The savage as living ghost: representations of Native Americans and scholarly failures to dismantle the notion of the savage
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Citation
Chen, C. (2017, March 21). *The savage as living ghost: representations of Native Americans and scholarly failures to dismantle the notion of the savage*. Retrieved from https://hdl.handle.net/1887/47360

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Title: The savage as living ghost: representations of Native Americans and scholarly failures to dismantle the notion of the savage
Issue Date: 2017-03-21

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Representations of Native Americans and Scholarly

Failures to Dismantle the Notion of the Savage

Cui Chen

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Representations of Native Americans and Scholarly

Failures to Dismantle the Notion of the Savage

PROEFSCHRIFT

ter verkrijging van
de graad van Doctor aan de Universiteit Leiden,
op gezag van Rector Magnificus prof. mr. C. J. J. M. Stolker,
volgens besluit van het College voor Promoties
te verdedigen op dinsdag 21 March 2017
klokke 13:45 uur

door

Cui Chen

陈萃

geboren te Chengwu, China
13 March 1989

Promotiecommissie

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Savages in Multiple Worlds and Histories: The Decolonial Attempt

Introduction

To introduce the topic of this thesis, let me start with a personal note, by saying that I am a *Chinese* scholar writing on a Western issue; the notion of the savage. Allow me to begin with Chinese terms, then, because what struck me first and foremost when doing research into the notion of the savage, was the difficulty and perhaps even impossibility to adequately translate this notion into Chinese. For instance, the historical linguist on Central Eurasian Studies, Christopher I. Beckwith, claimed in 2009 that it is "impossible to translate the word *barbarian* into Chinese because the concept does not exist in Chinese" (358). The typical modern Mandarin Chinese translation of the term barbarian is *yeman ren* (野蛮人), which, according to Beckwith, means: "wild man, savage." Thus, he concludes, "That is very definitely not the same thing as 'barbarian'" (358). Of course, not every scholar agrees with him, and in Chinese discourse both the term savage and the term barbarian are generally and almost automatically translated into *yeman ren*. Still, the terms savage and barbarian both have several other, different Chinese equivalents rather than this single one. As a noun, the term savage is translated in Chinese as *wei kaihua de ren* (未开化的人), *yeshou* (野兽), next to *yeman ren* (野蛮人). Etymologically, *yeman ren* refers to "wild *Mán* person," which hints at a certain set of peoples called *Mán*.[1] *Wei kaihua de ren* means "the uncultivated person" or those who are still not influenced by civilization or who live outside the city in remote areas.[2] Finally *yeshou* signifies "the wild beast and wild animal."[3] All these three equivalents of the term savage in Chinese have the connotation of being wild and violent, but they also have a different emphasis. The situation is similar with the term barbarian. Next to *yemanren*, barbarian can also be translated as *yuanshi ren* (原始人) or *yibang ren* (异邦人).[4] Etymologically, *yuanshi ren* refers to those who live in the past or in primitive circumstances, while *yibang ren* mainly signifies the foreigner or those who live far away.[5]

If we look closely at the common denominator, *yeman ren* or "wild *Mán* person," there seems to be a proper noun *Mán*, which does not indicate an individual but a collective: a set of peoples. As a more general term, it is "often translated as 'barbarians'" without having "the strength of the English word" (Drompp 174). *Mán* is indeed not an equivalent of the English word, since *man* can be either used singularly or together with another word, *yi*, to refer to aboriginal tribes or to minority nationalities living outside the Central Plains (comprising the middle and lower reaches of the Huanghe River).[6] These tribes or nationalities are considered as different and distinct from the dominant Chinese nationality Huaxia. The compound word *manyi* is also used as a synonym of another compound word *rongdi*, and the two taken together are also used as one compound: *manyirongdi*. This term refers to aboriginal tribes or minority nationalities in which *man* often refers to those who live in the south, *yi* in the east, *rong* in the west,

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[1] On definition of *yeman,* see <http://www.zdic.net/c/e/109/286694.htm>. The proper noun *Mán* will be discussed in detail in next paragraph.
[2] On definition of *kaihua*, see <http://www.zdic.net/c/0/fb/264227.htm>.
[3] On definition of *yeshou*, see <http://www.zdic.net/c/e/109/286691.htm>.
[4] On Chinese translation of barbarian, see <http://www.iciba.com/barbarian>.
[5] On definition of *yuanshi*, see <http://www.zdic.net/c/f/25/59792.htm>.
[6] On definition of *manyi*, see <http://www.zdic.net/c/e/a7/196988.htm>.

and *di* in the north. However, these references are not fixed, because, for example, sometimes *yi* may refer to those in the north and the same holds for the other terms (*man*, *rong*, *di*) as well. At first, the word *manyirongdi* did not have pejorative or insulting connotations with regard to minority nationalities. Rather, the word mainly referred to their different ways of life. For instance, according to an early second-century Chinese dictionary from the Han Dynasty, *Shuowen Jiezi*, *man* refers to those who live on fishing while *yi* refers to those who live on hunting.[7] However, gradually during the Spring and Autumn Period (771-476 BC), these four exonyms were expanded into general designations "referring to the barbarian tribes"; i.e. tribes that threatened the Central Plain states (Poo 45). Still, one must not, however, carry that notion too far, since "Chinese documents make it abundantly clear that these *topoi* tended to be employed when expedience demanded, but could be overlooked or even contradicted when necessary. 'Good barbarians' did exist, and were in fact praiseworthy" (Drompp 12). Recently, the word *manyi* or the word *yi* has been used to refer to foreigners and colonizers from the West.[8]

Clearly, there are intriguing and puzzling issues involved when we consider the untranslatability of culturally and linguistically different terms. Such terms do not just have different histories, but different attitudes as well, and at times different aesthetics, different fields of connotations, different semantic webs, different politics and ideologies. The French philologist and philosopher Barbara Cassin studied this dynamic in the European context, which resulted in *Vocabulaire européen des philosophies: Dictionaires des intraduisibles*, a study that was translated in English as *Dictionary of Untranslatables: A Philosophical Lexicon*. One of its translators and editors Emily Apter would give Cassin's argument a follow-up in arguing that, in the context of modern comparative studies departments, the cultural specificity of texts is too easily considered to be a minor problem.[9] To be sure, to state that something is untranslatable, in both studies, is not to say that words are untranslatable in principle. On the contrary, words that defy direct translation propel relentless attempts to translate: attempts to capture the specificity of terms.

In this thesis, my aim in what follows is not to come up with a comparative study although it was a cultural comparison that was at the basis of my curiosity, namely the untranslatability in Chinese of the European notion of the savage. My study on the savage investigates something else, namely whether we can move *beyond* the very notion of the savage. The question of whether one can move *beyond* a concept is only of relevance, of course, when a concept has detrimental effects. In this case, the effects are not hard to describe. The concept of the savage functions as a counterpart that has been used to define others as civilized and therefore superior. This superiority has been used in the colonial era and in its aftermath to underpin an ideology that justified appropriation and exploitation. The rhetorical strategy was, or still is, based on two presuppositions: (1) apparently it is clear who is civilized and who is not; (2) apparently it is clear that cultural differences can be valued on a hierarchical scale.

Before I deal with these presuppositions further, let me distinguish first between the terms savage and barbarian which are terms often used interchangeably, and not only in

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[7] On definition of *man,* see <http://www.zdic.net/z/23/sw/86EE.htm>. On definition of *yi*, see <http://www.zdic.net/z/17/sw/5937.htm>.

[8] In *The Clash of Empires: The Invention of China in Modern World Making* (2004), Liu Lydia discusses how "*Yi*" is used to refer to foreigners and is to be banned because of revolt of the English, who interpret it as an insulting term.

