eleazar Wheelock's Indians*, writes "The reader . . . will be amused as though he were watching some captive animal performing his tricks. He will also realize something of the tragedy of coercing the savage to studies for which he had little aptitude and no use . . ." (11).

[6] See Robert Warrior's "Eulogy on William Apess: Speculations on His New York Death" in the Summer 2004 issue of *Studies in American Indian Literatures*. In this article, Warrior focuses on aspects of Apess's life and death, rather than focus on his writings. As he states, "The purpose of this paper . . . is not so much to add to what we know of Apess's texts, but to examine the circumstances surrounding his death in 1839, not in New England, but in New York City" (2). Historical information is always important in helping us discover these writers, but to ignore their writings is a continuation of a practice that positions the Native American as inferior in American literary scholarship.

Aupaumut wrote narratives of diplomatic missions; Peter Jones situated himself as a Methodist missionary in his autobiography. Because there are such a variety of forms, I plan to focus my dissertation on how each writer is responding to a political moment.

My first chapter focuses on the writings of Joseph Johnson, one of the founders of Brotherton, the foremost Indian "praying" town. Joseph Johnson was a Mohegan Indian preacher and schoolteacher under the auspices of Eleazar Wheelock. His letters to Eleazar Wheelock, an ordained minister of the Second Congregational Church at Lebanon Crank, Connecticut and headmaster of Moor's Charity School, span a period of twelve years from 1764 through 1776.

What is important is these letters illustrate how Johnson, and others like him, respond to the imposition of Christianity on the Indian nations existing within and around colonial America. Johnson's letters and writings illustrate a refashioning of Christian doctrine fundamentally different than that of Eleazar Wheelock. That difference lies not in race, but rather in understanding. Johnson's definition and comprehension of regeneration tends toward Arminianism, Wheelock's to Calvinism. Johnson, like other students of Moor's Charity School, states on several occasions their *choice* to take part in activities deemed both improper and heretical. Many of these activities, as in Johnson's case, took place after the writer had undergone a spiritual experience. Therefore, choosing to act in an improper manner means that one was able to refuse a divine decree, the very point over which Arminians argued with Calvinist theologians.

Joseph Johnson illustrates a constant struggle between Euroamerican Christianity and Native American identity. In order to unite these seemingly incompatible parts into a coherent whole, Johnson and his colleagues strive to fashion a Christianity that will allow

them freedom to create an identity fundamentally different than that being created for them by Wheelock and others like him.

My second chapter focuses on Hendrick Aupaumut and his struggle to ensure survival, not only for the Mohican people, but for numerous other Indian nations. I focus mostly on *A Narrative of An Embassy to the Western Indians* (1827), which displays the struggle within a man determined to survive as an Indian in an increasingly white world. Through this work, we are able to see a man who believed in accommodation, but not complete acculturation. His *Narrative* reveals a man who realizes what is necessary for tribal survival, but is unwilling to sacrifice Indian identity. A close look at his writings reveal a man struggling to maintain a diplomatic balance between the Americans and Mohican allies.

My third chapter deals with Peter Jones, with special focus on the *Life and Journals of Kah-Ke-Wa-Quo-N~-By: (Rev. Peter Jones) Wesleyan Missionary.* Peter Jones'ss autobiographical journal is a fertile source for reading the Christian Indian. In a manner reminiscent of Joseph Johnson, Jones combines elements of tribal religion, Christian theology, and political commentary to illuminate the plight of the Indian in the early nineteenth century. Although his Methodism is strong – he dismisses his earlier baptism as an event, which worked no spiritual changes in him – his attention to Indian/White relations, and his desire for all Indians to receive the benefits afforded white Americans is clearly evident.

My final chapter focuses on William Apess. Although much has been written about Apess since the publication of Barry O'Connell's seminal collection of his writings, one cannot leave him out of any serious discussion of early Native American

writing. I focus mostly on Apess's *Eulogy on King Philip* and *The Experience of Five Christian Indians*. In the *Eulogy*, Apess uses history to reflect on the present, to overturn romantic notions of the American past, and to open up that narrow group of men whom we have labeled as ideal representations of the American spirit.

The above examples exemplify the different forms in which eighteenth and nineteenth century American Indians were writing. Their goals, the reasons for these letters, narratives, and autobiographies are as varied as the forms they use.

The scholarship in which I am engaged is of importance to American literature, minority studies, and of course, Native American studies. As I stated earlier, some work has been done on these texts, but there is much left to do. As an academic community, we know less about American Indian writing than any other American ethnic minority. Most of what we do know focuses on twentieth century works, and there are many who don't even realize the vast amount of early Native American writing that exists. So much of our understanding of American Indians comes from novels and stories written by our eighteenth- and nineteenth-century American novelists. My work will help to dispel and refute the myths that still exist about Native Americans.

CHAPTER 1

This Once Savage Heart of Mine:

Joseph Johnson, Wheelock's "Indians," and the Construction of a Christian/Indian Identity 1764-1776

> *Great Wonder! even marvelous in my Eyes, or rather the admiration of my soul that I, a hell deserving cursed Creature has been suffered to live in this World so long, Sinning, offending, and provoking the God of holiness, and the God of justice, and the God of vengance, and what is the joy of my Soul the God of love, and the God of mercy, through his dearly beloved and only begotten Son, the Lord Jesus Crist, who is admired by all them that believe, and in whom I humbly hope, I have been enabled by the Spirit of the living God, to put my whole trust & confidence, for time and for Eternity. O! that I might see more and more of my own wretchedness, and insufficiency, that Jesus Christ might be more and more precious to my Soul. Oh! I am nothing. Should I have the boldness to tell you, that I am hopefully converted, I should tell a news that I am not certain of. For since I first thought so myself, I have often doubted. I percieve Sin to be lurking within. Sometimes I greatly fear that I am altogether in my Sins, even under the power and Dominion of Sin, if so I am wretched wretched poor miserable creature sill, notwithstanding the World calls me blessed, notwithstanding I pass for a true Christian among all setts, and Denominations, as it were.*[7]

The Rhetoric of Confession

For those of the Reformed faith, an ideal way to measure spiritual progress was through the act of writing. Writing allowed Reformed Christians to keep a permanent record of their thoughts and actions as each progressed in a personal quest for spiritual

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[7] Joseph Johnson to Eleazar Wheelock, May 2, 1774 in Laura J. Murray, *To Do Good to My Indian Brethren: The Writings of Joseph Johnson, 1751-1776* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1998) 228. I am indebted to Laura Murray for her exemplary edition of Joseph Johnson's writings. Spelling in this quotation, and all subsequent letters, has not been corrected. The term "Wheelock's Indians" is meant to illustrate the mindset of the Euroamerican colonizer. I use the terms *Indian* and *Native American* interchangeably, realizing that each is flawed in a particular way.

salvation. Equally important were the rhetorical devices these writers used to illustrate the authenticity of their desire to live in a state of grace. Such devices could include dramatic flourishes, repetition, anaphora, chiasmus, and parallelisms among others. Similar rhetorical devices appear in many conversion narratives of well-educated New England ministers, trained in theology as well as the art of writing. What makes the above letter particularly interesting is that it was not written by a New England minister, but by a young Native American man engaged in the constant soul-searching common among his white, Euroamerican colonizers.

Joseph Johnson was a Mohegan Indian preacher and schoolteacher under the auspices of Eleazar Wheelock. His letters to Wheelock, an ordained minister of the Second Congregational Church at Lebanon Crank, Connecticut, and headmaster of Moor's Charity School, span a period of twelve years from 1764 through 1776. These letters are an interesting scene of writing, illustrating for the reader a struggle in power relations between a dominant European civilization and a colonized people.

Looking at the above-quoted letter with twentieth-century eyes, one may find Joseph Johnson's abjection and self-loathing to be off-putting, but the reader must bear in mind that religious doctrine required Christians to humble themselves before God and before their spiritual community. Nonetheless, there is still an element of discomfort when one is aware of Johnson's position as an Indian in eighteenth-century Colonial America. It is these two elements —Johnson as *Christian* and as *Indian*— that are of paramount significance to this work.

Johnson's correspondence helps us to recognize the complex and problematic relationship that existed between Wheelock and the Indian students. The definition of

that relationship was, as Johnson's letters illustrate, of critical importance to Johnson's struggle to unite two seemingly oppositional or incompatible identities: those of Christian and Indian. This paper will trace Johnson's struggles to construct an identity through his appropriation of rhetorical Christian discourse and his interpretation of Reformed theology. Although both Christian discourse and theology were firmly embedded in Western civilization, Johnson was able to manipulate certain rhetorical and theological devices that made visible the power relations between him and Wheelock.

Most importantly, the correspondence reveals how Johnson, and others like him, responded to the imposition of Christianity on the Indian nations located within and around colonial America. Johnson's letters and writings illustrate a refashioning of Christian doctrine that made it fundamentally different from the doctrine of Wheelock. The difference was founded not in race, but rather in understanding. Johnson's definition and comprehension of regeneration tended toward Arminianism, Wheelock's toward Calvinism.[8] Johnson, and other students of Moor's Charity School, stated on several occasions their *choice* to take part in activities deemed both improper and heretical. Many of these activities, as in Johnson's case, took place after the writer had undergone a spiritual experience. Therefore, choosing to act in an improper manner meant that one was able to refuse a divine decree, the very point over which Arminians argued with Calvinist theologians.

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[8] On this point I differ from other scholars who have focused on Johnson and Wheelock's Indians. Murray argues that Johnson's Christian discourse is the discourse of all Christians in the eighteenth century, as shown by his humility. Johnson's discourse, although a strong example of Christian humility, depict a man struggling with the issue of will in regeneration and justification, an issue that would be considered heresy by Wheelock or Wheelock's colleagues. See Murray, *To Do Good to My Indian Brethren*, 12.

On several occasions, Johnson bemoaned his failure to live a Christian life, yet consistently took responsibility for his own actions. In a letter written to Wheelock in 1774, Johnson asserted that he had "in times past *crucified* as it were, the Lord of Glory, even the Son of God, *afresh* and put him to an open shame."[9] Johnson's words denoted action on his part: he *crucified* both God and Christ, not once, but many times *afresh.*

In laying claim to his actions, Johnson addressed a major dilemma inherent in Protestant doctrine: the relation between will and reason. According to Perry Miller, if will were to follow a regenerated reason, then grace would become no more than an intellectual exercise. On the other hand, if will were not subject to reason, then the Christian would be able to refuse God's grace. Both views, according to Miller, were equally repugnant to Calvinists: the former discounts faith, the latter discounts divine decree.[10] Yet, as we shall see, the writings of Wheelock's Indians continually addressed one's will as it related to the acceptance or refusal of God's grace.

Eleazar Wheelock and the Function of Power

In order to examine the writings of Johnson and other members of Moor's Charity School, I have turned to the work of both James C. Scott and Michel Foucault. Foucault and Scott chart the way in which subjugation and resistance are both material and discursive processes. Scott's work focuses on two kinds of discourse that take place between the dominant and the subordinate: the public discourse, or transcript, and the

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[9] Joseph Johnson to Eleazar Wheelock, May 2, 1774, Eleazar Wheelock Papers, Dartmouth College, 774302 (emphases mine).

[10] See Perry Miller, esp. "The Means of Conversion," in Miller, *The New England Mind: The Seventeenth Century*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1954), 280-299.

critique of power that occurs "behind the back of the dominant," the *hidden transcript*[11]. Foucault, in both *Discipline & Punish* and *The History of Sexuality*, focused on the body as a site of power relations. The body is controlled through regimentation and surveillance. As we will see, Eleazar Wheelock's civilizing mission included the strict control of activity, the constant gaze of authority, and the extraction of the confession.

In Johnson's letters we can see the workings of Scott's *public* and *hidden transcripts* as well as the workings of Foucault's *panopticism* and his theory of the confession as a discourse firmly embedded in a power relationship, all of which contribute to the formation of Johnson as a colonized subject. In *The History of Sexuality*, Foucault wrote that confession is one method on which Western society relies for the production of truth; confession plays "a central role in the order of civil and religious powers"[12]. By forcing Johnson and the others to confess their sins publicly, Wheelock constantly strengthened his power over them. Furthermore, these letters served as a permanent record of the students' transgressions, allowing the confession to be alluded to repeatedly in order to reinforce the notion that the students were deficient in character and to cement the hierarchy of English over Indian.

Johnson's letters illustrate that the formation of his subjectivity was not a steady affair. A closer look at them reveals a man who was trying to position himself in a changing world. And it is here, in the interpretation of Johnson's letters, that I differ from James Scott. Scott argues that hidden transcripts take place away from, and outside of, dominant society's observation. Johnson's letters refute Scott's argument since they

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[11] James C. Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990) xii.

[12] Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, trans. Robert Hurley (New York: Vintage Books, 1980), 58.

function as both public and private discourse: public because of their material existence and private because they are the written conversation (confession) between pupil and mentor. This essay will demonstrate that a careful reading of these letters undermines one's assumptions about the power relations that at first glance seem so obvious. Johnson was excruciatingly aware of the social hierarchy within his community. He attempted to come to terms with the racialist ideology of those in power and simultaneously construct an identity that would allow him to function fully in both the Indian and the white worlds, an identity that one cannot label Christian, in the Wheelockian sense, nor "Indian," in the Krupatian sense.[13]

For European settlers in colonial America, the Christian school became a site for civilizing Native Americans. Wheelock, whose goal was to convert the Iroquois[14], founded the Indian Charity school, commonly known as Moor's Charity School, in 1754, in its final incarnation, it became Dartmouth College. He referred to his efforts as a *Great Design*[15] and was compelled as much by religious motives as he was by political and economic imperatives. France and England were in constant competition to win the allegiance of the Indians, and Wheelock believed that if half the money used to build and

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[13] The Wheelockian definition of Christianity is firmly embedded in Protestant congregationalism: the community is formed by covenanted members of the Church, among them "visible saints" and those whose regeneration had been confirmed by the educated ministry. Arnold Krupat, *The Voice in the Margin: Native American Literature and the Canon* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989). Krupat argues that one can determine Indian "authenticity" in autobiographical writings: the true Native American autobiography is dialogic representing both a collective self and a collective society. Autobiographies *by* Native Americans (his distinction) are monologic, representing the singular self in an effort "to accommodate themselves to a reigning authorative discourse" (134). Johnson's writings create a textual self that refuses both the Wheelockian and Krupatian definitions.

[14] Laura Murray writes: "[Wheelock's] ultimate ambition was to gain influence among the Six Nations, who were what he called 'a much better breed.'" Murray, *To Do Good to My Indian Brethren*, 54

[15] Wheelock wrote to George Whitefield, 1756: "My dear, dear brother, I feel in behalf of the poor, savage, perishing creatures like a covetous, craving beggar, as though I could not tell them when to ha' done, or how to leave begging for them, till the Great Design of their being brought to Christ be accomplished." In James Dow MaCallum, *Eleazar Wheelock, Founder of Dartmouth College* (Hanover, N.H.: Dartmouth College Publications, 1939), 75.

man fortifications had been spent on missionaries and school teachers, the "converted Indians 'would have been a far better defence than all our expensive fortresses'"[16].

Although a liberal thinker, Wheelock maintained that Indian conversion required a strictly regimented school day and constant surveillance:

> They are obliged to be clean, and decently dressed, and be ready to attend Prayers before Sun-rise in the Fall and Winter, and at 6 o'clock in the Summer. . . . [T]he School begins with Prayer about 9, and ends at 12, and again at 2 and ends at 5 o'clock with Prayer. Evening Prayer is attended before the Daylight is gone &c. They attend the publick Worship, and have a Pew devoted to their Use in the House of God. On Lord's-Day Morning, between and after the Meetings, the Master, or some one whom catachises them, discourses to them &c. . . . And in general they are orderly and governable.[17]

Wheelock was creating what Foucault termed the "docile body." During the eighteenth century, the body was identified as an "object and target of power." Institutions such as schools and the military found that a body that is "manipulated, shaped, [and] trained" is, in turn, compliant, responsive, and proficient.[18] Although Foucault restricted his study to Europe, one can apply his theory to Wheelock's methodology as it pertained to his Indian students.

By strictly regimenting the actions of his students, Wheelock increased the utility of the Indians' bodies while decreasing their autonomy. In other words, he forced their obedience in order to increase their productive capability. If one substitutes Moor's Charity School for the Gobelins school, Foucault's analysis of pedagogical discipline summarizes Wheelock's goal:

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[16] McCallum, *Eleazar Wheelock, Founder of Dartmouth College*, 76.

[17] Eleazar Wheelock, *A plain and faithful Narrative of the Original Design, Rise, Progress and present State of the Indian Charity-School at Lebanon, in Connecticut.* (Boston: Richard & Samuel Draper, 1763), 36.

[18] Michel Foucault, *Discipline & Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Vintage Books, 1995) 138, 136.

> [Moor's Charity School] is only one example of an important phenomenon: the development, in the classical period, of a new technique for taking charge of the time of individual existences; for regulating the relations of time, bodies and forces; for assuring an accumulation of duration; and for turning to ever-increased profit or use the movement of passing time.[19]

The motivation behind Wheelock's strict regimentation of the Indian body was to transform the "savage" into a reasonable facsimile of an English citizen. The important word here is "facsimile." Wheelock strongly believed that an Indian could never disregard his true "nature;" it could only be controlled through confession and surveillance. Therefore, when Joseph Johnson left school to begin his missionary work, Wheelock received reports of his progress in Johnson's own letters and in the letters from others, including Samuel Kirkland, a white student of Wheelock's, and Ralph Wheelock, Eleazar's son.

Writing as Public Transcript

Wheelock promoted the idea of using his Indian students as missionaries to the more remote tribes, believing that they had an advantage over English-speaking missionaries, given the similarities in their language and their knowledge of Indian culture. However, as Laura Murray points out, Wheelock's motives were not purely philanthropic: he sought students as a financial supplement to his meager salary.[20] Wheelock sent his students to work on nearby farms several days a week, causing one of his students, Hezekiah Calvin, to level charges of theft and misuse against the Reverend.

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[19] Foucault, *Discipline & Punish*, 157.
[20] Murray, *To Do Good to My Indian Brethren*, 50-51.

In a letter to Wheelock, Edward Deake, a white teacher in Rhode Island, listed Calvin's allegations:

> you use ye Indians very hard in keeping of them to work, & not allowing them a proper Privelidge in ye School. . . . That Mary Secutor, & Sarah Simon has been kept as close to work, as if they were your slaves, & have had no privelidge in ye School since last Fall, nor one Copper allow'd ym for their Labour. . . . So yt ye Indians are ready to conclude, that their Fellow-Indians will never receive any great Benefit of ye Large sums of Money contributed by good People to promote so good a Cause.[21]

In addition to questioning the sincerity of Wheelock's philanthropic motives, Calvin's accusations illustrate the importance of the written word as it applied to the Indian student and his teacher. Evidently Calvin was unable to express his anger and frustration with Wheelock through a more direct communication such as a face-to-face confrontation or a personal letter. However, Calvin felt comfortable enough among his friends to express his concerns.

Another important aspect of Calvin's accusations, as they relate to Joseph Johnson and the students of Moor's Charity School, is the very survival of these accusations in the written record. Wheelock was extremely careful in preserving the letters his students wrote to him, but few of his responses exist. Deake's letter allows us a rare glimpse into Wheelock's character and his relationship to his Indian students. As this essay will demonstrate, letters from Kirkland and Ralph Wheelock that inform Wheelock of Johnson's behavior and actions were likewise preserved.

Letters written by the Indians who attended Moor's Charity School were extremely important to Wheelock's fundraising efforts, which is why the Reverend took such pains to save them. Wheelock often sent copies of the letters to patrons in England

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[21] Edward Deake to Eleazar Wheelock, June 21, 1768, Wheelock Papers, 768371.2.

and Scotland as proof of his capability to educate and convert the "savage and brutish" Indians.[22] Johnson and his fellow students were aware of Wheelock's methods, as the postscripts of letters from Johnson and David Fowler indicate. In a letter sent to Wheelock in May of 1765, Fowler closed with the following: "Sir, I hope you won't let this letter be seen, I have no Table to write upon, besides I have not writ so long my Hand's out of order."[23] In February of 1768, Johnson wrote a lengthy letter to Wheelock, adding, "Please sir to overlook my hast, an the many Blunders which I Suppose are in the paper. I have no time to write it over or correct it. Dont Expose it."[24] Thus, Johnson and his peers were aware that they were writing for a larger audience and that their "performance" affected Wheelock's purse.

If Johnson and his peers were aware of their *power*, over Wheelock, albeit limited, why this willingness to participate in his *Great Design*? To answer this, one must return to Scott's work on power relations and resistance. Scott divides social subordination into two distinct, but related, areas: the *public transcript* and the *hidden transcript.* The *public transcript* is the open interaction between the dominant and the subordinate. The *hidden transcript*, as defined previously, characterizes subordinate discourse that "takes place 'offstage,' beyond direct observation by powerholders." Hidden transcripts thus "confirm, contradict, or inflect what appears in the public transcript," which Scott defines as "subordinate discourse in the presence of the

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[22] Eleazar Wheelock, *A Continuation of the Narrative of the State, &c., of the Indian Charity School at Lebanon, in Connecticut.* (Hartford: Ebenezer Watson, 1775).

[23] James Dow McCallum, *The Letters of Eleazar Wheelock's Indians* (Hanover, N.H.: Dartmouth College Publications), 91.

[24] Joseph Johnson to Eleazar Wheelock, May 2, 1768, Wheelock Papers, 768302.

dominant."[25] If one only looks at the public transcript, one fails to see the complete workings of power relations. For example, in the following quotations from Johnson and Fowler, one may discern little more than deference and consent.

> And may the Blessings of Heaven rest on you &c &c and continue you a long and rich Blessing in the World, may the Heathen in the Wilderness feel the goodness of thy Labours. May you have Double Measure of the Spirit of God, and fill your Heart with Love of God and Compassion to poor perishing Souls, and may the Giver of all things, give Strength and Health, Wisdom and Authority to rule govern and teach those who are commited to your Care in Fear of the Lord: which is the sincere Prayer of him who desire the Continuance of your Prayers.
>
> your affectionate
> tho: unworthy Pupil,
> David Fowler[26]

> Revd and Hond Doctr.
>
> Suffer me as an Indian and a good for nothing one, to Subscribe myself your dutifull Pupil, or one that will Endeavour to be dutifull, for time to come.
>
> Pray that he would grant me wisdom from on high, Such as none but a God can give; that he would grant me wisdom So to behave myself as not to dishonour or bring to Religion, that he would make me a blessing to the Children which he has commited to my charge.
>
> This is the true and Sincere, hearty desire, of me, thy Dutifull tho Unworthy Pupil.
>
> Joseph Johnson[27]

But was this deference a tactic used to appease Wheelock? Is the obsequiousness that runs throughout Johnson's letters a true indication of his relationship with Wheelock? Both questions can be answered in the positive. As Murray points out in her study of the letters of Calvin and Fowler, the relationship between Wheelock and the Indians was

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[25] James C. Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990), 2, 4.

[26] David Fowler to Eleazar Wheelock, June 24, 1765, McCallum, *Letters of Eleazar Wheelock's Indians*, 97.

[27] Joseph Johnson to Eleazar Wheelock, November, 10, 1767, Wheelock Papers, 767610.

intense and complex.[28] Following Scott's argument, it is imperative that the subordinate fulfill the expectation of the dominant society. Scott goes on to state that "the public transcript will typically, by its accommodationist tone, provide convincing evidence for the hegemony of dominant values."[29] Therefore, the public transcript between Johnson and Wheelock on its own shows Johnson playing the role of social subordinate.

