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The influence of Colonialism in J. F. Cooper's *The Last of the Mohicans*

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Z á s a d y p r o v y p r a c o v á n í :

Cílem diplomové práce je analyzovat zvolené dílo z hlediska toho, jak se v něm odráží koloniální politika či kolonialismus v nejobecnějším slova smyslu. Diplomantka nejprve uvede dílo do dobového historicko-literárního kontextu (kolonizace východní části dnešních USA, britsko-francouzská válka, expanze na Západ, literární romantismus, historický román, apod.), vysvětlí pojmy a teorie, s nimiž bude dále pracovat (kolonialismus, post-koloniální teorie, mezirasové vztahy, apod.)

Jádrem práce bude analýza zvoleného díla, v níž se diplomantka zaměří především na (stereotypy v) zobrazení indiánů, způsob prezentace mezirasových vztahů, otázky asimilace, genderu, apod. Studentka bude pracovat s relevantními kritickými zdroji týkajícími se zvoleného díla a rovněž s teoretickými pojednáními týkajícími se konceptů a témat, jimž se bude věnovat. Svá tvrzení bude ilustrovat ukázkami z primárního díla.

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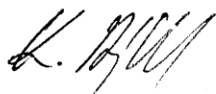
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Stepavhand, Haiali. *A Postcolonial study of Fenimore Cooper's Last of the Mohican: Relativity, Racism, Hybridity and American Dream*. Khorramabad: Azad University, 2013.

Theories of colonialism and post-colonialism in literature, for ex. authors:

Edward Said, Bill Ashcroft, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, Homi Bhabha ad., such as:

Ashcroft, B., G. Griffiths, and H. Tiffin. *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Post-Colonial Literature*. 1990.

Ashcroft, B., G. Griffiths, and H. Tiffin. *The Post-Colonial Studies Reader*. London: Routledge, 1995.

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Prohlašuji:

Tuto práci jsem vypracovala samostatně. Veškeré literární prameny a informace, které jsem v práci využila, jsou uvedeny v seznamu použité literatury.

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Souhlasím s prezenčním zpřístupněním své práce v Univerzitní knihovně.

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Magdaléna Půlpánová

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ANNOTATION

The diploma paper is generally concerned with the influence of colonialism in J. F. Cooper's most popular literary fiction *The Last of the Mohicans* (1826). The aim of this thesis is to analyse the era of colonialism in the eastern part of contemporary USA, the stereotypes in the portrayal of Indians and interracial relationships as they are depicted in *The Last of the Mohicans*. The work is divided into three chapters where the theoretical and analytical parts are interconnected.

KEYWORDS

Cooper, colonialism, *The Last of the Mohicans*, stereotypes, the United States of America

ANOTACE

Tato diplomová práce se obecně zabývá vlivem kolonialismu v nejpůvodnější literární fikci J. F. Coopera *Poslední Mohykán* (1826). Cílem této diplomové práce je analýza období kolonialismu ve východní části dnešních USA, stereotypů v zobrazení indiánů a mezirasových vztahů tak, jak jsou zobrazeny v díle *Poslední Mohykán*. Práce je rozčleněna do tří kapitol, kde jsou teoretické a analytické části propojeny.

KLÍČOVÁ SLOVA

Cooper, kolonialismus, *Poslední Mohykán*, stereotypy, Spojené státy americké

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INTRODUCTION

The following diploma thesis is in general concerned with the key era of the United States of America, namely the era of colonialism and its influence on the first major American novelist J. F. Cooper and his remarkable fiction *The Last of the Mohicans* (1826). In literature, this period has evolved as a phenomenon of colonial and postcolonial theories that has been introduced to American academic areas and expanded in a number of publications by Bill Ashcroft, Edward Said and other founders since the 1970s. Because the novel is Cooper's most popular work, it has been chosen by many as a subject of their studies. Despite the large number of studies focusing on *The Last of the Mohicans*, relatively little attention has been paid to colonialism in the novel. To fill this gap, this diploma thesis demonstrates the analysis of the novel related to the above mentioned issue.

The Last of the Mohicans, the second published book of *The Leatherstocking Tales* pentalogy, is set in the period of the The Seven Year's War also known as the French and Indian War (1754-1763). Other novels of the pentalogy are *The Deerslayer*, *The Prairie*, *The Pioneers* and *The Pathfinder* published from the year of 1823 to 1841. This pentalogy is perceived as the kind of reading for the young. Cooper himself regarded the series to be a good literary art claiming that "[i]f anything from the pen of the writer [...] is at all to outlive himself, it is, unquestionably, the series of *The Leatherstocking Tales*."¹

The diploma thesis consists of three chapters where the theoretical and analytical parts are interconnected. In other words, the theoretical findings in every chapter are subsequently illustrated with the examples from the primary text. The first chapter is devoted to the Anglo-American settler colonialism. Firstly, the basic terms, namely colonialism, post-colonialism, postcolonial theory and postcolonial criticism are explained. Secondly, the era of Anglo-American settler colonialism as defined by Walter Hixson and its impact on Indians as well as the white settlers is introduced. Here, the relationships between Indians and the coming

¹ Robert A. Rees, Earl N. Harbert eds., *Fifteen American Authors Before 1900* (Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1971), 3.

settlers, the English and French competition for land, the rituals of Indians used during negotiations with the white men as well as the context of the French and Indian War is discussed.

The second chapter is focused on the stereotypes of Indians. Some of the first settlers considered the Indians they first met as noble savages; others viewed them as savages, cruel creatures plundering the white settlements. All of them, however, consider them “other.” Both types of Indians are illustrated in J.F. Cooper’s novel with the help of his “good” and “bad” Indian protagonists. Moreover, the stereotype of vanishing race which emerged in the east, primarily thanks to Cooper’s fictional depiction of the Indian tribes in New York and Washington is described.

The third chapter attempts to outline the interracial love and friendship. As a genre of historical novel as well as historical and adventure romance, the theme of love is typical for *The Last of the Mohicans*. Moreover, Michal Peprník, one of the specialists in Cooper’s fiction, claims that the novel might be considered to have a large number of gothic features and therefore, it might be perceived also as the gothic novel. In spite of the fact that many confrontations between the Native Americans and the white settlers lead to wars and armed conflicts, the common alliances and subsequent marriages and friendships were nothing unusual. In the novel, Cooper creates the relationships between civilization and savagery as well as the relationships between “civilized” characters. In connection to interracial relationships, the issue of gender roles in the 19th century is depicted.

ANGLO-AMERICAN SETTLER COLONIALISM

Thousands of people living in the world today have had their lives altered by the experience of colonialism. Bill Ashcroft, one of the founders of the post-colonial theory, believes that this fact has been crucial in the economic and political spheres, but its general impact on the perceptions of contemporary peoples is often less apparent. Literature is one of the most important ways in which these new perceptions are voiced and it is in their writing and other arts such as sculpture, dance, music and painting that day-to-day real lives experienced by colonized peoples have been strongly encoded and so enormously significant.² The position of Native Americans depicted in literature can be seen as a part of the post-colonial situation because according to Louis Owens, “most fiction about American Indians had been written by non-Indian authors in a process that resembled literary colonization.”³ *The Last of the Mohicans* could be perceived as one of these fictions. It narrates the story about the clash between the European settlers and Indians. The former culture represents the colonizers. On the contrary, the latter symbolizes the colonized. Cooper claims that Indians should be kept removed from the presence of the white settlers, therefore, his fiction might be understood as a way of raising question of their elimination. As Shirley Samuels adds: “The novel overtly mourns the disappearance of native people and covertly rationalizes their elimination.”⁴

Colonialism is generally defined as “political-economic phenomenon whereby various European nations explored, conquered, settled, and exploited large areas of the world.”⁵ This term will always be associated with Great Britain. At the beginning of the 19th century, it appeared as the largest imperial power, and “by the turn of the 20th century the British Empire ruled one quarter of the earth’s surface, including India, Australia, New Zealand,

² Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin, *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Post-Colonial Literature* (London and New York: Taylor & Francis group, 1990), 1-2.

³ Louis Owens, *Other destinies: Understanding the American Indian novel* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1992), 23.

⁴ Shirley Samuels, *A Companion to American Fiction* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2004), 13.

⁵ “Colonialism,” accessed April 20, 2016, <http://www.britannica.com/topic/colonialism>

Canada, Ireland, and significant holdings in Africa, the West Indies, South America, the Middle East, and Southeast Asia.”⁶ British colonial domination persisted till the second World War when India attained independence in 1947, and other colonies slowly followed. Finally, in the 1980, Britain had lost the most of its colonies. Ashcroft claims that the era after this loss should be called “post-colonial period.”⁷

The term “post-colonial” is used to include all the culture influenced by the imperial process from the the instant of colonization to the present day. The reason for this is a persistence of preoccupations during the historical process introduced by European imperial attack.⁸ Peter Hulme comes to a conclusion that “post-colonial” should be applied as a merit badge, the adjective expresses nothing about a postcolonial country’s behaviour. As a postcolonial nation, the United States proceeded with colonizing of North America, finishing the genocide of the Native inhabitants begun by the Spanish and British. Thus, at the same time, a country can be postcolonial and colonizing. The differences between American countries in their postcolonial times and Asian and African countries in theirs will come to appear as crucial as their similarities and ”postcolonial studies is the name that is going to hang over the gate, then let us use the word in a way that includes America.”⁹

In Lois Tyson's view, post-colonial criticism examines literature created by cultures that evolved in response to colonial domination and might be called “Commonwealth literature,” which it was called until the 1980s. This literature was mostly written by colonized and formerly colonized peoples and only some of this literature was written by the colonizers. James Fenimore Cooper might be considered a white colonizer who raised the subject of Indians and their injustice. As a writer, Cooper was heavily criticized by many editors and other authors of literature. The best-known criticism came from Mark Twain in his essay *Fenimore Cooper’s Literary Offenses* where he criticized the novelist for many defects. The American editor and poet James Russell Lowell perceived Cooper’s women characters

⁶ Lois Tyson, *Critical Theory Today* (New York: Taylor&Francis Group 2006), 417.

⁷ Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin, *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Post-Colonial Literature*, 1.

⁸ Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin, *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Post-Colonial Literature*, 2.

⁹ Peter Hulme, "Including America." *Ariel: A Review of International English Literature* by Edward O. CLCWeb: Comparative Literature and Culture 6.2 (2004): Accessed May 10th, 2016.
<http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1227&context=clcweb>
<http://dx.doi.org/10.7771/1481-4374.1227>

as “sappy as maples and flat as a prairie.”¹⁰ Edgar Allan Poes had similar ideas claiming that “there is no distinct character to Cooper's writing and the lines he produces are crooked.”¹¹ Tyson concludes that post-colonial criticism searches for understanding the operations of authors “politically, socially, culturally and psychologically – of colonialist and anticolonialist ideologies.”¹²

In Tyson's words, “colonialist ideology,” often mentioned as “colonialist discourse” to label its relationship to the language in which colonialist thoughts were voiced, was proceeded from the colonizer's presumption of their own superiority, which they contrasted with the supposed inferiority of native (indigenous) peoples, the population of the lands the colonizers invaded. The colonizers believed that only their own Anglo-European culture was “civilized,” sophisticated, or, as postcolonial critics put it, “metropolitan.”¹³ For that reason, native people were considered savage, back-ward and undeveloped. Thanks to the colonizer's highly developed technology, they believed in their own culture to be highly advanced, and they disregarded the customs, the codes of behaviour and the religions of the peoples they subjugated. Therefore, the colonizers see themselves as the proper “self” at the heart of the world; the colonized are at the edge, considered “other”. This method of judging all who differ from the Anglo-European culture is called “othering,” and it separates the world into “us” and “them” (the “others” or “savages”). The “savage” is commonly regarded as evil as well as inferior. But sometimes, the “savage” is understood as possessing a “primitive beauty” or nobility born close to nature. In both the cases, however, the “savage” stays other, which means not completely human.¹⁴ According to Arnold Krupat, a specialist in Native American literature, it was due to powerful weapons and increasingly large numbers of the white settlers Native people tried to understand the ways of white settlers and speech, even at times learn from them irrespective of whose the ideas were originally. Native people started to understand Europe as a necessity and chance from the very first contact.¹⁵ Richard Slotkin declares in his preface to Cooper's *The Last of the Mohicans* that

¹⁰ “American literary blog,” accessed February 14th, 2017.

<http://americanliteraryblog.blogspot.cz/2010/02/cooper-and-his-last-mohican.html>

¹¹ “American literary blog,”

¹² Tyson, *Critical Theory Today*, 418.

¹³ Tyson, *Critical Theory Today*, 419.

¹⁴ Tyson *Critical Theory Today*, 419.

¹⁵ Arnold Krupat, *Red matters: Native American studies* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002), 66.

the coming settlers had met men in “uncivil or precivilized conditions”¹⁶ who had been regrettably not able to adapt to European conditions and manners.”¹⁷

The character of Colonel Munro, the commander of the English fort William Henry, is an example of the colonizer in the novel. He comes to the frontier with a modern equipment, military strategies and weapons to fight with the French for the territory. What Indians consider as a great advantage of the white men are primarily ranged weapons. In comparison, Indians use only primitive weapons such as tomahawks, spears, knives and axes. Duncan secretly watches Indian warriors preparing for the battle:

The whole encampment, in a moment, became a scene of the most violent bustle and commotion. The warriors drew their knives, and flourishing them, they arranged themselves in two lines, forming a lane that extended from the war party lodges. The squaws seized clubs, axes, or whatever weapon first offered itself to their hands, and rushed eagerly to act their part in the cruel game that was at hand.¹⁸

Nevertheless, Indians are skilled warriors and trackers who know their territory well, which is their advantage. The old chief Chingachook is convinced about the superiority of the white men over the Indians. He claims that “a war between naked Indians similarly armed cannot be equated with the white’s man conquest by gun and bullet.”¹⁹ In this way, Cooper points out that Indians were not civilized in comparison to the coming settlers.

According to Michal Peprník, a specialist in American and British literature, Munro contributes to the catastrophe of the English defeat at the William Henry, the place of civilization in the wilderness, as he publically whippes Magua for drunkenness – a crime made possible only by the presence of white armies.²⁰ According to Munro, Magua is able to learn the European customs and since this incident, he lets every Indian who comes to

¹⁶ Richard Slotkin in James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans* (New York: Penguin Books, 1986), 11.

¹⁷ Slotkin in James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 11.

¹⁸ Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 221.

¹⁹ Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 10.

²⁰ Michal Peprník, *Topos lesa v americké literatuře* (Brno: Host, 2005), 138. My translation.

the camp drunk whip as a dog. Magua explains Cora that he was not himself due to the fire water “that spoke and acted for him and Munro did not believe it.”²¹ Magua believes that no Indian should be punished for drinking alcohol, but the white settlers who brought it and learn Indians to drink it, should. As a result, Magua is not able to adapt to the European conditions and manners. By this act of whipping, Munro turns Magua into his worst enemy. Neither Munro’s military experience nor his diplomatic negotiations help him to reach his goal of saving his daughters from Magua. He does not respect the cultural differences and customs of Indians. As a consequence, he pays for his foolishness the highest price, the life of his daughter Cora.

Another colonizer in the novel is the young major Duncan Howard. Duncan is very careless and inexperienced when dealing with Indians. His first mistake is that he ignores Magua’s past and completely trusts him in contrast to the daughters Alice and Cora who do not like him as he was their father’s enemy. As Alice exclaims:” If he has been my father’s enemy, I like him still less.”²² Duncan tries to convince her, however, that she is “little accustomed to the practices of the savages and she mistakes the place of a real danger.”²³ As he adds, “it is enough that Magua is now our friend,”²⁴ and thinks of him as a harmless creature from the woods. Secondly, he naively agrees with Magua’s tricky plan to take a shortcut instead of travelling slowly with the ladies and the main troops which is later shown as a wrong step. Thirdly, when he attempts to capture Magua in the Huron’s village alone despite of talking “the sly foxe’s” way of speaking, Magua reveals what kind of a trap is going to happen.²⁵ Duncan does not know the real world of Indians and he is more of an embarrassment to the Mohicans and Hawkeye and so, puts the whole group into danger. He considers Magua a primitive savage whose story of life is not worth to know when he admits that he heard of an incident “in which a savage was rigidly dealt by – but forget the idle tale.”²⁶ He may, therefore, consider him “other.”