[9] See Apter (2013).

the case of the Chinese common denominator *yeman ren*. According to Dictionary.com, one of the English online dictionaries, the word *barbarian* is defined as "a person in a savage, primitive state; uncivilized person," and the adjective *barbarous* is regarded as a synonym for savage.[10] Thus the two become, indeed, synonymous, but each term has its own specific history and cultural implications both in the Western and Chinese contexts. Moreover, when comparing them, we can find that there are principal conceptual differences between the two. So let me focus on this conceptual distinction first and then introduce the research question of this study, which is twofold: What was and still is the potential in the notion of the savage; and what were and are the limits of the most prominent philosophical and methodological attempts to dismantle the Eurocentric nature of this notion? My hypothesis is that all major attempts to dismantle the Eurocentric term "savage" in the last seventy years up until today have not been successful.

0.1 The Barbarian-Savage Dynamic in the Western Context

Although the terms "savage" and "barbarian" are often used interchangeably, the concepts have different (though partly overlapping) genealogies. The genealogy of the savage or wild man has been mapped by historiographer Hayden White in "The Forms of Wildness: Archaeology of an Idea" (to which I will return in more detail in chapter two). The following account of the relation between the savage and the barbarian is based on White's essay and primarily on Christian Moser's elaboration of the relation between the two concepts.[11] While the concept of the barbarian has its roots in Greek antiquity, and was only later appropriated in a Christian context, the figure of the wild man was formed first in a Judeo-Christian context due to its appearance in the Old Testament, and entered sources of pagan antiquity later on.[12] The word "wild" likely derives from the German *Wald* (forest) just as the equivalent term savage comes from *silva*: savages are people that live in the woods. This makes the savage a spatially defined concept. This space, however, does not define the other as exterior to a (civilized) community; rather, in the Old Testament, "wild" is used to indicate a person or place that has been abandoned by God and thus does not have God's blessing or grace (White 1972, 12-13). If the barbarian in the Greek context marks a political and cultural difference—denoting the other that does not share Greek democracy and/or culture—the savage comes to mark a moral or even metaphysical difference (Moser). The wild man is impure, an

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[10] See <http://www.dictionary.com/browse/barbarian>.

[11] Here and in the following points of comparison between the two concepts, I am drawing from Moser's chapter "Barbarism as a Transitory Stage in Eighteenth-Century Cultural Theory, Political Philosophy and Literature" in Markus Winkler, Maria Boletsi, Christian Moser Eds. *'Barbarian': Explorations of a Western Concept in Theory, Literature and the Arts from the Eighteenth Century to the Present* (forthcoming by Metzler). My references to Moser's chapter are without page numbers, since the publication is forthcoming.

[12] In *Genesis* (16:12), the angel of the Lord tells Hagar that she is going to give birth to a boy, whose name is Ishmael. Of this young man it is said that: "He will be a wild donkey of a man; his hand will be against everyone and everyone's hand against him, and he will live in hostility toward all his brothers." As White argues, "The archetypal wild men of the Old Testament are the great rebels against the Lord, the God-challengers, the antiprophets, giants, nomads – men like Cain, Ham, and Ishmael, the very kinds of 'heroes' who, in Greek mythology and legend, might have enjoyed a place of honor beside Prometheus, Odysseus, and Oedipus... They are depicted as wild men inhabiting a wild land, above all as hunters, sowers of confusion, damned, and generative of races that live in irredeemable ignorance or outright violation of the laws that God has laid down for the governance of the cosmos" (1972, 14).

outcast, a sinner, and often a rebel against God. In the Bible, this would be someone like Cain, who murders his brother, or Nimrod, a violent hunter king that seems to stand opposite to the peaceful pastoral Fathers. Considered in a certain tradition as the founder of the city of Babel and the tower of Babel, the wild Nimrod is associated with a human nature that is uncontrollable and that—after God's intervention—will come to connote the corruption of human language.

An important difference between wild men and barbarians lies in the fact that biblical wild men are not found in groups: they are usually individual, isolated figures (Moser). This continues to apply to the concept of the savage or wild man as it developed in the Middle Ages. The savage is an individual who lives alone in the wilderness, away from communities. This is the typical wild man in medieval folklore and literature. There are traces of this figure in pagan ancient forest dwellers and mythological hybrid creatures (satyrs, centaurs, nymphs). "Wild men" are often naked, hairy, animal-like, grotesque (for instance in the form of gigantic shapes) and lack reason and proper speech. They satisfy their desires immediately, they usually lead the life of the hunter-gatherer, and tend to be sexually promiscuous or represent a danger of sexual nature (rape, kidnapping) (Moser). According to this medieval understanding, then, the concept "wildness" does not merely connote the absence of culture or an original state before culture (in the way it will appear in Michel de Montaigne's sixteenth-century essay "Of Cannibals").[13] Rather, it results from a fallen state that follows an error or sin: wild men are cursed and damned. In that sense, given that every man participates in Adam's original sin, savagery represents a threat that lurks in every man, and that only God's grace could avert (Moser).

Outside of the Judeo-Christian context, in ancient pagan sources, and particularly in epic poems and political philosophy, the wild man is also an isolated figure, yet not a sinner or cursed by God: wild men are often those who follow a rather primitive, pre-social mode of living (Moser).[14] In ancient political philosophy (in Cicero, for example), people who live without any form of social organization are designated as wild rather than barbarians. Moser locates here a crucial difference between the wild man and the barbarian in Greek and Roman antiquity: "Wild" people live outside society and are lawless, while barbarians have a form of social organization despite being ruled by kings, despots or tyrants rather than by laws. In ancient thought, however, as Moser argues, the barbarian and the savage are not conceived as stages in an evolutionary development towards civilized society, as they would come to be used in eighteenth-century models. They are both absolutely opposed to, and ontologically detached from, "civilitas" (Moser).

Before the concepts of the savage and the barbarian started being used as stages in an evolutionary development (in the eighteenth century), in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries they are used interchangeably and grow semantically close. This development, according to Moser, became possible due to several factors, which include the secularization of the savage (leaving behind its metaphysical character and allusions to sin) and the application of the term savage to groups, and not just isolated figures. The term starts being used more often in the plural, as in the French "les sauvages," the savages, the wild men, or wild peoples. An important factor for this extension of the term savage is the colonial conquest of America. This leads to the term savage being

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[13] Montaigne argues that these seemingly barbarous nations remain in their original simplicity and obey the laws of nature, that is: is not influenced by civilization (1958, 105-19).

[14] Moser mentions the Cyclop Polyphemus in Homer's *Odyssey*, who engages in anthropophagy, as a prominent example of such a wild figure.

applied (alongside the term "barbarian") to the indigenous peoples of the New World, who live together in communities according to specific rules. In writings about the indigenous peoples of the Americas, terms like wild, savage and barbaric are used interchangeably. Evidence for this mixing can also be found in attempts to reverse and positively reappropriate these concepts, as in Montaigne, who in his essay "Of Cannibals" (1580) puts forward the assertion that Europeans are more barbaric than those people of the new World that they designate as barbarians or savages. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries there is no systematic attempt to differentiate the terms (much comparable to the Chinese context). The terms barbarian and savage are not explicitly distinguished in Montaigne's essay, however within the text Moser is able to identify traces of a differentiation of these terms as indicative of different stages of development, prefiguring the terms' systematic differentiation in models that would be fully formed in the eighteenth century.[15]

The differentiation of the savage and the barbarian in the eighteenth century has to do with the temporalization of these concepts, which now come to function not in dyadic oppositional structures with civilization, but rather form a conceptual triad (Moser). The terms start to be used not only to indicate inferior others occupying another space, but also another time. The savage occupies the lowest position, while the barbarian is the middle and mediating phase in an evolutionary scale that leads towards the most advanced stage of civilization. In models developed in the context of the French and the Scottish Enlightenment, civilization is not a static state but a dynamic process involving a series of transitions: from savagery, to barbarism, to civilization. The savage and the barbarian thus become parts in this civilizing process (Moser). This development, which takes place in the fields of anthropology, political and cultural theory, and the philosophy of history, casts the savage as a historical category, not as a being devoid of history and outside of historical time. In universal historical evolutionary schemes of that period, the total history of mankind, its progress and ascent to higher forms of culture, proceeds from the primitive stage of savagery through the intermediate stage of barbarism to the highest level of civilization. Enlightenment thinkers distinguished between a wild, barbaric and civilized phase of human cultural development based on forms of subsistence: savages are usually thought as hunter-gatherers; barbarians are often nomadic shepherds or use agriculture and domesticated animals, and know a rudimentary form of property; civilization is marked by mercantile exchange, division of labor and money (Meek 28-36). These distinctions can already be found in Baron de Montesquieu's *De l'esprit des lois* (*The spirit of laws*, 1748) and Adam Ferguson's *An Essay on the History of Civil Society* (1767) (34).[16] Exactly how and when the transition to the third stage takes place is an object of debate for theorists of the Enlightenment. Some claim that the invention of agriculture and the introduction of sedentary lifestyle marked a transition to the state of culture and civilization. Others argue the beginning of civilization is tied to the founding of cities and the introduction of commerce. In these models, the barbarian becomes a complex in-between figure: barbarians have one foot

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[15] For the specific way in which this differentiation unravels in Montaigne's essay, see Moser.