Johnson's first letter to Wheelock was written in 1764, while he was still attending the Indian Charity School. The circumstances surrounding the letter indicate that some type of altercation had occurred between Johnson and Eleazar Sweetland, a fellow student.

> Revd & Hond Sir
>
> With A great deal of consideration would I inform you Sir what past between Eleazar Sweetland & I. This is the true meaning According to the best of my Memory, that as we was playing the Misfortune was this that Sweetland took up A Stone, Gourdains being present and he Sent the Stone not knowing that the dog was there. Gourdain told me of it.
>
> In a mean & Sordid Manner I told him that I would do the Same to him, As he would do to the dog, But All in Jest, Sweetland Witnesses to it.
>
> And I Also threw him down not Violantly & there held him down About A quarter of An-hour he Witnesses himself. In A shorst time After I had got him down I Asked him what if I keept him All the Night then he said he would not Stay here 2 hours longer. Then I told him I did not Intend he Should. Then he said he would not Stay one hour longer. Then I Askd him how he could help himself In no Anger but All in Jest Eleazar Sweetland witnesses.
>
> Your Humble Servant Joseph Johnson [30]

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[28] Murray, *To Do Good to My Brethren*, 17. Although I agree with her statement, Murray does not address the complexity of doctrinal differences that lie between Wheelock and his students. As I have stated earlier, Wheelock's understanding of grace is that of the Congregationalist, while Johnson's understanding—like that of several other of Wheelock's students—is closer to the Arminian definition of will and the role human reasoning plays in one's acceptance of grace.

[29] Scott, Domination and the Arts of Resistance, 4.

[30] Joseph Johnson to Eleazar Wheelock, September 6, 1764, Ayer Collection, Newberry Library, MS 453. Eleazar Sweetland went on to become a minister after graduating from Dartmouth College in 1774. Gourdain may be the nephew of Samson Occom Gourdain Wyyougs (Murray, *To Do Good to My Indian Brethren*, 60).

Although Johnson's letter *was* a confession, he explained that Wheelock and those who witnessed the occurrence misunderstood his actions. He stated that the "true meaning" of this skirmish was "All in Jest," confirmed by Sweetland himself, who "Witnesses to it." Johnson was aware, however, that he must still confess to behaving inappropriately. He went on to say that "In a mean & Sordid Manner, I told him that I would do the Same to him. As he would do to the dog." Johnson acknowledged his anger toward Sweetland for the latter's treatment of a dog, but continued to affirm that both he and Sweetland were no more than playing around. If we take this letter in its social context, we see nothing more than a thirteen-year-old boy roughhousing with his peers. Wheelock, however, turned this normal activity into an opportunity to increase his control over Johnson and the other students by requiring a public and permanent confession.

Wheelock compelled his students to structure their confessions in the form of a letter ensuring both the public knowledge of their sins and, by association, their public humiliation. What does this tell us about the power relations between Wheelock and the Indian students? One thing the letters illustrate is Foucault's theory of surveillance as a form of disciplinary power.

> The exercise of discipline presupposes a mechanism that coerces by means of observation; an apparatus in which the techniques that make it possible to see induce effects of power, and in which, conversely, the means of coercion make those on whom they are applied clearly visible.[31]

Confessional letters written by Hezekiah Calvin, David Fowler, Nathan Clap, Hannah Nonesuch, Mary Secuter, and Jacob Wolley, as well as Joseph Johnson, are still extant. In addition, some letters were composed while the writer was still attending at Moor's

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[31] Foucault, *Discipline & Punish*, 170-71.

Charity School; others, including Johnson's letter quoted below, were written from the student's assigned missionary post.

Wheelock's control over his Indian students reached much farther than mere physical proximity, as a letter to Wheelock from Hezekiah Calvin illustrates. Calvin, who entered Wheelock's school in 1757, left in 1765 to teach among the Mohawks in Fort Hunter, New York. He wrote the following letter, two years later:

> Honored Sir
> With shamefacedness & humbleness of Heart I write you these Lines, owning & Confessing my heinous Crimes.
> the last evening being the 25th of Xber I Confess I was Drunk: Swearing & Curseing followed, which I knew not of only as I was infor'd so this Morning, & am Sorry for it--I hear that they say I make mock at your Night Discourses; which I think is false, But But I promise never to Drink Liquor again & Promise to Attend my Life & Conduct for the future God assisting me I am willing to Suffer any thing that might make my Schoolmates know the wickedness of getting Drunk or that they might not take that example of me.
> Sir I am thy Disobedient
> & undutiful Servant
> Hezekiah Calvin[32]

Calvin's statement that his "[s]choolmates . . . not take that example of me" indicates that he was aware of the public nature of the confession as employed by Wheelock. However, even more startling is the need Calvin felt to confess his behavior to Wheelock two years after leaving Moor's Charity School. In this letter once can discern the extent of the power Wheelock had over his students and the students' awareness of his "all-seeing" gaze. Confessing to Wheelock was tantamount to confessing to God. Calvin directed his promise to refrain from liquor not to God, but to Wheelock. In fact, the only mention of God is an appeal for assistance in keeping that promise.

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[32] McCallum, *The Letters of Eleazar Wheelock's Indians*, 60 (emphases mine).

Three of the confessions cited above were written in Wheelock's handwriting, and at least one is believed to have been dictated by Wheelock. We have no way of knowing whether Wheelock copied these confessions or wrote them himself. Based on Foucault's theory of the confession as a production of truth, I would argue that Wheelock *impelled* his students to produce their own confessions and then copied the confessions for use in his fundraising efforts. For the confession to produce truth, the speaking (or writing) subject must acknowledge his or her behavior. Foucault wrote that the confession is "a ritual that unfolds within a power relationship, for one does not confess without the presence (or virtual presence) of a partner who is not simply the interlocutor but the authority who requires the confession, prescribes and appreciates it, and intervenes in order to judge, punish, forgive, console, and reconcile."[33] Letters such as Calvin's and Johnson's show Wheelock was always present in the minds of the Indian students.

The Confession and Reformed Doctrine

Several of the confessional letters began as Mary Secuter's did:

> I May [sic] Secuter do with shamefacedness acknowledge that on the evening of the 8th Inst I was guilty of going to the tavern & tarrying there with much rude & vain company till a very unreasonable time of night where was dancing & other rude & unseemly conduct, & in particular drinking too much spiritous liquor whereby I was exposed to commit many gross sins, which offence is doubly aggravated in that *it is a direct violation of a late promise I have publickly made before this school*—all which wicked & sinful conduct of mine, I am fully sensable is much to the dishonour of God & very prejudicial to the design & reputation of this school, and in opposition to the good of my own soul & the souls of my mates—for which I deserve to be turned out of this school & be deprived of all the privileges of it—*I desire to lie low in the dust therefor & do now ask forgiveness of God, the Revd Doctr Wheelock, his family and school,*

[33] Foucault, *History of Sexuality*, 61.

> *and all others whom I have hereby offended*—and I desire now with my whole heart to renew my former engagement that I will never more drink any spiritous liquor on any occasion where necessity does not require it, and *I do promise that (by the grace of god) I will amend my past life &* never offend by any of the like or any other misconduct. for time to come—*And desire once more to warn all my mates not to take occasion by this or any other instance of my misconduct, to commit the like or any other evil*—and I beg the privilege of continuing still a member of this school & that I may enjoy the privileges of it, for a trial of the sincerity of this my confession & my engagements for an amendment of life
>
> Mary Secutor
> *Lebanon March* 11th 1768 *Present*
> Dr Wheelock
> B. Woodward[34]

Secutor's confession illustrates the views that Wheelock and other colonists held concerning Indian character. Exposure to drinking, dancing, and other "rude & unseemly" conduct was all that was needed to turn the Indian from civilized to savage. Secutor was unable to refrain from sinning because her very character prevented her from making that choice. The fact that she was a young girl who had been removed from a culture steeped in community gatherings was not considered. Mary Secutor and the other Indian students, were expected, even obligated, to act as members of an English Protestant community, notwithstanding their upbringing as Indian children prior to their attendance at Moor's Charity School.

The circumstances surrounding Secutor's foray to the tavern provide evidence of yet another shortcoming. Her descent into sin followed a "publickly made" promise before the school not to "drink any spiritous liquor." The fact that Secutor did so after she vowed to refrain from such behavior caused such abjection that the rest of her confession is almost too painful to read. However, what one finds striking in her

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[34] McCallum, *Letters of Eleazar Wheelock's Indians*, 237 (emphasis mine). Bezaleel Woodward was Preceptor in Moor's Charity School.

statement is not the tone, but her *will* to sin. She was "fully sensable" [*sic*] that her conduct was both "wicked & sinful," an action for which she was completely responsible *after* promising to refrain from such behavior. Secutor's will to sin came some three months after an earlier transgression, after which she promised "*by divine Grace* to walk morally and in all Respects circumspectly, for time to come."[35]

Protestant congregationalists strongly held that one could not refuse divine decree, that once justification had occured a person had experienced regeneration and was then a covenanted member of the community—a "visible saint." Secutor's two confessions clearly indicate a person who was not covenanted according to any Protestant definition. Furthermore, she had proactively engaged in committing "many gross sins." Her ability to withstand "divine Grace" placed her squarely in the Arminian camp.

In several ways, Secutor's confession was strikingly similar to that of Hezekiah Calvin. Both individuals stated that with God's help they would rehabilitate themselves and abstain from such behavior in the future. In addition, both Calvin and Secutor warned others not to mimic their behavior, so as to avoid falling into the wickedness that had consumed them.

Like Mary Secutor's confession, all those written within the school proper conclude with some type of attestation, usually by Eleazar Wheelock himself, Bezaleel Woodward, or Ralph Wheelock. As Murray states, writing down one's actions serves as a reminder to "the confessor of the inferiority of his judgement and [causes] him to relive the embarrassment of misconduct reproved."[36] In addition, the attestation provides

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[35] McCallum, *Letters of Eleazar Wheelock's Indians*, 236 (emphasis mine).

[36] Laura J. Murray, "'Pray Sir, Consider a Little': Rituals of Subordination and Strategies of Resistance in the Letters of Hezekiah Calvin and David Fowler to Eleazar Wheelock," in *Early Native*

evidence of social hierarchy, not only that of Moor's Charity School, but of the European colonizers and their Indian subjects. Wheelock's signature (or that of Woodward or Ralph Wheelock) offered a validation to the confessor. Without the acknowledgment of one in authority, the confession would be ineffectual.

As noted above, Calvin's confession was written after he had left Moor's Charity School. As such, it is not an anomaly, as the correspondence of Johnson and others proves. Several of these letters are confessional in tone, Johnson penned one of them in 1768, two years after he had left Wheelock's school and taken a position among the Oneida Indians as an assistant teacher to Samuel Kirkland. During this, Johnson's final year among the Oneidas, he evidently engaged in behavior that was, by "Christian" standards, opprobrious. He "kept . . . strumpets . . . nigh two months last spring—drank up near three Galln of wine . . . & between 6 & 7 Galln of Rum." In an even more heinous act, Johnson "turn'd pagan for about a week—painted, sung—danc'd—drank & whor'd it, wh some of the savage Indians he cou'd find."[37]

Johnson's letter to Wheelock, written in December of 1768, reveals a man deeply ashamed of his behavior, yet oddly defiant. In it, he repeated the word *deceitful*, a direct reference to his perceived treatment by Wheelock himself. It is evident from a previous letter that Johnson was not trusted with any money and was hurt by this slur on his character. As he stated in a letter dated September 27, 1768, "I have not as yet been trusted with one Copper not So much as in sight . . . I have not yet been lavish of any of Christ money, or been found Dishonest . . . . Or ask Mr Kirkland if I Ever proved

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American Writing: New Critical Essays, ed. Helen Jaskoski (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 26-27.

[37] Samuel Kirkland to Eleazar Wheelock, December 29, 1768, McCallum, *Letters of Eleazar Wheelock's Indians*, 140-141.

dishonest to any of the Money He has from time to time trusted me with, or to your Honoured son . . ."[38] Johnson's reference to his mistreatment undermines Scott's theory that the *hidden transcript* takes place away from the gaze of the dominant. Johnson's subtle, but obvious, criticism of Wheelock contrasts sharply with the rest of the December letter, which is filled with deep shame and misery.

> Revd and Ever honoured Doctr.
>
> Forgive me for my Repeated presumtion in Writing to you; But this once more give me leave to acquaint you my Once kind Benefactor, the Case I at present am in; But as I have so Often been found *deceitfull*, I know not as you will have patience to Read over this my pretended Confession, as I said, Seeing I have showed So much Deceitfullness in my pretentions, & Undertakings, Since I have been capable of being Improved in some good way; But for Grant – Which way to Betake myself – I know not, I am at a stand. Hond Sir; to return to you whom I have so greatly grieved, I dare not; I am ashamed, & Concience stings me to the Measure the down Cast Spirits of Cain when He received his curse; but no Equal to his; tho my Crimes are more than Equal. The thoughts of your School haunts my Mind dayly, and to turn my face that way I dare not. I see nothing; but my Actions in the deepest dye of Ingratitude stare me in the face which Causes my heart to faint Under the thoughts of Returning; but what Course to take. I know that god is Everywhire, and is Acquainted with Actions past, and will punish without Mercy those that Be DisObedient to his Laws, and Commandments Er long.[39]

Johnson's letter serves as both confession and explanation. As much as he felt compelled to confess his sins, he also evinced the need to explain his behavior. In the first paragraph, Johnson asked Wheelock to forgive his presumption in writing, but deemed it necessary to present his "Case" so that Wheelock might hear about his actions first-hand, as it were. Johnson's writing depicts a young man unsure of his position within his world. He had behaved, according to Christian standards, in a most heinous manner. For a young Native American man, however, Johnson's actions were quite normal.

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[38] Joseph Johnson to Eleazar Wheelock, September 27, 1768, Wheelock Papers, 768527.
[39] Joseph Johnson to Eleazar Wheelock, December 28, 1768, Wheelock Papers, 768678.2

Johnson now stood firmly between two worlds: the world of the white Christian and the world of the Indian: ".Which way to Betake myself – I know not, I am at a Stand." This "stand" marked a significant point in Johnson's religious conversion. That God had bestowed his Grace, Johnson had no doubt: "Good God seems to be lengthening out his mercy to me, tho I have so Openly Rebeled against Him, and has graciously guided my Doubtfull steps" Johnson had experienced justification, but was not living the sanctified life. In doing so, he separated elements not separable according to Calvinists, who argued that justification and sanctification are complementary: out of justification came sanctification. Thus, Johnson chose, at various times, to live the unsanctified life, a choice that placed his determination over God's determinism. As evidenced by the above letter, Johnson's understanding of grace could be easily defined: it was necessary for salvation but could be refused.

However, the power that Eleazar Wheelock held over his students cannot be discounted or minimized, as this letter proves. Johnson had an almost overwhelming desire to return to Wheelock's school, but his shame prevented him from doing so: "Hond Sir; to return to you whom I have so greatly grieved, I dare not; I am ashamed. . . . The thoughts of your School haunts my Mind dayly, and to turn my face that way I dare not." The powerful presence of Wheelock was constantly felt. Johnson's words illustrate the depth of his pain and despair as well as his confusion. He had been removed from his home, his family, and his way of life. He was expected to become civilized, but never to become white. Wheelock sent Johnson, along with the other Indian students, as missionaries and teachers to other tribes without regard for the diversity of their languages and customs. Nevertheless, as Laura Murray points out, the students of

Moor's Charity School were meant to consider themselves as better than those whom they were sent to teach.[40] How could these young men and women reconcile their position between cultures? In so many ways they were not quite Indian and not quite white. It would appear that the tensions inherent in such a reconciliation led to Johnson's fall from Wheelock's grace.

Johnson's desperate attempt to obtain forgiveness from Wheelock is apparent in his rhetoric. His powerful use of anaphora illuminates his mindset and reveals his expertise in the art of writing: "But how, it seems as if there was some probability, some glimpse of hope yet, Some ways of Being Recovered from this Unhappy State . . ." Rhetorical questions indicate Johnson's futile desire to erase his behavior and obtain Wheelock's forgiveness: "But how can I make my sorrow Credible – which none can Believe . . ." "What would I give Even all that I have or all that my care or Industry would gain Could I Recall these fatal hours which I consumed in sensless Vanities . . ." If Johnson had learned anything from his tenure at Moor's Charity School, he had learned the power of the written word. He had been compelled to bare his soul on the page. His progress – as a Christian, as a civilized human being, as a teacher, as a missionary – could only be determined through the written word.

The Letters of Joseph Johnson

The first extant letter written by Johnson after he left Wheelock's school is from the Oneida country, where he was sent in 1766 as an assistant teacher to David Fowler and Samuel Kirkland. As mentioned previously, Fowler was another Indian student of

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[40] Murray, To Do Good to My Indian Brethren, 34.

Wheelock's, described by Laura Murray as "a teacher's pet."[41] Samuel Kirkland was one of the Reverend's white students considered to be "a key agent of Wheelock's hopes for converting the Iroquois."[42] Wheelock kept up a constant communication with Kirkland, on whom he relied for information about the behavior of the Indian missionaries, and his willingness to respond to Kirkland's letters was a point of contention with the Indians. In a 1767 letter written to Wheelock, Fowler complained that "others have received Folio's after Folio's," while "I have not received one Line."[43] The "others" to whom Fowler referred were, of course, Kirkland and, most likely, Ralph Wheelock.

Johnson's letter opens with a reference to a letter no longer extant. He apologized for its contents, saying, "I have not Acknowledged the kind reception it meet with and *the affectionate messages you have Sent me in your Letters to M^r Kirkland.*"[44] Although subtle, Johnson made it a point to mention that messages for him were relayed through Kirkland. In communicating with Johnson through Kirkland, Wheelock continued to reestablish the hierarchy of power between himself and Johnson, as well as the hierarchy between the white man and the Indian. In other words, Johnson did not merit a response from Wheelock himself. Johnson was aware of his position within this hierarchy, moreover, he was aware of the Indian's position as it related to white society.

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[41] Murray, "'Pray Sir, Consider a Little,'" 24. Murray presents a masterful reading of resistance in the letters of David Fowler and Hezekiah Calvin, another student of Wheelock's. Although a teacher's pet, several of Fowler's letters show a disenchantment with Wheelock: especially Wheelock's refusal to communicate with Fowler and his obvious preference for Samuel Kirkland.

[42] Samuel Kirkland entered Moor's Charity School in 1760, where he remained for two years before attending the College of New Jersey (Princeton). From 1764 through 1766, Kirkland served as missionary to the Oneidas and the Senecas before returning to Lebanon, Connecticut to be ordained. He returned to the Oneidas with whom he worked for more than forty years. Kirkland severed relations with Wheelock in 1770, in a dispute over the use of funds for Dartmouth College. See Samuel K. Lothrop, *Life of Samuel Kirkland: Missionary to the Indians* (Boston: Little Brown, 1848).

[43] McCallum, Letters of Eleazar Wheelock's Indians, 108.

[44] Joseph Johnson to Eleazar Wheelock, December 1, 1766, Wheelock Papers, 766651.3

In the same letter, Johnson wrote, "That God may grant you an ample reward in the upper world, for all your Labours of Love towards the poor Indians, and me in perticular . . . ." Although his tone is one of deference and humble gratitude, Johnson's view of himself and his people underlay this statement. He closed the letter, "your most Obedient though unworthy Servent Poor good for nothing Indian Joseph Johnson." Johnson's humility and obsequiousness served a dual purpose. On the one hand, he engaged in proper Christian rhetoric, since it was commonly expected that Christians would humble themselves before God and before their religious superiors. Laura Murray points out that many of Wheelock's white students used similar rhetorical devices in their letters. However, she goes on to point out that Christian rhetoric "takes on particular valences" as it pertains to the subordinate status of Native Americans.[45]

Nevertheless, there is more to Johnson's language than Christian rhetoric. Through it we witness a young man's struggle to establish a place in a world that has attempted to negate his existence. Johnson realized that men such as Wheelock played a large part in determining the fate of Native Americans. At the same time, he was trying to come to terms with his own role in shaping that fate. Neither the Mohegans, nor the Oneidas, nor any other tribe could survive without acknowledging European domination. Yet, with this acknowledgment came the awareness that Wheelock (and the majority of Europeans) viewed Indians as inferior; that even as he attempted to educate and train his Indian students, Wheelock always thought of them as savages.[46]

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[45] Murray, To Do Good to My Indian Brethren, 294, n. 12.

[46] Eleazar Wheelock to George Whitefield, July 4, 1761, McCallum, *Eleazar Wheelock*, 84: "None know, nor can any, without experience, well conceive of, the difficulty of educating an Indian. They would soon kill themselves with eating and sloth, if constant care were not exercised upon them at least the first year. They are used to set upon the ground, and it is as natural for them as a seat to our

Johnson's confusion about his place in God's plan and his position as a Christian Indian among the "pagan" Iroquois is evident in a letter he wrote to Wheelock in December of 1767.

> Revd & ever hond Doctr.
>
> I would once more attempt to write to you Hond Benefactor: Notwithstanding I find my mind so Discomposed, it is as if their was no Solidness in my mind; Sometimes Encouraged, & at other Time Dishearted; So yt I cant be Resolute in what I do. At present things look dark – They all wear a Garment of Discouragement, but I hope that Before long Some will change their present Garments, & Look Encourageing to your poor Labourers in the Wilderness.

As do Puritan writings, the above quotation incorporates an important element of the Christian writings of the time. Recording one's despair and sinfulness offered a purgation of that sinfulness as well as relief from despair. Nevertheless, the language employed sounded not only a note of sorrow, but also of hopefulness, as Johnson's writing illustrates: ". . . but I *hope* that before long Some will change their present Garments, & *Look Encourageing* to your poor Labourers in the Wilderness." Johnson was aware that God would only hear the appeal for salvation from one who was actively seeking that salvation.[47] Therefore, the "Wilderness" of which Johnson spoke was not only the physical space he occupied in Oneida country, but a spiritual space in which all Indians resided.

Johnson's desperate search to create a solid, viable identity among a society that thought of his people as less than human is poignantly displayed in the second paragraph of the letter:

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children. They are not wont to have any cloaths but what they wear, or will without much pains be brot to take care of any. They are used to a sordid manner of dress, and love it as well as our children to be clean."

[47] Again, a specifically Arminian view where the sinner chooses Christ. This contrasts with the Calvinist idea of God choosing the sinner.

> I Fear that God is about to give up these poor Ignorant heathen to walk after their own hearts, and cut them of Intirely from his Earth; I think at present their is Some concern amongst these Indians I would hope a Real concern. I hope that God is about to carry on his own work amongst us, and bring out Some of our Souls from this darkness into his Marvelous Light. I am yet in the Gall of Bitterness and in the bond of Iniquity. I hope that God will yet Enable me to See the pride of my heart, & the great Sin of Unbelief and the Necessity I stand in of Christ Jesus. I believe that unless God be pleased to Open my Eyes that I may See the wickedness of my heart I greatly fear I Shall never Obtain the One thing needfull.[48]

Johnson's ambiguous position within this society is markedly evident in the above quotation. Laura Murray points out his shifting pronouns, which reveal his confusion, but she fails to analyze the importance of these grammatical changes.[49] To whom should Johnson have related? Did he belong with those "poor Ignorant heathen" or did he belong with those who could see the damnation to which those "poor Ignorant heathen" were condemned?