But, as the plot develops, Duncan, “a man of his misfortunes,”²⁷ starts to learn from his mistakes. When the fort William Henry is conquered and the heroes decide to follow Magua

²¹ Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 92.

²² Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 13.

²³ Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 13.

²⁴ Peprník, *Topos lesa v americké literatuře*, 132. My translation.

²⁵ Peprník, *Topos lesa v americké literatuře*, 132. My translation.

²⁶ Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 13.

²⁷ Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 169.

who captured the ladies, he asks Hawkeye how he could help to save them. Hawkeye claims briskly that Duncan should keep at the back and try not to trample the footprints. Duncan obeys immediately as he was the most inferior soldier. In fact, he becomes such a soldier in the place of the American wilderness and the experienced woodsman Hawkeye takes the command instead. Moreover, Duncan is able to change his red uniform to adapt to the life in the wilderness which means that he gets rid of his superior role of an officer. At the end of the story, he takes the clothes of a crazy healer and lets himself be painted all over his body to fit the best into the world of Indians. As a result, it might be suggested that Duncan is this time able to adapt to the conditions on the frontier and respects the cultural differences. Moreover, thanks to his friend Uncas, he is enriched with a sense of a cultural difference or, as Peprník concludes, it is possible to understand the wilderness as a place where a class and property are not crucial in comparison to experience, ability and merit.²⁸

David Gamut, the pastor of psalmody, symbolizes another colonizer. He is an educated proper Christian and pacifist, a complete opposite to a brutal savage plundering the settlements. As Kelly Stern notes in her article, some critics have claimed that he is in the novel only to compare the inefficacy of the white man in the American wilderness with the expertise of the Native American. Others have claimed that he is a symbol of the traditional preacher/religious fanatic, or a survivor of the well-known Indian captivity narratives.²⁹ He is a type of man who would not survive a day in the wilderness without his warrior friends. His great belief frequently helps the ladies to overcome the fear of the Indians. During the most desperate moment, when Cora is taken from Alice to another village and all hopes for help seem to be lost, David encourages her: “Lady, it is the jubilee of the devils, and this is not a meet place for Christians to tarry in. Let us up and fly.”³⁰ According to him, Indians are cruel devils and their behavior is considered savage and inhumane. David power in the wilderness does not consist in ability to fight and knowledge of nature, but the knowledge of culture and physical support. Even if David does not look like Uncas, a well-built hero, he is willing to sacrifice his life to save Cora as well as to change his place with Uncas who is sentenced to die. As Peprník believes, at the end of the scene, Gamut changes into David from the *Bible* as he kills one of the Huron’s with a primitive catapult.

²⁸ Peprník, *Topos lesa v americké literatuře*, 132. My translation.

²⁹ Cooper in Kelly Stern, “Cooper’s The Last of the Mohicans,” *The Explicator*, March 30, 2010, accessed March, 18, 2017,

<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/citedby/10.1080/00144949709595241?scroll=top&needAccess=true>

³⁰ Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 201.

Therefore, he breaks his rules of a pacifist and becomes the American experiencing his own baptizing of fire.³¹

Also, David might well be set up as a prototype of a North American Indian medicine man. David's Christian belief and singing of psalms positively influences not only the ladies, but also the Hurons' – the enemies of the main protagonists in the novel. He uses his sacred music to charm both natives and animals. Stern claims that similarities between David and the medicine man are external ones.³² Medicine men are known for their "grave and solemn countenance, dignified step and circumspection."³³ In a similar way, Duncan depicts his face as "rather melancholy," as "forlorn and miserable."³⁴ The medicine man is used to live in a house with a different structure, does not work, eats special food and masks his face.³⁵ As stated in the novel, when David is in captivity, he lives in "a neglected hut, a little in advance of the others," which stands quite isolated.³⁶ David also wears distinctive clothes. His dress is combined with both the clothing of Indians and the white men. Moreover, he is a white man living among Indians.³⁷ Medicine men often use archaic speech – a kind of sacred language, especially during various ceremonies.³⁸ David not only speaks a different language, but also he uses singing which might be considered a type of a sacred language for Indians.

When David finds himself in the times of trouble, he starts to sing which helps him to save his life. Nonetheless, Hawkeye believes that his singing is useless in the wilderness and considers his job of a psalmody master very useless. When David survives the attack of Hurons, Hawkeye claims in surprise: "The poor fellow has saved his scalp, he is a proof that a man may be born with too long a tongue! 'Twas downright madness to sow six feet of flesh and blood on a naked rock to the raging savages. I only wonder he has escaped with life."³⁹ Bears and wolves would kill him immediately but Indians let him live and admire him. At first, in the middle of a massacre at the fort William Henry, the Hurons admire David

³¹ Peprník, *Topos lesa v americké literatuře*, 134. My translation.

³² Cooper in Kelly Stern, "Cooper's The Last of the Mohicans," 21.

³³ Maddox, John Lee, *The Medicine Man* (New York: AMS Press, 1997), 91.

³⁴ Cooper in Kelly Stern, "Cooper's The Last of the Mohicans," 21.

³⁵ Maddox, *The Medicine Man*, 91.

³⁶ Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 319, 320.

³⁷ Cooper in Kelly Stern, "Cooper's The Last of the Mohicans," 21.

³⁸ Maddox, *The Medicine Man*, 93.

³⁹ Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 57.

and believe that he is a brave hero since he accepts his death when he sings his last song and does not fight for his life. Secondly, at a different time, they consider him an insane person and therefore let him live.⁴⁰ As a result, his singing might work as a cure of medicine men. Nevertheless, in Kelly Stern's view, it is impossible to make this cure have any value since it fails repeatedly. In the time of a massacre at the fort, his singing attracts Magua, enabling him to abduct Alice. Then, when David appears on the scene with a sick woman, he "commenced a hymn that might have worked a miracle had faith in its efficacy been of much avail."⁴¹ David here appears to be trusting in the "power of suggestion and the patient's faith in his song to remedy the illness, just as the conjurer relies on the patient's belief in his enchanting powers."⁴² Lastly, when David faces the bear, he tries a "musical exorcism."⁴³ This also ends as a failure because the bear is not "possessed" by no spirit but Hawkeye's. ⁴⁴In these situations, David perceives music as an instrument of power, but it fails.

On the contrary, Indians in the novel represent either noble savages or savages. This issue is analyzed in detail in the following chapter devoted to the stereotypes of Indians. Magua, Munro's former ally, symbolizes a savage who plunders the settlements of the white settlers, scalps and kills cruelly. In comparison to Munro and Duncan, he uses primitive weapons such as for instance, a tomahawk or a knife. Magua looks devilish and embodies an evil. He scares Alice as he suddenly appears in front of her. She is convinced about his "otherness" when she asks Duncan:

Are such specters frequent in the woods, Heyward; or is this sight an especial entertainment ordered on our behalf? If the latter, gratitude must close our mouths; but if the former, both Cora and I shall have need to draw largely on that stock of hereditary courage which we boast, even before we are made to encounter the redoubtable Montcalm.⁴⁵

Other colonized Indians, Chingachgook and his son Uncas, symbolize noble savages whose world is uncorrupted, close to nature. Similarly to Magua, they are not able to adapt to

⁴⁰ Peprník, *Topos lesa v americké literatuře*, 134.

⁴¹ Cooper in Kelly Stern, "Coopers The Last of the Mohicans," 21.
<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/citedby/10.1080/00144949709595241?scroll=top&needAccess=true>

⁴² Cooper in Kelly Stern, "Coopers The Last of the Mohicans," 21.

⁴³ Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 321.

⁴⁴ Cooper in Kelly Stern, "Coopers The Last of the Mohicans," 21.

⁴⁵ Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 12.

the European conditions and manners. Chingachgook does not like the white men and does not want to become one of them as he compares Uncas's behaviour to a behavior of a white man: "Gently, gently, Uncas; you are as impatient as a man in the settlements; you forget that light feet leave but fain marks!"⁴⁶ In addition, he blames the white settlers for the disintegration of his tribe when he mentions alcohol and does not want to adapt to their conditions at all: "The Dutch landed, and gave my people the fire water; they drank until the heavens and the earth seemed to meet, and they foolishly thought they had found the Great Spirit. Then they parted with their land."⁴⁷ Thus, the Indians became victims of machinations of the white men. According to Peprník, during the last battle in the novel, the politics of the white man brought the Hurons and the Delawares, the former enemies, to cooperate and therefore harm the traditional structure of the Indian tribes.⁴⁸

Chingachgook explains Hawkeye that his tribe was happy before the white men came to their country:

The first pale faces came who came among us spoke no English. They came in a large canoe, when my fathers had buried tomahawk with red men around them. We were one people, and we were happy. That salt lake gave us its fish, the woods its deer, and the air its birds. We worshiped the Great Spirit and; we kept the Maguas beyond the sound of our songs of triumph.⁴⁹

Chingachgook and Uncas are believed to be good even if they are able to kill and scalp their enemies. Unfortunately, as stated in the novel, their tribe is sentenced to its extinction as Cooper's Uncas is the last living of the tribe. In Louis Owens's words, this is a romantic view of the American Indian existence accepted and celebrated by the non-Indian world. As he further adds, "writers from Freneau and Cooper to Faulkner and La Farge would stop here, with a crocodile tear for the dying noble savage."⁵⁰ In Krupat's words, the Indian lifeways were regarded to be "savage" in comparison to "civilization," they were obviously doomed to "vanish" or extinct.⁵¹ As Chingachgook mourns:

⁴⁶ Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 171.

⁴⁷ Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 23.

⁴⁸ Peprník, *Topos lesa v americké literatuře*, 136.

⁴⁹ Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 27.

⁵⁰ Owens, *Other destinies: Understanding the American Indian novel*, 53.

⁵¹ Krupat, *Red matters: Native American studies*, 81.

Where are the blossoms of those summers? – fallen, one by one; so all of my family departed, each in his turn, to the land of spirits. I am on the hill-top, and must go down into the valley; and when Uncas follows in my footsteps, there will no longer be any of the blood of the Sagamores, for my boy is the last of the Mohicans.⁵²

Peprník regards Uncas's death, in comparison to the massacre at William Henry, "not anonymous."⁵³ The mythical world has its own memory and a death of an individual becomes a great event. In such a world, the death of a hero brings transcendence and thus, the hero gains immortality. His story will not fade into obscurity and will be living in myths and songs of a nation that knows just oral literature. It would not be possible anything like that for Uncas in the world of white people. There, his death would stay anonymous, just a commonplace episode.⁵⁴ This topic is also discussed in a greater detail in the following chapter about Indian stereotypes.

Anglo - American settler colonialism, a historically important period of the United states, can be depicted as a negative reaction of the British immigrants to the tyrannical rule of their mother country which resulted in establishing their own national community. The historian Walter L. Hixson explains: "Hungry for land unavailable to them in Europe, settlers poured into new worlds, leaving metropolitan authorities struggling to keep pace."⁵⁵ Hixson differentiates settler colonialism from traditional colonialism and imperialism by defining a key characteristic of settler colonialism in North America and it is the "triangular relationship between settlers, the metropole, and the indigenous population."⁵⁶ The British settlers considered the contact with the American Indians as a very useful tool in disposing themselves of the authority of their mother country. These British, who later became well known as the Founding Fathers of the United States of America, produced their national identity with the help of the relation between the American settlers, Britain and *the Iroquois League of Nations* – the most powerful confederacy in Native America, also called *Haudenosaune*. This name could be translated into English as *the People of the Long House* or *the Six Nations* consisting of the Mohawks, Cayuga, Oneida, Onondaga Seneca, and

⁵² Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 28.

⁵³ Peprník, *Topos lesa v americké literatuře*, 137. My translation.

⁵⁴ Peprník, *Topos lesa v americké literatuře*, 137. My translation.

⁵⁵ Walter L. Hixson, *American Settler Colonialism: A History* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 5.

⁵⁶ Hixson, *American Settler Colonialism*, 45.

later Tuscaron tribes to which Hixson mentions as “dialectical relationship.”⁵⁷ As Larry Zimmerman claims, *the Iroquios league* was deeply involved in the Seven Year’s War, a conflict between the French and the English and it was well known for its political correctness and diplomacy connected to the control of a large and difficult territory.⁵⁸ According to Cooper, there existed for many years a confederation among Indian tribes which settled in the northern-western part of the colony of New York, which was at the beginning known as *the Five nations*. Later, the tribe of Tuscarorats entered the league. As stated in the novel, these people are still living on land arranged to them by the state; but they are disappearing, either by deaths or by removals. He claims that soon, there be will no remains of these remarkable people, in the territories they inhabit for centuries.⁵⁹ The American Indians became the part of the new American republic, however ultimately vanished from the scene and the metropolitan authority was brushed aside. As Hixson concludes: “the ability to make both the indigenous and the exogenous metropolitan other progressively disappear established the constitutive hegemony of the American settler component.”⁶⁰

In *The Last of the Mohicans*, the settlers are formed by the English and French troops at war who use Indian tribes for their benefits. Magua used to be a part of *the Iroquois League* of nations when he joined the Mohawks, the friends of the English. As Duncan claims about Magua: “He is said to be a Canadian too; and yet he served with our friends Mohawks who, as you know, are one of the six allied nations.”⁶¹ Nonetheless, Magua, “a runner of the army,”⁶² betrays the English as he wants to revenge Munro and so, converts back to the French troops. Luckily, he is accepted back by his tribe – the Hurons. Magua is proud of himself claiming that when his tribe expelled him “he was at least a warrior among the Mohawks.”⁶³ Cooper also calls Magua’s tribe the Mingoies (Magua’s) or as the French named them, the Iroquois. According to Larry Zimmerman, due to the pressure of the European settlement and a competition at the fur trade, there were many conflicts among the Indian tribes. In the 18th century, *the Iroquois League* together with the Dutch and the English defeated the Hurons

⁵⁷ Hixson, *American Settler Colonialism*, 45.

⁵⁸ Larry J. Zimmerman, *Land of the Thunderbird* (London: Duncan Baird, 1996), 41.

⁵⁹ Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 10.

⁶⁰ Hixson, *American Settler Colonialism*, 45.

⁶¹ Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 10.

⁶² Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 12.

⁶³ Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 91.

and started to control the whole fur trade in the north-east.⁶⁴ As a consequence, Magua has no reason to be in alliance with *the Iroquois League* anymore.

The tribe of the Mohicans is closely related to the tribe of the Delawares, also called the tribe of Lenni Lenape. John Gottlieb Heckewelder, a Moravian missionary who represented a great source of information for Cooper, regarded the Delawares the most important Algonquian tribe (or nation) in the region.⁶⁵ As the most powerful confederacy, *the Iroquois League* also controlled the position of the Delawares. However, Cooper does not mention the Iroquois domination over the tribe of the Delawares at all. As Peprník states:

The Iroquois sold the Delaware lands, enforced their authority over the neighboring tribes through terror. Interestingly enough, Cooper never uses this fact, as if this fact was too humiliating to be presented and would make the Delaware the subjects of Iroquois domination.⁶⁶

Uncas and his father Chingachgook are the ancestors of the chief of the Delaware tribe, Magua's present ally. When the group of heroes appears in the village of the Delawares to save the kidnapped Cora, Uncas proves his Delaware origin with a sign of a little tortoise tattooed on his breast. He stands in front of the Delaware's trial to be sentenced to torture and death as he betrayed his tribe because he fights on the English side. When this sign is revealed, Uncas reinforces his position: "Men of Lenni Lenape! . . . my race upholds the earth! Your feeble tribe stands on my shell!"⁶⁷ The word "race," used in the sentence is ambiguous because race was often perceived as identical to nation or race.⁶⁸ Tamenud, the old Delaware prophet, confirms that when he mentions that Uncas is the "son of the great Unamis from the wise race of the Mohicans."⁶⁹ According to Heckewelder, the Turtle, also called Unamis was one of the three early tribes of the Delaware that held the Council Fire. Their language claims Heckewelder, was the most musical and highly cultivated, and they took

⁶⁴ Zimmerman, *Land of the Thunderbird*, 22.