[16] In Book XVIII of *The Spirit of Law*, entitled "Of Laws in the Relation They Bear to the Nature of the Soil," Montesquieu discusses the relation of the laws and population to the mode of subsistence and there he distinguishes the savage from the barbarian. Although "there is certainly no indication in *The Spirit of Laws* that Montesquieu regarded the mode of subsistence as being in any case the *key* factor in the total situation," his ideas lay the foundation for the French and Scottish thinkers in the middle of 19th century (Meek 34). In this context Meek also mentions the Scottish Enlightenment thinker Adam Ferguson. In *An Essay on the History of Civil Society* (1767), Ferguson argued that what happened in history is "indeed the result of human action, but not the execution of any human design" (qtd. in Meek 150).

in civilization and the other in a wild state of nature. Nevertheless, these significant semantic shifts in the concepts of the savage and the barbarian do not put an end to the concepts' older semantic connotations and structures. The savage thus still often refers to people living in a state of nature outside of social organization (Moser).

White argues that in modern times the wild man, which has served the process he calls "ostensive self-definition by negation," is considered as a category of fiction or mere prejudice (1972, 5-6).[17] First, the category of the wild man was applicable to specific groups of people outside civilization. In modern times, so White contends, the wild man has been partially de-mythologized and de-spatialized, giving rise to a "compensatory process of psychic interiorization" (7). The wild man does not constitute an essentialist but a sociopsychological category: that is, it denotes parts of our psychological landscape and not actual groups of people (35). This interiorization amounts to a "remythification" of the wild man through the trope of the "wild man within." This trope in modernity is closely related to Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory, which projected savagery as internal to every individual psyche—"an aspect of our unconscious, which civilization tries to keep under control" (Boletsi 2013, 103).

This Freudian insight changed the self-perception of being/the civilized, revealing an inherent instability within the civilized subject. In *Civilization and Its Discontents* (1930) Freud delineated the conflict between instinct and civilizational restraints. In this study, Freud, Maria Boletsi writes, "sees a progression of humans from an unrestricted satisfaction of instincts (a primitive state) to a repression of instincts, which is the precondition for a civilized society" (104). The repression of instinct is essential for sustaining civilization. This, however, gives rise to "unhappiness, frustration, neurosis, and self-hatred" (104). Civilization has two mechanisms for restraining the manifestation of aggressive impulses: law as the external mechanism and the production of guilt as the internal mechanism, both of which regulate aggression. According to Freud, our "loss of happiness through the heightening of the sense of guilt" is the price for enjoying civilization's merits (81). "This control mechanism, however," as Boletsi writes on Freud, "does not always succeed in keeping our aggressive instincts at bay" (2013, 105). "In Freud's model, the 'return of the repressed' becomes the greatest threat to civilization" due to what can be called "the savage within" (105).

Next to all these historical differences, there are also linguistic differences in play between the two terms. One element that distinguishes the term barbarian from the term savage is that both "perform" differently when turned into an *-ism*. Whereas barbarity does exist next to savagery, barbarism is an accepted and often used term, also conceptually speaking, while "savagism" is not; it does not even exist as a term. The suffix *-ism* serves to turn nouns into abstractions, so it becomes clear that the barbarian can be made more general or abstract, whereas the savage cannot. This may relate to a second element of distinction: the term barbarian can in scarce occasions shift into a verb, in the form of to "barbarize" or "barbarianize"—to make barbarian—but it is not a verb itself.[18] By contrast, the word *savage* can be an adjective, a noun, but also a verb: to savage. The latter, according to the Merriam-Webster Dictionary, means: "to attack or treat (someone or something) in a very cruel, violent, or harsh way."[19] Other dictionaries add that "to savage" can also mean to mutilate. So, it is evident that the

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[17] My account of White in this and the next paragraph also draws from Boletsi's presentation of White's views in *Barbarism and Its Discontents* (103-105).

[18] See < http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/15383?rskey=ma2h8e&result=1&isAdvanced=false#eid>.

[19] See <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/savage?utm_campaign=sd&utm_medium=serp&utm_source=jsonld>.

barbarian connotes some form of organization and form whereas the savage connotes loss of organization and non-form. This supports the function of savagery and barbarism in ternary models of societal development that, as previously mentioned, came into use since the eighteenth century, in which barbarism connoted a more advanced level of societal organization than savagery (Moser 2015, 128). Consequently, barbarian organization and form is closer to civilization in terms of its hierarchical proximity to civilized society: it represents a scale higher than savagery. In this context the etymological origin of the term barbarian is telling: it involves *language*—a language that to so-called civilized ears may sound incomprehensible or less fully developed than the language of the civilized person himself. Instead the etymology of savage involves *space*, as we have seen, like the places where savages live, or come from: woods, caves, wastelands. This space, as Freud suggested, can also be a cultural space, or a mental or bodily one. It can be a space far away but also a space "within."

0.2 Research Question: Attempts to Move Beyond the Oppositional Concept of the Savage

Since the 1990s, and especially since "9/11," both terms barbarism and civilization have become increasingly popular. Barbarism has been attached to different groups in Western political and public rhetoric and even when these terms are employed in critiques of Western discourse, it seems that their meanings remain largely uncontested and are taken for granted (Boletsi 2013, 1 & 55-56). Since "9/11" the term barbarism is often used to refer to Islamic terrorism, but also more generally to Islamic fundamentalism, Muslim societies, migrants, or all non-Europeans, are regarded as simple, infantile, and inferior, while the term civilization often signifies the Western civilization, which is believed to be the only or the Absolute Civilization. For example, in *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (1996), Samuel Huntington identifies Islam as the main threat to the West, and China as the other primary threat to Western civilization (Boletsi 2013, 41). In his narrative, he proposes a kind of oppositional thinking, which clearly distinguishes between "the West" and "the rest," or civilization and barbarism. To denaturalize the conventional binary opposition between barbarism and civilization, and break up the current rigidity of their meanings, Boletsi in *Barbarism and Its Discontents* (2013) argues that "Barbarism is not an inherent quality of a human subject, language, medium, or cultural object" (2). Barbarism is not an immanent concept, that is, and this makes it impossible to essentialize barbarism. By contrast, and alongside the concept's violent and negative connotations, Boletsi suggests that, as a concept, barbarism also has a critical and transgressive potential and proposes to use it as a theoretical concept in cultural critique. For her, "barbarism not only is an object of study but becomes a theorizing agent: it is recast as a theoretical and methodological concept" (8). She argues that "barbarism and the barbarian also carry a performative force with a transgressive potential" (3). In order to "tease out the critical thrust of barbarism," she adopts a performative approach rather than an essentialist approach (8).