The above paragraph begins with Johnson distancing himself from the Oneidas as he stated that ". . . God is about to give up *these* poor Ignorant heathen," yet the next sentence brings the fear of damnation closer to himself as his pronouns shift to the first person and the possessive. "I hope that God is about to carry on his own work amongst *us* and bring out Some of *our* Souls from this darkness . . ." However, in the next sentence, Johnson moved completely inward, focusing solely on himself and his fear that he would never receive God's grace: "*I* am yet in the Gall of Bitterness. . . . *I* hope that God will yet Enable *me* to See the pride of *my* heart. . . . *I* believe that unless God be pleased to Open *my* Eyes that *I* may See the wickedness of *my* heart *I* greatly fear *I* Shall never Obtain the One thing needful." This transition illustrates the complexity of

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[48] Joseph Johnson to Eleazar Wheelock, December 29, 1767, Wheelock Papers, 767679.2.
[49] Murray, *To Do Good to My Indian Brethren*, 58.

Johnson's constant struggle to create an identity that would allow him to function in both the Indian and the white worlds.

Furthermore, Johnson believed that although God had not yet opened his eyes, He still might. Then Johnson would "Obtain the One thing needfull": salvation. That Johnson was still seeking salvation shows his belief in his own determination to achieve grace. In order to create a specific place in this new world order, Johnson would have to step outside of Wheelock's Calvinist theology and refashion a theology that would allow him and other Indians to survive and prosper in Christian America. As he struggled to determine his fate, Johnson's understanding of grace, regeneration, sanctification, and justification illustrated a subtle, but important, difference.

Conclusion

> *To all Enquiring friends, or to all Strangers that my Cast their Curious but dying Eyes upon these lines. Disdain not the feble attempt of a Poor Indian, who wishes well, to all mankind, wishes the well being of mortals, in this World; but above all Sincerely desires their well being, in the World to Come. But O! friend would you know more Concerning me. I am, kind friend, an Indian of the Mohegan tribe, known by the Name of Joseph Johnson. . . . As for my great Undertaking, I can assure you it was not the Purpose of my heart; till of late. My dear friend, let me freely tell you, that I was 21 years in this World, before I was born, and as Soon as I was born, I had my Eyes Opened. . . . But let me tell you, before I let you go, that I am but one year, and three months old properly, and my friend, you Cant expect that in such a short time, I have arrived to manhood. No. I confess, I am but a child in the knowledge of Jesus my Lord, and a babe in Understanding.*[50]

Joseph Johnson, along with other students of Moor's Charity School, personified a constant struggle between Euroamerican Christianity and Native American identity. In

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[5050] WP 772900.2.

order to unite these seemingly incompatible parts into a coherent whole, Johnson and his colleagues strove to fashion a Christianity that would allow them freedom to create an identity fundamentally different from that being created for them by Wheelock and others like him.

Calvinistic theology contended that human depravity, and therefore, divine salvation were not a matter of choice: God elected individuals prior to creation and those individuals, because of that election, lived a life of faith. Wheelock's constant demand for confessions of misbehavior and backsliding reinforced the idea that God had not chosen any of Wheelock's Indian students to receive salvation. To accept this interpretation of Christianity would lead to nothing but despair, a despair to which many, even Johnson himself, succumbed to for a time.

Nevertheless, Johnson was able to overcome this despair through his own understanding of the Christian God and reinterpretation of the Christian faith. Johnson's understanding of Christianity was much closer to Arminianism than to Calvinism. Arminian theology allowed humans to acknowledge their sinful state, repent and believe. God elected those whom He knew would accept salvation, but it was up to the individual to make that choice. Therefore, one could acknowledge divine grace, but still struggle to accept the gift. According to Calvinistic theology, Johnson's failure to lead a Christian life ensured his damnation. Johnson believed differently. His spiritual struggles, although many, culminated in a life of faith as evidenced by his later writings and the founding of the Brotherton settlement. Those writings show a man secure in his faith and in his belief of God's salvation and mercy.

Although he would die before Brotherton was completed, Johnson, along with Samson Occom, was a driving force behind the creation of the community. Within this community, Native Americans could live together, free from the constant concern that they might lose their land. Brotherton would embrace European agriculture and Christian religion combined with the Indians' sense of community. Brotherton became for Johnson and the others the perfect amalgamation of European and Indian ways.

CHAPTER 2

Do Not Let Our Words Be Buried Underground:

Hendrick Aupaumut and the Language of Diplomacy

> *But on my part, I have hitherto had a persuasion on my mind, that if the Western Nations could be rightly informed of the desires of the United States, they would comply for peace, and that the informer should be an Indian to whom they look upon as a true friend, who has never deceived or injured them.*[51]

In 1826, Dr. Benjamin Coates found a manuscript written by a Native American recording a diplomatic mission that attempted to engender peace between Indian nations living west of the Ohio River and the new American government. Coates found the manuscript to be fascinating, not for its historical significance, but for its literary significance. As he says " . . . men desirous of preserving the impartiality of history have often felt the want of some direct expression of the feelings and opinions of the sons of the forest themselves" (Coates 63). Hendrick Aupaumut defied the "ancient fable" that Coates refers to in his *Prefatory Remarks* to Aupaumut's *A Narrative of An Embassy to the Western Indians*: " . . . the lions have had no painters — no apologists have arisen to celebrate and exalt their great actions . . ." (Coates 63).

In a time when Indian nations were being decimated, when the search for a homeland was a constant undertaking, Aupaumut took it upon himself to become the "painter" for the "lions." His *Narrative* reveals a man who realizes what is necessary for tribal survival, but who is unwilling to sacrifice Indian identity. A close look at his writings reveal a man struggling to maintain a diplomatic balance between the Americans and Mohican allies. Aupaumut realizes that integrating certain aspects of white culture

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[51] Hendrick Aupaumut. *A Narrative of an Embassy to the Western Indians*. 76. Spelling in this quotation, and in all subsequent quotations, has not been corrected.

are necessary if the Indians are to survive. While he works toward this integration, Aupaumut fights against complete assimilation.

Historical Background

Because Hendrick Aupaumut remains virtually unknown, his background as well as some Mohican history is beneficial. Captain Hendrick Aupaumut was born in 1757 in Stockbridge, Massachusetts. The Reverend John Sergeant, a Protestant missionary, taught Aupaumut to read, write, and speak English. Aupaumut earned the title of "Captain" during the Revolutionary War, fighting in the Mohican company under George Washington. Because of his bravery and leadership, Aupaumut earned a commendation from Washington and rose from the rank of private to the rank of captain.

At the completion of the Revolutionary War, Aupaumut returned to Stockbridge, Massachusetts where he became sachem, or leader, of the Mohicans. As Alan Taylor explains in his article on Aupaumut, the Mohican tribe should not be confused with the Mohegans of southern New England or the Mohicans invented by James Fenimore Cooper. Aupaumut's Mohicans were a combination of Mahicans, Wappingers, and Housatonics who dwelled between the Hudson and Connecticut valleys (Taylor 432). The Mohicans called themselves Muhheakunuk, but both British and Americans referred to them as Mohicans or "Stockbridge Indians."

As sachem, Aupaumut accepted an invitation from the Oneida to immigrate to central New York. His decision was based on the increasing number of white settlers surrounding their township in Stockbridge, Massachusetts. In 1783, Aupaumut moved the Mohicans to New Stockbridge, a township located on the Oneida Creek. Although

not in danger of immediate encroachment by white settlers, the move to central New York provided distance from white incursion while still allowing communication between the Mohicans and American officials.

Aupaumut referred to his tribe as the "front door," invoking a long tradition of Mahican mediation between the colonists and the western Indian tribes (Ronda 47). Early in the seventeenth century, the Mahicans acted as cultural emissaries among the Algonquian tribes and as mediators along the Hudson trading corridor. Their position grew more dangerous with the advent of the Dutch fur trade. Mahican access to the goods traded by the Dutch engendered the hostility of the Mohawks who drove the Mahicans from their lands west of the Hudson River. With access lost to the Dutch fur traders, the Mahicans lost their diplomatic supremacy. By forming close ties with the Miami, Delaware, and Shawnee, they worked to rebuild their position as the "front door" which was undermined by their defeat in the war with the Mohawks.

Upon their amalgamation with the Housatonic and the Wappinger, the Mahicans settled around a Protestant mission in Stockbridge. Because of the remembered power and prestige of the Mahican people, the leadership of the unified tribe — the Mohicans — fell to the descendants of the original Mahicans. Aupaumut's grandfather believed that adopting the Protestant religion and English agricultural methods would ensure the tribe's survival. Suffering the derision of neighboring tribes, the Mahicans farmed the land, lived in permanent farmhouses, owned cattle, and sent their children to the Protestant mission school (Taylor 441). Thus, as a third-generation Christian and Stockbridge inhabitant, Aupaumut saw the benefits of adaptation and accommodation.

Although the Mahicans integrated European religious and cultural customs into their everyday lives, the result was not total acculturation. The Mahicans were able to integrate those European practices and customs that they determined would enrich their lives without turning away from their own customs and traditions. As Taylor states,

> the New Stockbridge Mohicans cherished their distinct identity as a native people. They adopted "white" techniques and beliefs that would help them persist as Mohicans in a changed world — not that they might pass as white men and women. They retained their Algonquian language (while adding English), matrilineal inheritance, clan system, and hereditary chieftainship and much of their folklore. In particular they clung to traditional diplomatic rituals, considering their precise renewal the essence of a native identity. (441)

Therefore, in 1803 when Aupaumut tried to convince the Delaware to adapt white farming techniques, he was not asking them to forsake their culture, but rather work to ensure Indian survival in an increasingly white world.

Aupaumut's knowledge of both Indian and white culture made him a prime candidate for the post of emissary to the western tribes. After the Algonquian defeat of General Hamar's army in 1790 and St. Clair's army in 1791, the Secretary of War, Henry Knox, sought an emissary to convey the new policy of the United States to the western tribes. Washington's administration determined that "short-term patience and restraint would dissolve the dangerous Indian confederacy and would eventually reward Americans with the continent at a minimal expenditure of blood and treasure" (Taylor 435). Knox wanted to recruit the Mohawk Joseph Brant, but Brant's connection with the British made him unreliable.

In June 1791, Timothy Pickering, the United States Indian commissioner, traveled to central New York to meet with potential delegates. He found the Iroquois wary and unwilling, but received an offer of assistance from the New Stockbridge Mohicans. In a

speech to Colonel Pickering, Aupaumut "offered to effect a western reconciliation as both a sincere friend to the United States' and 'a true friend to the people of my own colour'" (Taylor 435).[52] However, Aupaumut did not accept Pickering's mission with blind faith in the Americans. The Mohicans resented the treatment they had received from New York officials as well as the lack of payment from American officials for Mohican service in the Revolutionary War.

In another conversation with Pickering, Aupaumut stated:

> Since the British and Americans lay down their hatchets, then my nation was forgotten. But sometimes I feel sorrow, and shame, that some of my great brothers have forgotten me — that all my services & sufferings have been forgotten — and that I — my nation remain neglected . . . Perhaps I am too small to be regarded. My friendship however is strong; my friendship I do not forget. (qtd. in Taylor 442)[53]

Aupaumut takes the Americans to task for their behavior toward the Mohican nation. Although he questions his people's status with the Americans – "Perhaps I am too small to be regarded" – the sense one gets from his admonishment is one of disappointment in the Americans' behavior. His words are not that of an inferior but of a wise brother who seeks to correct his brother's mistakes. Aupaumut's diplomatic maneuvering is superb. His use of the words *sorrow* and *shame* are more effective than an outright display of anger. Anger may have made Pickering wary, concerned about Aupaumut's reliability in pleading the American cause to Mohican allies. By invoking the emotion of sadness, Aupaumut ensures Pickering of his own integrity, while stating his awareness of unfair American treatment toward Indian nations.

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[52]Aupaumut, Speech, 20 June 1791, in Pickering, Newtown Point Council Journal, Timothy Pickering Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society, vol. 61, item 200.

[53]Aupaumut, Speech, 20 June 1791, in Pickering, Newtown Point Council Journal, Timothy Pickering Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society, vol. 60, item 70.

In addition, Aupaumut placed the blame for the war between the western Indians and the American settlers firmly on the shoulders of the settlers. In another speech to Pickering, Aupaumut criticized "the inhuman practices of your people on the frontiers, who ought to have set good examples; but . . . these cruel people have kindled the bad fire, and so raised the evil smoke" (qtd. in Taylor 442).[54] Aupaumut clearly states that it is not the Indians who are acting *inhuman*; it is the whites. However, the atrocities begun by the whites, the *bad fire*, could affect more than the nearby tribes. The *evil smoke* can spread even farther, influencing those who are now at peace.

Still, if the situation could not be rectified, if the Americans reneged on their promise, Aupaumut was more than willing to assist the western tribes in repelling the American settlers. In a speech to the Shawnee, unknown to Pickering and other American officials, Aupaumut concluded, "We now tell you [that] if these people with whom you are at war shall refuse to listen to a just and honourable peace, and remove all obstacles on their part, then we can join with you against them" (qtd. in Taylor 442).[55] These excerpts from Aupaumut's speeches indicate a man with a knowledge of political maneuvering. Aupaumut knew where to place the blame for the ongoing troubles along the Ohio frontier and he was not afraid to voice his opinion to Colonel Pickering, nor to ensure to Western nations of Mohican support. Furthermore, he let Pickering know that he had not forgotten the payments owed to his tribe for service during the Revolutionary war even if the Americans had forgotten the Mohicans. Of course Aupaumut wanted to solidify his tribe's position with the Americans, but he also wanted to strengthen the

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[54]Aupaumut, Speech, 20 June 1791.

[55]Aupaumut, Speech to the Shawnees, quoted in Sergeant, Journal, 9 June 1791, Society for Propagating the Gospel among the Indians and Others in North America, Box 1, Massachusetts Historical Society.

bonds between the Mohicans and their western allies. Therefore, his motives in accepting the mission to the western tribes were more complicated than just blind loyalty to the Americans.

Aupaumut made four trips to the western tribes between 1791 and 1793. His first two trips in 1791 and February of 1792 ended in failure. Aupaumut was unable to reach the Indian confederacy situated along the Maumee River until his third trip in the summer of 1792 and his fourth trip in the summer of 1793. His third trip met with such success that the Americans sent a delegation to meet with the Indian confederacy. Aupaumut's fourth trip was as facilitator to the delegates, Benjamin Lincoln, Timothy Pickering, and Beverly Randolph. During his third trip, Aupaumut kept a journal that he then turned over to the American officials upon his return. It is this journal on which the remainder of this chapter will focus.

The Indian Report

The function of the Indian Report was to provide first hand, personal accounts to the government regarding the mindset of the various Indian nations. In 1776, the Board of War decided to appoint an agent for Indian affairs who would "support friendly savages" and determine and divide those nations who were hostile (Morgan 41). This decision was in response to the flux within the standing committee created to supervise Indian affairs, a flux that did not allow the government to establish a consistent policy when dealing with the various Indian nations. However, the United States could not find responsible agents who would fairly represent the new government's policies. Thus the United States was forced to recruit Indians as agents, especially to combat the British

who had over fifty agents actively promoting friendship between Indian nations and the British government.

However, Indian agents were not readily available, so many of the extant Indian reports are written by white men, usually members of the United States Army. In many cases, the language of the white-written Indian report is similar to that of Aupaumut's. Yet, careful reading allows us to see the subtle differences that make Aupaumut's narrative so important to our understanding of cultural negotiation between Indian nations and Euroamericans.

One interesting difference is how the narratives open. Aupaumut's narrative is prefaced by a letter from Coates to Thomas Pickering. Coates feels the need to "ascertain and confirm the authenticity of the memoir and the authority of the writer."[56] Pickering's reply to Coates, confirming Aupaumut's diplomatic journey, is placed prior to the narrative proper. Thus, Pickering's letter becomes an authenticating document, similar to those documents that preface the slave narratives of writers such as Frederick Douglass and Harriet Jacobs. The trope of the authenticating document requires that a white writer, usually a white man, confirm the veracity of the text as well as the veracity of the writer. Without this confirmation, it is implied, the writer, as well as the text, comes into question. Thus, without Pickering, Aupaumut's narrative voice is silenced, the narrative itself, dismissed.

Aupaumut opens his narrative explaining why he accepts the mission on behalf of the United States government and then explains the connections between his nation and the Western nations. Aupaumut states early on that both the United States and the

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[56] Coates, B.H. "Prefatory Remarks" in Aupaumut's *Narrative*, 68.

Western nations were concerned with his ability to negotiate peace; nevertheless, he believes "that if the Western Nations could be rightly informed of the desires of the United States, they would comply for peace, and that the informer should be an Indian to whom they look upon as a true friend, who has never deceived or injured them" (76). Thus, Aupaumut's position allows him to understand the position of the United States, while as an Indian he provides the American government a level of access to the Western Nations not necessarily available to a white emissary.

Colonel Thomas McKenney, appointed as Superintendent of Indian Trade in 1816 by President James Madison, undertook a mission to the Southern Indian nations: the Chickasaw, Choctow, Cherokee, and Creek. Throughout his mission, he wrote to James Barbour, the Secretary of War, informing Barbour of his progress.[57] McKenney traveled to the Southern nations to determine their views on the removal of their people to west of the Mississippi. McKenney's report of his mission to the Southern nations opens with a letter to James Barbour.[58] There is, of course, no authenticating document. Unlike Aupaumut, who feels the need to acknowledge that there are those who oppose his diplomatic position, McKenney is able to get right down to business: "Sir: I have met the Chickasaw Chiefs in Council, and, in pursuance of your instructions, ascertained their views in regard to their removal West of the Mississippi." Because his position allows him a certain privilege, McKenney has no need to establish his narrative voice.

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[57] These letters, encompassing his dealings with the four Southern Nations, date between October and November of 1827. See *Reports and Proceedings of Col. McKenney on the Subject of his Recent Tour among the Southern Indians, as Submitted to Congress with the Message of the President U.S.* Gales & Seaton, 1828.

[58] Letter dated 10th October, 1827. *Reports and Proceedings of Col. McKenney on the Subject of his Recent Tour Among the Southern Indians, as Submitted to Congress with the Message of the President U.S., 1828.*

Interestingly, McKenney's narrative rarely allows us to hear the Indian voice. McKenney recounts speeches to the various nations, but only rarely quotes the their reply. Out of a thirty-seven-page report, less than five pages focus on the Indian reply and then only the speeches of the Chickasaw and Choctaw. Aupaumut, on the other hand, makes it a point to provide detailed accounts of the Western Nations' responses. When McKenney does provide us with the Indian voice, the quotes he provides focus on him and his position within the government, a position the Chiefs of the Chickasaw and Choctaw nations know can help or hinder their cause.

To further his position, McKenney informs his readers that Levi Colbert, Counselor to the Chickasaw nation, refers to him as "brother," but McKenney uses no such language when referring to Colbert and the other chiefs.[59] This may not seem to be an important distinction until one remembers the importance of familial connections among the Indian nations. Aupaumut opens his narrative defining his nation's connections with the Western nations in familial terms. For example, the Delawares are Grandfathers to the Mahicans, the Monthees are brothers, while the Miamies and the Ottawas are grandchildren.

Thus, for McKenney the term "brother" is no more than a political maneuver to solidify his position to his reader James Barbour. By noting Colbert's use of "brother," McKenney assures the Secretary of War that he has the connections needed to guarantee Indian cooperation. He is familiar enough with Indian diplomacy to mimic it, but his connection with the Southern Nations, as shown through his narrative, is superficial.

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[59] McKenney states: "I will, however, note the language of Levi Colbert: 'It makes my heart glad, *Brother*,' said he, 'to see you' . . . I replied that a *regard* for them, and a strong desire to see them, and to see them happy, had brought me to their country . . . ." (7-8 emphases mine). Letter to James Barbour, 10 October 1827.

McKenney uses the term "brother" in his address to the Chickasaw and Choctaw nations, not to establish any type of familial connection, but to illustrate the superiority of the "American" way of life and the power of the United States government. The Chickasaw nation is reluctant to leave their lands – "Here lie the bones of our fathers; and here has been the home of our infancy, and we love this country" – because it is their home. McKenney dismisses their argument with his focus on the Western ideal that betterment and progress are equivalent. He tells the Chickasaw chiefs that their "exchange of country" will provide "an opportunity of making [them] a great people, and in all respects like the whites."[60] For McKenney, greatness and whiteness are analogous. He goes on: "You ought to have told [the American commissioners], like all other people, we wish to better our condition."[61] McKenney's speech is in no way similar to those of Aupaumut's to the Western Nations, other than his meaningless use of the term "brother."

In contrast, there is no time when Aupaumut disregards the position of the Western Nations. When he delivers the United States' message, he does so without prejudice. He neither condemns the position of the United States nor the Western Nations during council meetings. However, he does note his skepticism of the American government and their treatment of Indian nations, his in particular.[62] Aupaumut never encourages the Western Nations to assimilate or acculturate. He does not assume to tell the Nations what position they should take. All Aupaumut does is present the words of the United States government – he leaves the decision on whether or not to accept these words to the leaders themselves: "I have delivered you a great Message in your hands,

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[60] "Talk delivered to the Council held with the Chiefs of the Chickasaw Nation, at Levi Colbert's, on Tuesday, October 9th, 1827." Thomas McKenney, *Reports and Proceedings*.

[61] Ibid.

[62] Please see pp. 5-7 where I discuss this point

and you must exert yourselves, and consider it seriously – and to remember our children, women, young men, and old people, and take the wisest part; and as I am here with you, I will endeavour to assist you as far as I can" (95). Nor does Aupaumut argue that by accepting the terms of the United States, the Indian nations will better themselves. They may better their condition – they will avoid war – but he never assumes to determine their future.

Another significant departure between Aupaumut and McKenney is their descriptive language. In a letter to James Barbour, McKenney advises against giving the Indians money, stating: "All who know any thing of the Indian character, know how improvident they are, and will admit that a moneyed consideration would be a fruitful source of evil to them, and would doubtless render the majority of them homeless and houseless for the rest to their lives."[63] He makes it clear that he, in no way, believes in the Indian character. His language is similar to many whites: the Indian is no better than a child, and must be protected from himself.

Aupaumut, on the other hand, acknowledges that the United States can help the Indian nations by assisting them, not controlling them. As he tells the Delaware, the United States endeavors "to lift us up the Indians from the ground, that we may stand up and walk ourselves; because we Indians, hitherto have lay flat as it were on the ground, but which we could not see great way; but if we could stand then we could see some distance" (127). Aupaumut, unlike McKenney, fully believes in the Indian's ability to control his own destiny, to "stand up and walk ourselves," albeit with some assistance.

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[63] Letter dated October 10, 1827.

Thus, Aupaumut's narrative differs in that Aupaumut places greater emphasis on the Indian voice than does his white counterpart. Both McKenney and Aupaumut attempt to provide the American government with the mindset of the nations they visit, yet McKenney does so through his own cultural lens: a view that sees the Indian as child-like and incapable of caring for himself. McKenney rarely provides a first-hand account of the Indian voice because the Indian cannot speak for himself or for his nation. In almost direct contrast, Aupaumut provides us mostly with the Indian voice. The bulk of his narrative is the Western Nations' response to the American offer and to the problems with white settlers. In doing so, Aupaumut challenges the pervasive notion that the only way of survival was through Euroamerican culture. Aupaumut and the Western nations understand and are willing to accept American help "to lift the Indians up," but are determined to "stand up and walk" themselves.