⁶⁵ Heckewelder, John Gottlieb. *History, Manners, and Customs of the Indian Nations* (Philadelphia: Historical Society of Pennsylvania, 1819), 327.

⁶⁶ Michal Peprník, "Moravian origins of J.F. Cooper's *The Last of the Mohicans*," *Miscellaneous Papers* No. 22, February 2006, accessed February 2, 2017, <http://external.oneonta.edu/cooper/articles/other/2006other->

⁶⁷ Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 53.

⁶⁸ Peprník, "Moravian origins of J.F. Cooper's *The Last of the Mohicans*."

⁶⁹ Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 360.

pleasure in respect for their wisdom.⁷⁰ It was mainly at the Council Fire, where the chiefs could prove their talents in speaking. Cooper also lets Uncas speak “in the softest tones of his own musical voice.”⁷¹ Peprník claims that Uncas is identified by the turtle as a sort of king in disguise, “a king who can now claim his lost kingdom.”⁷² In terms of Uncas, Cooper evidently wants to keep open several possibilities: the aristocratic connection with the family, the romantic connection with the nation fighting for its existence, and mythological connection with the original tribe structure of a remote heroic age. The way he deals with this situation indicates his ability to layer meanings. Uncas is a Mohican, a Turtle and a king of an old tribe. His own presentation as “a son of the Great Unamis” induces the mythic moment of great beginnings of events by which Cooper was so fascinated.⁷³ Uncas is perceived by the Delawares as the lost founding father and with his help, it is possible to regain all the lost fortune and fame of the tribe. In comparison, Magua is perceived as an enemy who deceived the Delawares and he is expelled from their camp, though, unfortunately with his prisoner Cora. Even his attempt to appease the Delaware’s anger and influence their emotions does not help him. As he claims: “The Hurons love their friends the Delawares. . . . Why should they not? They are colored by the same sun, and their just men will hunt in the same grounds after death. The redskins should be friends, and look with open eyes on the white men.”⁷⁴

The Indians in the novel speak not only different languages, but also diverse dialects of those languages. Moreover, they are able to speak English and French which they find beneficial when communicating with the white settlers. Mark Twain claims that when Cooper tries to describe something, “his abstract language defeats him.”⁷⁵ As the quote suggests, Twain criticized Cooper’s language for being inaccurate when describing Indian’s customs and even their language. Stephen Blakemore, one of the specialists in the American fiction, explains in his article that Cooper views the language of the Delawares as

⁷⁰ Heckewelder, *History, Manners, and Customs of the Indian Nations*, 327.

⁷¹ Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 357.

⁷² Peprník, “Moravian origins of J.F. Cooper’s *The Last of the Mohicans*.”

⁷³ Peprník, “Moravian origins of J.F. Cooper’s *The Last of the Mohicans*.”

⁷⁴ Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 295.

⁷⁵ Twain in Mc Williams, *The Last of the Mohicans: Civil Savagery and Savage Civility*, 11.

the language of Eden. In contrast, the English and French languages are considered fallen.⁷⁶ The scout of the English army Hawkeye is able to distinguish the dialect of the Hurons, his enemies: “It was easy to distinguish not only words, but sentences, in the patois of the Canadas. A burst of voices had shouted simultaneously, “La Longue Carabine.”⁷⁷ Magua is, for instance, able to speak, though not fluently, English and French. He learned these languages as he could see that there was a raising number of the white settlers coming and now he can see an opportunity to profit from his knowledge of these European languages. As Magua returns to the ladies “speaking also, though imperfectly, in the French language.”⁷⁸ Uncas and Chingachook, the noble savages, are not only able to speak the Mohican language, but also the language of the Delawares to which they are originally related and which they prefer. They are also able to speak imperfect English, but very little, only when necessary: “Once or twice Uncas was compelled to speak, to command the attention of those he served. In such cases he made use of English, broken and imperfect, but intelligible.”⁷⁹ Magua, on the contrary, almost cannot use the language of the Delawares as he is more used to English, which makes him “the fallen Indian.” As Cooper states: “Uncas, returned Magua, pronouncing the Delaware name with even greater difficulty that he spoke his English words. . .then, changing his language, he continued. . .”⁸⁰

Another aspect of American settler colonialism which needs to be considered for the purpose of this thesis is fight for land with other European empires, primarily with France. Cooper claims, however, that “neither France nor Britain is destined to retain this land.”⁸¹ What was crucial for the British - later the Americans, was to obtain more land for their new settlers, into which they could make their investments. They cooperated with the American Indians only for economic purpose.⁸² In contrast, the French demanded primarily the North American fur trade. As the trade over the country gradually developed, even the American Indians became reliant on the European market objects, for instance, woollen blankets, alcohol and

⁷⁶ Stephen Blackmore, “Strange Tongu <http://external.oneonta.edu/cooper/articles/ala/1999ala-kalter.htmles>: Cooper’s Fiction of Language in *The Last of the Mohicans*,” *Early American Literature*, Spring 1984, 21, accessed March, 13, 2017,

⁷⁷ Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 74.

⁷⁸ Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 156.

⁷⁹ Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 46.

⁸⁰ Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 49.

⁸¹ Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 3.

⁸² Hixson, *American Settler Colonialism*, 45.

metal tools.⁸³ As Larry J. Zimmerman claims, some of these objects seriously influenced the indigenous people's native culture and eliminated traditional manufacture, raised hunting and the last but not least, the alcoholic drinks destroyed the tribal life. The main tribes involved in this trade were the Hurons until the year of 1649, when they were invaded by the Iroquois, who gained control over the whole trade.⁸⁴

Besides a number of military conflicts, this strong economic and political competition resulted in treaties of various alliances with the Native Americans, which preserved trade and also military and diplomatic benefits of colonial relations. Nevertheless, Indians very frequently joined the European armies only for their own needs and both the French and the British complained of their misbehavior and disloyalty.⁸⁵ Hixson claims that the American settlers persuaded the Native Americans to sell their land by a swindle.⁸⁶ The deeply rooted cultural differences between the American settlers and the American Indians were of great importance to negotiating treaties. The American Indians believed in mutual respect and kinship that would bring good relations with the white settlers in the future. In addition, the use of rituals played an important part in their tradition of negotiations. They concentrated on the process and the rituals connected with all political negotiations in their tradition whereas the Americans highlighted the outcome of negotiations. The Native Americans, with their culture based on oral tradition rather than written records often did not understand the terms and meaning of the written texts in English.⁸⁷ Nonetheless, these negotiations between the American settlers and the Native Americans were not always accompanied in the spirit of mutual respect. For example, the famous Haudenosaunee chief in American history, Canasatego, had led the negotiation between the Six Nations and the American settlers since the 1740s. In accordance with the American Indian customs, Canasatego "dined and drank and joked with colonial gentlemen, and he collected a quite satisfactory payment for the lands."⁸⁸ After the success in the American Revolutionary War and declaring the thirteen colonies free, the Founding Fathers did not repay the Haudenosaunee for their land. In addition, the representative of the subsequent United States of America arrived at

⁸³ Armstrong Starkey, *European and Native American Warfare 1675-1815* (London: Routledge, 1998), 99. Accessed November 14, 2016. <http://site.ebrary.com/lib/cuni/Doc?id=10054943>

⁸⁴ Zimmerman, *Land of the Thunderbird*, 40.

⁸⁵ Starkey, *European and Native American Warfare 1675-1815*, 10. <http://site.ebrary.com/lib/cuni/Doc?id=10054943>

⁸⁶ Hixson, *American Settler Colonialism*, 45.

⁸⁷ Hixson, *American Settler Colonialism*, 45.

⁸⁸ Francis Jennings, *The Creation of America: Through Revolution to Empire* (Cambridge: The Press Syndicate of the University of Cambridge, 2000), 46.

the conclusion that Indians would symbolize a barrier to the newly created nation. His decision led into complete removal of eastern nations from their homeland to the West in Indian Removal Act in 1830.⁸⁹ The Iroquois Chief also known as Joseph Brant viewed the political negotiations between the Haudenosaunee and the American settlers in the following way:

It is not the quantity of lands claimed at this time, which alarms the Indians, but the principles upon which it is claimed, for it is opening a door for extending it over the whole of the Indian lands... and the highest degree of injustice... the disgust is spreading where no prejudice had before existed... It may be well known that the personal interest prompt them [American] to it, not the public good.⁹⁰

The Indian hospitality and customs of agreement making were frequently used to the benefits of the white Americans who abused the Indian's trust. Thus, it was possible that Canasatego failed to comprehend the entire meaning of several agreements and he consequently sold a half of the Haudenosaunee homeland to the British."⁹¹ Canasatego complains of the personal interest which is crucial for the Americans. The Indians, on the contrary, prefer the public good and peace. This might be shown in the dialogue between Montcalm and Magua in *The Last of the Mohicans*. When the French subdue the William Henry, Magua needs to make sure of the peace between his tribe of Hurons and the French. He does not like the idea of a peace suggested by Montcalm with the English. As he claims, "Magua is pledged not to sully the lilies of France. The enemies of the great king across the salt lake are his enemies; his friends, the friends of the Hurons. Let his father give Magua a hand."⁹² Montcalm, however, has to obey "his master who owns the land and was ordered to driven off these English squatters."⁹³ Magua's suggestions are not crucial for Montcalm as he is devoted to the interests of his French superiors.

⁸⁹ Larry L. Naylor, *American Culture: Myth and Reality of a Culture of Diversity* (Westport: Bergin and Garvey, 1998), 137.

⁹⁰ Joseph Wronka, *Human Rights and Social Policy in the 21st Century* (Lanham: University Press of America, Inc, 1998), 71.

⁹¹ Francis Jennings, *The Creation of America: Through Revolution to Empire*, 46.

⁹² Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 191.

⁹³ Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 191.

Magua forms an alliance with the French Commander Montcalm and he is a typical example of an Indian who uses an alliance for his own motives and he is considered by Munro, his former ally, as a misbehaving Indian due to his drunkenness. Magua serves for the British commander Munro only for one reason which is the revenge for the degradation Munro caused him. That is why Magua, the runner of the British army, leads Munro's daughters through the battlefields into the presence of his tribe that accepted him back. He demands Cora to become his wife or to die. As Cora complains about Magua's offer to Alice: "He would have me . . . follow him to the wilderness, go to the habitations of the Hurons, to remain there, in short, to become his wife!"⁹⁴ Firstly, Munro tries to offer him himself instead of his dear child. Later, he makes a use of his property when offering Magua lots of "gold, silver, powder, and lead – all that a warrior needs."⁹⁵ But, Magua claims that he already "has his revenge."⁹⁶

Montcalm, represents, in comparison to Munro, old "European patrician presumption unelevated by any consistent moral sense or sentiment."⁹⁷ His main interest on the frontier consists in trade, especially with the Hurons. His army is in a great advantage as he is equipped with, in comparison to Munro's, "an army numerous as the leaves on the trees."⁹⁸ Montcalm plans to gain the fort William Henry, however, proves his nobility, when he offers Munro their mutual truce, the safe crossing to the British territory. Nonetheless, he is not able to prevent his allies – the Hurons with their chief Magua from the massacre that followed. The Hurons do not respect the truce and proves their disloyalty and misbehaviour towards Montacalm. Magua prefers his personal revenge to the interests of his French ally. As he exclaims: "The spirit of a Huron is never drunk; it remembers forever."⁹⁹

Uncas and Chingachkook live with Hawkeye, also known as La Longe Carabine or Natty Bumbo, in the American forests of New York for many years. Together, they fight on the English side, forming alliance with Colonell Munro. Hawkeye is the English scout

⁹⁴ Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 98.

⁹⁵ Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 296.

⁹⁶ Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 296.

⁹⁷ David Blaire in James Fenimore Cooper's *The Last of the Mohicans*(Herthforrdshire: Wordsworth Classics, 1992), 51.

⁹⁸ Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 4.

⁹⁹ Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 113.

and Chingachgook and Uncas are illustrated as his companies. They do not misbehave and are always loyal to Hawkeye – the white man, as well as the English crown as shown when Uncas justifies Hawkeye’s innocence and therefore, saves his life. As Uncas talks to Tamenud, “ father, look at this paleface – a just a man, and the friend of the Delawares.”¹⁰⁰ According to Uncas, Hawkeye does not deserve the anger of the Delawares as his intentions are good. The group of heroes does not serve the British for their own needs and revenges as Magua does which proves their nobility and goodness. For them, Magua is perceived as a “bad Indian.” As Hawkeye claims: “Mingo is a Mingo, and God having made him so neither the Mohawks nor any other tribe can alter him.”¹⁰¹ When the group meets Duncan and the ladies lost in the forests, they decide to help them: “Uncas is right! It would not be the act of men to leave such harmless things to their fate, even though it breaks up the harbouring-place for ever.”¹⁰² Perhaps, this is what, on the contrary, Magua would do, according to Hawkeye. For the rescue of the ladies, the group does not demand any money, thus, any scalps and spoils of war. They just demand them to promise two things: “The one is, to be still as these sleeping woods, and the other is, to keep the place where they shall take them for ever a secret from all mortal men.”¹⁰³ By this place, they mean a cave at Glenn Falls situated not far away from their actual position which represents a shelter for both Hawkeye and the Mohicans. The former condition means that they need to adapt to the conditions in the forests because as Hawkeye believes:” Whoever comes to the woods, he must use Indian fashions, if he would wish to prosper in his undertakings.”¹⁰⁴

Allan M. Axelrad claims in his article about the historical context of *The Last of the Mohicans* that at the period of the French and Indian War the American colonists were victimized by plentiful massacres as the one at the fort William Henry as well as other “substantial evils.”¹⁰⁵ He mentions that Anglo-American victimization is an important theme in the novel,¹⁰⁶ primarily in the chapter depicting the carnage at the Willim Henry. In this

¹⁰⁰ Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 293.

¹⁰¹ Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 35.

¹⁰² Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 43.

¹⁰³ Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 36.

¹⁰⁴ Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 30.

¹⁰⁵ Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 4.

¹⁰⁶ Allan M. Axelrad, “Historical contexts of *The Last of the Mohicans*: The French and Indian War, and Mid-1820s America,” *James Fenimore Cooper: His Country and His Art*, Papers from the 2009 Cooper Seminar (No.

chapter, Cooper describes the incredible barbarity of the Indians, the French allies. Yet Cooper also knew that the frightened colonists exaggerated the real dangers “by a thousand fanciful and imaginary dangers.” He wrote that with the unending storytelling of Indian horror stories, “the alarmed colonists came to believe that the yells of the savages mingled with every fitful gust of wind that issued from the interminable forest of the west.”¹⁰⁷ Acting illogically, forgetting their manhood and shaming themselves, the colonists became slaves to the most vulgar and ignoble passions, such as cowardice, hatred, and vengeance.¹⁰⁸ Axelrad further suggests that victimization was “a central trope in the Anglo-American understanding of the French and Indian War, especially in middle colonies like New York and Pennsylvania.”¹⁰⁹ Thanks to the first survivors an exaggerated report about the massacre was soon published in *The London Magazine* claiming that when the British abandoned the fort, the French “most perfidiously let their Indian blood-hounds loose upon our people. After noting that “most were stript stark-naked” and many “were killed and scalped,” grim details were provided of women’s “throats” that “were cut,” “belies ripped open,” “bowels torn out”; and of children “taken by the heels, and their brains beat out against the trees or stones.”¹¹⁰ Such brutality led the Europeans to feel hatred for Indians and as the historian Fred Anderson states the outcome of the French and Indian War, was “the wholesale destruction of native peoples.”¹¹¹

Peprnik claims that who is responsible for the massacre at the William Henry, are predominantly the European world powers that put America into chaos. The Europeans lost control over the authority they brought among Indians. Not only the Hurons, but also the French and the English are responsible for the massacre. If there weren’t the Europeans, the Indians would have never gathered in such large numbers. The Indians were not interested in defeating the enemy, but in gaining his scalp and the spoils of war. The French underestimated the way the Indians perceive the war. Nonetheless, Cooper blames also

17), The State University of New York College at Oneonta, 2009, accessed February 9, 2016, <http://external.oneonta.edu/cooper/articles/suny/2009suny-axelrad.html>

¹⁰⁷ Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 3.

¹⁰⁸ Cooper in Allan M. Axelrad, “Historical contexts of *The Last of the Mohicans*: The French and Indian War, and Mid-1820s America.”