In this way, the meanings and the uses of barbarism can be opened up through centering on the performativity of barbarism and the barbarian. Instead of being limited to being the negative part in a hierarchical opposition to civilization, barbarism turns out to be "a disruptive element within the self: a constant reminder of the fact that we can never own what we think belongs to us, including our languages, our cultural

practices, our own selves" (245). On the one hand, the exposure of this internal barbarism brings about a self-dispossession that may be uncomfortable or even painful, but on the other hand, it also contains alternative ways of knowing and relating to others as well as ourselves (245). Boletsi's research not only successfully dislodges barbarism from conventional contexts, but also shows that barbarism can be used as a creative and critical concept with transgressive potential in cultural theory.

In 2015, Boletsi, together with Christian Moser, edited the book *Barbarian Revisited: New Perspectives on an Old Concept*. Just as the title of the book indicates, they *revisited* the term barbarism and mapped out "a series of discursive domains, traditions of thought, and cultural and historical contexts which have decisively shaped, and been shaped by, the notion of barbarism" through several case studies (20). In order to break with the self-evidence with which barbarism is often used and counter the essentialization and naturalization of the term, they focus on how the concept of barbarism is involved in complex semiotic and rhetorical mechanisms. Just as Boletsi regarded barbarism as a theorizing agent in *Barbarism and Its Discontents*, Boletsi and Moser "see barbarism and the barbarian not as objects we wish to fully master as scholars, but as forces, the potential functions, implications, and meanings of which we set out to test and explore" (14). Engaging with the intricate genealogy of barbarism, they find that "the opposition between civilization and barbarism" is not simple or stable, but is characterized by "an inbuilt asymmetry" and "an inbuilt instability," which may account for "its versatility and adaptability to diverse contexts" (15). For them, the concept of barbarism, in its fundamental instability, works in two opposite ways: "On the one hand, it reinforces the discourse of civilization that needs it as its antipode. On the other hand, it can also disrupt the workings of the discourse of culture or civilization" (20). That is to say, as a concept, barbarism is a constitutive element of civilization, and at the same time, it keeps challenging or disturbing the discourse of civilization.

My research is part of an attempt to expand the study on barbarism to that of the savage. Next to the distinctions we encountered in the previous section, there is one specifically charged element, here, that will be relevant to my study. The savage came to embody a potential that the barbarian never acquired, at least in the European context.[20] For those who consider civilization itself to be a perversion or alienation or degeneration—a typically Romantic idea in the Western context—the uncivilized can become the vessel of purity and nobility. Whereas the barbarian usually connoted civilized existence on a lower scale, especially from the eighteenth century on, the savage could also connote purity and purification and, consequently, a higher ideal. In this context, the savage, more than the barbarian, could become an excellent vehicle for a double form of desire and hatred. The marker "savage" facilitated civilized subjects to hate uncivilized others, and for those civilized subjects living in self-hate it facilitated the desire for, and imagination of, an idealized (and thus not real) other. In the context of colonialism, this double dynamic was distinctly at work. And let me make clear that I will deal with colonialism in what follows as something that did not exist next to modernity but was at the very heart of it, as Walter Mignolo has argued.[21] During colonialism and due to colonialism, the savage served as a negative counter-image, to ideologically underpin and justify the Western desire to appropriate space and time. At

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[20] In Chinese history, the imagination of a "better barbarian" was brought forward in the fourth century BC (Lehner 26).
[21] See Mignolo (2007).

the same time, the noble savage facilitated a nostalgia propelled by Western self-critique or even self-hate.[22]

Especially due to this ideological use of the term, the last seven decades have witnessed relentless attempts to do away with the oppositions in play, or to do away with the very term savage and the Eurocentrism it connotes. These attempts are the focus of my study.

There have been several moments in history when people felt the need to reflect on the abuse of language by certain political powers. One famous example would be Germany after the Second World War and after the atrocities of the Nazi regime, and another one would be South Africa after the Apartheid regime. In both cases language, or distinct words, were used to support, defend, veil or legitimize acts of atrocity. A seemingly innocent word such as "resettlement," for instance, would hide violent mass deportations and appropriation. Likewise, Jews were not murdered but "put on transport."[23] Or, defining the Jews as "vermin," defended and naturalized the Nazi attempt to "root them out" (yet another seemingly innocent phrase). More in general there have been words and phrases that were used by parties to cover up or defend acts of atrocity. A good example would be the more recent phrase "ethnic cleansing" where the word "cleansing" is used to avoid saying terms like mass deportation, mass killing, mass raping, mass destruction and mutilation.

Once terms and phrases like these have come to life, one vexing problem is that even when they are criticized, ideologically exposed, or straightforwardly rejected, this does not mean they go away. In a sense such terms keep imposing themselves. In the current circumstances there are few terms that keep imposing themselves so intensely, so regularly and so persistently, next to barbarism as the one of "savage." Today, savage and savagery are terms that are used nearly daily and almost compulsively, by many people in relation to certain forms of warfare. To give just one example, *The Ashgate Research Companion to Modern Warfare* has one section entitled "Civilization and Savagery."[24] In this section David Tucker, who works for the American based Strategic Studies Institute, is quoted in saying that contemporary civilized societies are threatened by "savage warriors who respect none of the civilized constraints" of warfare (Bowden 276). And according to the war historian John Keegan (quoted in the same text), there is a clear link, here, between "the savages of the past and the savages of the present" (282). I am not saying that these scholars use the term unreflectively, nor am I saying that they use the term only rhetorically or ideologically (although all this may be the case). One could even question, "why bother that they use the term, as long as we are all capable of sensing and tracing how they specifically use it?" However, that would be a bit naïve, for the term savage indeed *imposes* itself, almost self-evidently and naturally, and our response to it, or resistance against it, will not make it go away. Thus unavoidably my study contributes to the term's imposition, yet it does so in a relevant context and not in order to get away from the very term savage. In a sense this study takes seriously that the term savage is here to stay. The relevant issue, consequently, is that we, as scholars, ask ourselves how come and why? Or more precisely: how come and why does this term persist despite decades of serious and continuous criticism?

This brings me to my research question. As said, by now there have been many studies, especially in the entire body of knowledge on colonialism and postcolonialism, in which the use of the term savage has been critically investigated. Instead of adding yet

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[22] On this nostalgic characteristic in modernity and capitalism, see Braidotti (1994).

[23] On the manipulation of language in Nazi Germany, see, for instance, Michael and Doerr (2002).

[24] See Bowden (2016).

another genealogy of, or yet another linguistic or ideological critique on the use of the term, this study aims to investigate four major ways people have tried to dismantle, or to move away from the term savage as being part of an opposition that always contrasts the civilized European or Western man with uncivilized savage. In my analysis, the four major modes of trying to dismantle this Eurocentric opposition, and hence the term savage, have been: the structuralist one, the poststructuralist one, the postcolonial or multiculturalist one, and, most recently, the decolonial one. With respect to these my study wants to chart first of all, more or less systematically, how they have been trying to dismantle the term, and secondly how the different attempts led into one another, with decoloniality as the latest attempt in a chain.

In this context one question I will raise is: What was and is the potential in, and what were and are the limits of these prominent philosophical and methodological attempts to dismantle the Eurocentric notion of the savage? To answer that question I will bring paradigmatic theoretical texts in dialogue with what I consider to be paradigmatic literary and cinematographic texts. I do so because my hypothesis is that the notion of the savage cannot be dismantled critically, rationally, or in terms of scrutiny and awareness. This hypothesis is related to my second question: Why were or are all these attempts to dismantle the Eurocentric term "savage" not successful? One answer to this question is that the referent of savage is not real in the sense of *real*, while, yet, it is real. That is, it belongs to the realm of imagination. With respect to this, in the end of my study, I will come to define the savage as a ghost, and a multiple one at that. The other answer is that the theoretical attempts to dismantle the notion of the savage have not been able to really ground their analysis affectively, or aesthetically. This is also why I decided to bring theoretical texts and artistic ones into dialogue with one another. When I will get to my suggestions for further research, one of them will be that, perhaps, we do not need alternative theories, but rather more and other cultural representations—representations that do not rely on familiar and too often repeated stereotypes and oppositions.