Objective Reality and the Language of Diplomacy

In *Residues of Justice*, Wai Chee Dimock states that justice "will always be *imagined as having an objective reality*, a reality coincidental with the immanent relations among things and discoverable through a rational process of deliberation" (4, emphasis added). For Aupaumut, and the Western nations whom he approaches on behalf of the United States government, justice and the language surrounding it, have an objective reality, not an *imagined* reality. Speech between Aupaumut and the Western nations takes on a material reality, a physical presence unfamiliar to American officials. This materiality can be seen as Aupaumut requests his brother "to fetch [his] bag of peace, in which there is ancient wampom [sic]" before starting out on his journey (78).

The significance of this gesture cannot be glossed over. Aupaumut's presence at the council fires, or his speech alone, is not enough to convince the sachems of the importance of his mission. The idea of diplomacy, the act itself, must be visible to leaders of the Western nations. Aupaumut must present physical proof of the United States' intentions: their desire for peace and their willingness to negotiate the terms of that peace. In addition, Aupaumut must assert his position as an ally of the Western nations and a worthy advocate for the United States. His bag of peace, then, carries a presence that goes far beyond the symbolic or the imagined. It becomes, in effect, the material presence of peace, the concrete manifestation of the goals Aupaumut attempts to achieve.

Equal to the objective reality of diplomacy is the objective reality of justice. Dimock argues against the idea that justice is a reification of commensurability, that relations surrounding the conception of justice complicate the notion that one good could equal another good or one evil could equal another evil (6). Yet, in Aupaumut's narrative, justice has a physical commensurability as evidenced in the exchange of wampum. Wampum serves not only as a physical manifestation of diplomacy, -- as the exchange reveres both speaker and audience -- but both parties imbue the wampum itself with a belief in its commensurability: the administration of what is morally right must be visible between the United States and the Western tribes. Wampum, then, implies that one good can equal another and to renege on diplomatic promises demands equal reaction.

The physical manifestation of diplomacy is made evident in an early interaction between Aupaumut and the Iroquois. At the very beginning of his journey, Aupaumut

meets with members of the Iroquois confederacy, explaining the reasons behind the urgency of his mission as well as the United States' choice of him as intermediary. Before he takes leave of the confederacy, however, Farmers Brother, an Iroquois sachem, asks Aupaumut to deliver a message to the Delaware. Evidently, Iroquois warriors, "led astray by the big knifes," have killed two Delaware.[64] In his message, Farmers Brother apologizes for the actions of these "foolish young men" and reassures the Delaware of their continued alliance. He concludes his speech with the promise to "wipe of [sic] your tears which runs down your cheeks," and he ensures the importance and truth of his statement with five strings of wampum (81). Thus, Aupaumut will deliver to the Delaware material proof of both sorrow and justice as felt by the Iroquois.

In addition to the objective reality of both diplomacy and justice as represented by wampum, speech itself takes on a physical aspect. In a speech by Tautpuhgtheet, a Delaware sachem, sorrow and its elimination have an objective reality:

> You have come from great way off to see and visit us -- you have seen many dismal objects for which your tears droping [sic] down. Our good ancestors did hand down to us a rule or path where we may walk. According to that rule I now wipe off your tears from your eyes and face that you may see clear. And since there has been so much wind on the way that the dust and every evil things did fill your ears, I now put my hand and take away the dust from your ears, that you may hear plain -- and also the heavy burden on your mind I now remove, that you may feel easy, and that you may contemplate some objects without burden. (87)

The acts of seeing, hearing, and thinking become more than just sensate experiences: for all of the nations with whom Aupaumut will come into contact, these sensory acts are manifested physically.

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[64] In the familial terms by which various nations refer to one another, members of the Iroquois confederacy act as "uncles" to both the Delaware and to Aupaumut's Mohican nation.

Thus, the language of diplomacy and its interpretation moves from the realm of the subjective into the realm of the objective. Words cannot be misinterpreted as those who are speaking will first "take away the dust" that fills the recipient's ears and remove any "heavy burdens" that may trouble the recipient's mind. In doing so, the speaker ensures that his message will be understood and interpreted correctly.

Nevertheless, Aupaumut understands that diplomatic offers from the United States to the Western nations either have been misinterpreted or ignored. Therefore, he couches the words given to him by the United States government in physical terms: "It has been feared that our word of peace has not reached your ears, but has fallen and been buried under ground, or gone into the air by means of malignant birds" (93). Words, therefore, have a physical life of their own. They carry a materiality that, if not received correctly, may result in their being entombed in the ground or snatched away in transit by "malignant birds."

Reading Aupaumut's narrative, we can see that, for Aupaumut and the Western nations, the language of diplomacy does have an objective reality, a physical presence that does not exist in the Euroamerican language of diplomacy. Furthermore, the exchange of wampum is the transmogrification of words into object, a transmogrification that ensures understanding between the conversants. The language of diplomacy carries with it a weight that cannot be easily dismissed. Acts, such as Aupaumut's, became more than just an exchange of words that could be easily forgotten when considered to be no longer beneficial. Long after the speeches had ended and the council fires had been extinguished, those present had material proof of what had occurred.

Aupaumut's Language and the Implied Reader

As I mentioned earlier, Hendrick Aupuamut was not the United States' first choice as emissary to the Western nations. Henry Knox had hoped to convince either Joseph Brant or the Seneca chief, Red Jacket, to deliver the Americans' message to the Western nations as both men were well known to the Americans and the Indian nations. In addition, other nations opposed Aupaumut as it placed the Mohicans in a position of some authority. Thus, Aupaumut opens his narrative responding to the Mohawks who disapproved of his election as an emissary to the western tribes. Aupaumut states that the "principal chiefs of the Five Nations" opposed his mission, contending "that it would be folly for the United States to send me on that business . . . the Western Nations will not regard the voice of One Nation — but the business ought to be negotiated by the Five Nations and the British" (76). It is likely that Aupaumut's critic was Joseph Brant, the Mohawk sachem, who repeatedly attempts to undermine Aupaumut's mission. Brant's connection with the British and the powerful Iroquois confederacy placed him in a formidable position, factors with which Aupaumut was well aware.

Although the Five Nations greatly outnumbered the Mohicans, Aupaumut fell back on his tribe's history as diplomats and negotiators. Furthermore, Aupaumut alludes to the honor and integrity of the Mohicans in their dealings with other tribes, implying that the Mohawks could not be trusted implicitly. As he remarks: " . . . the informer should be an Indian to whom they look upon as a true friend, who has never deceived or injured them" (76). He will remind the western tribes, later in the narrative, of the Mohawk's past deception: "But you look back and see heaps of your bones, wherein the

Mauquas [Mohawks] have deceived you repeat[ed]ly. I think I could have good reason to tell you not to believe the Message or words of the Mohawks, for they will deceive you greatly as Usual — but I forebear" (129). One can easily note the facetious tone of Aupaumut's remark. Without directly naming Brant, Aupaumut implies that Brant and the Mohawks are untrustworthy and deceitful, and therefore, because of their connection with Brant, the British cannot be trusted.

That Aupaumut should begin his narrative with a retort to Brant's criticism is very telling. His concerns are not with American apprehension over his ability, but rather with the western Indians' perception of his people as loyal friends. However, we must remember that Aupaumut writes this narrative in English for American officials and it will likely never be seen by any Indian. Why then does he make this statement?

As mentioned earlier, we must remember that Aupaumut was not Knox's first choice; Joseph Brant was. When the Americans decided that Brant was unreliable because of his connection with the British, the government still wanted another sachem from the powerful Iroquois confederacy. In putting himself forward as a candidate for the emissary position, Aupaumut was invoking the Mohican past as intercultural brokers. The United States had a skewed conception of Iroquois influence and Aupaumut sought to convince the Americans of the benefits of a Mohican/American alliance.

In the second paragraph, Aupaumut shrewdly refers to Mohican diplomacy and his support of the United States' peace efforts: " . . . I conclude that I could acquaint them my best knowledge with regard of the dispositions, desires, and might of the United States, without partiality . . ." (76). Aupaumut is able to *acquaint* the western tribes with the intentions of the United States because his knowledge encompasses both white and

Native American culture and language. Unlike Thomas McKenney, whose knowledge of Indian culture and diplomacy is shallow at best, Aupaumut has a shrewd understanding of both positions. He is telling his readers -- Henry Knox, Thomas Pickering -- that his familiarity with the United States runs deep enough to enable Aupaumut to articulate the moods and aspirations of the American government. Coming immediately after Brant's criticism, Aupaumut implies that American officials could not expect this depth of knowledge from one whose loyalties lay with the British.

Aware of his implied readers, Aupaumut then proceeds to narrate the Mohicans' diplomatic history. He explains that the connections with the western tribes are old friendships established by his "forefathers" (76). Aupaumut continues with a detailed description of the connections between the Mohicans and the western tribes. In the Indian tradition, Aupaumut describes all connections in familial terms. Using labels such as *grandfather*, *nephew*, *uncle*, and *brother*, Aupaumut allows his readers insight into the hierarchical nature of intertribal relationships. Besides laying bare the structure of these relationships, Aupaumut's specific portrayals of those relationships further enhance his position as emissary. As he states at the end of this description, "It was the business of our fathers to go around the towns of these nations to renew the agreements between them, and tell them many things which they discover among the white people in the east, &c" (78). This statement illustrates that this embassy was a continuing vocation for the Mohican people.

Aupaumut has his first confrontation with Brant who tries to convince him to let the British deliver the message of the United States to the western tribes. Brant tells Aupaumut that the western tribes were more likely to listen to the British, besides which

the British could arrive at the Maumee River more quickly than Aupaumut. Although Aupaumut records Brant as using the term "British," he knew that Brant was telling him that the western tribes were more likely to listen to Brant rather than Aupaumut. Aupaumut's response is silence; as he says, " . . . I gave him no answer" (78).

Aupaumut's second encounter with Brant occurs in a meeting with Captain Aaron, a "cousin" of the Mohican tribe. Brant sent Aaron, Brant's nephew Tawalooth and two others as messengers to the western tribes. His message is in direct conflict with Aupaumut as he informs the western tribes that the Six Nations and the Seven Nations of Canada are preparing to join with them for war against the Americans. Aupaumut states that Tawalooth, speaking for Brant, has led the western tribes to expect nothing but war and is unaware of the damage his message has done (85). Aupaumut's tone is disheartened, but by including this information he is preparing a defense in case of failure.

Aupaumut's next meeting is with the Delaware and the Shawnee. At this meeting are four British delegates, including Captain Elliot, who is an associate of Joseph Brant. In one speech, Aupaumut makes a subtle comparison between the Americans and the British, a comparison which shows the British in an unfavorable light. Aupaumut tells the Delaware sachem that the Mohican nation lives in peace with the Americans and "that the great men of the United States wished to live in peace with all Indians . . ." (89). He then goes on to state that "there are some wars among the great people over the waters — and that negroes also have cut off many of their masters — which the Indians glad to hear . . ." (89). Aupaumut is referring to a slave uprising in a British colony in the Caribbean

(Tanner 32). In bringing this information up, he compares the United States' treatment of Indians to the British treatment of those living in British colonies.

The following day, in a council session, Aupaumut uses the Mohican position as cultural emissary to explain his reasons for his intervention on behalf of the Americans. During this speech, he reveals the unfair treatment from the Americans toward his nation:

> In order to have you to understand our business, I will acquaint you some things of our situation, lest you may have wrong apprhensions [sic]. Since the British and Amaricans [sic] lay down their hatchets, then my nation was forgotten. We never have had invitation to set in Council with the white people — not as the Five Nations and you are greatly regarded by the white people — but last winter was the first time I had invitation from the great man of the United States to attend Council in Philladelphia [sic]. According to that invitation I went — and after we arrived at Philadelphia, I find that the business was for the wellfare [sic] of all nations — and then I was asked whether I would carry a message of peace to you here. I then reply that I would — for I know that it would look unfriendly to you, had I refuse [d] to bring good tidings, and for the sake of our good friendship, and for peace, I was willing to take this long journey, &c. (92)

Clearly, Aupaumut wants the western tribes to understand that he is not acting as a pawn for the United States government. He brings up his grievances with the Americans to illustrate that any misplaced loyalty has not blinded his perceptions regarding them. Furthermore, Aupaumut uses this statement as a deliberate reminder to his American readers that he expects something in return for his efforts. This statement also serves to inform Knox, Pickering and others that he is cognizant of their failure to fulfill their promises.

Furthermore, he lets the Americans know of his disappointment in there not being a voluntary meeting between his people and the United States government. He tells the Shawnee and the Delaware, and therefore the Americans, that he approached the whites, not the other way around. Had he not volunteered for this mission, it is likely that the

Mohicans would have never sat down with the Americans in council. In addition, he states that he was quick to respond to the Americans' invitation. Aupaumut concludes his opening with yet another reminder of the diplomatic past of the Mohican people.

At this point in the narrative, near the halfway point, Aupaumut delivers the speech of the United States government. He refers to them as the *15 sachems* and the *15 United Sachems*, respectively. Within the speech Aupaumut, speaking for the Americans, explains that he was chosen because he is of their "own colar" [sic] and because he will "faithfully" and "impartially" deliver to them the "dispositions of the United States" (93). Again, Aupaumut reassures the Indians, through the voice of the United States government, that his loyalty lies with his own people. The United States assures the Indians that they will deal with the "big knives" and will remove the forts standing on their lands if the western tribes call in their war parties and agree to a treaty regarding settlement along the Ohio River. Hobakon, the Delaware sachem, agrees to deliver the United States' message to the back nations (Wyondots, Ottawas, Chippewas, etc.) and encourages those present to accept the terms.

Upon leaving the Delaware town, Aupaumut hears that the white settlers have arrived at Fort Jefferson. This news places Aupaumut's mission in jeopardy as the "big knives" are encroaching farther into the territory of the western tribes. As Aupaumut continues his mission, he is continually bombarded with news of further atrocities committed by white settlers. Each time he is met with such news, Aupaumut exhorts the western sachems to send warriors out in order that they may discover the veracity of such statements.

Aupaumut continues onto the Forks, the meeting of the Maumee and Au Glaize rivers, where he meets with Big Cat, another Delaware sachem. It is here, once again, where Brant and the British confront Aupaumut's mission. However, it is not Aupaumut who answers the charges regarding his expedition. Captain Elliot, the British emissary, makes the mistake of questioning Big Cat. Although the Algonquian nations depended heavily on British aid for food and other supplies, Big Cat tells Aupaumut of a severe rebuke he gives to Elliot for overstepping his boundaries:

> Then I replied, how came you to ask us such questions? Did you ever see me at Detroit or Niagara, in you councils, and there to ask you where such and such white man come from? or what is their Business? Can you watch, and look all around the earth to see who come to us? or is what their Business? Do you not know that we are upon our own Business? and that we have longed to see our friends, who now come to us, and for which we rejoice? (103)

Aupaumut then says that Elliot was silenced and all the other Indians who were present "laughed at him to scorn" (103). His reasons for recounting this incident are varied. Big Cat's defense illustrates Aupaumut's reputation as a diplomat. It also shows the Americans that the British hold on the western nations was precarious. Furthermore, Aupaumut is able to portray his defeat over Brant and the British who had plagued him throughout his mission.

However, Brant's most serious interference was yet to come. Colonel McKee, another British agent, arrived at Big Cat's town with a message from the British. McKee opens his speech with a warning about Aupaumut's loyalties. He tells the western tribes that the "Muhheconneew" (Aupaumut) was sent by the "big knives" and that their belief in Aupaumut's words will ensure a life of misery. McKee then informs the tribes that he has received from the King "guns and ammunition, and cloathing [sic], that you may

stand strong against your enemies" (112). The following day Brant's nephew, Tawalooth, delivers a message from Brant. In it he tells the Indian confederacy " . . . do not believe what Message the Muhheconneew brought to you, neither believe what he says, if you do you will be greatly deceived" (112-13). Brant refutes Aupaumut's message regarding the settlement of the Ohio River region with his next words:

> I have myself seen Washington, and see his heart and bowels; and he declared that he claims from the mouth if Miamie [sic] to the head of it — thence to the head of Wabash river; and down the same to the mouth of it; and that he did take up dust, and did declare that he would not restore so much dust to the Indians, but he is willing to have peace with the Indians, &c. (113)

Aupaumut responds to Brant's message within the narrative, not in speech to the western tribes. His tone is angry and disheartened. He mentions that Tawalooth "speak[s] the Shawany tongue, also some other languages" and this enabled him to tell "many lies" against Aupaumut. Aupaumut calls Tawalooth "a proper Liar" and an "Emmissary [sic] of the Devil" (113). Brant's message, according to Aupaumut, greatly injured the United States peace effort.

Soon after Tawalooth's arrival, Big Cat asks Aupaumut to deliver a message to the American officials. Aupaumut writes down the entire speech, which recounts all that has happened since he arrived at the Forks. Although Big Cat's speech recapitulates much of what Aupaumut has already recounted, Aupaumut faithfully reproduces the speech in its entirety. In doing so, he uses Big Cat to support the events that have taken place during his mission.

As the narrative nears the end, Aupaumut lists the Indian arguments against accepting the terms for peace and his refutations of those arguments. He blames the deceit of white people on British law, stating that the laws have changed with the

American victory over the British. The Indian confederacy recounts numerous tales of deceit and murder perpetrated by the "big knives." Aupaumut argues that the "big knives" should not be confused with the American officials. To support his argument, he says "if the great men of the United States have the like principal or disposition as the Big knifes had, My nation and other Indians in the East would been along ago anihilated [sic]. But they are not so" (127). He asks the confederacy to look at the actions of the United States so that they may see the difference between the American officials and the white settlers.

Aupaumut goes on to say that the British do not want the Indians to be self-sufficient; rather they want to "cover them with blanket and shirt every fall, and the Indians feel themselves warm, and esteem that usage very high — therefore they remain as it were on the ground and could not see great way these many years" (127). On the other hand, the Americans want to lift the Indians off the ground so "that we may stand up and walk ourselves" (127). Aupaumut believes that British affiliation would lead to stagnation, but an alliance with the Americans would lead to growth among the Indian nations.

However, in an address to his readers Aupaumut states that he did not tell the Indians the complete tale of his dealings with white people:

> In all my arguments with these Indians, I have as it were oblige to say nothing with regard of the conduct of Yorkers, how they cheat my fathers, how they taken our lands Unjustly, and how my fathers were groaning as it were to their graves, in loseing [sic] their lands for nothing, although they were faithful friends to the Whites; and how the white people artfully got their Deeds confirm in their Laws, &c. I say had I mention these things to the Indians, it would agravate [sic] their prejudices against all white people, &c. (128)

With this statement, Aupaumut demonstrates how strong is his desire for peace. He is willing to hold back information from his "family" so that war can be averted. The above excerpt also shows Aupaumut's shrewdness in diplomatic circles. He and the American officials know that such information could destroy any chance of a peaceful settlement. Therefore, it would behoove the Americans to amend any problems that exist between the State of New York and the Mohican tribe.

Conclusion

Aupaumut's mission was thought to be a success and, as I mentioned earlier, he accompanied a United States delegation that were to meet with the Indian confederacy at Lake Erie in the summer of 1793. However, the attempt to reach an agreement failed when the confederacy demanded that the United States remove all settlers and forts from the Ohio country and designated the Ohio River as the boundary (Taylor 449). In the summer of 1794, the American army advanced upon the confederacy and defeated the Indians at Fallen Timbers on August 20, 1794.

Although the United States would increasingly turn to white men for its diplomatic missions, Aupaumut's narrative stands as a singular text within the genre of the Indian report with its detailed look at Indian diplomatic rituals. A contextual reading of Aupaumut's narrative and one such as McKenney's allows us to see the subtle, but important differences between Indian and American culture, and how both viewed the future of the Indian in American society. Aupaumut did not deny American help, but still felt it was important for the various Indian nations to determine their own future. McKenney, on the other hand, is guilty of "imputing characteristics of the white man's

culture to the Indians" (Sheehan 58). For McKenney, and others like him, Indian progress must be the same as the Euroamerican ideal. Aupaumut fought to ensure survival not only for the Mohican people, but also for numerous other Indian nations. His narrative displays the struggle within a man determined to survive as an Indian in an increasingly white world. Through this work, we are able to see a man who believed in accommodation, but not complete acculturation.

Furthermore, Aupaumut's narrative allows us to understand the ways in which Native Americans viewed the language of diplomacy and justice. For Aupaumut and the sachems of the Western nations, language has an objective reality that is absent in the Euroamerican language of diplomacy and justice. Commensurability is evident in the exchange of wampum and in the physical gestures that accompany diplomatic speech. Therefore, the theoretical tools that we use to dissect the Western idea of law and justice do not apply to those texts written by Native Americans.

CHAPTER 3

Must We be Led by the Blind? Must We be Governed by the Wicked?:

Peter Jones and Methodism

> *Several Indian converts spoke very feelingly, insomuch that the white people present were astonished and confounded at the mighty power of God in converting the poor Indians, and many of them blushed and said they were ashamed of themselves on account of their spiritual deadness and want of more faith in that Gospel which they had long professed to believe. . . . Good Lord, I fear the white man will have to give an awful account at thy bar in the day of judgment for the evils they have inflicted upon the poor red man of the forest.*

Peter Jones (1802-1856) was a mixed-blood Mississauga Ojibway Indian, born to Augustus Jones, a Welshman who served as the King's Deputy Provincial Surveyor, and Tuhkenahneequay, the daughter of Chief Wahbonosay. Because Augustus Jones was away so often, Peter was raised in the Ojibway tradition. His maternal grandfather gave him his Ojibway name, Kahkewaquonaby, which means "Sacred Waving Feathers."

Jones spent much of his boyhood learning and participating in Ojibway traditions. At one point, he was adopted by another Ojibway chieftain, Captain Jim, who had lost his own son. Jones suffered from hunger and deprivation while with his adopted family. So serious were the circumstances that Jones and his family subsisted on bark: ". . . we suffered much from hunger, and were obliged to cut down hickory trees; we then peeled off the bark and cut out chips, which we boiled in order to extract the sweet juice; this we drank and derived much nourishment from it" (4). Because of extensive malnourishment, Jones at one point was almost crippled; he was unable to walk for three months. He believed that these dire events contributed to the poor health that plagued him throughout his life.

In 1816, Augustus Jones sent his son to an English school where Peter Jones learned the language by reading the New Testament. However, he says, "the words I read had no effect on my heart, because I did not understand the great plans of human salvation" (6). Jones's father encouraged him to become a Christian and Jones dutifully obeyed, being baptized in the Church of England in 1820. However, as I will discuss later, this religious ritual had no effect on Jones, partly due to the behavior of white Christians. It was not until June of 1823 that Jones experienced conversion during a Methodist camp meeting.

From 1835 until illness forced him to stop traveling, Jones traveled among the various Indian nations throughout Ontario as an itinerant preacher. In addition, he made several trips to cities throughout Canada and the United States, as well as two trips to England for fundraising purposes. Jones was a tireless Methodist "circuit rider," preaching, teaching, and helping throughout the Indian settlements. He was elected Chief of the Ojibway nation in 1829 with the understanding that the office would not interfere with his missionary work. Jones's life work was his translations of the Bible, several hymns, and the Apostle's Creed into the Ojibway language. He kept a detailed journal of his life, his faith, and his work: a journal that allows us insight into the workings of Methodism and Indian conversion.