¹⁰⁹ Axelrad, “Historical contexts of *The Last of the Mohicans*: The French and Indian War, and Mid-1820s America.”

¹¹⁰ *The London Magazine: Or, Gentleman’s Monthly Intelligencer* (Oct. 1757), 495.

¹¹¹ Fred Anderson, *The War that Made America: A Short History of the French and Indian War* (New York: Viking, 2005), 37.

the English since they were not able to face the Indians and started to panic in spite of the fact that they could keep their weapons. Cooper had enough information about the massacre but as Peprník adds, he adapted the situation to the novel where every side participated is guilty.¹¹²

As stated above, the American Indians believed in mutual respect and kinship when they negotiated with the white men. Tamenud, an old patriarch of the Delawares, respects Hawkeye even if he, as Tamenud believes “has slain his young men; his name is great for the blows he has struck the Lenape.”¹¹³ Hawkeye also tries to show the respect and reach an agreement claiming that he is “friendly to the Delawares, and all that belongs to their nation.”¹¹⁴ During negotiations, Indians had to consult their steps at the council fire, a sacred place, where only the wisest of men in the tribe could enter. As Cooper depicts, “the tribe that guarded the sacred precincts of the council house, was distinguished for ages by its flattering title of the Lenape.”¹¹⁵ In addition, nobody could harm a prisoner until the council did not finish their discussion. When imprisoned by the Hurons, Duncan “was protected by immemorial and sacred usage, until the tribe in council had deliberated and determined on his fate.”¹¹⁶ Such meetings were, as Cooper claims, “called on the occasions of the last importance.”¹¹⁷

The use of rituals was important for the Native Americans for many generations during the negotiations. According to Zimmerman, almost all native North American rituals represent the celebration of the past. During such rituals, the Indians use a sacred pipe which is considered as one of the means of keeping connection with the past. For the Indians it represents the middle of the space. Respect for a pipe symbolizes the return to a period in life when the ghosts entered to the world of people. In addition, the smoke of a sacred pipe can deliver the prayers to the ancestors.¹¹⁸ When the group prepares for the journey to find

¹¹² Peprník, *Topos lesa v americké literatuře*, 138. My translation.

¹¹³ Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 362.

¹¹⁴ Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 362.

¹¹⁵ Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 332.

¹¹⁶ Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 224.

¹¹⁷ Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 275.

¹¹⁸ Zimmerman, *Land of the Thunderbird*, 104.

the kidnapped ladies Cora and Alice, Heyward Duncan is restless. The two Mohicans, in comparison, need to talk to the ancestors at first. As Chingachook claims:

An Indian never starts on such an expedition without smoking over his council fire, and though a man of white blood; I honour their customs in this particular, seeing that they are deliberate and wise. We will, therefore, go back and light our fire tonight in the ruins of the old fort; and in the morning we shall be fresh, and ready to undertake our work like men, and not like babbling women or eager boys.¹¹⁹

Chingachook believes that it is necessary to ask the ancestors about the expedition they are going to take and mainly calm down. Unless, it will not be possible for them to act like the right men. For this purpose, they use an old fort which symbolizes a sacred place suitable for such a ritual. Even if Chingachgook respects Heyward's decision as he always respects the white men, he declares that Heyward is too inexperienced and considers him an eager boy. As he states: "Young blood and hot blood, they say, are much the same thing."¹²⁰

Later, Duncan starts to understand Indian customs, but in comparison to Hawkeye, does not start to perform them. He rather watches any danger and patiently waits for the result. At this time, he remains silent and respectful. As Cooper notes:

Duncan knew enough of Indian customs to understand the reason the fire was replenished, and why the warriors, not excepting Hawkeye, took their seats within the curl of its smoke with so much gravity and decorum. Placing himself at an angle of the works, where he might be a spectator of the scene within...¹²¹

After the arrival of the Europeans and their American successors, the Indian way of life has radically changed during a period of less than one generation. The white settlers brought new illnesses which destroyed the inhabitants and as they had to move, they lost their family lives and found themselves in the territories where nobody knew their sacred stories. Even at

¹¹⁹ Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 216.

¹²⁰ Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 215.

¹²¹ Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 226.

the times of such unfavourable conditions Indians tried to remain faithful to their traditional way of life as long as possible. The change was, however, unavoidable. As a result, at the beginning of the 19th century, the new religious movements were found out in the lives of the Indians.¹²² Zimmerman claims that some of these movements were millenaristic, predicting the end of the white men. Others viewed their survival from the point of view of a nature and ghost which underpins the belief of many indigenous cultures.¹²³ The millenaristic movements were ceremonies which frequently started with the presence of a prophet who proclaimed about a coming danger and a return to the traditional ways of the tribe. These prophets wanted to bring the new practices and beliefs into their tribes and ordinarily emerged during the worst times. Most of them were considered sacred, others did not have any sacred training but they were good public speakers and had political abilities. In addition, they became prophets as a result of their personal visions and dreams. They opened a ceremony with a dance during which they warn, prophesy and put themselves into a trance. One of the most popular and extended movements was the *Ghost Dance* which first appeared among the North-Indian tribe of Paiutes. The *Ghost Dance* consisted in circle dance during which the dancers might visit their dead relatives and it was associated with Wovoka, “the weather doctor” who accepted the English name Jack Wilson. He moralized about Indian future. He claimed that Indians could not fight with the white men and can adopt some of their customs.¹²⁴

Similar ceremony is held in the village of Hurons. When Uncas is taken a captive, an old prophet appears in front of him as he is dangerous for the tribe. The prophet might be considered as good at public speaking. As she opens the ceremony: “Look at you, Delaware”! Your nation is a race of women and the hoe is better fitted to your hands than the gun.”¹²⁵ Later, she starts to dance and goes into trance:

At that moment the withered squaw already mentioned moved into the circle, in a slow, sidling sort of a dance, holding the torch, and muttering the indistinct words of what might have been a species of incantation. Though her presence was altogether

¹²² Zimmerman, *Land of the Thunderbird*, 126.

¹²³ Zimmerman, *Land of the Thunderbird*, 128.

¹²⁴ Zimmerman, *Land of the Thunderbird*, 136.

¹²⁵ Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 224.

and intrusion, it was unheeded. The Mohican maintained his firm and haughty attitude, and his eye, so far from deigning to meet her...¹²⁶

As the prophet is muttering the indistinct words, she tries to connect with the world of her ancestors, going into trance which helps her to find Uncas's soul and real intentions. Thanks to the state of trance, she can prophecy his future in relation to her tribe of the Hurons. The young Mohican maintains his dignity but Duncan, standing nearby "turns away in horror when he can see them writhing in irrepressible agony."¹²⁷ Thus, for the white man like Duncan the ceremony is frightening.

As stated above, Cooper set the sacred story of creation of the Delawares-Mohicans in the novel as he was fascinated by the myths of the Indian life. Their sacred story is not well-known as Uncas and Chingachgook are the last chiefs of the powerful nation whose "people parted with their land"¹²⁸ after the arrival of the first settlers. According to Zimmerman, a large number of tribes consider a muskrat the only creature that was able to sink below the surface for a piece of mud and so, it was able to create the land.¹²⁹ For the purpose of the novel, Cooper uses a turtle which is a totemic animal for the Delawares. Uncas seems to be pleased when Alice and Cora are interested in the story of his nation as well as the tribe of the Delawares. As stated in the novel: "His companions crowded about him in wonder, and every eye was, like his own, fastened intently on the figure of a small tortoise, beautifully tattooed on the breast of the prisoner."¹³⁰

Thus, to conclude this chapter, it can be stated that *The Last of the Mohicans* is deeply affected by the era of the Anglo-American settler colonialism. Cooper defends the American Indians and blames the Europeans who changed the forests of the American wilderness into the hell of war. Although the white settlers and the American Indians formed common alliances at first, later the Europeans caused the Native American's elimination from their families, homelands and subsequently removed them to the reservations. Some

¹²⁶ Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 227.

¹²⁷ Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 227.

¹²⁸ Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 23.

¹²⁹ Zimmerman, *Land of the Thunderbird*, 117.

¹³⁰ Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 322.

of the first settlers viewed the Indians as noble savages; others viewed them as savages, bloody creatures. All of them, however, considered them as different. To explore more broadly these views, it is necessary to define Indian stereotypes which represent the task of the following chapter.

THE STEREOTYPES OF INDIANS

The conflict between savagery and civilization underpinned the source of inspiration, among the others, of the first major American novelist James Fenimore Cooper in his novel *The Last of the Mohicans*. Of Cooper's 19th- century fiction, Roy Harvey Pearce declared, "The interest is not in the Indian as Indian, but in the Indian as a vehicle for understanding needs of civilized life."¹³¹ As Owens adds, the identical words might relate to most works of literature about Indians by Non-Indians authors.¹³² Even though Cooper introduced a detailed depiction of Indian tribal life, traditions, and the techniques of fight, his knowledge came into existence during his occasional visits of Washington and also Iroquois communities in central New York, the centre of 19th century writing.¹³³ Thus, his depiction of Delaware and Iroquois tribes was mostly based on reports of missionaries and adventurers such as primarily John Gottlieb Heckewelder from Moravia.

Thanks to a great number of resources, the New World was often named the Garden of Eden. Most adventures were amazed by the beauty of the wilderness of the American West and the Frontier. The Frontier was a region of marches and forests representing the untouched place longing for civilization. Importantly, this land signified the political and battle border of the two parties at war, the British and the French together with *the Iroquois League of Nations* that was deeply involved in their competition. The most famous definition of the American frontier was proclaimed by Frederic Jackson Turner, a professor at the University of Wisconsin and a member of the American Historical Association in the summer of 1893 – after the publication of *The Last of the Mohicans*. In his paper called *The Significance of the Frontier on American History*, he claimed that the Frontier was "the meeting point between civilization and savagery."¹³⁴ As Richard Etulain adds, by the 1920's, Turner's claim had become the most acceptable interpretation of the American history.¹³⁵

¹³¹ Louis Owens, *Other Destinies: Understanding the American Indian Novel* (Norman: Oklahoma University Press, 1994), 28.

¹³² Owens, *Other Destinies: Understanding the American Indian Novel*, 28.

¹³³ John McWilliams, *The Last of the Mohicans: Civil Savagery and Savage Civility* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1995), 62.

¹³⁴ Richard W. Etulain, *Does the Frontier Experience Make America Exceptional* (New York, Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 1999), 3.

¹³⁵ Etulain, *Does the Frontier Experience Make America Exceptional*, 6.

One of the major problems Cooper had to face after the publication of *The Last of the Mohicans* was related to the authenticity of the novel. Cooper adjusted the American Indian protagonist for the use in romantic literary art and therefore transformed the image of the savage into the image of a romantic hero. The Indian represented a great subject for the new American literature since he was connected with the past and his life was influenced by the colonization of the United States of America. The American society of the 19th century criticized Cooper for being exaggeratedly sympathetic and creating an idealized illustration of the American Indians, which was not authentic at all.¹³⁶ According to Peter B. High, Cooper divides Indians into ‘good’ and ‘bad.’ The good Indians are “marvel of self-control,” whereas the bad ones remind of the white men by whom they have been spoiled.¹³⁷ In *The Last of the Mohicans*, as High explains, his ‘good’ ones are represented by Uncas and Chingachgook, faithful and affectionate. Some critics express discontent about such exaggerated goodness and claim that Cooper imagined them implausibly, as ‘noble savages.’¹³⁸ Fennimore’s critic, the Governor of Michigan territory, Lewis Cass claimed that “his Uncas has no living prototype in our forest.”¹³⁹ Also D. H. Lawrence, another well-known literary critic, declared that Cooper’s Indians are too noble and too literary:

But Cooper’s presentment is indeed a wish-fulfilment”¹⁴⁰ “If ever any Indian was like Apollo. The Indians, with their curious female quality, their archaic figures, with high shoulders and deep, archaic waists, like a sort of woman. And their natural devilishness, their natural insidiousness.”¹⁴¹

This claim, in fact, did not please Cooper who regarded his works as completely original. As the author once said: “I am a true historian...a describer of society as it exists and of men as they are.”¹⁴² His quote suggests that he himself described the current position of the Indians on the frontier, which was, as already mentioned, troubling. Nevertheless, he provided

¹³⁶ McWilliams, *The Last of the Mohicans: Civil Savagery and Savage Civility*, 17.

¹³⁷ Edwin Fussell, *Frontier: American literature and the American West* (Princeton New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1965), 40-1.

¹³⁸ Peter B. High, *An outline of American Literature* (New York: Longman Group Limited, 1986), 34.

¹³⁹ Robert Rees A., Earl N. Harbert, eds., *Fifteen American Authors Before 1900*, 48.

¹⁴⁰ D. H. Lawrence, *Studies in Classic American Literature* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books., 1997), 43.

¹⁴¹ Lawrence, *Studies in Classic American Literature*, 55.

¹⁴² Donald Darnell, *James Fenimore Cooper: Novelist of Manners* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1993), 6.

the readers with the detailed and credible description of the American Indian tribal life and a land rich in natural resources raising interest in other future settlers. What Cooper intended the most, was to raise the question of the American Indian's injustice. His Indians are either villains embodying evil or heroes embodying the good. Nonetheless, he never depicts their characters as perfectly good, innocent and bad at the same time.

As mentioned in the previous chapter, on the one hand, the savage is commonly regarded as evil and the "other." On the other hand, it can be understood as noble – born close to nature, possessing primitive beauty. The latter view can be encapsulated as Primitivism. Primitivism has its roots in mythological stories of Arcadia and the Garden of Eden to which the New World was compared. These myths tell the stories of distant wilderness situated far away to the west where the population live according to laws of nature and reason. The Europeans believed that these inhabitants were rich in virtues which had been corrupted on the old continent such as, equality of economic condition and social status, freedom and happiness.¹⁴³

The captain in the queen Elizabeth's service Arhur Barlowe describes his first impression of American Indians in the idea of Primitivism:

[The American Indians are] are very handsome, and goodly people, and in their behaviours mannerly and civil, as any of Europe... We were entertained with all love, and kindness, and with as much bounties, after their manner, as they could possibly devise.¹⁴⁴

Both inspired and amazed by the noble behaviour of the Indians the author further adds: "We found the people most gentle, loving, and faithful, void of all guile, and treason, and such lived after the manner of the Golden Age."¹⁴⁵

¹⁴³ Berkhofer, Robert F. Jr. *The White Man's Indian: Images of the American Indian from Columbus to the Present* (New York: Random House, 1978), 74.

¹⁴⁴ Barlowe as quoted in Berkhofer, *The White Man's Indian*, 75.

¹⁴⁵ Barlowe as quoted in Berkhofer, *The White Man's Indian*, 75.

When this flattering message about the Native Americans arrived to Britain, the image of the Indian became a model of society. As Berkhofer mentions, the American Indian became compared to an image of “enunciating hopes and desires of philosophers, of criticizing the institutions and customs, of monarchies”¹⁴⁶ and this image showed a promise of a better world. Barbara Arnell has found this theme of the Indian in the piece of work of John Locke. In Locke’s view, Arnell refers, “America is the beginning of civilization to the extent that it reveals civil society’s natural origins.”¹⁴⁷ Nevertheless, Locke considered America a new beginning for the old world in Europe, especially for the purpose of capitalist business. For Locke, America is England’s second chance at paradise, providing the colonial masters of the old world with a land full of all the promise known in the first idyllic state.¹⁴⁸

The topic of the American Indian reached its climax in the time of the American Revolution. The main topic of this period was what Berkhofer names “the dichotomy between nature and convention,” which is in contrary to the British philosophers. In other words, “if what was natural was good,” Berkhofer explains, “then what was civilized was artificial, hence decadent and certainly bad.”¹⁴⁹

Cooper’s ‘noble savage’ is represented by Uncas, the real last living descendant of his tribe. Another ‘good’ Indian is symbolized by his father Chingachgook. The Mohicans is a fictional tribe created on the basis of the author’s inspiration by a real tribe as well as its chief’s name living in the area of contemporary Connecticut, namely the Mohegans. Their tribe formed an alliance with the Pequots, the other tribe of Algonquian Indian group, until their chief Uncas demanded the independence of the Mohegans and joined the white military in the Pequot war. In the novel, Uncas and Chigachgook also fight for the white settler and the commandant of the Fort William Henry, Colonel Munro. Their task is to protect his young daughters, Alice and Cora Munro. From the very first moment, the ladies are enchanted by Uncas’s appearance:

¹⁴⁶ Berkhofer, *The White’s Man Indian*, 74.