0.3 Method: Rubbing Theory and Art

The theoretical attempts to do away with the savage that I will identify are, like I said in the above: the structuralist one, the poststructuralist one, the postcolonial or multiculturalist one, and, most recently, the decolonial one. Each one of them will be central to, respectively, chapters one, two, three and four. In these chapters and on the basis of a paradigmatic theoretical text that exemplifies the approach as a whole, I will make the theory talk to paradigmatic artistic texts. The texts involved in chapter one are the French structuralist anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss's study *The Savage Mind* (originally published as *La Pensée Sauvage*) from 1962 and William Golding's novel *Lord of the Flies* from 1954. In chapter two I will bring White's "The Forms of Wildness: Archaeology of an Idea," from 1972 in dialogue with Aldous Huxley's novel *Brave New World* from 1932. In chapter three I will focus on Ella Shohat and Robert Stam's *Unthinking Eurocentrism: Multiculturalism and the Media* from 1994, especially chapter five entitled "Stereotype, Realism, and the Struggle over Representation," and discuss it in context with Quentin Tarrantino's film *Inglourious Basterds* from 2009. In chapter four, finally, I will deal with Mignolo's "DELINKING: The rhetoric of modernity, the logic of coloniality and the grammar of de-coloniality," from 2007 and bring it into dialogue with a recent film by Alejandro González Iñárritu, *The Revenant* from 2015. Why I chose

specifically these artistic texts will be discussed in the next subsection. Here I want to focus on how I relate the artistic texts methodically to the theoretical texts.

In terms of method I want to make it clear that I will not be offering overviews of the theoretical approaches involved. These overviews already exist.[25] I will be dealing with the potential they offered in their attempt to dismantle the notion of the savage in a European and Western context. This will be tested on the basis of paradigmatic theoretical texts in which the key characteristics of this potential can be found. When I said in the above that I will make these texts "talk to" or bring these texts "into dialogue" with artistic texts, this needs specification. The theoretical texts, although famous and important in their own right, and although they have influenced scholarly fields that may have a global scope, are comparatively marginal in terms of audience size and audience diversity, when compared to the audiences that read the novels or watched the films involved. *Brave New World* and *Lord of the Flies*, for instance, are still on the reading lists of almost all high school education in the Western world. In fact, when in the pre-final year of my research, 2016, the Dutch campaign called *Everyone in the Netherlands Reads* ("Heel Holland leest") selected *Lord of the Flies* as one of three books that everybody should read, and the book was distributed for free to masses of readers. Thus you can imagine how many students will read *Lord of the Flies* years before potentially being introduced to the ins and outs of structuralism, poststructuralism, postcolonialism and multiculturalism, or decoloniality. And in terms of scope (audience size and diversity) the novels I focus on turn pale in relation to the films concerned. *The Revenant*, for instance, was made with a budget of 135 million dollars and after its world wide release in January 2016 it earned more than 532 million dollars, and the numbers are still rising.

Due to their diverse if not disparate status, it seems that it would be hard to make all the almost incompatible texts "talk to one another." Yet I will take all these texts as indeed *text*, texts that as such can be close read. They are close read not to compare them, but to assess how a theoretical approach could or would deal with the artistic text it is confronted with, in trying to dismantle the notion of the savage. Methodically speaking, my analysis follows four steps, here. First, the theoretical text is close read for its paradigmatic status in relation to an approach. Second, the artistic texts functions as an object of analysis that may illustrate the *potential* in the theoretical approach involved. Third, the artistic text will help to indicate the *limits* of the attempt to do away with the Eurocentric notion of the savage. Fourth (and finally), I will pay attention to the ways in which the artistic text is "excessive" in that it will provoke or call for yet another attempt. Such provocation consists in the fact that these texts will prove to be hard to entirely grasp theoretically. They do not nicely fit. They are doing several things at the same time. Or they may be analyzed ideologically and criticized, while still preserving considerable affective powers. The theoretical and artistic texts brought together, here, are not so much "in dialogue" then. I had better say that I will be rubbing them against one another consecutively, in a scholarly way, in order to come to an overview of the attempts to critically deal with the notion of the savage.

As for the structuralist attempt, or more specifically structuralist anthropological attempt, it can be read as an alternative to the nineteenth century comparative forms of studies in which the comparison, implicitly or explicitly, was based on the cultural superiority of European nation states amongst one another and in relation to cultures and peoples globally.[26] In order to substantiate the structuralist alternative Lévi-Strauss

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[25] See Culler (1975), (1982), Loomba (2015), and Mignolo (2011).
[26] See Bassnett (1993) and Bernheimer (1995).

proposed an approach that was heavily influenced by the Prague form of structuralism, with Roman Jakobson as its major proponent, but that also implied some key aspects of French structuralism. The most important element here was the arbitrary relation between signifier and signified. Translated to anthropology this meant that the transition from nature to culture was not one of essential differences but of arbitrary rules. The difference between cultures was not one of hierarchy, moreover, although there were historical differences. Modern, rational, instrumentalized or technological science was different from what Lévi-Strauss called "wild thinking" but also has a structural resemblance with this type of thinking, in the sense that even the older "wild thinking" functioned as the "substrate" of this modern kind of thought. Here Lévi-Strauss formed a prelude to what later would be called "a difference within" (central to poststructuralism and to chapter two of this thesis).

In rubbing *The Savage Mind* against *Lord of the Flies* it will become clear that, in the novel, the signifier savage is an elusive sign that maintains a both naturalized and at the same time arbitrary relationship with the signified savage. Reading it in the structuralist mode, it appears that the novel not so much imposes an essentialist idea of the savage but instead works out a differential structure of savages, such as between noble savage, ignoble savage and animal-like savage. Secondly, it will appear that savage thinking is operative in the novel as well, in terms of what Lévi-Strauss would call "bricolage." The children's savage thinking is equal in this sense to the science that facilitated the very war that made the children end up on an uninhabited island. With respect to this, savage thinking is not inferior to Western scientific thinking but another mode of thinking that forms the substrate to modern thinking. Still, this all may not be enough to show that the signifier "savage" would not be able to function within the confines of Eurocentric oppositions. I will bring in Jonathan Culler's *Structuralist Poetics* to make clear why the idea of savage is difficult to eradicate, precisely due to structuralist effects. Especially Culler's ideas on "*vraisemblance*" are pivotal, here. With this notion Culler traced five different levels of *vraisemblance*, or the way in which things appear to be conceivably real. All these levels apply to *Lord of the Flies*. Ironically, a structuralist poetics tells us, then, why structuralism is able to analyze oppositions but not do away with them.

Chapter two deals with what has been called "a difference within." Basing himself on White's *Metahistory*, Arnold Krupat in a study on Native American[27] autobiographies, described how "the story of Indian savagery must be structured as a tragedy, because the story of Euroamerican civilization … was structured as a comedy" (qtd. in Sayer 34). Krupat brought in White's different generic modes to organize historical materials in order to show that history does not exist in forms of history that are opposites and in order to show that no one history coincides with itself due to internal differences. The idea, here, was to dismantle the Eurocentric or Western historiography as it was projected through one single and dominant perspective and to focus on internal dynamics. Following the logic of poststructuralism I will be looking here at the novel

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[27] There are many different terms to refer to the Natives who lived in the Americas before the Conquest of the New World, such as *Native Americans*, *American Indians*, *Indians, Injuns* and *Indigenous*. Different scholarly circles choose different terms. For example, the latest overview of Ecocriticism chooses *American Indians*. The reason is that *Native Americans* suggests that they are Americans though native ones while *American Indians* works the other way around. However, in this thesis, I prefer to use the term *Native Americans*, because the use of *Indian* in *American Indians* seems rather Eurocentric in that it repeats the misunderstanding of Christopher Columbus and his contemporaries that the natives they encountered in the New World were, in fact, the people of India (so the appellation *Indian* confirms their gaze in a way). As other authors prefer to use other terms, I have left their words as they wrote them, as to a certain extent these term can be used interchangeably.