Methodism and the American Indian

From its beginning with John and Charles Wesley's "Holy Club" in 1729 through the itinerant preaching of the nineteenth century, Methodism was particularly suited to the conversion of the American Indian. Firstly, Methodism began as a facet of the

Church of England just as the dominant culture thought the Indian was a facet of American society. As the Anglican church was unsure how to deal with Methodism in its beginnings, Euroamericans were unsure where the Indian fit into this new world they were creating. Joseph Pilmore, one of the first preachers appointed by Wesley himself to the American circuit, did not want to separate from the Anglican church but was frustrated with the "bigotry and narrow sectarian outlook" of the church itself (Norwood 72). Thus, the colonists separating themselves from the American Indian was in line with church practice.

Wesley himself argued that Methodism was not theologically new or different, but was necessary "to reform the nation, particularly the Church, and to spread Scriptural holiness over the land" (qtd. in McEllhenney 6). Wesley did not want society members to avoid liturgical obligations; rather, he sought to combat the apathy of the Church of England. In addition, Wesley believed that preachers were just that, they were not pastor because they were not to remain in one area, but travel around the "circuit." Preaching is, however, an important element of Methodism as it brings "together the members of the classes for informal worship" (Norwood 34). Such communion was of particular importance to Wesley who was dismayed by the dearth of spiritual mentoring available to the lower classes. Furthermore, he advocated preaching to all, regardless of nationality or race.

The doctrines Wesley taught were those of the Reformed faith with important exceptions. He argued that God provides people with three types of grace: prevenient grace, justifying grace, and sanctifying grace. Wesley defined prevenient grace as "preparing" grace, arguing that humans are not completely depraved as God places a

divine spark in everyone. It is on the subject of justifying grace that Wesley split from Calvinism. He believed that humans are free to accept or reject God's grace. Furthermore, one cannot achieve grace because of one's disposition, lifestyle, or through good works. Lastly, Wesley believed that people could fall from grace or backslide. One has to participate in the means of grace – known as "sanctifying" or "sustaining" grace – in order to continue in grace.

The means of grace are divided into works of piety and works of mercy. Works of piety include prayer, Bible study, fasting, communion, and membership in a Christian community. Works of mercy are defined as good deeds: visiting the sick, and feeding and clothing the poor, for example. Wesley was interested in both the emotional and the intellectual aspects of human nature, and these works of piety and mercy allow one to develop one's nature to its fullest.

Wesley laid down stringent parameters for membership in Methodist society. Candidates had to prove themselves worthy of membership with a six-month probationary period. In addition, members were required to attend small society meetings and love feasts – which consisted of distributing bread and water and spiritual testimony – to preserve intimate community (Norwood 34; 130).

However, the most important aspect of Methodism was the itinerant ministry. These circuit riders were the most visible representation of ministerial participation among the people. Because the itinerant preacher moved about from class meeting to class meeting, those left behind fulfilled the functions of local preacher and exhorter, requiring even more participation from the laity.

With Indian communities and nations scattered throughout the frontier, itinerant preaching allowed the Methodists to reach many potential converts. The preservation of intimate community was important within Indian tradition, just as it was to Methodism. The Indians would respond positively to this feature, as well as the camp meeting and the love feast. Wesley's Methodists, who were combating apathy in the Church, would be appealing to those Indians, such as Peter Jones, who recognized the gulf between the white Christian's beliefs and behavior.

Christianity and Authenticity

Religious doctrine required those who were seeking salvation to measure their spiritual progress throughout their everyday life. An ideal way in which to do so was through the act of writing. Writing provided a permanent record of one's thoughts and actions as one progressed in the personal quest for God's grace and mercy. Throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, two ways in which the faithful measured their spiritual life was through the writing of autobiographies and diaries.

Although the autobiography may be considered a public document, while the diary would be considered private, both genres served to chart one's spiritual progress individually and communally. Whether the diary itself is written for personal reflection or with a wider audience in mind, it allows the writer to seek some assurance of salvation through any event no matter how insignificant. A Puritan, for example, wrote a diary in order to "reveal what otherwise . . . must [be kept] hidden, he could expose his heart to God, and in so doing he could get the satisfaction of expressing on the conscious level the fears and doubts which molested him and which, totally suppressed, could lead to

dangerous and painful consequences" (Murdock 104). Autobiographies, on the other hand, were written with the larger community in mind and served as a guidebook for others involved in their own spiritual struggles. Kenneth Murdock writes that the autobiography had a twofold value for the Puritan: "it was the record of a good man's life, rich in suggestion as to how a human heart might triumph over doubt, fear, and sin, if properly receptive to God's grace; and it was in effect a sermon on adversity as a stimulus to holiness" (115).

In addition to serving as a spiritual guidebook, the conversion narrative functioned as a necessary component for admission into the Church. In addition, Wesley required a probationary period before full admittance into the Methodist society. The church required the applicant to relate a personal religious experience to the congregation using theologically appropriate language. In her work on Puritan conversion narratives, Patricia Caldwell distinguishes between the structure of the English conversion narrative and the American conversion narrative. English conversion narratives followed a specific pattern, known as the *morphology of conversion*[65], which included "sin, preparation, and assurance; conviction, compunction, and submission; fear, sorrow, and faith" (Caldwell 2). Caldwell argues that the American conversion narrative was less structured, depending more on biblical narrative structure than the "straightforward and reality-oriented" structure of the English conversion narrative (178). The shift in structure occurred, in part, because of the physical shift in the Puritan's location. No

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[65] See Edmund S. Burke, *Visible Saints: The History of a Puritan Idea* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1963).

longer able to depend on the historical and social significance of England, the Puritans had to search for a different structure to express their coming to God.

Admittance into the New England Puritan church required both personal and public proof from the applicant that included entering into a verbal covenant with the church as well as a profession of faith. The profession of faith was further broken down into the confession of faith, the confession of sin, and repentance. Thus, the profession of faith took on a much more personal cast, requiring that the candidate relate his/her *experience* in addition to his/her knowledge of church doctrine. The confession of sin, Patricia Caldwell writes, "became . . . [the] conversion narrative, the story of the work of grace to the soul" (65). New England conversion narratives, therefore, moved from a multiple-step morphology of conversion to a two step morphology: the profession of faith and the confession of sins.

The Native American Conversion Narrative

In addition to imparting religious doctrine, missionary teachers taught the English language to their Native American students, believing that the introduction of English literature was an effectual way to promote Western civilization and Christianity. Familiarity with the English language was necessary for yet another reason, a reason of vast importance to the missionaries: the explanation of sin. If the Indians were unable to conceive of sin, the atonement of Christ would have no meaning. Once Native Americans understood the idea of sin, the next task was to emphasize the sinfulness of Native Americans.

As I have noted above, knowledge of one's sinfulness is a necessary component in the conversion process. The subjective aspects of conversion include knowledge of religious doctrine and the confession of a sinful past, but they must be done in theologically appropriate language. According to Tinker, "the imposition of confessional theology is de facto the imposition of culture and values" as *theologically appropriate* language would entail the ability to demonstrate the rhetoric of Western Christianity (35).

Although we cannot deny the political and cultural motivation behind the process of Christianization, we must consider the motivation behind the Native Americans' willingness to convert. In her study on conversions among African-American women, Kimberly Rae Connor argues that conversion serves both the individual and society[66]. There are, of course, significant differences in the experiences of African-Americans and Native Americans, but similarities also exist between the two cultures, especially in their relation to the dominant culture.

Conversion allows the member of the subordinate group to achieve selfhood using the language of Christianity. Conversion signals a connection to both God and self; this connection requires that one turn not only to the self, but "to a transcendent order symbolized in . . . religious tradition" (Connor 4). Nevertheless, one must integrate the self into a community; selfhood cannot be achieved in isolation. Thus, one develops an individual identity through the connection to a collective religious consciousness.

Connor's theory works well when considering the African-American community, but can we also apply it to Native American communities? Are early Native American

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[66] Kimberly Rae Connor, *Conversions and Visions in the Writings of African-American Women* (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1994).

Christians developing their individual identities through a collective religious consciousness? If they are doing so, is it through the collective religious consciousness of white America or a collective religious consciousness through their own communities?

To answer these questions, we must look at what lies behind an individual's or a community's desire for religious conversion. James Axtell argues the "acceptance of Christianity . . . allowed [Indians] not only to survive in the present but gave them a long lease on life when many of their colonial landlords threatened to foreclose all future options" (51). Conversion is an attempt by members of a society to construct a better culture. Members of a particular society may look at their culture and find it wanting in several areas, or they may fear its demise. Thus, in the midst of a dominant Euroamerican presence, Native Americans, like African-Americans, found that conversion to Christianity allowed them to create a cultural system that they could control and with which they could identify. Creation of this cultural system was necessary because of social stress, which is "a condition in which some part or the whole of the social organism is threatened with more or less serious damage" (Connor 29). Conversion experiences allow for manipulation of the self and others to create a new *mazeway* – "a combination of nature, society, culture, personality, and body image" -- which minimizes or eliminates social stress (Connor 29).

With this is mind, I would argue that Native American converts were developing their individual identities through a collective consciousness that included the presence of Euroamericans, but was more dependent on the collective consciousness of their own culture. As James Axtell writes in his essay addressing the authenticity of Native

American conversions, the arrival of white men presented emotional and social challenges to the Indian communities:

> But in general, [Native Americans] turned to Christianity because that world religion satisfied new emotional needs and intellectual hungers. Those needs were created by the advent of the European strangers, their marvelous technology, and their deadly diseases. The ablest native minds could simply not explain — much less predict — the origins of white men and black, the geographies of continents beyond their own "island on the turtle's back," the lethal etiology of smallpox, the arts of metallurgy and papermaking, alphabetic literacy, or lunar eclipses. Nor could native societies control even their own circumscribed worlds as before. The invaders put so much pressure on native America, some of it deliberate, some inadvertent, that traditional culture was sooner or later thrown into disarray . . .. Christianity (and its attendant culture) offered answers to their most urgent questions, balm to their frayed emotions, and techniques of prediction and control to replace those they had lost. (120)

The Conversion of Peter Jones

As I mentioned earlier, Peter Jones was baptized by the Church of England in 1820, according to his father's wishes, but did not have a spiritual awakening until a Methodist camp meeting in 1823. Jones helped found the first Methodist Indian church in Davisville, an Indian Christian community situated on the Grand River reserve. Continuing his work with the Methodist church, Jones was ordained as a traveling minister in 1827. The year prior to his ordination, Jones returned to his Ojibway family, founding the Credit River mission, a Canadian Christian Indian community.

In this section, I will focus on the "Brief Account of Kah-Ke-Wa-Quo-N~-By" which is included in his published diary entitled *Life and Journals of Kah-Ke-Wa-Quo-N~By*. Jones'ss wife, Eliza, compiled his diary writing in 1860, four years after his death. Reverend Enoch Wood, the Methodist missionary superintendent, edited the diaries that were published by the Wesleyan Methodist printing company.

Jones autobiographical account begins with a brief sketch of his early life. Jones, like William Apess in *The Experiences of Five Christian Indians*, denounces the effects of alcohol on the Indian community, but places the blame for its use firmly on the shoulders of the whites:

> For more than fourteen years I lived and wandered about with the Indians in the woods, during which time I witnessed the miseries of savage life, and the woeful effects of the fire-water, (alcohol,) which had been introduced amongst us by white people. (2)

In addition to his explicit condemnation of alcohol, Jones'ss reference to the "miseries of savage life" sounds a note of deprivation and despair suffered by numerous Native Americans who had lost their lands and their means of survival to the encroachment of white America. Jones continues in this vein, relating a harrowing tale of his near starvation as a child, when lack of food forced the Indians to boil tree bark for nourishment. Jones came very close to death as his malnutrition crippled him for more than three months. It is no wonder, then, that we can find no regret as Jones relates the move to his father's farm and the beginning of his education.

During his tenure at the English School, as he calls it, Jones is introduced to Christianity. And it is here where Jones differs from Apess, who tells us in *The Experiences* that he was "powerfully affected" by the preaching of the Gospel although he was only eight years old. Jones writes that his teacher, one George Hughes, "made us read the New Testament, but the words I read had no effect upon my heart, because I did not understand the great plan of human salvation" (6). In contrast, Apess writes that although he "was ignorant of the plan of salvation through Jesus Christ . . . [he] had no doubt but the word was spoken with divine authority" (122). Whereas both Jones and

Apess were of the Methodist denomination, we cannot lay this difference at the feet of religious doctrine. Apess's writings, however, are filled with strong denunciations of white racist ideology; therefore, we can surmise that he is attempting to prove that God's grace can be bestowed on any human being, no matter if they are a child or a member of another race.

This is not to say that Jones does not address the issue of racism in his autobiography. He explains his lack of spiritual conviction attending his baptism as directly related to the behavior of white Christians. Jones agreed to be baptized in the Church of England for purely mundane motives; he believed that by becoming a Christian he would "be entitled to all the privileges of the white inhabitants" (7). Jones writes that his introduction to religious doctrine contrasted sharply with what he saw all around him:

> Sometimes whilst reading the Word of God, or hearing it preached, I would be almost persuaded to become a Christian; but when I looked at the conduct of the whites who were called Christians, and saw them drunk, quarreling, and fighting, cheating the poor Indians, and acting as if there was no God, I was led to think that there could be no truth in the white man's religion, and felt inclined to fall back again to my old superstitions. My being baptized had no effect upon my life. (7)

In reading the works of Christian Indians, one comes across this criticism repeatedly. Even Joseph Johnson, whose writing focuses more on his own struggle for salvation, addresses the treatment of Indians in a 1774 speech to the Oneida Indians: "So now Brethren, we leave the English those who have acted unjustly towards us in New

England, I say we leave them all in the hands of that God who knoweth all things, and will reward every one according to their deeds whether good or Evil."[67]

Peter Jones recounts his conversion experience in detail, giving the reader the time and date of his conversion: " . . . the glorious morning of the 5th of June, 1823!" as well as his initial reluctance to receive God's mercy (13). On the first of June, Jones and his sister Mary accompanied a Mrs. Thomas to a Methodist camp meeting. Apess recounts strong prejudice against Methodists when he attended his first camp meeting in 1813, stating, "it was a disgrace for any character of respectability to attend these meetings," yet there are no hints of this in Jones'ss autobiography (126).

Interestingly, both Jones and Apess write of their conversion experiences in similar language. Apess writes:

> I went on from day to day, with my head bowed down, seeking the Savior of sinners, but without success. The heavens appeared to be brass; my prayers wanted the wings of faith to waft them to the skies. The disease of my heart increased; the heavenly Physician had not stretched forth his hand and poured upon my soul the panacea of the Gospel. . . . (Apess 128-29)

Jones writes:

> When I first began to pray my heart was soft and tender, and I shed many tears, but strange to say, sometime after my heart got hard as stone. I tried to look up, but the heavens seemed like brass. (Jones 12)

Both writers use typical conversion rhetoric. In biblical writings, "brass" can represent the immutable decrees of God, what Zechariah metaphorically describes as "the mountains of brass," or as insensibility or obstinacy in sin (Zechariah 6:1; Isa. 48:4; Jer. 6:28; Ezek. 22:18). The metaphorical movement of the narrative prior to the conversion

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[67] Wheelock Papers, 774120.

experience is downward; note Apess's description of his head bowed *down* and Jones'ss inability to *look up* to the heavens.

After conversion, however, the movement of the narrative turns upward as the convert's world is changed. Jones tells us:

> That very instant my burden was removed, joy unspeakable filled my heart, and I could say "Abba Father." The love of God being now shed abroad in my heart, I loved Him intensely, and praised Him in the midst of the people. Every thing now appeared in a new light, and all the works of God seemed to unite with me in uttering the praises of the Lord. The people, the trees of the woods, the gentle winds, the warbling notes of the birds, and the approaching sun, all declared the power and goodness of the Great Spirit. And what was I that I should not raise my voice in giving glory to God, who had done such great things for me! (Jones 13).

Apess contends:

> There was not only a change in my heart but everything around me. The scene was entirely changed; the works of God praised him, and I saw in everything that he had made his glory shine. My love now embraced the whole human family; the children of God, I loved most dearly. . . . My mind was employed in contemplating the works of God and in praising his holy name. (Apess 129)

By their use of verbs, Jones and Apess illustrate the movement from a state of sinfulness to a state of grace. Prior to their conversion, their use of verbs denotes a kind of desire: Apess "*went* on from day to day," his "prayers *wanted*," and the disease of his heart "*increased.*" Jones "*shed* many tears," his "heart *got* as hard as stone," he "*tried* to look up." However, after their conversion, the verbs move "to a condition of being or abiding" (Caldwell 28). Jones writes that "joy unspeakable *filled* [his] heart" and "every thing now *appeared* in a new light." Apess tells us that his "mind was *employed* in contemplating the works of God" and that he "*enjoyed* great peace of mind."

In addition to both spiritual and emotional movement, there are also physical and temporal spaces to cross. Immediately after his seeming inability to be moved by God's word, Jones actually leaves the prayer meeting and returns to his tent to sleep. A minister awakens him and leads Jones back to the prayer meeting where his conversion takes place. Once the conversion takes place, Jones sees the world around him differently: "The people, the trees of the woods, the gentle winds, the warbling notes of the birds, and the approaching sun, all declared the power and goodness of the Great Spirit" (13). Thus, the conversion requires that the individual bridge a physical as well as a spiritual gap.

Yet, we must note Jones's language in the above-quote. He uses the traditional Indian term in speaking of God. Jones is therefore attempting to bring both the language of Western Christianity and Ojibway spirituality together. Throughout his journal, Jones will move between the two cultures, at times so fluidly, that one is rarely taken aback. However, there are times when Jones makes a deliberate transition from Christian thought to Ojibway beliefs. When he does so, the reader becomes painfully aware of the ideological chasm between the two cultures.

The Journal of Peter Jones

Jones's journal is, in many ways, a conventional journal. He begins it on April 1, 1825, two years after his conversion, and makes daily entries until September 18, 1838. Jones follows, for the most part, the form of the Christian narrative. Looking at the writings of David Brainerd,[68] we can see similarities between the two men's entries.

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[68] Brainerd was missionary to Indian nations at Kannameek, New York, and Crossweeksung and Cranberry, New Jersey from 1743 through 1747.

Both wrote everyday, noting the mundane, as well as the spiritual, incidents in their daily lives. In an entry dated July 30, 1743, Brainerd writes, "Just at night, moved into my own house . . . and lodged there that night; found it much better spending the time alone than in the wigwam where I was before" (125). Jones writes on August 24, 1825, "Travelled about twenty-five miles this day to Westminster; baited our horses in Oxford, where we visited Mr. E. Harris, who was very low with a fever; prayed with him and then departed" (40). Such seemingly unimportant information provides us with an insight into the daily life of the missionary and the Christian convert, who in Jones's case, are one and the same.

Not all entries focus on small, seemingly insignificant details. Jones provides the reader with personal, day-to-day struggles that are illustrative of Methodist teachings and belief:

> A few days after this [Jones's conversion] the evil spirit tempted me to doubt the reality of the change wrought in my soul by the Holy Spirit, but this seemed only to urge me to seek the Lord with greater diligence. I searched the Scriptures, prayed much, and waited for a clearer manifestation of His work on my heart. One day I retired to a grove to pray, and whilst thus engaged all my doubts and fears were dispersed, and I was enabled to receive the witness of the Spirit bearing witness with my spirit that I was a child of God, that I had passed from death unto life, and that of a truth a good work was begun in my heart. (14)

Jones experiences what Wesley maintains is the continuous repentance of the believer. Jones's doubt is not only to be expected but, in many ways, encouraged in Methodist teachings. Wesley himself distrusts those who would contend that once one has accepted God's justifying grace, one is fully sanctified. In his sermon entitled "The Repentance of Believers," Wesley says,

> It is true, we are then delivered, as was observed before, from the dominion of outward sin; and, at the same time, the power of inward sin is

> so broken, that we need no longer follow, or be led by it: but it is by no means true, that inward sin is then totally destroyed; that the root of pride, self-will, anger, love of the world, is then taken out of the heart; or that the carnal mind, and the heart bent to backsliding, are entirely extirpated. And to suppose the contrary is not, as some may think, an innocent harmless mistake. No: it does immense harm: it entirely blocks up the way to any farther change; for it is manifest, "they that are whole not need a physician, but they that are sick." If, therefore, we think we are quite made whole already, there is no room to seek any further healing. On this supposition it is absurd to expect a farther deliverance from sin, whether gradual or instantaneous.[69]

Unlike Calvinists, who argue that one cannot deny God's grace once it has been bestowed, Methodists believe that one must constantly work toward sanctifying grace. Thus, Jones's backsliding is perfectly in line with Methodism and not to be disparaged.

This incident is not an isolated one. Throughout his journal and thus, his life, Jones struggles with his faith. Many times, he writes of his battles asserting, "My mind is very uneasy, owing to heavy temptations and trials," or "I felt low and dejected. May God revive my drooping soul!" (19; 33). Jones is unhappy when his mind is "taken up with the busy scenes of this world," and he constantly agonizes over his inability to focus on spiritual matters (51). His focus is not only on how his mind is occupied, but even with his inability to complete his life's work: the translation of hymns, the Apostle's Creed, and scripture into the Ojibway language. In one entry dated November 14, 1828, Jones writes, "Set a part this day to fasting and prayer, for the purpose of imploring the blessing and assistance of Almighty God to rest on my Translations, especially on those of the Holy Scriptures, which I am about to commence. I felt my insufficiency for this important work . . ." (188). Even more striking is the entry of January 23, 1833 when Jones questions his life's work: "I hardly know why it is I cannot go on with the

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[69] John Wesley. Sermon 14 "The Repentance of Believers."

translations of the Scriptures; everything seems to work against me in this undertaking; which has rather caused me to doubt whether it was my duty to confine my time to this work, and leave off visiting my Indian brethren at the different stations. O that the Lord would lead me in a *plain path*!" (emphasis his 357). He is clearly torn between the active work of a Methodist preacher and the personal journey to sanctification.

Nevertheless, his strife illustrates his movement toward sanctification, a lifelong and gradual process, according to Wesley, which one may seek right up until the moment of death. Interestingly, entries such as the one I mentioned above cease after 1833. This does not mean his struggles ceased, only that he was not affected as deeply as before. His movement toward sanctification may have become easier as his life was focused on Works of Mercy. Furthermore, we must take into account that Jones discontinued writing after 1838. His wife, Eliza Jones, wrote the remainder of his journal – 1839 through his death in June of 1856.

Throughout the journal, Jones strives toward Christian perfection in true Methodist form by involving himself in the means of grace. He engages in Works of Piety through prayer and his study of scripture. Each time he feels himself backsliding, he turns to fasting, prayer, and searching the scriptures. According to Wesley, one can only attain the means of grace through active waiting, "all who desire the grace of God are to wait for it in the means which he hath ordained; in using, not in laying them aside."[70] Jones does not "lay them aside," as we see over and again in his writings. Many times, he tells of time spent in works of piety, and many times, the impetus is not backsliding; rather, it is a normal part of his day.

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[70] John Wesley. Sermon 16. "The Means of Grace."