¹⁴⁷ Barbara Arnell, *John Locke and America: The Defence of English Colonialism* (New York, New York University Press, 1996), 27.

¹⁴⁸ Arnell, *John Locke and America: The Defence of English Colonialism*, 2.

¹⁴⁹ Berkhofer, *The White Man*, 74

At a little distance stood Uncas, his whole person thrown powerfully into view. The travellers anxiously regarded the upright, flexible figure of the young Mohican, graceful and unrestrained in the attitudes and movements of the nature.¹⁵⁰

Uncas possesses the features of a noble savage. He is a great warrior and the ladies do not believe he is able of “those cruel murders, those terrific scenes of torture,”¹⁵¹ of which they read and hear so often. He represents the uncorrupted man living according to the laws of nature. Moreover, he is gentle serving to both the ladies. For an Indian warrior it was not allowed to take care of any menial employment as it was a purely female task. For instance, during the first days of their voyage through the American wilderness into the fort William Henry, Cooper describes:

Uncas acted as attendant to the females, performing all the little offices within his power with a mixture of dignity and anxious grace that served to amuse Heyward, who well knew that it was an utter innovation on the Indian customs, which forbid their warriors to descent to any manual employment, especially in favour of their women.¹⁵²

Another ‘noble savage’ in the novel is symbolized by Uncas’s father Chingachgook. Chingachgook is an adviser, an old mentor who has already experienced a lot of wars, fights and traps in the wilderness. He is not physically strong anymore but his power consists in wisdom and experience which is sometimes considered more than physical strength. He is a faithful and affectionate companion to his son and knows that their tribe will vanish soon. When Chingachgook talks to Hawkey, a white member of their warrior group, he proclaims himself a noble savage and proves that his tribe did not want the kill and scalp the white population; his people just defended themselves from it and their manners were based on natural laws. He claims that Hawkeys’ fathers “came from the setting sun, crossed the big river, fought the people of the country, and took the land, and Chigachgook’s came

¹⁵⁰ Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 51.

¹⁵¹ Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 52.

¹⁵² Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 55.

from the red sky of the morning, over the salt lake, and did their work much after the fashion that had been set him by the white colonizers.”¹⁵³

Even if Uncas and Chingachgook are affectionate and faithful creatures, they are able to kill and scalp their enemies and that means that they are not completely innocent. The act of scalping was already practiced before the 18th century and as of the French soldiers described, it was very brutal:

When he has struck two or three blows, the savage quickly seizes his knife, and makes an incision around the hair from the upper part of the forehead to the back of the neck. Then he puts his foot on the shoulder of the victim, whom he has turned over face down, and pulls the hair off with both hands, from back to front.”¹⁵⁴

Generally, a scalp signified a warrior’s dominance over his enemy. The American Indians believed that a piece of hair that was worn over an enemies’ belt possessed a victim’s spirit.¹⁵⁵ The more scalps a warrior possessed, the more he was valued by his tribe. As the group draws nearer to the fort William Henry, it is beleaguered by the French soldiers. Thanks to Duncan Heyward, the young British officer, the group escapes from danger. Cooper depicts the death of a young French warrior which is however resulted in “the gift and nature of an Indian that should not be denied”¹⁵⁶ in the following way:

[Duncan] was interrupted by a long and heavy groan, which arose from a little basin...[...] Another groan, more faint than the former, was succeeded by a heavy and sullen plunge into the water [...] while they yet hesitated in uncertainty, the form of the Indian was seen gliding out of the thicket. As the chief re-joined them, with one hand he attached the reeking scalp of

¹⁵³ Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 24.

¹⁵⁴ “Scalping during the French and Indian War,” last modified October 18, 2016. <http://www.varsitytutors.com/earlyamerica/early-america-review/volume-3/scalping-during-the-french-and-indian-war>

¹⁵⁵ James Kirby Martin, *America and its people* (Glenview: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1989), 28.

¹⁵⁶ Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 153.

the unfortunate young Frenchman to his girdle, and with the other he replaced the knife and tomahawk that has drunk his blood.¹⁵⁷

In contrast, some of the first settlers constituted a popular myth of a brutal savage, who was murdering, torturing and also scalping the white settlers on the Frontier. These stories were partly built on reality, partly adorned for the attraction of the audience. McWilliams asserts that in 1790, there were about two million Indians living west of the frontier in the Allegheny Mountains which was more than half of the number of the white population. They symbolized a threat for blocking the on-going process of western settlement.¹⁵⁸ Due to the common assumption of their illiteracy and brutality, they were regarded as inferior being placed on the lowest level of social hierarchy. Even if some of the missionaries attempted to convert the American Indians to Christianity and taught them their civilized manners, the most of the society did not trust these attempts and started to discriminate them. Moreover, many colonial Americans regarded those Indians who refused to convert to Christianity “devil worshippers.”¹⁵⁹ They were viewed by the society as bad, full of evil with an impossibility to be trusted.

On the side of the French warring party stands Magua representing the author’s idea of a ‘bad’ Indian, the real ‘savage’ embodying evil. Nonetheless, he reminds of a white man by whom he was corrupted. The only thing he deserves is a cruel revenge as his adversity was caused by the European settlers:

Magua was born a chief and warrior among the red Hurons of the lakes; he saw the suns of twenty summers make the snow of twenty winters run off in the streams, before he saw a pale-face; and he was happy! Then his Canada fathers came into the woods and taught him to drink the fire-water, and he became a rascal.¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁷ Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 153.

¹⁵⁸ Mc Williams, *The Last of the Mohicans: Civil Savagery and Savage Civility*, 17.

¹⁵⁹ Alan R. Velie, *Native American Perspectives on Literature and History* (Norman and London: University of Oklahoma Press), 1995), 1.

¹⁶⁰ Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 110.

Magua complains of alcohol which is introduced to him by the white Canadian settlers. The use of alcohol completely destroys the tribal life and reasonably, Magua is refused and later expelled by his tribe. He loses everything he has and as a consequence, he becomes 'a ravenous beast' wandering behind the borders of his native village. In comparison to Uncas, Maguas' appearance reminds of a devil. When Cora and Alice see him, they tremble with fear. Alice claims that she does not like him "shuddering partly in assumed yet more in real terror."¹⁶¹ In spite of the fact that he represents Colonel Munro's enemy, his task is to guide the ladies across the battlefields to the loving arms of their father. In fact, he is a traitor and leads them to danger. From this danger, the ladies are saved by the 'good' Indians, Uncas and Chingachgook – their new guides. Cooper romanticizes Magua as he gives him the second chance to serve faithfully in the British army again which is not what would any white British colonizer expect from the Indian. He wants him to fulfil his task and therefore, lose the feeling of revenge on Munro. But, as a matter of fact, this is not Maguas' intention.

The main genre of literature depicting the Indians as bloody savages and therefore supporting their discrimination is called the captivity narrative. Some critics consider the novel *The last of the Mohicans* to be part of the captivity narratives tradition. Richard Slotkin states that the captivity narrative was "an archetype of the American experience" since it provided "a way of addressing the fear and guilt that accompanied the emerging American pattern of profound mobility."¹⁶² Authors of captivity narratives were predominantly women who retold the stories of plundering the colonial settlements by Indians. Indians burned the whole homestead, scalped and killed the white population. Those who survived and did not escape were taken prisoners, hostages. As Michal Peprník specifies, with the help of the British Canadian data in the 17th and 18th centuries, over 750 settlers were taken hostage by the American Indians.¹⁶³

The most popular captivity narrative was written in 1677 by Mary Rowlandson. In her work called *A Narrative of the Captivity, Sufferings and Removes of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson*, the author describes her own threatening captivity she experienced two years ago.

¹⁶¹ Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 12.

¹⁶² Hine Faragher, Faragher, John Mack, Hine, Robert V. (eds.). *The American West: A New Interpretive History*. (New Haven and London: Yale UP, 2000), 65- 67.

¹⁶³ Peprník, *Topos lesa v americké literatuře*, 56. My translation.

In the beginning of her captivity, Rowlandson rather wishes to die than to stay in the presence of whom she calls ‘ravenous beasts,’ she prays for nothing but survival. As she elaborates:

I had often before this said that if the Indians should come, I should choose rather to be killed by them than taken alive, but when it came to the trial my mind changed; their glittering weapons so daunted my spirit, that I chose rather to go along with those (as I may say) ravenous beasts, than that moment to end my days.¹⁶⁴

Ray Allen Billington also believes that “the red men of captivity were slothful, degenerate, and mercilessly cruel, degraded by their contact with whites and instinctively animalistic in their savagery.”¹⁶⁵ Thanks to this belief, the captivity narrative just strengthened hatred and fear of the American Indians who were consequently condemned to extinction. The story of a woman captured in the wilderness was more appealing than a story of a captured man for the wide European reading public. In *The Last of the Mohicans*, Cora and Alice are taken hostage. Nevertheless, Cooper celebrated indigenous people and he used the captivity in the novel only for the purpose of increasing suspense.

Another stereotype which emerged after the discovery of America was “the vanishing Native American.” After the publication of Cooper’s *The Last of the Mohicans* appeared a large number of writers who further considered the topic of a tribe’s final descendants. Newspapers and magazines often introduced stories reminding of the assumed single representatives of Indian tribes. Miles A. Powel believes that “the subject of the lone survival of an Indian nation became a literary field that spanned genres and decades.”¹⁶⁶ With the rise of the American romanticism in the early 19th century, the last living Indian represented a romantic hero controlled by unlimited passion and feeling. Many authors of literature depicted Indians as “resistant to the lures of civilization, with many choosing death over

¹⁶⁴ “Mary Rowlandson, *Captivity and Restoration of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson*,” last modified October 14, 2016, <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/851/851-h/851-h.htm>

¹⁶⁵ ¹⁶⁵ Ray Allen Billington, *Land of Savagery: Land of Promise* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1985), 25.

¹⁶⁶ Miles A. Powel, *Vanishing America: Species Extinctions, Racial Peril, and the Origins of Conservation* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2016), 121.

persisting in a white world.”¹⁶⁷ The Americans believed that all Indians were predestined to die before the attack of civilization. ¹⁶⁸ Brian Dippie confirms this view in his book *The Vanishing American*. As he declares:

Sensitivity about the United States’ moral stature among the nations of the world made it difficult for Americans to admit to a deep complicity in the Indians’ destruction. It was easier to indict Indians for their own ruin, thereby washing the white man’s hands of responsibility. An even more satisfactory explanation held that the fate of the aborigines was predestined.¹⁶⁹

In the early 1800s the vanishing Indian became “a habit of thought” and forty novels from 1824 to 1834 had vanishing Indian “episodes.” ¹⁷⁰ According to the article in *The New York Times* from 1902, Kiankia, “the last of the Delawares” glanced back sorrowfully on the times in which his tribe “started toward the land of the setting sun” until the days they were “fewer and fewer of what was once the greatest of all Indian nations.”¹⁷¹ Another 1842 article titled “the Last of the Mohegans” was written by a reporter from *The Niles National Register* who claimed that “the Indians decay is natural, inevitable result of the progress of society and we are not necessarily responsible...for the extinction of the Indian race.”¹⁷²

This stereotype, however, did not reflect the reality. The aim of the vanishing idea was to move Indians out of the land which was very important for the newly born America. When this plan was put into practice, the tribes in the east had suffered from warfare and their occupancy was more easily forgotten than those tribes further west.¹⁷³ As a result, the vanishing Indian stereotype was established in the east, particularly by the courtesy of James Fenimore Cooper and his “thinly veiled fictional accounts of New York.”¹⁷⁴ As the author further suggests, this narrative framework of Indian tribes was put into use

¹⁶⁷ Powel, *Vanishing America: Species Extinctions, Racial Peril, and the Origins of Conservation*, 123.

¹⁶⁸ Powel, *Vanishing America: Species Extinctions, Racial Peril, and the Origins of Conservation*, 121.

¹⁶⁹ Brian V. Dippie, *The Vanishing American: White attitudes and US Indian Policy* (Kansas: The University of Kansas, 1982), 56.

¹⁷⁰ Dippie, *The Vanishing American: White attitudes and US Indian Policy*, 56.

¹⁷¹ Powel, *Vanishing America: Species Extinctions, Racial Peril, and the Origins of Conservation*, 123.

¹⁷² Powel, *Vanishing America: Species Extinctions, Racial Peril, and the Origins of Conservation*, 123.

¹⁷³ Petra T. Shattuck & Jill Norgen in Katryne E. Fort “Vanishing Indian returns: tribes, popular originalism, and supreme court” *Saint Louis University Law Journal*, August 2013, accessed February 16, 2017.

¹⁷⁴ Katryne E. Fort “Vanishing Indian returns: tribes, popular originalism, and supreme court,” 316.

regardless of the concrete internal and external history of individual nation. The tribes were brought together “into one unified history, usually to their detriment.”¹⁷⁵

In *The Last of the Mohicans* it is Uncas, the son of Chingachgook, who is sentenced to die tragically at the end of the novel as he is the last descendant of his tribe. Uncas is believed to be “an unblemished specimen of the noblest proportion of man.”¹⁷⁶ Tamenud mourns a lot for the young warrior and knows that there is no chance to resist to the power of civilization. The race of all Indians is doomed to vanish including Tamenud. One positive about Uncas’s death is, however, the real escape from the attack of the white settlers. As Tamenud claims, “go, children of Lenape; the anger of the Manitto is not done. Why should Tamenud stay? The pale faces are masters of the world and the time of the red man has not come yet again.”¹⁷⁷ However, Tamenud believes that there is still a chance for the red men. As the white men came, they can leave in the same way:

I know that the pale-faces are a proud and hungry race. I know that they claim not only to have the earth, but that the meanest of their color is better than the Sachems of the redman ... But let them not boast before the face of the Manitto too loud. They entered the land at the rising, and may yet go off at the setting sun. I have often seen the locusts strip the leaves from the trees, but the season of blossoms has always come again.¹⁷⁸

Chingachgook also believes that he will die as a result of the white colonization. He claims that he is “a blazed pine in a clearing of the palefaces.”¹⁷⁹ By this statement Chingachgook might refer to the Great White Pine, one of the most important symbols of *the Iroquois League of Nations* performing the Great Law of Peace as well as the confederacy itself. The tradition claims that the sacred branches of the Great White Pine provide the protection of the Haudenosaunee peoples and its roots grown to the four major points of the world, attracting people to join its confederacy.¹⁸⁰ Chingachgook might compare himself to

¹⁷⁵ Fort “Vanishing Indian returns: tribes, popular originalism, and supreme court,” 316.

¹⁷⁶ Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 51.

¹⁷⁷ Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 407.

¹⁷⁸ Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 365.

¹⁷⁹ Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 406.

¹⁸⁰ Bruce E. Johansen, Barbara A. Mann, *Encyclopedia of the Haudenosaunee* (Iroquois Confederacy) (Westport:Greenwood Press, 2000), 136.

the Great White Pine which is in flames and cannot protect its people from the white colonizers. Chingachook, in comparison to Tamenud, does not believe in any new time of the red men. He despises of civilization when he refers to fire water claiming that he is an “unmixed man.”¹⁸¹ His son is dead and so is the race of the Mohicans that will vanish completely as Chingachook is alone. Uncas was good and brave warrior and Chingachook believes that what happened to him was Manitto’s will. He wants to save him from the attacks of the white settlers. As Chingachook claims:

Why do my brothers mourn? Uncas has gone to the happy hunting-grounds that a chief has filled his time with honour? He was good; he was dutiful, he was brave. Who can deny it? My race has gone from the shore of the salt lake and the hills of the Delawares. But who can say that the serpent of his tribe has forgotten his wisdom? I’m alone.¹⁸²

After Uncas’s death, Hawkeye cannot leave Chingachook. According to Peprník, they will be kings and establish an endless dynasty of the American heroes who will live on the border between civilization and savagery. They will make journeys to the dark forest to make us experienced with our dreams and nightmares.¹⁸³

James Fenimore Cooper adapted his American Indian protagonists for the use in romantic literary art and depicted them implausibly, as noble savages. Moreover, he belongs to the generation of writers who used the stereotype of vanishing American Indian in their works. As stated above, this stereotype of vanishing emerged in the east, primarily thanks to Cooper’s fictional depiction of tribes in New York and Washington. Cooper was able to evoke the feeling of sorrow in his readers for the dying Indian which helped him to attract attention to the wide reading public as well as raise questions of American Indian’s eradication. *The Last of the Mohicans* was written in 1826 in the period of vanishing episodes “boom” and it might be stated that the novel’s main theme is the fight for Indian survival. At the time of the Revolutionary War, the popular military slogan was “Civilization or death

¹⁸¹ Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 36.