Brave New World in terms of a cartography of different territories, which include the Civilized World, the Savage Reservation, the Exile place and the Light house, where John the Savage spends his life in the end. John the Savage will illustrate here how the savage embodies a difference within that exemplifies how civilization and savagery coexist in and with one another. Rubbing the novel against White's article "The Forms of Wildness: Archaeology of an Idea," I will come to conclude that the poststructuralist approach finds its limit in that it cannot lead to an alternative history, but instead reshapes history in the form of what White would call historiographical Satire.[28]

In chapter three I will discuss a chapter from Shohat and Stam's *Unthinking Eurocentrism: Multiculturalism and the Media* (1994). The chapter is entitled "Stereotype, Realism, and the Struggle over Representation" which are all notions that are of relevance in rubbing the text against Quentin Tarrantino's film *Inglourious Basterds* from 2009. The attempt embodied in the work of Shohat and Stam was not so much to look for a difference-within but for a plurality of options, as is the case with multiculturalism. Central here was not so much to try to deconstruct the dominant perspective, but rather to show how within one world a plurality of cultural representations exist. In the film, for instance, representations of the Second World War, of the destruction of Jews, and of Native Americans, of civilized and less civilized, and of civilized and savage, intermingle. They do not do so on an equal par, however. This is what brings Shohat and Stam to a second element in the attempt to avoid focusing on one dominant perspective. Instead they propose that readers and critics amplify voices that are hidden or marginalized in texts, again in order to plurify. Such plurification has one major opponent, namely stereotypes that have such a powerful persisting force. Here the idea is that by means of repetition a difference can be realized nevertheless. That is to say: attempts to do away with stereotypes by means of criticism may not work but repeating them may, because through repeating them other meaning potentials may materialize and possibilities of difference may start to work (I will be following the work of Judith Butler here).

In chapter four I will rub Iñárritu's film *The Revenant* (2015) with Mignolo's "DELINKING: The rhetoric of modernity, the logic of coloniality and the grammar of de-coloniality" (2007). The film may serve to indicate that the attempt here is not so much to think in terms of plurality but in terms of multiplicity. Whereas plurality, like multiculturalism, operates within one world, the term multiplicity suggests that there are worlds existing next to one another that are not translatable into one another and may be disparate. The decolonial attempt aims to consider history not from one dominant and dominating perspective, nor from a plural perspective on that history, but to multiply history. To that order we have to "de-link" ourselves, as Mignolo calls it, from a historiography that perpetuates itself even when subjected to criticism and attempts to plurify it. Instead we have to focus on other histories, other modes of thinking, other worlds.

0.4 Why the Paradigm of "the" Native American?

In what follows I will be focusing on representations of Native Americans only, and this choice requires justification. In Western colonial discourses, African, Asian, Australian,

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[28] Here in order to distinguish Satire from satire as a literary genre, I choose to use "Satire" with the capital "S" to refer to the historiographical Satire discussed by White in *Metahistory*. More on this in chapter two.

and American peoples have all been regarded as "others," and many of them have been depicted as savages. *The Encyclopaedia Britannica* (1853), for instance, under the lemma "Asia," described the situation as follows:

> Among those semi-barbarians who have no fixed habitation, but who dwell in tents, migrating periodically with their flocks in quest of pasture, all crimes of violence, such as rapine, revenge, and murder prevail without any restraint. … The regular commerce of Asia is in consequence carried on in caravans or large companies or merchants who travel together for safety; and even these are not secure from the savage tribes, the remnants of the Tartar population, who inhabit the mountains and central plains. (751)

The passage can be seen as paradigmatic in its stereotypical description of savage peoples from other continents than Europe. Here, in fact, we may trace the scalar Enlightenment idea of evolutionary progress that I talked about in section 0.1, where savages come before barbarians, or semi-barbarians. My decision to focus solely on Northern Native Americans is due to their unique relationship with Westerners. Before Christopher Columbus landed on what later would be termed "the New World," in 1492, Native Americans lived on their own, in their diversity, on the Northern and Southern American continents. Among all other, these continents, and especially the North, were called "The New World" by Europeans who desired to leave their own "Old World" either for trade and profit or to escape religious persecution. In this context and in this process, the American colonization, much like the later Australian one, amounted to an appropriation that did not consist in ruling other peoples, but *removing* them, in one way or another. Whereas nineteenth century colonialism consisted of European nation states ruling other peoples and nations that, at least to a certain extent, continued to exist, the histories of many Native American groups were nigh extinguished. Thus, from almost this moment in the sixteenth century, the figure of the Native American became a dominant, haunting subject in the European and Western imagination.

Centuries later, at the height of European colonialism, the German novelist Karl May (1842-1912) contributed enormously to a popularized and sometimes almost savoured idea of the Native American as either a ferocious or violent savage, or a noble one, fighting against the injustice of European settlers. Through works such as May's, the Native American, or "Indian," became the paradigmatic and favorite Western savage, who was either regarded as brave, noble, and good, or as animalistic, offensive, bloodthirsty, and bad. This was not just a matter of artistic imaginations such as May's. The meeting between Europeans and Native Americans produced fundamental changes. As Jodi Byrd noted, the conquest of the New World and its inhabitants "marked a fundamental and radical shift within the historical trajectory of European epistemology, engendering in its wake the notion of the human and mobilizing the concept of property, money, and life as possessions that would come to stand as the boundaries between civilization, savagery, and the nonhuman" (Byrd 122). That is to say, with the European appropriation of the Americas, European epistemology changed, and the boundaries between civilization and savagery, the human and the nonhuman, were redefined. Yet, since this very fundamental change was intrinsically linked to the confrontation with Native Americans, the latter kept haunting the European and Western imagination.

In the course of centuries, but especially in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Native Americans who had been external to the Old World came to be treated

as savages external to their own, now New World as well. As Byrd also notes: "Sovereignty in the New World required Indians as the sign of the external savage in order to cohere an internal ordering of the nomos" (124). In being framed as external savages, Native Americans were redefined as subjects who would not be eradicated coincidentally by European settlers, but had to be removed on so-called legitimate grounds. The treatment of Native Americans as external to their own native land, as unwanted others that needed to be expelled from their territory, continues well into the twenty-first century. This process is also met with acts of resistance, which underline the irony in the colonizer's treatment of Native Americans as trespassers in their own territory. A striking recent example is the protest known as the Standing Rock Protest, which is still taking place at the moment I am writing this thesis. This protest was initiated in 2014 by Native Americans—the Standing Rock Sioux tribe—to safeguard their sacred native land and protect their water sources from being contaminated by a project called The Dakota Access pipeline (DAPL).[29] Until November 1st 2016, the federal government did not issue any specific proposal or commandment in response to the protest, and both presidential candidates Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump held an unclear attitude towards the protest, while what is clear is that "a highly militarized police force" has been formed to "aggressively target protesters."[30] That is to say, even today, the rights of Native Americans to their lands are still hardly guaranteed.

Thus, the history of a "discovery," which was also glorified as a history of conquest, turned out to be a history of colonization, genocide and racialization of Native Americans. In this history, however, Native Americans were not simply or not always passive objects, if only for the reason that they proved to be constitutive elements in the conceptualization of European civilization: "European modernity hinges upon Indians as the necessary antinomy through which the New World—along with civilization, freedom, sovereignty, and humanity—comes to have meaning, structure, and presence" (Byrd 123). As the *necessary* antinomy, then, Native Americans came to contribute to the construction of European modernity. Compared with savage Africans, savage Asians, or savage Australians, the savage Native American came to be a both external and central figure, who was constantly reproduced in Western discourse.