According to John Wesley, another component to attaining Christian perfection is works of mercy. In yet another of his sermons, he describes such works:

> And, First, with regard to works of mercy. "Take heed," saith he, "that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them: Otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven." "That ye do not your alms:" -- Although this only is named, yet is every work of charity included, every thing which we give, or speak, or do, whereby our neighbour may be profited; whereby another man may receive any advantage, either in his body or soul. The feeding the hungry, the clothing the naked, the entertaining or assisting the stranger, the visiting those that are sick or in prison, the comforting the afflicted, the instructing the ignorant, the reproving the wicked, the exhorting and encouraging the well-doer; and if there be any other work of mercy, it is equally included in this direction.[71]

Thus, when Jones is struggling with his decision to translate certain works into Ojibway rather than teaching among his "Indian brethren," he is struggling with his own balance between works of piety and works of mercy. Nonetheless, Jones's journal is filled with prudential means of grace. He spends most of his time traveling the circuit, preaching to various Indian communities. His journal is filled with evident concern about his people: their past, what events affected their lifestyle; their present, how they are living; and their future, both mundane and spiritual.

Jones visits with Ojibway families, conversing "with them on the things of God" (26). He attends the sick, especially those that have converted. He helps to build schools and encourages families to take advantage of these educational opportunities. By doing all this Jones follows Wesley's teachings that one must be Christian "in both word and deed" ("John Wesley: Holiness of Heart and Life").

Looking at the above evidence, we might be tempted to believe that Jones was an exemplary representative of Methodism. And, in many ways, we would be right.

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[71] John Wesley, Sermon 26. "Upon our Lord's Sermon on the Mount (VI)."

However, there are elements in Jones's journal that we do not see in the diaries of David Brainerd, for example.[72] I would not argue that Jones, at any point, acts in a way contrary to Methodist teachings; however, there are entries that challenge Western ideologies and Christian beliefs.

As Jones travels his circuit, he encounters individuals who are not swayed by the efforts of the Christian missionaries. As Jones mentioned in his autobiography, he himself was put off by the behavior of those who have had the benefits of Christian teaching throughout the whole of their lives, but whose behavior towards the Indians is questionable: "It is a strange thing indeed if the Mission family cannot do as they please about providing for themselves the necessary comforts of life. Must we be led by the blind? Must we be governed by the wicked? Must we gratify the avaricious worldling? No! but in the strength and name of our God, we will come out from among them . . ." (158-59). Jones implies that in order for the Indian to survive, she must look to her family and to her faith, not to those who hold political and economic power.

Yet, Jones goes even farther in that he gives Indians a platform in which to voice their dissent. Moreover, Jones does not just make mention of their dissent, he publishes their arguments in full. Just as Jones himself does, various individuals whom he meets throughout his travels challenge the hypocrisy of those who label themselves Christians. A number of Chippewa chiefs, whom Jones visits on his circuit, raise objections to the missionaries' work:

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[72] For example, we never hear the voice of the Indian in David Brainerd's journal. Although Jonathan Edwards categorizes Brainerd's journal according to the Indian nations Brainerd lived within, Brainerd rarely even mentions them. When he does, he refers to them as engaging in "heathenish practices" and meeting together to "worship devils." See entries dated 27 May 1743 and 21 July 1744.

> [The chiefs] replied that they had a religion of their own, handed down to them by their forefathers, in which they were now walking. As regards to their drunkenness, they said that it was the white Christian people who had made them such drunkards as they were. That when they took anything to sell among the white people, whiskey was the first thing offered to them, and that when any of their children went to buy a bit of bread from the whites, perhaps the firs thing handed them would be whiskey. I then informed them that all the whites were not good Christians, but that many of the whites were very wicked, and that the Great Spirit was angry with them for their sins; but that they were some amongst them who loved and served God, and wanted all other people to worship and serve the Good Spirit also. The reflection of these Chiefs cast upon the whites is too true; for had it not been that the white people introduced the fire-water amongst the Indians, they would never have become drunkards. What an awful account must the wicked whites give at the great day of judgment, when the blood of those Indians slain and ruined by strong drink will be required at their hands! May the Lord have mercy upon the poor white heathens! (29)

Interestingly, Jones labels the whites using similar language they used to label Indians. He labels them "wicked," he labels them "heathens," and he asks God to have mercy on them. In doing so, Jones neatly reverses the nineteenth-century reader's belief in the superiority of Western civilization.

Jones refuses to condemn what many at the time would label pagan ritual. He arrives in lower Muncey in time for the yearly feast "of the offerings of the first fruits of the earth" (43). He and his colleagues, including the Reverend Torry, are invited into the longhouse to partake of and participate in the great feast. Jones writes of this feast in detail, using descriptive language to allow the reader a thorough understanding of events. He describes the layout of the "Pagan Temple," as he calls it: "There is a door at each end, one opening to the east, and the other to the west. . . . In the centre of the temple was a large post, round which was suspended a number of deer skins and wampum" (43). He provides details of the ritual, explaining that the Indians are

> seated on the ground round two fires . . . . There were two young men appointed to watch the doors and keep the fires burning. The doors being closed, the two young men brought each of them an armful of hemlock boughs, which being thrown on the fires, smothered them and caused a great smoke in order that the smoke might fill every corner of the temple. Each man waived [sic] his blanket over the fire. This was done with the idea of purifying the temple and driving out the evil spirits. (43).

For some, attending this feast and then writing about it, would serve as ample opportunity to defame traditional Indian belief, and further the notion that here are the "ignorant heathen."[73] Yet, Jones does not do so. Although he does label the longhouse a "Pagan Temple," he refuses to condemn the actions of the Muncey Indians. On the contrary, he treats the ritual and those engaged in it, with the utmost respect, ending his entry with the following: "No drinking, or improper conduct is allowed; the utmost solemnity prevails" (44). For those who believe that traditional Indian ritual is akin to satanic worship, filled with painted, screaming heathens, Jones's description and commentary subvert a necessary component of the argument for civilizing and Christianizing the Indians.

In addition, Jones does not clearly delineate between the two religions. When he preaches to the Indians, he tells "them of the goodness of Kezhamunedoo (God) in sending His only begotten Son to save us from Mahjemunedoo (the bad spirit) and that whosoever would believe on him should be made happy, and when they died be taken up to Ishpeming (Heaven) . . ." (83). Jones is able to conflate Christian and Indian belief in such a way that he does not detract from traditional beliefs. Those whom he is able to convert need not fear that they are abandoning who they are as a people. In Jones's worldview, there is room for all beliefs. Furthermore, his ability to bring the two

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[73] Brainerd labels a similar feast "idolatrous," saying he "knew they [the Indians] were met together to worship devils and not God." In another entry, Brainerd writes, "I knew they must hate to hear me, as having but just got home from their idolatrous feast and devil-worship." See entries of 21 July and 6 December 1744.

religions together illustrates his unwillingness to turn away completely from his cultural heritage.

In his need to conflate the two religions, Jones over and again notes the differences between "true" Christian behavior and its opposite. He provides examples, as I have mentioned above, of "ignorant heathens" who introduce alcohol to the Indians. Yet, he also provides examples of those who contribute to the welfare of the Indians:

> . . . men who are not afraid to blacken their hands by logging the timber, and burning the wood in the field; men who are not ashamed to work in their shirt sleeves; men who do not say to the Indians, "Go and do this or that;" but who say to them, "*Come on brethren*:" such men only can convince the Indians that they are their friends and wish to do them good. On such the Indians will look up with reverence and esteem. O that the Indian had more of such kind friends! how soon would the wounds made by the wicked whites be healed, and joy and gladness spring up in the Indian's heart! But alas, too many of those who have gone amongst the Indians have rather manifested a domineering spirit, which has proved his want of success. The Indian is a *free* man and will not be driven. (228).

Jones informs his readers what is necessary to succeed so that the work of the missionary can continue. In laying out all that one must do, he subtly chastises those who do not lead by example. Along with Wesley, Jones believes that Christian teachings must come before civilization (228).

As mentioned earlier, Jones allows the dissenter to be heard. He visits Chippewa Indians at Bear River where Chief Kanootong argues for a separate Indian religion. Kanootong says that the Great Spirit "placed the white man across the great waters, and there gave him his religion written in a book," but he placed the Indian "in this country, and gave him his way of worship written in his heart, which has been handed down from one generation to another" (123). Chief Pezhekezhikquashkum, of the Ojibway nation, makes the same argument, adding that both have different ways of administering to the

sick, and to give up the traditional way for the way of another culture will only lead to death (247-48). Both chiefs argue that cultural differences exist and should remain. For both men, conforming to Western ideals and beliefs are tantamount to a cultural death sentence.

What is even more interesting is that their arguments are based in how knowledge is transmitted and preserved. For a culture in which the written word *is* the Word of God – "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God"[74] – anything less is deemed inferior. Thus, in Western tradition, the transmission of knowledge any other way but through writing is blasphemous. However, the opposite holds true in Native American thought. All aspects of the culture, including religion, medicine, history, and story is passed down orally. In taking the voices of these chiefs and putting their arguments in written form, Jones is able to provide a depth of understanding to his readers. Through the chiefs' voices, Jones presents an articulate and logical argument against conversion and Western civilization and enables his readers to see an alternate way of thinking and knowing..

Moreover, Jones lays out the chiefs' arguments in full, allowing them to list all of the wrongs perpetrated by whites. Both men censure the white men for drunkenness, fighting, lying, cheating, and stealing. As Chief Kanootong says, "the white men . . . go from their meeting-house straight to the tavern; so that I do not desire the white man's religion, neither do I think that I should be able to forsake the sins which I have already committed" (124). Jones agrees with the Chiefs' assessment of the white man's behavior

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[74] John 1:1.

and posits that they are not behaving as true Christians. However, he is unable to respond to Kanootong's opinion that sins already committed should not be forgiven.

What is even more interesting is the space he gives to the chiefs' arguments and the lack thereof to his rebuttal. Jones knows he cannot, and does not want to, refute their assessment of the whites' behavior. Nevertheless, he fails to even address points of doctrinal significance, such as Kanootong's disbelief in the forgiveness of sins. It may be that he does not feel a need to rebut because he knows his audience is well versed in Methodist theology. Moreover, because his readers are Methodists, Jones makes it a point to record the objectives of his people rather than recount well-known doctrinal beliefs..

Such arguments, which Jones narrates, are neither new nor different. We have seen them in the writings of Joseph Johnson, Hendrick Aupaumut, and William Apess. What makes Jones unique is his firm belief in Methodist teachings and the Christian God. He does not, as Johnson does, subvert theological arguments. On the contrary, Jones is fully a Christian Indian, able to combine both Indian and Christian belief systems into a cohesive ideology. For those who argue that one negates the other, Peter Jones stands as proof of the fallacy of that belief.

Conclusion

Peter Jones's conversion to Methodism allowed him to create a new, personal mazeway – to use Kimberley Rae Connor's term – in order to prevent further damage to his own social system. By embracing the Christian faith while still honoring Native American religious thought, Jones is able to create a new cultural system for his people.

It is of vast importance that Jones was elected chief of the Ojibway nation while setting forth criterion that allowed him to continue his preaching. In being both chief and missionary, Jones is not only able to create a cultural system, but control it as well.

His journal, although situated firmly in the genre of Christian spiritual progress, stands apart from similar narratives written by Euroamerican missionaries. In true Methodist form, Jones tells of his personal struggles to attain God's sanctifying grace. His path is filled with stellar examples of both works of piety and of mercy. Yet underlying his entries is a concern and a respect for his culture, his people, and their traditions. Unlike the non-Indian missionary, Jones gives voice to those long considered voiceless. He presents arguments that one cannot rebut, in order to teach those who claim position as teachers. Jones's journal serves as the bridge between Indian and Christian, as we are able to see a man create an ethnic identity out of two disparate elements.

CHAPTER 4

Where, then, Shall We Place the Hero of the Wilderness?

William Apess's *Eulogy on King Philip* and the Republican Ideal

> *For while Washington was assisted by all the knowledge that art and science could give, together with all the instruments of defense and edged tools to prepare rafts and the like helps for safety across the river, Philip was naked as to any of these things, possessing only what nature, his mother, had bestowed upon him . . .*

The America of the early nineteenth century was struggling to find an identity within itself as well as a place within the nations of the world. What does it want to be? How does it want to portray itself to its nation and the rest of the world? Although America looked to its future, it needed a past, a history, on which to lay the foundations of its own nationalism. Such work was paradoxical in nature, for the creation of a history required that America look back either to Europe or the Indian. A dilemma indeed. For to look back to Europe meant coming to terms with patricide – the killing of the father so America might exist as a separate entity. However, looking back to the Indian was fraught with its own moral issues. To place the Indian in a foundational role required a mythical elevation of he who America attempted to systematically annihilate.

The Indian is a marginal figure in the American landscape, and marginal figures exist on the outside. As such, they allow members of the body politic to recognize the otherness of the marginal, while recognizing the likeness existing between the two. With the ability to distinguish difference, subjects can then determine principles on which to base the nation. As Anne Norton says, "In choosing what they will reject, nations determine what they signify and what they will become" (55). Thus, in rejecting the

Indian peoples, while embracing Indian mythology, America attempted to fashion a distinct national identity.

The creation of a national identity is steeped in mythmaking and memorializing. As John R. Gillis says, "National memory is shared by people . . . [who] are bound together as much by forgetting as by remembering" (7). The nation must forget its crimes, while remembering its glories. If its citizens are unable to wipe out the past, the nation must work to recreate it so that it fits the image, the ideal, of the nation. It becomes important in the early decades of the nineteenth century to begin the memorializing of the national hero, to create representations of the ideal American. The merging of the real and the imagined shows up in the literature of the time as the American hero. He comes in many guises: James Fennimore Cooper's Leatherstocking, Herman Melville's Ishmael, John Filson's Daniel Boone, Longfellow's Hiawatha, and the Washington, Adams, and Jefferson of Daniel Webster. The American hero encompasses both Euroamerican and Indian: he is a republican gentleman, educated not in the salons of Europe, but in the wilderness of the American frontier. He is the natural man, the "white Indian[75]," able to combine positive elements from disparate cultures to create something distinctly "American." Definitions, such as those describing the American hero, set specific boundaries, that, according to Norton, "designate difference" (7).

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[75] Richard Slotkin uses this term to describe the European's attempt to place the Native American in a universal context. From those who saw the Indians as descendents of Troy to those who thought they were the "lost tribes," Euroamericans struggled to come to terms with their own connection to the Indian.

Fifteen years after the publication of James Fenimore Cooper's *The Last of the Mohicans*, Emerson summed up Cooper's understanding of civilization's effect on humanity in his essay on "Self-Reliance":

> What a contrast between the well-clad, reading, writing, thinking American, with a watch, a pencil, and a bill of exchange in his pocket, and the naked New Zealander, whose property is a club, a spear, a mat, and an undivided twentieth of a shed to sleep under! But compare the health of two men, and you shall see that the white man has lost his aboriginal strength. . . . He has a fine Geneva watch, but he fails of the skill to tell the hour by the sun. A Greenwich nautical almanac he has, and so being sure of the information when he wants it, the man in the street does not know a star in the sky. (279-80)

In his novel, Cooper is thinking through the question of what is needed to create the ideal American. We have become so complacent in our dependence on the abstract ideals of honor, proper behavior, and a specific type of education, that we are unfit to deal with anything that is outside our known boundaries. Cooper seeks to remedy this defect through the character of Duncan Heyward, who embodies the nineteenth-century American man, what Emerson would later define as "man . . . metamorphosed into a thing" ("The American Scholar" 54).

Of all the characters who move through *The Last of the Mohicans*, Duncan Heyward has the most to learn. Although completely educated in the art of European warfare, Heyward is unfit for duty in the American wilderness. His education has created a "thinker," not "Man Thinking," as Emerson would later label similar men. Heyward distrusts his own instincts, depending more on his reason than he does on his intuition. As soon as he, Cora, Alice, David Gamut, and Magua enter the forest, Duncan believes he has "mistaken some shining berry of the woods, for the glistening eyeballs of some prowling savage" (27). His mistake, however, is his distrust of his own senses.

Heyward's training has "[suffered] his youthful and generous pride to suppress his active watchfulness" (27). Thus, he errs over and again in this wilderness environment. Duncan must therefore unlearn certain things he has believed, heretofore, to be inviolable and reeducate himself so that he may negotiate the wilderness.

What things Duncan must learn and what things Duncan must reject, I will discuss in just a moment, but before moving on, we need to understand just what the wilderness symbolized for Cooper as he portrays it in this novel. The wilderness, in *The Last of the Mohicans* and several other nineteenth-century novels, symbolizes the primordial self that exists in all members of a civilized, American society. Some writers wish to deny this self, while others embrace it to the detriment of civilization. However, it is here, in Cooper's novel, where the wilderness gets its most democratic treatment.

Duncan's inability to transverse the wilderness is made explicit once Magua's treachery is known. Duncan is filled with an almost childish fear, believing trees to be "human forms" and imagining that he sees his "lurking foes" in the dense foliage. He immediately turns to Hawk-eye for leadership and advice: "'What is to be done?' he said, feeling the utter helplessness of doubt in such a pressing strait; 'desert me not for God's sake! remain to defend those I escort, and freely name your own reward!'"(45). This is the beginning of Duncan's transformation: he is fully aware of his inability to negotiate the wilderness and is willing to turn over his mission to the more experienced men, including *Indian* men.

Heyward will not remain in this state, however. He must learn "how to be a real man and friend to other men" and how to "[draw] blood and witness death" (Michaelsen 73). In order to do so, he must shed part of his established identity and create a new

identity by assimilating the traits of the wilderness and its Indian inhabitants. However, Duncan must distinguish between "good" Indian traits and "bad" Indian traits. He must become more like Uncas without becoming at all like Magua. Moreover, what is it that prevents Duncan from assimilating "bad" Indian characteristics? His uncontaminated "whiteness."

Contamination is key to Cooper's novel. Too much contact between Indians and whites has negative connotations for all concerned. Natty Bumppo is too long among the Indians. Although no one could mistake him for an Indian — he is after all, "a man without a cross" — he is able to negotiate the wilderness with almost as much skill as Chingachgook or Uncas. As Richard Slotkin says, "[i]n all matters of skill and outward culture, he [Natty] has adapted to Indian ways, and this allows him to be the most effective of the white warriors; but inside, in all matters of conscience and affection, he is pure white and highly conscious of that fact" (91). With this ability, though, comes loss: Natty is unable to move beyond the wilderness. Unlike Duncan, he cannot return to civilization. Natty is a liminal figure, caught in the in-between space of "Indianness" and "whiteness." It is this liminality that restricts him. "A man without a cross" not only means that his blood is unmixed, it also means that he is unable to "cross" any borders. Natty must forever remain in the wilderness, struggling to prevent his "Indian" nature from completely dominating his "whiteness." His struggle is like that of *Star Trek*'s Mister Spock, where the human half constantly battles with the Vulcan half for dominance. Only in Natty's case, the "Indian" is not a question of "blood" but a question of propinquity.

Uncas finds himself in a similar predicament. Like Duncan, he is fully immersed in his own culture and stands, as does Duncan, as the future of his people. Unlike Duncan, however, Uncas has been contaminated. His contact with Natty has compromised him and this compromise creates a behavior inconsistent with his culture. This contamination is illustrated in Uncas's behavior toward Cora: he waits on her and Alice, an action that is "an utter innovation on the Indian customs"; he is unwilling to leave the women to the mercies of the Hurons and announces his intentions in English (56, 79). Such actions are clues as to why Uncas cannot lead his people to a reestablishment of their prominence and why he must die.

What Cooper posits in *The Last of the Mohicans* then, is the need for evolution. The (white) American (man) must evolve; he must transcend his lineage so that the structure that is American culture can sever its relationship to European culture and become something that is entirely its own. Thus, Duncan Heyward, as "Representative Man," must shed his "Britishness" so that he may recover his primordial self. One must engage is a sort of "social Darwinism" and assimilate whatever cultures and/or ethnicities are needed to evolve.

Although these American heroes defined themselves through the Indian, Indians themselves were denied these very definitions. The dominant culture admired independence and war-like prowess, but only in the white American. As the Indians are removed from their lands, the nation appropriated traits, which they saw as desirable, while attempting to remove the indigenous peoples from the national landscape.

Although American mythmakers use the Indian to create a national identity, there is no place within that identity for the Indian himself. Interestingly, there is a place for

the Indian woman, in the figure of Pocahontas. Pocahontas is viable as a national figure because of her willingness to sacrifice herself. Whether or not the incident involving her, Captain John Smith, and her father, Chief Powhatan actually occurred is of little or no consequence in creating the myth artifact. Pocahontas represents what nineteenth-century America needed from the Indian: sacrifice, subservience, and silence. In other words, Pocahontas is viable because she is feminized in the national memory. The memorialization of Pocahontas allowed the mythmakers to create an Indian woman who is immediately aware of Captain John Smith's (and therefore, the European's) superiority and willing to lay down her life in order that he might live.[76]

I would not argue that the Indian becomes feminized in the national myth. On the contrary. As Richard Slotkin so succinctly argues, writers used the Indian's prowess as warrior and hunter in creating the American hero, especially the frontier hero. However, because of these characteristics, the Indian is a threat to the nation, the national identity, and the myth. America cannot allow her sons to be bested by those they came to

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[76] The myth according to Captain John Smith: "At last they brought him to Werowocomoco, where was Powhatan, their emperor. Here more than two hundred of those grim courtiers stood wondering at him, as he had been a monster; till Powhatan and his train had put themselves in their greatest braveries. Before a fire upon a seat like a bedstead, he sat covered with a great robe, made of raccoon skins, and all the tails hanging by. On either hand did sit a young wench of sixteen or eighteen years, and along on each side the house, two rows of men, and behind them as many women, with all their heads and shoulders painted red, many of their heads bedecked with the white down of birds, but every one with something, and a great chain of white beads about their necks. At his entrance before the king, all the people gave a great shout. The queen of Appamatuck was appointed to bring him water to wash his hands, and another brought him a bunch of feathers, instead of a towel to dry them. Having feasted him after their best barbarous manner they could, a long consultation was held, but the conclusion was, two great stones were brought before Powhatan: then as many as could laid hands on him, dragged him to them, and thereon laid his head, and being ready with their clubs to beat out his brains, Pocahontas, the king's dearest daughter, when no entreaty could prevail, got his head in her arms, and laid her own upon his to save his from death: whereat the emperor was contented he should live to make him hatchets, and her bells, beads, and copper; for they thought him as well of all occupations as themselves. For the king himself will make his own robes, shoes, bows, arrows, pots; plant, hunt, or do anything so well as the rest." From John Smith, *The General Historie of Virginia, New England, and the Summer Isles.*

conquer. Thus, Natty Bumppo, Daniel Boone, and George Washington must defeat the Indian, but they are only to do so because they have mastered the Indian's art of war.

In the American national memory of the nineteenth century, only aspects of the Indian are permitted. Thus, as Americans begin the commemoration of the hero, the Indian is not to be found. All that is remembered is annihilation, even though this memory is tinged with sadness. In his "Second Annual Message to Congress," Andrew Jackson mourns the Indian in much the same manner as do Cooper's characters in *The Last of the Mohicans*:

> Humanity has often wept over the fate of the aborigines of this country, and Philanthropy has been long busily employed in devising means to avert it, but its progress has never for a moment been arrested, and one by one have many powerful tribes disappeared from the earth. To follow to the tomb the last of his race and to tread on the graves of extinct nations excite melancholy reflections. But true philanthropy reconciles the mind to these vicissitudes as it does to the extinction of one generation to make room for another. In the monuments and fortifications of an unknown people, spread over the extensive regions of the West, we behold the memorials of a once powerful race, which was exterminated of has disappeared to make room for the existing savage tribes. Nor is there any thing in this which, upon a comprehensive view of the general interests of the human race, is to be regretted. Philanthropy could not wish to see this continent restored to the condition in which it was found by our forefathers. What good man would prefer a country covered with forests and ranged by a few thousand savages to our extensive Republic, studded with cities, towns, and prosperous farms, embellished with all the improvements which art can devise or industry execute, occupied by more than 12,000,000 happy people, and filled with all the blessings of liberty, civilization, and religion? (para. 105)

Thus, the Indian has "disappeared," but in doing so, has made room for "civilization" and "progress," for the "masters of the earth" (Cooper 350).