¹⁸² Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 406-407.

¹⁸³ Peprník, *Topos lesa v americké literatuře*, 56. My translation.

to all American savages.”¹⁸⁴ Even more discriminating was another statement by General Philip Sheridan: “The only good Indian is a dead Indian.”¹⁸⁵ The American Indian culture was condemned to extinction and represented ‘savagery,’ the white culture by contrast symbolized ‘civilization.’¹⁸⁶ In Coopers view, these two prominent cultures cannot coexist peacefully declaring that the Indians should get a territory “where they could advance in civilization to maturity.”¹⁸⁷

¹⁸⁴ Roy Harvey Pearce. *Savagism and Civilization* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 51.

¹⁸⁵ Dee Brown, *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee* (New York: Penguin, 1970) 170-172.

¹⁸⁶ Mc Williams, *The Last of the Mohicans: Civil Savagery and Savage Civility*, 52-53.

¹⁸⁷ Ray Allen Billington, *Land of Savagery: Land of Promise*, 5.

INTERRACIAL LOVE AND FRIENDSHIP

The natural setting of the Frontier in the 19th century symbolized an ethnic melting pot. The white settlers and Indians started to occupy the same land and it was not easy to coexist for both cultures. Many Indians were not able to assimilate into the white culture and adapt to the manners and conditions of the European settlers. Some Indian spiritual leaders even perceived the whites and Indians as the result of two dissimilar creations; whites being identified as not fully human.¹⁸⁸ The confrontations led to both long wars and armed conflicts. Nonetheless, as stated above, Indians also created alliances with the white men and subsequent interracial friendships and marriages were nothing abnormal. In *The Last of the Mohicans*, Cooper created relationships between civilization and savagery as well as the relationships between “civilized” characters. In connection to these relationships, Cooper also raises the question of gender roles; specifically he focuses on the possible controversial character of Cora. His famous story of love and friendship might be considered as a historical novel, historical and adventure romance and also a gothic novel.

Throughout the 19th century, James Fenimore Cooper became widely celebrated. The first president of the United States George Washington and the writers Herman Melville and Washington Irving respected him as “national novelist.”¹⁸⁹ Many American writers of this period followed long constructed European genres and patterns. Cooper was amazed by the existing genre of historical novel and for this reason he was frequently called “the American Scott”¹⁹⁰ even though in his stories he focuses more on historical romance. It might be claimed that historical romance is a mixture of historical novel and romance. It includes the theme of love, symbolism and mystery. Moreover, its plot is connected to identifiable historical events. According to Helen Hughes, the historical romance plot incorporates narrative motifs that are the impulse of the action and a number of details and incidents which make the reader conscious of the historical circumstances.¹⁹¹ George Dekker claims that the historical romance “blend history and novelistic fiction, satisfying both one’s educated interest in reconstructions of past events and ways of life and one’s fascination with

¹⁸⁸ Starkey, *European and Native American Warfare 1675-1815*, 14.

¹⁸⁹ McWilliams, *The Last of the Mohicans: Civil Savagery and Savage Civility*, 18.

¹⁹⁰ Billington, *Land of Savagery: Land of Promise*, 31.

¹⁹¹ Helen Hughes, *Historical Romance 1890-1990* (London: Routledge, 1993), 27.

<http://site.ebrary.com/lib/cuni/Doc?id=10095794&ppg=11> , accessed February 20, 2017.

fictional adventures in regions of place and mind rarely represented in the historical record.¹⁹²As Samuels adds, Cooper adapted the historical romance made widely popular by sir Walter Scott “to the vast, complex subject of frontier settlement – the relentless incursion of Euro-Americans into a wilderness inhabited by Native tribes.”¹⁹³

In addition, in many of his works, Cooper developed the genre of historical romance into an adventure romance. Cooper’s daughter Susan disclosed the possible origin of *The Last of the Mohicans* in her book, namely *Pages and Pictures from the Writing of James Fennimore Cooper* (1861) where she claims that the novel was written as a consequence of the voyage to the Lake George Region. What made Cooper and his British companions fascinated here was the beauty of the American surroundings. As Susan Cooper further claims, her father fell in love with the Glenn Falls and promised to use “the very scene for romance.”¹⁹⁴He wished to create a work which would praise the natural scenery of the Frontier and tightness between civilization and savagery. As Susan Cooper concludes, the very first draft of *The Last of the Mohicans* was finished only four months after his arrival home.¹⁹⁵

In the novel, the Glenn Falls really serves as a place for romance. The romantic scene between Uncas and Cora is described as follows: “At Glenn’s falls, when attending to the sisters, Uncas’s dark eye lingers on her rich, speaking countenance, while Cora has already caused an embarrassed silence by her remark betraying perhaps too unguardedly her admiration for Uncas.”¹⁹⁶Another romantic scene centres on Heyward. Talking to sleeping Alice in one of the caverns at the Glenn Falls, he convinces the reader about his love to her. As he whispers: “Yes, sweet innocence, Duncan is here, and while life continues or danger remains he will never quit thee.”¹⁹⁷

¹⁹² George Dekker, “Historical Romance.” *American History Through Literature 1870-1920*, accessed March 14, 2017. <http://www.encyclopedia.com/history/culture-magazines/historical-romance>

¹⁹³ Samuels, *A Companion to American Fiction*, 12.

¹⁹⁴ William P. Kelly, *Plotting America’s Past: Fenimore Cooper and The Leatherstocking Tales* (Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University Press, 1983), 45-6

¹⁹⁵ Kelly, *Plotting America’s Past: Fenimore Cooper and The Leatherstocking Tales*, 45-46.

¹⁹⁶ Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 46

¹⁹⁷ Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 56.

In Peprník's view, the novel might be considered to have a large number of gothic features and therefore it might be perceived also as the gothic novel. These features include for instance, a lady in danger, tracking and pursuing somebody, the place and characters with mystery, moments of fear and doubts, etc. Even if there was a lack of ruins and romantic associations in the 19th century America, Cooper created at least small ruins.¹⁹⁸ The first gothic scene in the novel comes when Magua confirms Hawkeye that he led the ladies, Howard and David into a trap. At this moment, all of them shiver with fear.¹⁹⁹ Another scene comes when the Hurons catch Alice and she almost faints from fear. As Cora exclaims: "Fear has overcome her and she is helpless. Alice! My sweet Alice!"²⁰⁰ The gothic atmosphere of fear influences the actions of European soldiers as well as the white settlers. For example, the General of the British army Webb does not dare to help the general Munro as he knows that Montcalm has a huge army. He is too afraid and lets the fort be easily conquered. As a result, he becomes jointly responsible for the massacre that followed.²⁰¹ As Peprník claims, while in Europe there is always a ghost who haunts the castles and country houses, in many Cooper's novels it is the American Indian who frightens the white settlers in the American woods.²⁰² He kills and scalps especially at night and his appearance on the scene is different from any of the white man's.

In contrast to the white settlers, the Indians in the *Last of the Mohicans* appear always suddenly and silently as if they were ghosts.²⁰³ According to Peprník, this might be understood as a "gothic" effect.²⁰⁴ When Duncan disguised as a healer arrives at the Huron village at dusk, he can see a group of Indians reminding him ghosts:

By the doubtful twilight, Duncan beheld twenty or thirty forms rising alternately from the cover of the tall, coarse grass in front of the lodges, and then sinking again from the sight, as it were to burrow in the earth. By the sudden hasty glimpses that he caught of these figures, they seemed more like dark glancing specters, or some other

¹⁹⁸ Peprník, *Topos lesa v americké literatuře*, 142. My translation.

¹⁹⁹ Peprník, *Topos lesa v americké literatuře*, 142. My translation.

²⁰⁰ Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 247.

²⁰¹ Peprník, *Topos lesa v americké literatuře*, 142. My translation.

²⁰² Peprník, *Topos lesa v americké literatuře*, 143. My translation.

²⁰³ Peprník, *Topos lesa v americké literatuře*, 143. My translation.

²⁰⁴ Peprník, *Topos lesa v americké literatuře*, 143. My translation.

unearthly beings, than creatures fashioned with the ordinary and vulgar materials of flesh and blood.²⁰⁵

The Indians are not only able to appear as ghost, but also disappear in the same way. For example, when Duncan watches Uncas to fall asleep on the ground and come closer in a little while, he can see that Uncas is not present anymore. He disappears as a ghost. Chingachgook, Uncas's father, also reminds of a ghost when he suddenly appears in the cave at the Glenn Falls, everybody is shocked. As Peprník claims, Cooper deals with demonic associations mainly in the first part of the novel. Nonetheless, the author uses them only metaphorically when, for instance, compares Magua's eyes to "a star in the dark night."²⁰⁶

In terms of gothic, Peprník suggests that Cooper uses a number of stage properties the aim of which is to produce an atmosphere of fear as for instance, a cemetery, the lake of fear, and a ruin. Even if there were hardly any ruins in the 19th century America, Cooper created two of them in his novel. The first one is represented by the conquered fort William Henry and the other one by an old ruin which tells a story of the battle between the tribe of Mohicans and the Mohegans.

Another gothic scene takes place at the "bloody pond." This place is again connected to the past. Several years ago, Hawkeye and the English army killed a group of French soldiers who were thrown in to the lake; some of them were even buried there alive. As he describes: "When all was over, the dead, and some say the dying, were cast into that little pond."²⁰⁷ When the group of heroes is passing this lake, Hawkeye tells a story that only those who were buried dead sleep silently. At this time, the character of guide suddenly appears on the shore that reminds them of a ghost.²⁰⁸ Other demonic associations are presented through the character of the avenger Magua and his tribe of Hurons. According to Peprník, Magua is compared to Milton's *Prince of the Darkness* and the village of Hurons in the light of the fire flames reminds of nothing but the hell. The last but not least gothic association is the above

²⁰⁵ Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 51.

²⁰⁶ Peprník, *Topos lesa v americké literatuře*, 146. My translation.

²⁰⁷ Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 123.

²⁰⁸ Peprník, *Topos lesa v americké literatuře*, 146. My translation.

mentioned cavern at Glenn Falls. This cavern serves as a dark shelter, the place of fear and also a trap.²⁰⁹

As stated above, Cooper created the possible relationships between savagery and civilization. Nina Baum claims that the novel disputes “the representation of gender relations in Lydia Child’s *Hobomok* as it relates to interracial relationships.”²¹⁰ These relationships of friendship and love with Indians might even result in interracial marriages. Arnold Krupat claims that “the highest intermarriage rates are those of American Indians.”²¹¹ Most of American Indian men (52, 9 percent) and American Indian women (53, 9 percent) married whites rather than American Indians.²¹² Because it was assumed that Indians in the 19th century could become “civilized,” they might also, intermarry with whites – something “which had not only not been prohibited in this country, but in some quarters positively regarded (even before Thomas Jefferson) as a possible solution to America’s “Indian problem.”²¹³ For individual Native Americans, this would require that they first abandon their tribes and submerge in white civilization as in Carlisle’s “outing” system.” Or, their tribes might only wither away, the hoped-for result, all in all, of the Dawes Act of 1886.²¹⁴ Or, native persons might, it appears, even come from tribes that were not, paradoxically, Indians at all.²¹⁵ Nevertheless, Richard Slotkin mentions the “natural repugnance” which affected the American society.²¹⁶ According to this view, only the people in the line of an ancestry of the pure blood race could become the proper members of the American civilization. Thus, only the white-white or Indian-Indian marriages were perceived as appropriate, in compliance with the law. The conditions of interaction were based on skin color and the superiority of white men.²¹⁷

The relationship between Uncas and Cora Munro might represent Cooper’s attitude towards the relationship between civilization and savagery. Even if these two protagonists come from different cultures and places, they are attracted by the spirit of each other. Cora’s fascination

²⁰⁹ Peprník, *Topos lesa v americké literatuře*, 146. My translation.

²¹⁰ Baum in Samuels, *A Companion to American Fiction*, 13.

²¹¹ Krupat, *Red Matters*, 78.

²¹² Krupat, *Red Matters*, 78.

²¹³ Krupat, *Red Matters*, 90.

²¹⁴ Krupat, *Red Matters*, 90. (The Dawes Act was established to survey the American Indian land and divide it into particular allotments for individual Indians.)

²¹⁵ Krupat, *Red Matters*, 90.

²¹⁶ Slotkin in Cooper’s preface to *The Last of the Mohicans*, 16.

²¹⁷ Chester Mills, “Ethnocentric manifestations in Cooper’s *Pioneers* and *The Last of the Mohicans*” *Journal of Black Studies* Vol.16, No.4 (Jun., 1986) 442, accessed February 23, 2017. www.jstor.org/stable/2784199,

for Uncas consists in his physical strength as well as his noble behaviour. She seems to be quite open towards interracial relationships when she asks Duncan: “Who that looks at this creature of nature, remembers the shade of his skin?”²¹⁸ Uncas also admires Cora, especially for her physical beauty. The young Mohican is portrayed as a romantic character with a hearty attitude towards women in danger. He believes that they are too fragile and innocent to be present in the woods of the American wilderness:

When Uncas, who moved in front, had reached the centre of the plain; he raised a cry that drew his companions, in a body, to the spot. The young warrior had halted over a group of females, who lay in a cluster, a confused mass of dead.⁶²

Another time Uncas expresses his positive attitude towards women when he suggests that it is not fair to leave Cora and Alice in the woods. As Hawkeye agrees with Uncas: “Uncas is right. It would not be the act of men to leave such harmless things to their fate.”²¹⁹

In The Last of the Mohicans, Uncas is the last descendant of Indian tribe. Cora is the daughter of the white colonizer Colonel Munro and his first wife. However, Cooper later in the novel reveals that Cora’s origin is not completely pure as her mother, a woman of mixed blood (white and African), came from the West Indies. As Munro claims: “I had seen many regions, before duty called me to the islands of the West Indies. There it was my lot to form a connection with one who in time became my wife and the mother of Cora.”²²⁰ W.E.B. Du Bois, one of the famous civil rights activists of the 19th century, depicted the dilemma of being both a Negro and an American in his powerful description of what he called the phenomenon of “double consciousness:”

It is a peculiar sensation, this double-consciousness, this sense of always looking at one’s self through the eyes of others, of measuring one’s soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity. One ever feels his twoness, - an American,

²¹⁸ Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 43.

²¹⁹ Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 35.

²²⁰ Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 146.

a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder.²²¹

Cora also experiences this “double-consciousness” and she is aware of the fact that she is very different from her fair sister Alice. Munro feels pity for Cora when claiming that she “is the daughter of a gentleman . . . by a lady whose misfortune it was... to be descended remotely from that unfortunate class who are enslaved to administer to the wants of a luxurious people.”²²² Thus, the race of Uncas and Cora is different and it is not allowed for them to get married. In addition, they cannot get married since it would lead to the eradication of Uncas’s tribe which is in contradiction to Cooper’s message in the novel. There is only one solution for them at the end of the novel which is their death. Chester Mills claims that Cora can marry neither Uncas nor any white man because she is not pure blooded; she does not belong to the society and as a result, she must die. He also notes that Cora and Uncas must stay separate even in death and thus, they are buried individually.²²³ Leslie Fiedler, one of the specialists in the genre of fiction, states, however, that the ritual which binds Uncas and Cora is not their possible wedding but their funeral,²²⁴ though it culturally differs. Even if Cooper attempts to separate them during life, their common death unites them. Samuels declares that in spite of the fact that Cooper (through) Munro mourns for slavery and (through Magua) recites manifold unfair treatments heaped upon Native people by Euro-Americans, he still “refuses to envision a future American nation - the progeny of Cora and Uncas – uniting European, Native American, and African blood.”²²⁵

The character of Magua is also attracted in Cora’s beauty demanding her to become his wife and stay in his wigwam. Nonetheless, Magua wants to marry Cora, in comparison to Uncas, as he wants a revenge on her and in fact, does not truly love her. As Cora talks to Magua: “And what pleasure would Magua find in sharing his cabin with a wife he did not love – and who would be of a nation and colour different from his own?”²²⁶ Later, Hawkeye even offers Magua Hawkeye himself as an exchange for Cora. However, even if the life of a famous

²²¹ Du Bois in Krupat’s *Red Matters*, 82.