In my research, I do not bring in works by Native Americans themselves, which is not to deny their significance or relevance. On the contrary, as Elvira Pulitano argues in *Toward a Native American Critical Theory* (2003), the works of Native American critics, such as Paula Gunn Allen, Craig Womack, Robert Warrior, Greg Sarris, Louis Owens, and Gerald Vizenor, form an independent Native American critical theory. Their studies contribute to:

> a corpus of works that could represent the beginning of a Native American critical theory, a complex, hybridized project that, while deeply embedded within the narratives of Native American oral tradition and Native epistemology, inevitably conducts dialogues with the larger critical discourse of contemporary theory and significantly disputes the scholarly assumptions of a resistance to theory within Native American studies. (Pulitano 3)

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[29] See <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2016/nov/03/north-dakota-access-oil-pipeline-protests-explainer>.

[30] See <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2016/nov/03/north-dakota-access-oil-pipeline-protests-explainer>.

Many contemporary Native American novelists, such as N. Scott Momaday, Louise Erdrich, James Welch, Leslie Marmon Silko, and Sherman Alexie, began to make their voices heard in order not just to rethink but also move away from, or provide alternatives to, the stereotypes of Native Americans. In fact, Marmon Silko's *Ceremony* was counted as "among the four most important American publications" in 1996 (Wiese 79). It would be possible and a decisive endeavor to bring in the voices of Native Americans themselves, to think with Native American critics, and study the figure of savage the Native American from the perspective of Native Americans. However, as Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak once explored in her study "Can the Subaltern Speak" (1988), the danger might be that we have not prepared the grounds for such a meeting well enough, as a result of which what Native Americans utter might be transformed or even distorted by the echo chambers of their European or Western-American masters. In fact, even the question of who or what "the" Native American is, has become vexing, which cannot be avoided in any discourse involving Native American issues. As Louis Owens points out in *Other Destinies*, the identity of Native Americans is an invention. The Native American, "in today's world consciousness is a product of literature, history, and art, and a product that, as an invention, often bears little resemblance to actual, living Native American people" (4). For Owens, as a product of colonial Western discourse, the Native American does not convey much about the reality of Native Americans, which includes diverse tribes, but instead tells us about Western imaginations. Therefore, in order to open possible grounds for talking about Native Americans as "actual, living" people in the past and in the present, we have to break up the conventional idea of the savage Native American first, or to de-naturalize its meanings in Western discourse. To that end, we do not have to return to Western discourse itself but, rather, to the attempts to do away with the dialectical, oppositional notion of the savage in order to assess their strengths and weaknesses.

In Western discourse, the savage Native American is a construct with a long history: a construct that keeps repeating itself in literature and films, from, say, James Fenimore Cooper's 1826 novel, *The Last of the Mohicans*, to the 1990 film, *Dances with Wolves*, directed by Kevin Costner, to all sorts of contemporary comics, television series, and animations in which Native Americans appear explicitly and, increasingly, in a respectful way.[31] Yet, even more abundant are those cultural forms of representation in which Native Americans appear *implicitly* or tangentially. For instance, Golding's *Lord of the Flies* mentions the Native American tangentially, in comparison with J. M. Barrie's different versions of the Peter Pan story. Yet, the (racist) ghosts of both Peter Pan's Native Americans and the representation of Native Americans in general are *manifestly* present in Golding's novel.[32] In Huxley's *Brave New World*, John the Savage is far from

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[31] There are many examples of such comics, television series and animations. In 2015, Marvel Comics created its first Native American superhero, Red Wolf, who is resourceful, and uses grit, wits, and knowledge of his environment to battle crime. Instead of taking a supporting role, a Native American character named Naikia Parker takes the lead on the TV series *Nakia* (1974), which tells a story of a Native American police officer in New Mexico. Another TV series, *Northern Exposure* (1990-1995), in which a newly graduated doctor is required to set up his practice in an Alaskan town, not only features Native Americans, but also respects their culture. *Bravestarr* (1987-1988) is an animated television series, in which Marshal BraveStarr [Pat Fraley] is depicted as a Native American who can call upon the power of "spirit animals."

[32] On the occasion of the NBC show *Peter Pan Live!*, "a bold new LIVE television production of the classic Broadway musical," Elizabeth Broadbent rightly argued that things that would be simply impossible and unacceptable in the context of contemporary representations of Black Americans, are very well still possible regarding Native Americans, as when they are represented as less than children. See <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/elizabeth-broadbent/peter-pan-and-the-roots-o_b_6301724.html>.

being a Native American. Yet, here as well, the allusion is unmistakable, with the Reservation being a dominant space in the novel. My interest in relation to these is not to find out an authentic or realist, let alone *true* representation of the history of Native Americans, which is almost impossible to achieve. Instead, I want to delve into the presence of the savage, paradigmatically embodied by the Native American, in Western discourse and discuss how people, in reflecting on that discourse, have tried to break away from the ways in which the figure of the savage Native American was produced, is reproduced, and repeated, and how it, as a consequence, persists. Only if we have more clarity about these more or less successful attempts, can we try to find the grounds on which, or the cultural spaces within which, the voices of Native Americans themselves can be heard, without their being framed beforehand in such a way that these voices might not be their own in any true sense of the word.

Chapter One

The Savage Hierarchy: *Lord of the Flies* and *The Savage Mind*

Introduction

In his study published in 1962 entitled *La pensée sauvage* (*The Savage Mind*), the French structuralist anthropologist Lévi-Strauss worked with the opposition between the civilized and not-civilized, or to be more precise between the industrialized scientific mindset and the savage one.[1] He did so not so much to dismantle the very opposition or to propose another image of what can be called "savage," but to lay out another way of thinking that corresponds to the "savage mind." He thus distinguished between two modes of thinking and knowing: "modern scientific inquiry" and the "science of the concrete," the latter of which he also referred to as "magic," "mythical" or "savage" thought. His use of the term "savage" to characterize the latter science may create the impression that he placed these two modes in a hierarchical opposition to each other and/or in a scale of temporal development whereby savage or mythical thought was prior and inferior to scientific thought. However, this was not the case, rather, in an attempt to uncouple the opposition between civilization and savagery from an ideologically underpinned hierarchy, he saw these modes as two autonomous and equally valid ways of thinking and acquiring knowledge. In fact, his intention was to consider the savage equal to modern man.

     In order to test the implications of this attempt to consider the savage on a par with the civilized, I will bring Lévi-Strauss's argument in *The Savage Mind* in dialogue with Golding's *Lord of the Flies* (1954), a paradigmatic *literary* text on the difference between the two but also their disturbing intertwinement. The novel tells a story of a group of children who become savages after being abandoned on an uninhabited island following an aircraft crash. As the novel was written almost a decade after the Second World War, many critics read it as a reflection on people's depression and disillusionment due to witnessing, or going through the war. As Henri Talon, for example, argued: "Morally wounded by the extreme barbarity and sadism that the Second World War disclosed in the heart of *supposedly civilized Man*, Golding chose to project his spiritual uneasiness into a picture of children's hatred and deadly combats" (emphasis added, 296). And indeed, what Lévi-Strauss would call a substratum of this *supposedly civilized Man*, was embodied in the novel by

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[1] Although the popular English translation of the title is *The Savage Mind*, Dan Sperber, a student as well as critic of Lévi-Strauss, argues that it is more suitable to translate the title as *Untamed Thinking*, as *'The Savage Mind'* may suggest that "there may be other kinds of mind besides 'savage' one," which is what Lévi-Strauss argues against (Sperber 26).

children; children acting savagely.

In *Lord of the Flies*, at first, the lost and abandoned children are eager to be rescued by the adults and to return to their former world. In order to be rescued, they try to maintain the same order as their parents did and imitate the British system as much as possible. Under Ralph's leadership, they lay down basic rules to make their world as orderly and organized as English society. For example, during their first meeting, the children agree that as a rule only the one who holds the conch has the right to speak. To be saved by a passing-by ship, the children have some of them watch over the fire and make sure that there is enough smoke. To eat meat, they have their own hunting group and raise fire to cook the meat. However, after living on the island for a few days, the children find it difficult to maintain an orderly situation as in their former world and begin to break the rules. For instance, the meeting held by Ralph is no longer taken seriously and the conch loses its power to endow people with the right to speak. The group led by Ralph collapses and Jack overturns Ralph's position to become leader himself. Under Jack's leadership, the children gradually forget about getting rescued and pay little attention to the smoke. They begin to paint themselves like "Indians"—stereotypical savages, perform a hunting game, kill their peers such as the kind-hearted Simon and the intelligent Piggy, and plan to kill Ralph. It is mere coincidence that they are rescued by a navy ship in the end, as it was not something they actively sought at that point in the narrative.