So, the mythmakers turned to America's "native sons," focusing on the larger-than-life exploits of Daniel Boone and George Washington. Again, it mattered not whether these exploits were true; only that they, in some way, correspond with the image

being constructed. The American hero becomes an interesting amalgamation of European and Indian, involving, as Gillis argues, a "coordination of individual and group memories," that hide the attempted extermination of the "sons of the forest" (5).

The Hero and Daniel Webster

Daniel Webster was particularly suited to the act of commemoration and the art of creating the national hero. Webster himself occupies a singular place within the national memory as evidenced by Craig R. Smith's encomium: "Without peer in the golden age of American oratory, Webster addressed the great issues of his era . . . with language crafted to persuade his . . . countrymen to the keystone in his political philosophy: 'Liberty and Union, now and forever, one and inseparable" (xi). From 1812 through 1852, Webster was one of the most well-known men in America. He was a writer, a lawyer, and a politician, and his views on the country were oftentimes the views of the populace. Who better, then, to reinforce the ideals of the republic and the heroes who helped to create it? Webster knew the power of history and its ability to fashion the nation's narrative out of elements of its past.

His views of history correspond with his own views of those he commemorated. In "The Dignity and Importance of History," a speech given before the Historical Society of New York in 1852, Webster describes history as "the epic of real life," and the historian as "an artist, as true to fact as other artists are to nature" Webster does not question history's veracity. On the contrary, he is aware that the historian "may occasionally, perhaps, color too highly"; yet, he argues that such embellishment is not a misrepresentation as the "truth is still visible through the lights and the shades." What

Webster fails to take into account is too much of one or the other cannot only embellish but can distort the object being viewed. Thus, commemoration, especially when it is used to fabricate national identity, becomes a denial of reality. When elevating a man to heroic proportions, such as is done with Boone and Washington, one loses the real and all we are left with is the myth. Nonetheless, this forgetfulness is important to the national memory, when "the importance of remembering" struggles with "the comforting convenience of amnesia" (Kammen 101).

Such is the case in Webster's speech entitled "The Character of Washington." Washington's name is "intimately blended with whatever belongs most essentially to the prosperity, the liberty, the free institutions, and the renown of our country" (339). His name, thus, conveys a presence that signifies the nation itself. As Webster argues, it was Washington's name, even more than the man himself that "was of power to rally a nation." Washington is such an essential part of the American myth that who he was is no longer significant. Cunliffe says that Washington's "real merits were enlarged and distorted into unreal attitudes, and that this overblown Washington is the one who occurs immediately to us when his name is mentioned" (7). Webster and others have created a figure that only marginally represents Washington the man.[77] His identity, created by those involved in fashioning the republic becomes, as Gillis contends, something we think *with* rather than something we think *about* (5).

In his speech, Webster not only panegyrizes the American hero, but also constructs the republican ideal through the figure of Washington. Washington is the

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[77] See especially M.L. ("Parson") Weem's *The Life of George Washington; with Curious Anecdotes, Equally Honorable to Himself, and Exemplary to His Young Countrymen.* Philadelphia; J.B. Lippincott, 1856. It is from Weems's "biography" that we get the moral fables we so clearly associate with George Washington.

embodiment of the republic; human rights, liberty, all the elements contained within American ideology are contained within Washington. Webster postulates that Washington's memory is so illustrious and celebrated that one hundred years after his birth, American youth will study him as a model to emulate.

Such adulation is only the beginning for Webster, however. He discusses changes that have occurred in the past hundred years: the human mind has developed exponentially and society has become something completely new and different (340-41). These changes, Webster implies, are directly related to Washington. This particularly "American" spirit birthed a man qualified to head the government "by wisdom, by virtue, by patriotism, by discretion, by whatever can inspire in man toward man" (Webster 340). All positive elements that can reside in a human, Webster claims, resides within Washington. Moreover, Webster implies that these inherent characteristics do not come out of the republic: they are its foundations. Thus Washington does not only embody the republican ideal, he is the republican ideal.

In a metaphor Webster will use again in his eulogy on Adams and Jefferson, Washington and the republican ideals are stars and planets and as such, they have spread across the world like an "emanation from heaven" (342). Adams and Jefferson, Webster contends, are like "suns" who "rose slowly and steadily, amidst clouds and storms in their ascendant, so they have not rushed from their meridian to sink suddenly in the west" (158). Adams and Jefferson, therefore, were life-giving elements of the republic. Webster represents the span of their lives in astronomical terms as without them, the republic would have faltered and died, lacking the light that is the source of all life.

The same holds true for Washington, the man who is the republic. As the world looks on, waiting to judge whether "free states may be stable," America, through Washington, becomes "the Great *Western* Sun" (emphasis his, 342). If this "sun" should fail, Webster asks, ". . . at what other fountain shall the lamp of liberty hereafter be lighted? What other orb shall emit a ray to glimmer, even, on the darkness of the world?" (342). Thus, if the America fails, the world fails, plunged into eternal darkness as its "sun" dies.

In the eulogy for Adams and Jefferson, Webster continues his use of nature as metaphor. He describes the past, present, and future as a tree in its three stages of growth: seed, sapling, tree:

> The tree which they assisted to plant will flourish, although they water it and protect it no longer; for it has struck its roots deep, it has sent them to the very centre [sic]; no storm, not of force to burst the orb, can overturn it; its branches spread wide; they stretch their protecting arms broader and broader, and its top is destined to reach the heavens. (158)

It is the endeavors of these two men in particular, in which the foundations of America lie. Although they no longer live, their legacy has taken root and its results are spreading throughout the world.

Thus, all three men are suited to their roles as heroes of the republic because of certain innate characteristics. Adams, for example, is able to bring "clearness, force, and earnestness" in his arguments before the Revolutionary Congress, not from any learned ability, but because convictions exist in him, "in the subject," and "in the occasion" (167). For Webster, all prosperity, all future endeavors are contained within the idea and the ideal of the republic. Through his perceptions of Washington, Adams, and Jefferson, Webster argues that the way to maintain the republic is to pursue that which is "truly

national" (345). Such pursuit involves commemoration that in which ideals such as wisdom, virtue, and patriotism reside. Webster finds these ideals in specific places and within specific men: the Bunker Hill monument, the landing at Plymouth Rock, and the "founding fathers." To be "truly national," therefore, is to be "truly American," and this truth is born, according to Webster, out of the American Revolution and in men of European descent.

William Apess

William Apess, Pequot Indian, Methodist preacher and writer, was born on January 31, 1798 in Colrain, Massachusetts.[78] In his autobiography, *A Son of the Forest*, Apess tells us that his father was a mixed-blood Indian who married a full-blood Pequot princess descended from King Philip. In his extensive work on William Apess, Barry O'Connell writes that he has been unable to discover, with any certainty, the names of Apess's parents. O'Connell, however makes a cautious argument that Apess's father was one William Apes, a mixed-blood Pequot, and that his mother was likely one Candace Apes. Although William Apess claims his mother was of royal blood, the only information O'Connell was able to unearth about Candace Apes was census information which listed her as a "Negro" woman owned by a Captain Joseph Taylor of Colchester, Connecticut. However, census records during this time are notoriously unreliable and anyone of mixed blood may be labeled in any number of ways. O'Connell points out that William Apes was listed as a "free white man" (xxvii, n.17). Furthermore, interracial

[78] I am indebted to Barry O'Connell for the biographical information on William Apess. See his introduction to *On Our Own Ground: The Complete Writings of William Apess, A Pequot* (Amherst: The University of Massachusetts Press, 1992), xiii-lxxvii.

marriages between Indians and African-Americans were not uncommon in eighteenth-century southern New England, so any claim to purity of blood is highly skeptical. Whether Apess knew of his mother's ethnicity is not known, so any supposition as to why Apess would or would not reveal such information is highly debatable.

Apess's parents separated when he was three years old and he went to live with his maternal grandparents. His grandmother was evidently an abusive woman, because she beat Apess so severely that an uncle had to intervene. Apess was placed with a white family where he began his education and was introduced to Christianity.

A prolific writer, Apess published five books between 1829 and 1836. His first book was his autobiography, *A Son of the Forest*, published in 1829. His second book, a collection of conversion narratives, is entitled *The Experience of Five Christian Indians of the Pequot Tribe* and was published in 1833. In all of Apess's writing, one can see a strong condemnation of the white people's attitudes toward and treatment of people of color. For example, Apess begins *The Experiences* with his own conversion, which includes a brief autobiographical sketch:

> It is not my intention to descend to particulars in this pamphlet, any farther than to notice the origin of my life for the purpose of giving the youth a transient view between their condition and mine; or those poor children of the forest, who have had taken from them their once delightful plains and homes of their peaceful habitations; their fathers and mothers torn from their dwellings, and they left to mourn, and drop a tear, and die, over the ruins of their ancient sires. Perhaps you may ask, Why is this? I answer, because of deception and power, assisted with the fiery waters of the earth—rum. (119)

Apess's conversion narrative opens not with a reference to his spiritual state, but rather with an implicit criticism concerning the treatment of Indians. His reference to the Indians' loss of their land signals the tone of this publication. Apess's words get stronger

as he fires a verbal salvo at white America, whose "deception and power" have led to ruination for the "children of the forest."

He continues to criticize the racialist ideology of whites throughout *The Experiences*. Within this rather compact document are several instances where Apess turns from his tale and comments on the racism that has led to the present circumstances of the Indians.

> Had my skin been white, with the same abilities and the same parentage, there could not have been found a place good enough for me. But such is the case with depraved nature, that their judgment for fancy only sets upon the eye, skin, nose, lips, cheeks, chin, or teeth and, sometimes, the forehead and hair; without any further examination, the mind is made up and the price set. This is something like buying chaff for wheat, or twigs of wood for solid substance.
> But to proceed with our story. . . . (123)

This fact alone distinguishes Apess's writing from Joseph Johnson's; Johnson does comment on his position and the position of other Indians in his writing, but a careless reading may overlook these criticisms. On the other hand, Apess's denunciation of racism is not only unmistakable; it is a major theme throughout *The Experiences*.

Apess does, however, make use of the rhetorical devices that differentiate the conversion narrative from other types of Christian writing. Like Johnson, Apess struggles with a hardened heart that refuses to accept the grace of God. This crisis of faith is present in all conversion narratives and served as spiritual edification for the reader.

> This night I slept but little; at times I would be melted down into tenderness and tears; and then again, my heart would seem as hard as adamant. I was awfully tempted; the evil one would try to persuade me that I was not in the pale of mercy. I fancied that evil spirits stood around my bed; my condition was deplorable, and awful; and I longed for day to break. . . . (Apess 128)

> How Easy is my Mind taken from the Thoughts of my future State, Carried away by Every vain Imagination, and Amused by many Airy dream. How much of my time there is in which there is not the least Thoughts of God, or of my Soul. Here I Set hour after another Stupid, Thoughtless, and Unconcerned as if I had all sure, and had Heaven in Possession, Whereas I am an Intire Stranger, to God, Christ and Heaven, and myself.[79]

Of course, Apess is writing for the public—the conversion narratives of these five Christian Indians are didactic in their content—while Johnson's writings are of a more personal nature. Nevertheless, both writers record the crises of faith to provide guidance and direction to their audience, whether it is themselves or an outside reader. Furthermore, these crises establish a point of similarity between Apess, Johnson, and their white counterparts.

Yet another interesting aspect of *The Experiences* is the presence of Mary Apess, Hannah Caleb, Sally George, and Anne Wampy. Although Apess writes all of the narratives, with the exception of Mary Apess's, we are provided with voices of those who are not ordained ministers, including one (Anne Wampy) who is far from fluent in the English language. Furthermore, Hannah Caleb's narrative was composed by herself, not Apess. He tells us that he was given a copy of her conversion and has "no doubt of its authenticity" (147). We can surmise that Apess edited Caleb's narrative, nevertheless, it is *her* story. Anne Wampy's conversion is recorded in "her own language," as Apess states, during his visit to the Pequots in 1831.

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[79] Joseph Johnson, diary entry December 6, 1771.

These voices, particularly Hannah Caleb's, refute Arnold Krupat's argument that it is Apess's "wish to be the licensed speaker of a dominant voice that desires no supplementation by other voices" (*The Voice in the Margin* 148). Krupat adds that "the voices of Pequot . . . relatives and friends . . . are suppressed in [Apess's] texts" (147). If his argument is valid, how do we explain this voice in Hannah Caleb's narrative: "After I had done singing, I had a desire to pray, but I thought, what shall I say? 'Oh, I am a poor sinner. Lord have mercy upon me, a poor sinner'" (147). How do we explain the voice of Anne Wampy:

> When Christian come to talk with me, me no like 'em; me no want to see 'em; me love nobody; I want no religion. But Sister Amy no let me alone; she talk a great deal to me about Jesus. Sister Apess, too, come talk pray for me. I be afraid I should see 'em, and me no want to hear 'em; by me, by me come trouble very much, me very much troubled. Me no like Christians, me hate 'em, hate everybody. (152)

Krupat's theory that Apess makes "no attempt to convey the sound of any other voice" is contradicted in *The Experiences of Five Christian Indians* (*Voice* 148). Krupat even goes as far as to devote a number of pages to *The Experiences*, but fails to deal with any of the conversion narratives. Instead, he focuses on the final essay, "An Indian's Looking-Glass for the White Man." To dismiss Apess's writing as no more than a mimicry of salvationism—"a voice . . . heard commonly in the early nineteenth century"—is to dismiss the writings of one of the most widely published Indian authors of the nineteenth century (*Voice* 148). Furthermore, this "mimicry," allows Apess and the other converts to establish a specific identity. The language of Christianity provides a rhetorical space where Indians were able to write themselves into the nation.

The Hero and William Apess

William Apess' last published work was the *Eulogy on King Philip as Pronounced at the Odeon, in Federal Street, Boston.* According to Barry O'Connell, Apess delivered this speech twice, once on January 8 and the second time on January 26 of 1836 (103). O'Connell mentions that the second speech is a condensed version, but we can only surmise why Apess would have shortened his address. The *Eulogy* is abolitionist in nature, but since he was speaking to a Boston audience, it is unlikely his political leanings would be met with disdain. Nor can we claim the subject matter displeasing, as there were efforts to reclaim King Philip as a heroic representation of the American desire for freedom and independence.

According to Anne Marie Dannenberg, Apess's *Eulogy* is a radically political text, similar to Jefferson's Declaration of Independence and King's "Letter from a Birmingham Jail" (68). In making such a claim (and rightly so), Dannenberg connects Apess to two of America's most revolutionary minds. Nevertheless, it is Apess who stands apart from both men in our inability to categorize him. The *Eulogy* is yet another example of our failure to neatly position a nineteenth-century Indian writer in the nativist/assimilationist camp. In this text, Apess uses history to reflect on the present, to overturn romantic notions of the American past, and to open up that narrow field of men whom we have labeled as ideal representations of the American spirit.

Apess begins the eulogy by telling his audience that he is not here to tell about a noted warrior because he does not believe war to be "the best method of . . . civilizing man" (105). He is more interested in discussing the natural talents of humans, especially

the "wild men," by the "God of Nature" (105). However, their virtues have gone unrecognized, even though they are purer than those of civilized peoples.

For Apess, monuments are one's family, one's descendants, one's ancestors, not something manufactured. These descendants remember Philip and hold him in the same high esteem as those who immortalize and venerate Washington. Philip's cause, Apess says, is revolution: a revolution in the same vein as the American Revolution. Yet, the present does not recognize it as such, preferring to relegate King Philip's War to yet another battle the beleaguered Pilgrims had to fight to maintain their newly found freedom and their lives. Apess implies that American memory is as faulty as the country's knowledge of Philip: colored by prejudicial treatises by men such as Increase Mather and Benjamin Church.

In his speech, Apess questions the American definition of honor. Those whom the state has deemed honorable are guilty of destroying "whole nations and communities," but yet are thought of as belonging to a civilized people. Apess argues that warfare, whether fought by those labeled civilized or uncivilized, achieves the same ends; that "one mode of warfare is just as the other" (106). The only difference lies within the group's perception of itself and how it justifies its wars to the world. Here, Apess is implying that the Pilgrim's cannot justify their wars against the Indians.

In explaining Philip to an audience who only knew of him through his conquerors, Apess begins with Massasoit, Philip's father: "Who is Philip? He was the descendant of one of the most celebrated chiefs in the known world, . . . for injuries upon injuries, and the most daring robberies and barbarous deeds of death that were ever committed by the American Pilgrims, were with patience and resignation borne, in a manner that would do

justice to any Christian nation or being in the world" (106). In doing this, Apess implies that Philip's nobility, his fairness, his ability to lead are innate qualities determined by blood. Such comparison forces us to remember Webster's portrayal of Washington as the ideal American. Apess and Webster postulate that both Philip and Washington were born with the characteristics that made them distinctly "American" heroes. Moreover, in connecting Philip and Massasoit, Apess implies that such characteristics are not an anomaly, as Webster seems to imply with Washington. Rather, one needs only to study Philip's genealogy to understand the kind of man he was.

Interestingly, Webster rarely explicitly invokes Christianity in his speeches. There is no need for Webster to do so because the Christian faith is part and parcel of the American nation, notwithstanding the separation between church and state. Therefore, Webster, and his audience, assumes the religious beliefs and behavior of those he commemorates. Much of the *Eulogy on King Philip* focuses on the tenets of Christianity and how one lives one's faith. Such assumptions present in Webster's speeches are not present in Apess's eulogy because Christian behavior is not present in those who dealt with Philip nor, as Apess implies, in their descendants. Apess conflates Christian and patriotic behavior and posits that the Indians' behavior is more in line with the republican ideal than any behavior displayed by Americans since the landing at Plymouth Rock.

> December (O.S.)[80] 1620, the Pilgrims landed at Plymouth, and without asking liberty from anyone they possessed themselves of a portion of the country, and built themselves houses, and then made a treaty, and commanded them to accede to it. This, if now done, it would be called an insult and every white man would be called to go out and act the part of a patriot . . . and if every intruder were butchered, it would be sung upon every hilltop in the Union that victory and patriotism was the order of the

[80] Old Style. In this calendar, dates are ten day earlier than in our current system.

> day. . . . And yet for their kindness and resignation toward the whites, [the Indians] were called savages and made by God on purpose for them to destroy. (108-9).

It is the Pilgrims who are acting against the Union, not the Indians. They fail to embody both the republican and Christian ideal, and as such, their behavior borders on the criminal.

Apess does not mince words, calling the Pilgrims hypocritical, inhumane, and savage. His rhetorical skills allow him to use the very language of conquest, turning it back on those who claim moral superiority. Apess's use of examples to support his argument are powerful and provocative.

> Another act of humanity for Christians, as they call themselves, that one Captain Standish, gathering some fruit and provisions, goes forward with a black and hypocritical heart and pretends to prepare a feast for the Indians; and when they sit down to eat, they seize the Indians' knives handing about their necks, and stab them to the heart. The white people call this stabbing, feasting the savages. We suppose it might well mean themselves, their conduct being more like savages then Christians. (109).

He is able to invoke sympathy and horror in his audience and, one might imagine, no small degree of shame. Yet, Apess is after more than an emotional response: his aim is at least partly didactic. Apess shows through example that this inhumane treatment by the Pilgrims toward the Indians is a foundational part of America's past.

Another interesting facet of the above example is Apess's use of tense. We must notice that Apess avoids the use of the past tense, refusing to historicize the "white people's" behavior. Moreover, this rhetorical device firmly places the actions of white Christians on a continuum. They still "call themselves" Christians without behaving as such; their conduct is still "savage" while they label others the same. Thus, the use of the terms "savage" and "Christian" are devoid of meaning. The signs have no specific signifier because those who originally defined them have corrupted their meaning.

Apess uses many of the same rhetorical techniques in his commemoration of Philip, as does Webster in his commemorations of Washington, Adams, and Jefferson. For instance, he likens Philip's memory to the sun, dimming the memories of lesser men, like Increase Mather (112). In doing so, he uses the metaphor in a similar manner to that of Webster: Philip is of elemental importance, not only to his people, but also to the idea of America.

In addition, Apess makes it a point to use the title "King" when talking about Philip. Philip's true name is Metacom, and it is the colonists who gave him both name and title. Why, then, would he use a title one would normally associate with a Western form of governmental power? Apess is employing a strategy similar to the one he uses when discussing Christianity. In using the title "king," he invokes America's political memory, one of patricidal guilt.[81] Apess continues the colonists' manner, giving Philip a nobility and monarchical rights not present in the colonists themselves or in their claims to the land. Apess even positions Philip above all American heroes, calling Philip " the greatest man that ever lived upon the American shores" (118). With this sentence, Apess effectively dismisses the contributions of Washington, Adams, Jefferson, any white American the public might venerate. I would not argue that the colonists believed in Philip's superiority or claims; however, one cannot deny the significance of the title, especially to those whose entire political world revolved around the God-given idea of kingship.

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[81] Susan Scheckel. *The Insistence of the Indian: Race and Nationalism in Nineteenth-Century American Culture*. See especially chapter 2, "American Origins and the Problem of History," where she discusses the problems America had in envisioning a continuity with the past.

Apess does not just use the title as respectful address to an honored ancestor. He uses it to illustrate the lack of respect by whites toward Indians, not only during Philip's time, but also in the present. Apess provides examples of legal matters where cases similar in nature, one charge levied by Peter Talmon and a similar charge levied by Philip, were decided both times for the colonists. Interestingly, Apess's tone is ironic, as he claims that "it would be a strange thing for poor unfortunate Indians to find justice in those courts of the pretended pious in those days, or even since . . ." (119). He implies that justice should not be difficult for any person, white or Indian, to find in a nation founded on the Christian idea of equality.

When Webster speaks of Washington, he not only illustrates the man that he is, but also the way the rest of the world thinks of him:

> He demanded, and he obtained at once, a standing of perfect equality for his country in the society of nations; nor was there a prince or potentate of his day, whose personal character carried with it, into the intercourse of other states, a greater degree of respect and veneration. (343).

Washington, by his virtue alone, is able to demand respect from his peers. Webster makes it a point to tell his audience that even those who may consider themselves above Washington, "prince or potentate," esteem and revere him.

However, as Apess points out, such respect is not synchronous. In other words, America demands and expects respect from foreign leaders, but will not grant the same. The governor of Plymouth demands that Philip appear before him to answer charges; a demand that Apess calls "an insult . . . to His Majesty; [that] an independent chief of a powerful nation should come at the beck and call of his neighbors whenever they pleased to have him do it" (120). Philip refuses the call, and when the governor attempts to engender a new treaty, Philip refuses stating, "Your governor is but a subject of King

Charles of England; I shall not treat with a subject; I shall treat of peace only with a king, my brother; when he comes, I am ready" (qtd. in Apess 122). Philip establishes himself as equal to the King of England, in the same manner as Washington is considered equal to any person of royalty.