²²² Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 146.

²²³ Mills, “Ethnocentric manifestations in Cooper’s *Pioneers* and *The Last of the Mohicans*,” 446-447.

²²⁴ Fiedler in Samuels, *A Companion to American Fiction*, 84.

²²⁵ Samuels, *A Companion to American Fiction*, 13.

²²⁶ Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 93.

warrior is not equal to the life of a woman in the life of Indians, Magua does not want to release Cora as he already has his revenge.²²⁷ He offers Cora either a marriage or a death explaining to her: “A great warrior takes thee to wife. Go; thy race will not end.”²²⁸ With the help of this statement, Cooper highlights his worries about the eradication of Native Americans as he compares the death of Cora to the death of his noble savage Uncas. However, Cora rather wishes to die than to marry the one whom she calls “the monster” and therefore, she prevents herself from being the part of an inappropriate marriage. She refuses to marry Magua and cannot marry Uncas and so, the love triangle of Cora, Uncas and Magua has to die because it would lead to the elimination of their tribes.

And how would Cooper’s Magua treat Cora if she accepted his offer to become his wife and thus assimilated into the Native American society? Denise K. Lajimodiere, a Native American female author, claims that early Euro-centric accounts illustrated American Indian women as being obliged to do all the work and being treated even worse than an animal. It is nearly a universal belief perpetrated by literature, movies, and pictures that the American Indian woman was the slave of men in her tribe, “a heaviest workhorse, dragging a travois, trudging along a trail behind her swarthy warrior husband, who was riding a horse.”²²⁹ After damaging the tribal life, American Indian women were taken as “squaws” by traders, trappers and military men. They endured slavery, physical hurt and atrocity. Moreover, they were viewed by Whites “as sub-humans, fit only to kill or rape.”²³⁰ This all would probably be the destiny of Cora. Cora is convinced that nothing but horror would mean her marriage with Magua and knows that her death would be a better choice: “He would have me; [. . .] go to the habitations of Hurons; to remain there; in short, to become his wife!,” she exclaims.²³¹ Magua plans Cora to inhabit his wigwam forever and therefore to assimilate into the society of his tribe. As he claims: Let the daughter of the English chief follow and live in Magua’s wigwam forever.²³² Her task would be, as Magua describes, to take care of their children and grow his corn: “The daughter of Munro would draw his water, hoe his corn, and cook his

²²⁷ Peprník, *Topos lesa v americké literatuře*, 133. My translation.

²²⁸ Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 295.

²²⁹ Denise K. Lajimodiere, “American Indian Females and Stereotypes: Warriors, Leaders, Healers, Feminists; Not Drudges, Princesses, Prostitutes,” *Multicultural Perspectives*, North Dakota State University, 15 (2013.): 105.

²³⁰ Denise K. Lajimodiere, “American Indian Females and Stereotypes: Warriors, Leaders, Healers, Feminists; Not Drudges, Princesses, Prostitutes,” 105.

²³¹ Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 98.

²³² Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 93.

venison.”²³³ As Magua’s wife, Cora’s position would have hardly any value in the Indian society and even worse value in the Euro-American society where she would be only destined to be raped or killed. Also, she would be treated as a slave and followed the destiny of her mother from the West Indies.

On the contrary, the relationship of Alice and Duncan Heyward is not “forbidden” as both of them are of the same race with the pure blood representing the proper members of the American society. In comparison to Cora, Alice is a daughter of Munro’s second wife coming also from Scotland. Munro claims that “he was, maybe, such one as Heyward when he plighted his faith to Alice Graham, the only child of a neighbouring laird of some estate.”²³⁴ In Samuels’s words: “The budding romance between fair Alice and a Southern colonist, Major Duncan Heyward, projects the incipient formation of a Euro-American people.”²³⁵ David Blair claims in the introduction to *The Last of the Mohicans* that Heyward symbolizes the sentimental lover of the enduringly trembling and frequently helpless Alice. Heyward is gifted with an imaginative disposition that leads him frequently to dream of his desires of his guardianship borrowed from chivalric romance “as in his dream from chapter 13, where he is “a knight of an ancient chivalry” holding his midnight vigils before the tent of a recaptured princess.”²³⁶ As Peprník adds, even if one of the main themes of the novel is a journey, the novel does not refer to a book of travels but to a chivalric romance and a fairy-tale.²³⁷ Duncan represents a romantic gentleman who would never leave his lady even if it would mean to follow her to the martyr’s stake. As he offends Magua: “You and your vengeance are alike despise.”²³⁸ Magua threatens Duncan with a question: “Will the white man speak the same words at the stake?”²³⁹

When Duncan talks with Munro about the mischievous plan of Montcalm to conquer the William Henry, he mentions his interest in Munro’s daughter. Munro thinks that Howard is interested in his older Cora and he feels embarrassed revealing the true about her mixed

²³³ Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 93.

²³⁴ Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 146.

²³⁵ Samuels, *A Companion to American Fiction*, 13.

²³⁶ David Blair in Cooper’s *The Last of the Mohicans* (Hertfordshire: Wordsworth Classics, 1993), 14.

²³⁷ Peprník, *Topos lesa v americké literatuře*, 130. My translation.

²³⁸ Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 245.

²³⁹ Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 245.

origin: “Duncan Heyward I have loved you, because I thought you would contribute to the happiness of my child. But all this love would turn to hatred, where I assured that what I so much apprehend is true.”²⁴⁰ Duncan comes from the southern state of Virginia and Munro knows that it is a place where “these unfortunate beings are considered of a race inferior”²⁴¹ to the white men. Consequently, Munro knows that this marriage would lead to a threat of miscegenation and it would not be considered as proper for the Americans. However, Duncan does not feel any racial hatred towards Cora and knows that Alice is “not less lovely child.”²⁴²

The interracial friendship of Hawkeye and Indians might be understood as another relationship between civilization and savagery. Natty Bumppo or Hawkeye, Cooper’s “man without a cross” (mixed blood) is a white man from Europe; nonetheless, he chooses to live among Indians preferring the simple code of natural law to the machinations of the white man. Natty strongly opposes racism when claiming that “he is not a prejudiced man”²⁴³ and also when exclaiming that “there is a reason in an Indian, though nature has made him with a red skin!”²⁴⁴ He repetitively “voices Cooper’s scorn for the ravages of so-called “civilization.”²⁴⁵ Uncas and Chingachgook teach him their traditional ways of life and Hawkeye teaches them the ways of the British army as for example, good leadership. As a friend, he is incredibly devoted to the “good” Indians in the novel. When Uncas dies, Hawkeye explains Chingachgook that “the gifts of their colours may be different, but God has so placed them as to journey in the same path.”²⁴⁶ According to Samuels, it is predominantly Uncas’s death what unites their friendship when they stand at the grave of the young Mohican “together in tears, a hand clasp, and a vow of loyalty.”²⁴⁷ Despite of Hawkeye’s origin, he adjusts to the Indian way of life and does not intend to return to the white society. He is deeply influenced by the culture he lives in and almost looks like an Indian. As illustrated in the novel:

²⁴⁰ Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 146.

²⁴¹ Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 147.

²⁴² Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 147.

²⁴³ Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 20.

²⁴⁴ Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 20.

²⁴⁵ Samuels, *A Companion to American Fiction*, 12.

²⁴⁶ Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 407.

²⁴⁷ Samuels, *A Companion to American Fiction*, 84.

He bore a knife in a girdle of wampum, like that which confined the scanty garments of the Indian, but tomahawk. His moccasins were ornamented after the gay fashions of the natives, while the only part of his under-dress which appeared below the hunting frock was a pair of buckskin leggings that laced at the sides, and which were gartered above the knees with the sinews of a deer.²⁴⁸

Samuels states that after the 1820s, Hawkeye becomes the first major American hero in the *Leatherstocking Tales* who “resembles the popular democratic image of the president Andrew Jackson.”²⁴⁹ His excellent wilderness skills, lowly origin and identification with seemingly “vanishing” Native Americans symbolize the first stage in the mastery of the new continent, “an imperialistic Manifest Destiny propounded by Democratic leaders who saw the American land as the material basis of an egalitarian society.”²⁵⁰ As Marcus Cunliffe claims, so long Natty is a free agent he can have admiration for the reader, and serve as a hero. Nonetheless, he is not a member of Indian society, and he can never belong to white society without too closely determining his status. Therefore, he can never marry and reproduce.²⁵¹ Samuels suggests that the frontiersman will vanish as the civilization moves forward to be substituted by “natural” elites.²⁵² His world is, on the whole, created wonderfully attractive. But it is fragile.²⁵³ As a cowboy-hero, he represents a knight without “a title or crest, has no place in society, and so must – according to the genre – ride off into the sunset, without having laid a finger on the rancher’s daughter.”²⁵⁴ He is rejected by every woman as it is shown in the stories of *The Leatherstocking Tales*; nonetheless, it is not a subject in *The Last of the Mohicans*. In fact, Natty reminds of the author who stands on the border between the European and the Indian culture desperately calling for the Indian survival. In comparison to interracial marriage of Uncas and Cora, the interracial friendship of Hawkeye and the Mohicans is praised and celebrated by Cooper. Possibly, it portrays his dream society coexisting without any racial prejudice. Nonetheless, because the Native Americans were considered not fully human and inferior to the white man, the interracial friendships were not desired as well.

²⁴⁸ Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 19.

²⁴⁹ Samuels, *A Companion to American Fiction*, 33.

²⁵⁰ Samuels, *A Companion to American Fiction*, 34.

²⁵¹ Marcus Cunliffe, *The Literature of the United States* (Brighton: Penguin Books Ltd, 1966), 67.

²⁵² Samuels, *A Companion to American Fiction*, 34.

²⁵³ Cunliffe, *The Literature of the United States*, 67.

²⁵⁴ Cunliffe, *The Literature of the United States*, 68.

As mentioned above, Cooper was heavily criticized for many defects in his *Leatherstocking Tales*, among the others, for his depiction of women characters who were portrayed as unintelligent and wholly dependent on their male counterparts. This might be related with the low social status of women in the 18th and 19th centuries whose role was mainly to raise children and take care of households. In addition, their rights were very limited for instance; they could not vote or be employed. Thus, if they married favourably, their lives were happy not only for them, but also for their children. They often could not choose their partner freely because this was the task of their parents who usually arranged their future marriages. In *The Last of the Mohicans*, Munro also wants his daughters to marry well and knows that Heyward would be a proper husband for Alice when asking him if he was “intelligible to the girl.”²⁵⁵

In the 19th century, many authors of literature created the typical examples of the dark and fair women heroines. Mitchell Summerlin, one of the specialists in Cooper’s writing, claims that there are three types of Cooper’s women characters: “the refined socialite; the coquette, and the innocent naive young girl.”²⁵⁶ These three groups overlap in some of the features but each presents the characteristic that distinguishes it from the other.²⁵⁷ *The Last of the Mohicans* is also adapted for the roles of the dark and fair heroines, namely Cora and Alice Munro. The Munro sisters represent binary oppositions. Alice is the fair lady with blue eyes and blond hair embodying purity and naivety. In most situations, her behaviour seems to be childish and in fact, it is in accordance with the conventional expectations of the society in the 19th century. On the contrary, Cora represents the dark heroine who, according to Nina Baum, possesses some virtues of men²⁵⁸ which is very unusual for the 19th century woman. Her behaviour might be described as mature. She is, in comparison to Alice, strong and brave, ready to do anything for the survival of her sister: “Though the cheeks of Cora were pale, and her countenance anxious, she had lost none of her firmness; but the eyes of Alice were inflamed, and betrayed how long a bitterly she had wept.”²⁵⁹ Also, when the ladies and Gamut are kidnapped by the Hurons, Cora is the only one who keeps thinking rationally and attempts to let some signs of their presence on the trail for the heroes who search for them

²⁵⁵ Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 145.

²⁵⁶ Mitchell Summerlin, *A Dictionary to the novels of James Fenimore Cooper* (Greenwood: The Penkville Publishing Company, 1987), 10.

²⁵⁷ Summerlin, *A Dictionary to the novels of James Fenimore Cooper*, 10.

²⁵⁸ Nina Baym, “The Women of Cooper’s *Leatherstocking Tales*,” *American Quarterly*, December 1971, accessed March 3, 2017. www.jstor.org/stable/2712252

²⁵⁹ Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 158.

eagerly: “Cora remembered the paring injunctions of the scout, and whenever an opportunity offered, she stretched forth her arm to bend aside the twigs that met her hands.”²⁶⁰ Even if her attempts ends in failure, she proves to be courageous doing something that some of the men would not even dare to do if they were in such a situation. The relationship between Cora and Alice might be considered partly as sibling and partly maternal:

For many moments the older sister looked upon the younger; with countenance that wavered with powerful and contending emotions. At length she spoke, though her tones had lost their rich and calm fullness in an expression of the tenderness that seemed maternal.²⁶¹

Therefore, Cora provides a kind of protection for Alice, for example, when standing among the prisoners, she “entwines her arms in those of Alice, in the tenderness of sisterly love.”²⁶² The character of Cora in the novel might be based on the story of the real historical figure Jane McCrae who was a daughter of a Scottish Presbyterian minister, the commander of the Fort William Edward. Similarly to Munro, the minister abandoned his fort and put it in the hands of the Indian guide. However, later he was found scalped and dead in the nearby forest.²⁶³ The destiny of Cora and Jane is very similar; however a number of major differences might be identified. In comparison to Cora Munro, when her father died, Jane McCrae longed for joining her brother and became married to an officer of the English Army. Nonetheless, she was cruelly killed by the Indians and her story influenced many writers and painters. Cooper also had to see some of her visual interpretations when he was in New York City in 1825.²⁶⁴ Paul Revere, the American activist and artisan, claims that Jane McCrae was frequently compared to “the American Joan of Arc,”²⁶⁵ the girl who sacrificed herself for the freedom of her country.

²⁶⁰ Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 87.

²⁶¹ Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 97.

²⁶² Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 278.

²⁶³ Mc Williams, *The Last of the Mohicans: Civil Savagery and Savage Civility*, 70.

²⁶⁴ Mc Williams, *The Last of the Mohicans: Civil Savagery and Savage Civility*, 129.

²⁶⁵ John Koster, “Jane McCrea, remembered as a victim American Indian brutality, may have died under different circumstances” *Military History*, June 2000, accessed March 4, 2017, <http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.is.cuni.cz/docview/212664207/fulltext/1334ED6BEC0AB6E51F/1?accountid=35514>

The Last of the Mohicans might be considered the historical novel, historical and adventure romance as well as the gothic novel. In his remarkable work, Cooper created the relationships between civilized as well as the relationships between civilized and uncivilized characters. The interracial marriages were not considered proper and so the love triangle of Cora, Uncas and Magua has to die. The interracial friendships could be considered inappropriate as well since there was a belief that Indians are not fully human, inferior to the white men. Thus, such friendships were not desired by the Euro-Americans. However, Cooper praises the firm friendship of Hawkeye and the Mohicans as he celebrates the Indian nations. In connection to marriages, women in the 19th century were fully dependent on their future husbands since their rights were limited and their role was only to take care of the children and household. Cooper's Munro also wishes his daughters to marry well regardless their origin. However, he feels pity for his Afro-American Cora whose personality is illustrated as non-standard for the society in the 19th century.

CONCLUSION

The aim set for the diploma thesis was to analyse the era of colonialism in the eastern part of contemporary USA, the stereotypes in the portrayal of Indians and interracial relationships as they are depicted in *The Last of the Mohicans*. After the arrival of the Europeans and their American successors, the Indian way of life has radically changed during a period of less than one generation. The white settlers brought new illnesses which destroyed the inhabitants and as they had to move, they lost their family lives and found themselves in the territories where nobody knew their sacred stories. Most Native Americans were not able to adapt to the European conditions as well as to assimilate into the European society. As a result, they were doomed to vanish. Moreover, in a number of literary works they were portrayed implausibly and their possible relationships with the white settlers were not considered proper. As demonstrated in this diploma thesis, the novel aptly epitomizes Cooper's fight for Indian survival and blames the white colonizers who caused the eradication of the Native Americans.

First of all, it was necessary to explain the important terms, namely colonialism, post-colonialism, postcolonial theory and postcolonial criticism. Then, the Anglo-American settler colonialism was introduced. The European "colonizers" in the novel had met the "colonized" Indians who were not able to adapt to the European conditions and manners and they were considered "other," not fully human. As a result, this situation led to the general hatred and discrimination towards Indians. Nonetheless, many Indians made alliances with the white men as they found it beneficial for their future. These alliances, however, did not bring much good fortune for both Indians as well as the white colonizers since Indians used alliances for their own plans and revenges and not for the purpose to gain more land. In the Seven Year's War, the British primarily demanded to gain more land. In comparison, the French were interested in the fur trade. But in Cooper's words, none of them is destined to gain and control this land.

The first settlers described the Native Americans either as noble savages, possessing primitive beauty or cruel savages longing only for scalping and killing of the coming settlers. After the publication of the novel, Cooper faced the problem of authenticity. The American society

of the 19th century criticized him for being exaggeratedly sympathetic and creating an idealized portrayal of the American Indians. He adapted his Uncas and Chingachgook for the literary art and depicted them implausibly, as noble savages. In comparison, the latter view of cruel savage resulted even in the popular genre, namely the captivity narratives telling stories about the Europeans, especially women who were treated badly by Indians and kept in the captivity. This genre supported the European hatred and discrimination towards Indians. However, it was only the white man of whom the Indian was spoiled as shown with the help of Cooper's Magua. Besides these myths, there was one more stereotype that evolved and became popular after the publication of *The Last of the Mohicans*, namely the stereotype of the vanishing Native American. Cooper's fictional portrayal of the eastern tribes caused that many other authors of literature involved the stories of the last tribal descendants in their works and subsequently, all Indians were considered to have one unified history, frequently to their detriment. It was generally believed in America that all Indians including Cooper's Uncas have to die before the attack of the white civilization.

Cooper introduced the relationships between civilization and savagery as well as the relationships between "civilized" characters. The interracial marriages were not considered proper because they would lead to miscegenation and so the love triangle of Cora, Uncas and Magua has to die. The interracial friendships could be considered inappropriate as well since there was a belief that Indians are not fully human, inferior to the white men. Thus, such friendships were not desired by the Euro-Americans. However, Cooper praises the firm friendship of Hawkeye and the Mohicans as he celebrates the Indian nations. Their friendship could be an example of his dream society without any racial bias. Cooper also raises the topic of gender roles in the 19th century when he describes the controversial nature of Cora Munro. She is depicted as brave and strong possessing the virtues of men. She is, in comparison to her sister Alice, the real opposite of what should a woman in the 19th century be expected to be.

RESUMÉ

Tato diplomová práce se zabývá vlivem kolonialismu v nejpůvodnější literární fikci J. F. Coopera *Poslední Mohykán* (The Last of the Mohicans). Cílem této práce je analýza období kolonialismu ve východní části dnešních USA, stereotypů v zobrazení indiánů a mezirasových vztahů tak, jak jsou zobrazeny v díle *Poslední Mohykán*. J. F. Cooper byl mnohými slavnými osobnostmi 19. století považován za národního spisovatele, a dokonce i do dnešních dnů se jeho díla těší velké oblibě jak dětí, tak dospělých. *Poslední Mohykán* byl vydán v roce 1826 jako druhá kniha pentalogie zvané *Příběhy Kožené Punčochy* (The Leatherstocking Tales). Děj se odehrává v pohnutém období amerických dějin, v době Sedmileté války (Francouzsko-indiánské války) na území dnešní východní části Spojených států amerických. Poutavý příběh tohoto díla o střetu původních obyvatel a bílých přistěhovalců přesně vystihuje Cooperův boj za přežití amerických indiánů a také pocit smutku za jejich vyhlazení bílou kulturou.

Tato diplomová práce je rozčleněna do tří kapitol, kde jsou teoretické části a analytické části propojeny. Jinými slovy, teoretické poznatky v každé kapitole jsou následně ilustrovány na příkladech z primárního díla. Pro porozumění této diplomové práci bylo nejprve třeba vysvětlit základní termíny, jmenovitě kolonialismus, post-kolonialismus, post-koloniální kritika a post-koloniální teorie. Dále už byla věnována pozornost pouze kolonialismu v Americe. Bílí „civilizovaní“ kolonisté se v románu setkávají s domorodými Američany. Tito domorodí Američané, kteří jsou později kolonisty ovládnuti, se nejsou schopni přizpůsobit evropským zvykům a způsobům života. Z toho důvodu jsou později považováni za necivilizovaní a zaostalá stvoření. Jejich tomahavky a nože nestačí na moderní vojenskou techniku stále přicházející a sílící vlny kolonistů. I nejstarší člen kmene Mohykánů Chingachgook je přesvědčen o tom, že boj nahých indiánů s noži a tomahavky se stěží vyrovná boji bílých mužů ve střelné zbraně. Hlavními představiteli kolonistů jsou následující postavy: velitel anglické pevnosti William Henry Colonell Munro, jeho věrný pobočník důstojník Heyward Duncan a také učitel zpěvu a zarytý pacifista David Gamut. Postavy původních obyvatel jsou zobrazeny pomocí indiánů z kmene Mohykánů neboli Delawarů a také z kmene Huronů.

Střet obou vzájemně odlišných kultur postupně vyústil v sérii válek a ozbrojených konfliktů. Jak je tomu i v díle *Poslední Mohykán*, indiáni byli také schopni uzavírat s bílými osadníky mnohá spojenectví za účelem prosperity, obchodu a obecně dobrých vztahů do budoucna. Mnohá tato spojenectví se však později neukázala jako optimální, neboť pojetí války indiánů se lišilo od pojetí války bílých osadníků. Přesně takové spojenectví je v románu tvořeno huronských náčelníkem Maguou a velitelem francouzských vojsk Montcalmem. Magua se se svým kmenem spojí s Francouzi jenom z toho důvodu, aby se mohl pomstít svému bývalému spojenci a anglickému veliteli Colonellu Munroovi. Francouzům v čele s Montcalmem jde však o získání nových území a to třeba i s pomocí Indiánů. Munro věří, že je možné divocha zcivilizovat a naučit ho Evropským mravům. Jedním z těchto mravů je i pití alkoholu, na který nebyli indiáni zvyklí. Alkohol ničil kmenový život a přinášel jenom neštěstí. Když se Magua vrátí jednoho dne do Munroova tábora podnapilý, Munro ho nechá před celým vojskem ostudně zbičovat. To už je na hrdého válečníka Maguu příliš a tak se rozhodne Munroovi pomstít tím, že unese jeho dvě dcery Coru a Alici.

Když dojde ke krvavé bitvě o pevnost William Henry, Montcalm není schopen zabránit svým indiánským spojencům v drancování a vraždění Munroova vojska. Indiáni touží po válečné kořisti (skalpech bílých osadníků) a evropské zájmy v souboji o území pro ně nejsou důležité. Podle Coopera jsou za krveprolití v pevnosti zodpovědní především osadníci z Evropy, kteří proměnili americké lesy v peklo na zemi. Peprník však dává vinu i Angličanům, kteří se nedokázali indiánům postavit, přestože jim byly ponechány zbraně.

Při vyjednávání s bílými muži indiáni věřili ve vzájemný respekt a mír. Protože jejich tradice byla pouze ústní dohoda, často nerozuměli smlouvám vytvořeným bílými osadníky a lehko tak přicházeli o svá území. Když Montcalm nařizuje Maguovi, aby se svým kmenem na Angličany neútočil, neboť dle dohody Angličané vyhlásili kapitulaci, Magua této evropské strategii nerozumí. V tu chvíli má strach, že Montcalm přestal dodržovat jejich vzájemný mír a chce po svém veliteli, aby mu podal ruku a stvrdil tak sjednaný mír. Montcalmovi však nejde o vzájemný mír s indiány. Touží pouze získat další území jako je právě strategicky výhodná oblast pevnosti William Henry.

Další kapitola se pokusila nastínit indiánské stereotypy. Mnozí první osadníci spatřovali v indiánech kruté divochy, kterým jde jenom o válečnou kořist. Jiní je vnímali jako ušlechtilá stvoření, která žijí v souladu s přírodními zákony a jsou nezkažena světem civilizace. Všichni je však považovali za odlišné. Mýtus krutého divocha, který vraždí a skalpuje bílé osadníky na pohraničí se dokonce objevil v podobě literárního žánru tzv. příběhů o zajetí (captivity narratives). *Poslední Mohykán* je také mnohými specialisty na americkou fikci považován za součást této tradice příběhů protože Munroovy dcery Cora a Alice jsou uneseny huronským náčelníkem Maguou. J. F. Cooper byl tehdejší americkou společností kritizován jednak za přílišné sympatie k indiánům, jednak pro nepříliš autentické ilustrace indiánů ve svých příbězích. Tehdejší guvernér Michiganského teritoria Lewis Clark dokonce prohlásil, že Cooperův Uncas nemá v lesích americké divočiny žijící prototyp. Cooper však přizpůsobil své indiány pro romantický příběh, který probudí ve čtenáři soucit a sympatie s původními obyvateli.

Dále byla tato kapitola věnována stereotypu tzv. vymírající rasy (vanishing race). Cooper se v *Posledním Mohykánovi* zaměřil na popis života severovýchodních kmenů. Jeho ušlechtilý hrdina Uncas patří k fiktivnímu kmeni Mohykánů a je posledním svého kmene. Kmen Mohykánů je v příběhu založen na skutečně žijícím kmeni Moheganů, který sídlil v dnešním americkém státě Connecticut. Postava umírajícího Uncase a tedy jeho vymírající rasy vyvolává ve čtenáři pocit smutku, což byl právě Cooperův záměr. Po jeho vzoru použilo tento námět mnoho dalších spisovatelů, protože se ukázal jako velmi působivý a atraktivní u čtenářů. Tito spisovatelé si pro tento účel literárního námětu vybírali kmeny ze všech koutů Ameriky a tak postupně vznikl mýtus o vymírající rase. Ve skutečnosti byla myšlenka vymírající rasy spojena s odsunem indiánů dále do vnitrozemí ve snaze získat další území, která byla velmi důležitá pro vznik nového státu. Na zabírání území východních kmenů bylo zapomínáno více než na zabírání území kmenů na západě. Postupně tak vznikl stereotyp vymření všech indiánů, kteří musí zemřít před nájездem bílých přistěhovalců.

Úkolem poslední kapitoly byla analýza mezirasové lásky a přátelství. Po příjezdu bílých osadníků se americký kontinent stal místem střetávání a míšení ras. Indiáni a bílí osadníci se

učili žít společně na jednom místě, avšak střet dvou naprosto odlišných kultur byl následkem mnoha ozbrojených a konfliktů a dlouhých válek. Indiáni a bílí osadníci však také uzavírali mnohá spojení a následná mezirasová manželství či přátelství nebyla ničím neobvyklým. Richard Slotkin tvrdí, že mezirasové vztahy nebyly vhodné, jelikož vedly k míšení ras. Stejně tak mezirasová přátelství byla tabu, neboť indiáni byli považováni za odlišná stvoření. J. F. Cooper ve svém díle vytvořil vztahy mezi divoštvím a civilizací a také vztahy mezi civilizovanými jedinci.

V *Posledním Mohykánovi* vytvořil Cooper mezirasový vztah lásky mezi posledním náčelníkem kmene Mohykánů a dcerou velitele britských vojsk Munroa z prvního manželství Corou Munro. Cooper však později prozradí, že Cora není čisté rasy, neboť její matka byla otrokyní pocházející z Karibiku. Přestože Cora a Uncas pocházejí z odlišných kultur, najdou v sobě velké zalíbení. Cora obdivuje Uncasovo ušlechtilé chování a Uncas především její fyzickou krásu. Jejich vztah a následné manželství však není považováno za vhodné a proto nemohou zůstat spolu. Dalším důvodem pro jejich následné odloučení je i to, že Uncas je posledním svého kmene a tak by jejich manželství vedlo k vymření Mohykánů. To by však bylo v rozporu s Cooperovým posláním v románu.

Další indián, který najde v Coře zalíbení je proradný Huron Magua. Na rozdíl od Uncase však Magua Coru opravdově nemiluje a chce si jí vzít pouze z toho důvodu, aby se pomstil jejímu otci. Maguův vzhled a chování připomíná d'ábla a Cora tvrdí, že chce raději zemřít než se stát jeho ženou. Protože by ovšem došlo k míšení ras, jediným východiskem pro milostný trojúhelník Coru, Uncase a Maguu je opravdu jediné smrt.

S druhou manželkou Alicí Graham, která pocházela také ze Skotska, měl Munro mladší dceru Alici. Ona a důstojník Heyward Duncan tvoří společensky vhodný pár. Oba dva jsou stejné rasy a čisté krve a tak společně reprezentují spořádané americké občany. Heyward představuje romantického gentlemana, který by nikdy neopustil svoji dámu, i kdyby to mělo být třeba u popravčího kůlu.

Dalším příkladem mezirasového vztahu je přátelství zvěda britské armády Sokolího oka a Mohykánů. Zde jde opět o vztah mezi divoštvím a civilizací. Sokolí oko neboli Natty Bumppo je Cooperovým „mužem bez kříže“ (smíšené krve). Je to Evropan, který dává přednost životu indiánů podle přírodních zákonů nad machinacemi a zkažeností bílých mužů. Má velký odpor k rasismu, když prohlašuje, že je mužem bez rasových předsudků. Sokolí oko a Mohykány pojí pevné přátelství, což se především ukáže po smrti Uncase, která ještě více spojí Uncasova otce Chingachgooka se Sokolím okem. Přes všechny snahy se však Sokolí oko nemůže stát členem indiánské společnosti. Shirley Samuels tvrdí, že jak bude civilizace postupovat, Natty brzy z Ameriky zmizí podobně jako indiáni a bude nahrazen „přirozenou elitou.“ Jelikož indiáni byli považováni za odlišné, i mezirasová přátelství nebyla vhodná. Cooper však oslavuje přátelství Nattyho a Mohykánů, které by mohlo představovat jeho myšlenku ideální společnosti bez předsudků.

J. F. Cooper byl ve svých dílech kritizován za spoustu defektů, mimo jiné i za to, že jeho ženské postavy nejsou inteligentní a jsou plně závislé na svých mužských společnicích. To může mít spojitost s tehdejší postavením žen ve společnosti. V 18. a 19. století byla ženská práva striktně omezena. Ženy nemohly například volit a jejich hlavním úkolem byla péče o děti a domácnost. Jejich jedinou nadějí bylo výhodné manželství, ve kterém by se měly dobře nejenom ony ale i jejich děti. V *Posledním Mohykánovi* je prototypem spořádané ženy 19. století Alice, která je plně závislá na svých mužských ochráncích, především na jejím budoucím manželovi Heywardovi Duncanovi. Naopak starší Cora je podle Niny Baym ženou s mužskými vlastnostmi. Je nebojácná, nezávislá a snaží se chránit mladší sestru Alici. Je přesným opakem toho, čím by žena tehdejší doby měla být.

Mnoho autorů vytvořilo ve svých dílech postavy tmavých a světlých hrdinek. Takovým příkladem je i *Poslední Mohykán* a jeho postavy Cora a Alice. Tyto sestry navzájem tvoří binární opozice. Cora má havraní vlasy, tmavé oči a tmavší pleť. Je odvážná, smíšeného původu a její uvažování je racionální a dospělé. Alice je křehkou blondýnkou s modrými očima a drobnou postavou. Na rozdíl od Cory se často chová jako dítě a je přímým ztělesněním čistoty a naivity.

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