Apess likens Philip yet again to Washington, comparing the battle of Pocasset[82] to that of Washington crossing the Delaware. Even though Philip is surrounded in a swamp for thirteen days, he managed to escape via the Connecticut River losing only fourteen men. Apess posits that Philip's strategic skill is above that of Washington as

> . . .Washington was assisted by all the knowledge that art and science could give, together with all the instruments of defense and edged tools to prepare rafts and the like helps for safety across the river, Philip was naked as to any of these things, possessing only what nature, his mother, had bestowed upon him; and yet makes his escape with equal praise. (125)

Just as Washington had, according to Webster, inherent qualities that made him a natural leader and an American hero; Philip, according to Apess, had qualities that were at least equal to Washington. Furthermore, Philip's abilities are even greater, as he did not have the technological advancements available to Washington.

Philip, as leader, as warrior, becomes superior to those that came before and those who will come after. It is important, as Apess notes numerous times, to remember that Philip's education comes out of the wilderness, an education similar to the education granted to American heroes such as Daniel Boone, Natty Bumppo, and George Washington. Apess argues that Philip's prowess is greater even than Philip of Greece as "Philip of Mount Hope" was able to gather all the surrounding Indian nations in their resistance against the colonists. Furthermore, the greatest military minds owe a debt to

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[82] According to O'Connell, this battle began on July 18, 1875 when Philip's men killed fifteen Englishmen in an ambush.

Philip: Napoleon patterned his strategy of arraying his forces and surprising the enemy after Philip. Even more importantly, Washington "pursued many of [Philip's] plans in attacking the enemy and thereby enabled him to defeat his antagonists and conquer them" (134). Thus, the most endearing symbol of the Republic, Washington himself, learned lessons from Philip that allowed the United States to break away from England.

Apess makes it known that Philip was only defeated through Indian treachery, not because of any strategic superiority by the colonists. Such information is important as it maintains Apess's argument that Philip is "the greatest man that was ever in America" (136). Thus, Philip becomes the ideal America should look to as its preeminent hero, not those who appropriate Indian ways.

Conclusion

Apess continues to criticize the racialist ideology of whites that he began in *Son of the Forest* and continues in *The Experiences of Five Christian Indians* and *An Indian's Looking Glass for the White Man.* Within this document are several instances where Apess turns from his tale and comments on the racism that has led to the present circumstances of the Indians. By doing so, Apess informs his audience – whom we can assume, with a strong degree of certainty, were mostly white – that the American idea of equality and freedom is contradictory at best and is non-existent at worse.

This fact alone distinguishes Apess's writing from Joseph Johnson's; Johnson does comment on his position and the position of other Indians in his writing, but a careless reading may overlook these criticisms. On the other hand, Apess's denunciation of racism is not only unmistakable; it is a major theme throughout the *Eulogy.*

Apess is able to overturn, through his exemplary use of rhetoric, the notion of "civilized" and "uncivilized." As he says, "It will be well for us to lay those deeds and depredations committed by whites upon Indians before the civilized world, and then they can judge for themselves" (107). In other words, the civilized world will be unable to view the Pilgrims' behavior towards the Pokanoket with nothing less than horror at the barbarous acts committed by God's chosen people.

In discussing white America's disposition for enslaving other peoples, he claims, "this inhuman act of the whites caused the Indians to be jealous forever afterward, which the white man acknowledges upon the first pages of the history of his country" (107). Apess is showing that Indians have only been viewed through one lens, the "White Man's Looking Glass for the Indian" as it were. The irony is in the idea that anyone would be jealous of another's desire to enslave other human beings. To do such, according to Apess, goes against all tenets of Christianity:

> How could they go to work to enslave a free people and call it religion is beyond the power of my imagination and outstrips the revelation of God's word. O thou pretended hypocritical Christian, whoever thou art, to say it was the design of God that we should murder and slay one another because we have the power. (107)

Apess equates the treatment of the Indians to the treatment of the Africans and in doing so, implies that abolition must overturn the racialist mindset.

Yet again, Apess is saying that America has allowed slavery to exist because of Pilgrims' belief in their own superiority. He condemns their twisted interpretation of Scripture, which convinced the Pilgrims of their right to murder and torture those Indians who attempted to befriend them.

> They took one Wittumumet, the chief's head, and put it upon a pole in their fort and, for aught we know, gave praise to their God for success in murdering a poor Indian; for we know it was their usual course to give praise to God for this kind of victory, believing it was God's will and command for them to do so. (110)

Note his use of the pronoun in the phrase "their God." The Pilgrims' idea of God is certainly not his, Apess is saying, and should not be anyone's who claims to be Christian. He goes on to tell of the Pilgrims' capture and enslavement of Philip's son, asking those present to reflect upon this act:

> Only look at it; then stop and pause: My fathers came here for liberty themselves, and then they must go and chain that mind, that image they professed to serve, not content to rob and cheat the poor ignorant Indians but must take one of the king's sons and make a slave of him. Gentlemen and ladies, I blush at these tales, if you do not, especially when they professed to be a free and humane people. (129)

Here is the foundation of all your beliefs, Apess is saying. If you want to revere your ancestors as thieves and cheats, that's one thing, but to kidnap and enslave a small child defies all claims to humanity. Furthermore, he *demands* his audience to feel ashamed. If they do not, they can no more claim to be free and humane people than their ancestors whom Apess has shown to have no right to that title.

Apess ends his speech with a demand Jace Weaver will echo some 160 years later: we must change our system of thought if we are to become the people we have always claimed to be: "I say, then, a different course must be pursued, and different laws must be enacted, and all men must operate under one general law" (138). Through his use of rhetoric, history, and theology, and "as an advocate of Christian American enlightenment," Apess refuses to be categorized as a nativist or assimilationist (Dannenberg 68). Apess uses not only Western discourse – social reform, law, Biblical

precedent – but Native American discourse as well: the oral tradition, the telling of story to enact change.

CONCLUSION

> *But a supposed Indian, whatever machinations produced the ace of his identity, has already allowed the federal government to determine what is or what is not Indian without considering that if he lets the government do that, he has accepted the government's final and inevitable statement that a particular tribe or people are no more.* (Penn, *Feathering Custer* 86)

I was attending a conference a few years ago on New England Indians that was attended by many natives, scholars and non-scholars alike. During the question and answer period of my panel presentation, a Narragansett man complained that the papers addressed Indian issues from a white perspective. I gently reminded him that although three-fourths of the panel's papers did just that, mine discussed Indian issues from Joseph Johnson's perspective. He dismissed both me and my paper with the statement that I did not look "Indian enough" and had, in his opinion, "gone over to the other side." As disappointed as I was in this "identity" issue coming up yet again, I am not naive enough to be shocked by that man's accusations or perceptions. Indian identification is, and has been, a thorny issue, an issue that I do my best to avoid because I refuse to enter into someone else's fantasy.

Nevertheless, these questions will not go away. There are those, scholar and non-scholar, Indian and non-Indian alike, who firmly believe that "Indianness" is tied to blood quantum and the tribal identification card. Like Gyp Carnel, one of the characters who moves through W.S. Penn's *Killing Time with Strangers*, many believe that a sense of Indian identity rests solely with that card. Even though such behavior is sadly funny at best, and juvenile at worst, I find myself unable to wholly condemn Gyp's actions. So much of the Indian has been consumed and appropriated by American culture that debates over authenticity become overwhelming. As I explained in chapter four, Indian

attributes and characteristics were desired and needed in the creation of a distinctly American identity. This desire continues even today.

For example, in *The Patriot* (2000) Mel Gibson's character, Benjamin Martin is able to save his family and defeat the British because of his prowess as an *Indian* fighter. I use this term fully aware of its double meaning: one who is skilled at warring with and defeating (in American mythology) the recalcitrant Indians who refuse to willingly abandon their land and their culture to make way for Western civilization. Then, there is the second meaning: one who fights *like* an Indian, but because of his technological, social, and moral superiority becomes more than Indian, a kind of uber-Indian with a healthy dose of whiteness thrown in to make it palatable. Benjamin Martin is, when the film opens, a pacifist who fears "that [his] sins would return to visit [him] . . . and the cost is more than [he] can bear." These "sins," we find out, are the slaughter of both French and Indians at Fort Wilderness during the French-Indian War. Nevertheless, his pacifism comes to an abrupt end when British soldiers kill his teenage son, Thomas. Martin's "Indian" comes to the fore as he crashes through the woods; tomahawk in hand, intent on revenge. We, of course, are meant to empathize with and encourage Martin's bloodlust. The fact that he kills British soldiers in a distinctly "American" way (read: "white Indian") is meant to rouse the audience into a jingoistic frenzy.

Martin's connection to the George Washington of "Parson" Weems fame is unmistakable in the film. His children call him "Father" so often that it interrupts the narrative flow. He learns his battle skills fighting the Indians and is surrounded by black "employees," not, as the film points out, slaves. Martin's family is the whole focus of his life, just like, as we are led to believe, Washington's focus becomes the American people,

his family. Just as Washington is seen as liberal in his views on slavery, freeing his slaves on his deathbed, Martin is seen in a similar light. The falsity of both views have been fodder for scholars and others. Spike Lee, in an open letter to the *Hollywood Reporter*, lambasted *The Patriot*, saying, ""For three hours *The Patriot* dodged around, skirted about or completely ignored slavery. How convenient... to have Mel Gibson's character not be a slaveholder... *The Patriot* is pure, blatant American Hollywood propaganda. A complete whitewashing of history. One can never forget that America was built upon the genocide of the Native Americans and the enslavement of African people. To say otherwise is criminal" (Jam! Movies). We know that Washington freed his slaves because he feared for Martha's life, not because he suddenly became an abolitionist near the end of his life; however, it is important to American mythology that they view his act as humanitarian.

However, just as the revised Washington serves as the model for the nineteenth century's heroic ideal with all his contradictions erased, the model for Gibson's character is also revised. Francis Marion, "The Swamp Fox," who is the basis for Benjamin Martin, hunted Indians for sport and was a notorious slave trader. But Gibson's Martin regrets his wholesale slaughter of the Cherokee, and Martin's eldest son, Gabriel, tells an African-American soldier that they are fighting "for a new world where all men are created equal in the eyes of God." We are painfully aware that such equality is not present in the film where Native Americans themselves are never seen, where the only reference to anything Indian is the tomahawk, which a bloodied and rage-filled Martin uses to brutally hack a soldier to pieces. Thus, the film implies that such brutality is also an Indian characteristic, that Indians are blood-thirsty savages who do not have the

technological advantage to kill more humanely. It is Martin, the white Indian, who is able to control his Indian savagery, to turn away from the tomahawk as it were, and embrace the musket.

Even more subversive is Kevin Costner's *Dances with Wolves* (1990). Nominated for twelve academy awards and winner of seven, including Best Director for Costner and Best Picture, *Dances with Wolves* reinforces the American hero myth to an unusual extent. The beginning of the film introduces the idea that Costner's character, Lieutenant John Dunbar, is a savior: Dunbar rides between Confederate and Union lines with his arms outstretched like the crucified Christ.

Although the film takes place after the Civil War, the Lakota Sioux still believe that Dunbar may be a "white god." The historical moment of the film does not allow for such a conclusion. Indian nations all over the North American continent had been in contact with white people, some for well over a hundred years. By having Kicking Bird, the Lakota medicine man, question Dunbar's divinity, screenwriter Michael Blake is covering much tread-upon ground: the Indian, especially a holy man, is quick to recognize and acknowledge the white man's superiority.

This idea continues throughout the film. Dunbar, not the Lakota, locates buffalo for the hungry nation. He saves a young boy from certain death during the hunt because of his superior weaponry; he kills more buffalo than the Indians, thus providing them with all the food they will need. Dunbar gives the Lakota rifles to battle the Pawnee, ensuring the "most one-sided victory in memory."

Nevertheless, Dunbar does recognize specific attributes and works very hard to appropriate them. He is able to learn the Lakota language while no Indian is able to learn

English. He recreates a sacred hunt dance without actually participating in one. Thus, by the end of the film, Dunbar leaves the Lakota ostensibly to protect them from the Army, but also because he is the only one who can "talk to those who will listen."

I cannot deny that *Dances with Wolves* is a stellar achievement in film art. I am pleased to see Native American actors portraying Native Americans and am impressed by the extensive use of the Lakota language throughout the film. However, for all that the film attempts to do, we cannot deny the message it sends. Yet again, as Filson does with Boone, as Cooper does with Leatherstocking, as Robert Rodat does with *The Patriot*, the white man becomes Indian, but does so while denying these very attributes he appropriates to those from whom he has appropriated. Consequently, the battle that Apess wages in his *Eulogy to King Philip* is not won. White America still needs the Indian to create a distinctly American identity, but must do so while silencing the Indian voice.

Thus, as I turn my attention to these early Native writers, I attempt (key word, here) to let the writer speak for himself. I am only interested in what Eleazar Wheelock has to say, for instance, if I can present Joseph Johnson's refashioning of Wheelock's perception. These early writers did not focus their works on answering the identity question—it is present-day scholars that have asked these questions of them. The time in which they lived demanded a response from them, a response that demanded not that they prove themselves Indian, but that they prove themselves human.

Charles Eastman

Charles Eastman has been accused by many critics of not only assimilating, but of fully embracing "a dominant Euro-American sensibility" (Peterson 174). Such accusations lead, once again, to the simple categorization of these early Native writers as residing firmly in the nativist camp or in its polar opposite. Nowhere do these categorizations allow for movement between the two poles.

Eastman, however, resists this reductionism, as represented in two of his works: *The Soul of the Indian*, published in 1911, and *From the Deep Woods to Civilization*, published in 1916. A cursory reading of these books may lead one to assume that Eastman begins as a nativist but ends firmly assimilated into white society. Nevertheless, a closer reading will dispel such erroneous notions. As Erik Peterson notes, the idea that Eastman must be either "Indian" or "American" refutes Gloria Anzaldua's definition of a borderland as 'a vague and undetermined place created by the emotional residue of an unnatural boundary. It is in a constant state of transition. The prohibited and the forbidden are its inhabitants" (qtd. in Peterson 175).

As a Christian and an Indian, Eastman automatically enters in the "prohibited and forbidden" zone occupied by his predecessors. Yet, Eastman differs from them, separated by time and the changes wrought in American history. This temporal change is more than just the passage of years between Joseph Johnson, for example, and Eastman. Eastman, as it were, stands on the shoulders of giants, of those who went before and carved out an identity that allowed Native Americans to determine their own place in this society. Time has also wrought a change in the view of the Indian as unable to adapt. Cooper's "Noble Savage" who vanishes into the wilderness, does not and has never,

existed. Eastman forces Western society to come to terms with his "Indian": the one raised in tradition yet willing to use that tradition as a foundation upon which to build.

Eastman, then, writes *The Soul of the Indian* as a rebuttal to those who still may see Indian traditions and religious rituals as no more than a primitive response to the world around them. Eastman begins by defining Sioux religion as just another form of worshiping God: the same God "of the lettered and the unlettered, of the Greek and the barbarian" (xiii). In doing so, he connects Indian civilization to ancient Greece, a connection to which Western civilization also claims. Eastman refuses to differentiate between the Sioux religion and Christianity. As he says, "I believe . . . that the spirit of Christianity and of our ancient religion is essentially the same" (24).

Eastman makes it a point to engage in comparative study between Christianity and Sioux religion. Interestingly, Eastman talks of the Indian's connection to the "Great Mystery" in Protestant terms: he writes that God "is nearer to us in solitude, and there were no priests authorized to come between a man and his Maker" (4). The white reader can see, then, that the Sioux approached God in much the same way as they. In addition, he says that the "first *hambeday*, or religious retreat" is similar "to that of confirmation or conversion in Christian experience" (his emphasis 6-7). Over and again, Eastman illustrates that beliefs and behaviors long held by whites to come out of Christianity, are, and have been, present in the Sioux culture.

Like Johnson, Aupaumut, Apess, and Jones before him, Eastman emphasizes the glaring discrepancy between white Christian tenets and white "Christian" behavior, behavior that earned the condemnation of those considered lowly in the eyes of the dominant culture:

> The lust for money, power, and conquest so characteristic of the Anglo-Saxon race did not escape moral condemnation at the hands of his untutored judge, nor did he fail to contrast this conspicuous trait of the dominant race with the spirit of the meek and lowly Jesus. (22)
>
> But it was not so easy to overlook or to excuse national bad faith. When distinguished emissaries from the Father at Washington, some of them ministers of the gospel and even bishops, came to the Indian nations, and pledged to them in solemn treaty the national honor, with prayer and mention of their God; and when such treaties, so made, were promptly and shamelessly broken, is it strange that the action should arouse not only anger, but contempt? (23)

He goes on to refute the idea that civilization has somehow improved his moral being: "Long before I ever heard of Christ, or saw a white man, I had learned from an untutored woman the essence of morality. . . . I knew God. I perceived what goodness is. . . . Civilization has not taught me anything better!" (87). Note his use of "untutored" in the two previous quotes. Eastman implies that the most necessary facets of education, one of the foundations of Western civilization, are found among those American society had labeled as "savages."

Thus, *The Soul of the Indian* seeks to reconcile the contradictory notion of Christian and Indian. Eastman challenges the idea that one cannot somehow meld the two and create a synthesis where the best of both worlds reside in one person.

In *From the Deep Woods to Civilization*, Eastman moves from the autoethnography of *The Soul of the Indian* into autobiography. The title, it seems, would mimic both the conversion narrative, where one moves from the darkness of ignorance into the light of Christianity and the slave narrative, where one moves from ignorance of slavery to the light of freedom. However, Eastman's text defies such categorization.

It begins in a manner similar to the autobiographical narratives of William Apess and Peter Jones, with one significant difference. Whereas Apess and Jones recount their

childhood as times filled with anxiety, poverty, and despair, Eastman's childhood is filled with family, education, and freedom. This does not mean that Eastman's childhood is filled with light and laughter. He believes that his father has been killed by whites and, as a result, is taught "never to spare a white man from the United States" (3). However, his father returns, miraculously says Eastman, not only alive, but converted. Eastman says he listens to his father's "eloquent exposition of the so-called civilized life," but only because it is his father. Nonetheless, Eastman cannot accept his father's exaltation of white culture: ". . . there was a voice within saying to me, 'A false life! a treacherous life!'" (7).

That Eastman brings this up is important to our understanding of his narrative. This is not a man who blindly accepted a supposed superior civilization. What this passage illustrates is a man who constantly questions what he sees going on around him. It depicts a thoughtful mind that refuses to condemn or sanction without further investigation. We can see this working in later passages where Eastman comes face to face with white treachery, including the massacre at Wounded Knee.

His father's conversion becomes a conversion to white society. Eastman notes that it is after his father has returned from being a prisoner of war that he changes his views and his way of life, deciding to farm a homestead and swearing never to join another Indian uprising. Jacob Eastman tells his son that to turn their backs upon the white man's way will lead to stagnation: ". . . one would be like a hobbled pony without learning to live like those among whom we must live" (25). Eastman's father stresses the need for his son to receive a "white man's education"; he argues that it is only in learning to read and write English that one can exist in this world.

Eastman agrees to his father's request that he attend school after listening to his grandmother argue for the opposite. Oddly enough, it is her own principles that convince Eastman to follow his father's advice: "Ah grandmother! You had forgotten one of the first principles of your own teaching namely: 'When you see a new trail, or a footprint that you do not know, follow it to the point of knowing'" (28). Thus, the remainder of Eastman's life, his attendance at the Santee Sioux school, Beloit College, and Dartmouth, is in response to the teachings of his grandmother, who did not want her grandson to live the "made-up life" of the white man.

Eastman's conversion, both religiously and culturally, does not have the same impact on the reader as do the conversions of Apess and Jones. For example, the treatment he receives from a white family on his way to Santee is enough to cause him to embrace "civilization" and renounce his "wild life" (39). Yet, he does not go in depth about his change of heart as one would expect in a conversion narrative. Furthermore, it is during his first summer at Beloit that Eastman realizes the "greatness" of Western civilization and begins to "think and act like a white man" (57-58). What causes this transition is the diversity he sees in those attending Beloit College, "the blending of all languages and the gathering of all races under one religious faith" (57).

One might expect the rest of Eastman's narrative to be an encomium to Western civilization and Christianity. But Eastman is too perceptive. He sees the downside of "American" life on a stopover in Chicago on his way to Dartmouth: "unhappiness, thievery, isolation, crowded cities," things he knows do not exist in Indian culture (62). Interestingly, he makes no further comment, but turns his attention to the rest of his trip.

His tenure at Dartmouth is further immersion into white society; nevertheless, he enters into medicine and is appointed physician to the Pine Ridge agency. It is here where he comes face to face with the treatment many Indians receive at the hands of white government officials. He is at Pine Ridge during the events at Wounded Knee and goes to the site so that he may assist any survivors. The scene was such that "It took all of my nerve to keep my composure in the face of this spectacle . . ." (112). Though subtle, Eastman needs say no more about his reaction. In his characteristically thoughtful manner, he makes one restrained comment: "All this was a severe ordeal for one who has so lately put all his faith in the Christian love and lofty ideals of the white man. Yet, I passed no hasty judgment . . ."(114). It is at this point, I am sure, where those who have labeled Eastman an "Uncle Tomahawk" got their evidence. Yet, we must remember Eastman's audience and his motivation. His references to Christianity and his struggle to maintain his composure are more telling and more powerful than any tirade he could deliver.

He reacts in a similar manner when he resigns from his Pine Ridge appointment under pressure after exposing crooked dealings by government officials. He is disappointed, but refuses to condemn white society, because he "had seen the better side of civilization, and [was] determined that the good men and women who had helped me should not be betrayed" (138). He adds, "The Christ ideal might be radical, visionary, even impractical, as judged in the light of my later experiences; it still seemed to me logical, and *in line with most of my Indian training*" (my emphasis 138). Eastman equates the Christian ideal with the Indian; thus, the two sides of him are not in opposition, as many would argue, but are grounded in the same belief structure.

Eastman ends his narrative with a chapter entitled "The Soul of the White Man." The title would lead one to believe that we are to be presented with "his final passage from the darkness of the 'deep woods' into the light of 'civilization'" (Peterson 182). Yet something so blatant does not occur. Instead, we are presented with a further look into Eastman's life as he is appointed to revise the Sioux allotment roles. Once again, he quietly comments on the treatment many of his people have received from the whites. He ends his narrative with a commentary on his choices and his religious beliefs:

> Yet even in deep jungles God's own sunlight penetrates, and I stand before my own people still an advocate of civilization. Why? First, because there is no chance for our former simple life any more; and second, because I realize that the white man's religion is not responsible for his mistakes. There is every evidence that God has given him all the light necessary by which to live in peace and good-will with his brother; and we also know that many brilliant civilizations have collapsed in physical and moral decadence. It is for us to avoid their fate if we can. (195)

Eastman thus silences any critics who would label him traitor to his people. He understands that the Sioux must advance because there is no other decision. More importantly, the use of the third-person pronoun signals that Eastman does not align himself with whites. He positions himself as an observer of this "brilliant civilization" in order that his people can avoid the same fate that awaits white society.

Thus, when we see Joseph Johnson's refashioning of Calvinistic theology, or William Apess's rhetorical mastery, we see the authentic Indian. We see authenticity in the conversion narrative of Peter Jones and the diplomacy of Hendrick Aupaumut. We do not need, as Arnold Krupat would have us believe, what white America has determined to be essentially "Indian." We do not need tribal identification cards, vision quests, or sweat lodges. All we need do is look to those who have come before.

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