As an adventure story, *Lord of the Flies* has a similar plot and structure as its precedents *Robinson Crusoe* (1719) by Daniel Defoe, *The Coral Island* (1858) by R. M. Ballantyne and other novels. All of these works describe how human beings survive on an uninhabited island after disasters. However, contrary to R*obinson Crusoe* and *The Coral Island*, which depict the successful survival of human beings after disasters, *Lord of the Flies* tells how a group of English children fail to maintain the order of their former world and become savages in the face of a harsh environment. The novel does not present any Native Americans, but it alludes to them through the imagination of these English children, who through their cultural training would be inclined to regard Native Americans as savages, and thus assume a "savage" identity themselves in the end.

The very fact that children are chosen as subjects acting savagely allows Golding to bring in a host of stereotypes concerning the savage. In doing so, the novel plays with the mapping of two pivotal tenets in the European imagination of the "savage other": the savage's belonging to another place, an alien "elsewhere," which in this case is an isolated and uninhabited island, and the savage's belonging to another time, the earlier. The implications of the savage's double removal, spatial and temporal, from civilization were examined to the full by the ethnographer Johannes Fabian in a study called *Time and the Other: How anthropology makes its objects*. This study focused on the fact that, from a European perspective, the savage elsewhere on this planet was equated with the primitive European ancestors, back in time. In the novel this shift is, in a sense, made literal and figural at the same time. It is literal because in its focus on children, the story presents, from an adult perspective, an

earlier phase, which is one that is supposedly less developed and less civilized. In eighteenth century and nineteenth century European evolutionary models, savagery commonly represented the first stage in human development and was correspondingly seen as the "childhood" of humanity.

The novel's focus on children literalizes this metaphor of the savage as the childhood stage of man, while it also evokes the infantilism in the colonialist attitude towards the colonized "savages": the tendency to reduce them to children and deny them an adult status and the ability to rule themselves (Acheraïou 70). The child was in fact a widely popular trope in colonial literature and colonialist discourse, where it functioned as a double symbol, "both 'unformed' and evil-like," and was used to define the colonized races (70). At the same time the children in the novel metaphorically present the acts of savage behavior of *adults*. The dynamic between the two—civilization and savagery—and the mapping of the two shifts in time and place produce an unease.

This unease, or dis-ease, does not so much concern a reaction to the conventional savage as the inferior opposite of the civilized, here, however. It was captured by Golding himself as follows: "I must say that anyone who moved through those years without understanding that man produces evil as a bee produces honey, must have been blind or wrong in the head" (qtd. in Bloom 56). The trope brought in play by Golding, of the bee producing honey, is also an uneasy one, since it equates the sweet of honey with the bitterness of evil. It may be, then, that the unease provoked by the savage-civilized dynamic constantly needs to be covered up by tropes, or allegories, which themselves produce unease. Through my reading of the novel, I will explore the implications of the novel's use of tropes that involve the savage and the unease that the novel produces as it iterates these tropes. Bringing the novel's treatment of the "savage" in dialogue with Lévi-Strauss's attempt to de-hierarchize the savage and claim the autonomy of savage thinking, I assess the potential but also the limits of this structuralist attempt to consider the savage as structurally both opposite to, and parallel with, the civilized. Finally, I employ Lévi-Strauss's notion of the "bricoleur"—which he used as a metaphor to elucidate the operation of savage or mythical knowledge—in order to test the way the novel deals with the figure of the savage and the implications of its approach for the kind of knowledge it produces about the (European) self and its others.

1.1 Mythical Knowledge Versus Modern Science: A Groundbreaking Distinction and Its Discontents

To showcase the innovation behind Lévi-Strauss's re-casting of the savage through his distinction between mythical and modern science, it is worth comparing Lévi-Strauss's approach to the common understanding of the "savage" in Western thought in more detail, especially in the way the notion of the savage was formed during the Enlightenment and has persisted since. Exploring the imagination about the savage in Enlightenment thought, Tony C. Brown stresses the function of the

savage other as indispensable for the completeness of the (civilized, European) self: "Along with an anthropological emphasis central to the Enlightenment came an understanding of the self's others as serving a particular function for the self such that it now maintains an unavoidable relation to those others" (70). At the same time, the savage is dependent on the civilized as it contributes to the construction of the European self. The placing of savagery and civilization in a temporal evolutionary scale of progress, which was particularly popular during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in Europe, also makes these categories appear somewhat autonomous: "Rousseau posits the savage as an anterior form of the European, giving each a certain autonomy. The savage presents an external category of identity different to that of the European" (70). Although this autonomy may seem to contradict the codependency of the savage and the civilized, Brown argues that it actually supports this codependency: "Through its exterior position," the savage "closes the circle of European self-constitution" (70). That is, the prior savage state is a necessary step in the evolution toward civilized progress and marks the origins of civilized society—a primitive, less advanced state that has to be superseded by other stages so that the civilized subject can eventually emerge. Thus, the temporal and spatial distance of the savage (as a previous stage but also the subject of alien faraway places), which I already laid out in the introduction, does not entail the savage's autonomy but enhances its function as a means of self-constitution. "The savage," Brown writes, "points both to the European self and away from that self; it presents, precisely, the not- or pre-European" (70).

Following this logic, the savage's mode of being and knowing, as conceptualized by many thinkers of the Enlightenment, primarily helped to make a point about civilized modes of social organization and knowledge acquisition: i.e. savages proved the superiority of European civilization, or in the case of critiques to European societies, illustrated the flaws and corruption of European societies through their innocence, naivety, and pure state. But even when savages were mobilized as a means of critique of European societies, they were still defined based on what they lacked, not based on positive qualities. Already in the late sixteenth century, Montaigne's description of the Tupi tribe is exemplary of this casting of Native American "savages" through negative categories, even when they are being admired:

> This is a nation ... in which there is no kind of commerce, no knowledge of letters, no science of numbers, no title of magistrate or of political superior, no habit of service, riches or poverty, no contracts, no inheritance, no divisions of property, only leisurely occupations, no respect for any kinship but the common ties, no clothes, no agriculture, no metals, no use of corn or wine. (110)

In line with this logic, even though the savage was considered as the "pre" of civilization, belonging to another phase in time, savages themselves were denied history; not only did they lack history, but they were even seen as lacking the capacity to reflect on the past, condemned to living in an eternal present: "savages

never look before or behind themselves, to the past or to the future. Living in a condition of apparent unhistorical immanence, they belong to the present alone" (T. Brown 67).

Lévi-Strauss thus sets out to counter a series of common assumptions about "savages" and their languages, many of which owe their popularization to narratives formed during the Enlightenment. He thus rejects the common claim that savage languages—a term with which Lévi-Strauss mainly referred to languages of Native Americans—are poor in abstraction, which is supposedly the "monopoly of civilized languages" (1966, 1). These languages do not lack in intellectual capacity compared with civilized languages (8). Their systematic organization of knowledge does not only serve practical purposes and satisfy practical needs, but further meets complex "intellectual requirements": things "are not known as a result of their usefulness" but are considered "useful or interesting because they are first of all known" (9). In an attempt to relativize essentialist attitudes of cultural superiority that, as we saw, tend to utilize the category of the savage as a means of constructing a superior self, he notes that "every civilization tends to overestimate the objective orientation of its thought [...] When we make the mistake of thinking that the Savage is governed solely by organic or economic needs, we forget that he levels the same reproach at us" (3).

As already explained in the introduction, "mythical," "savage" or "magical" thought for Lévi-Strauss is not defined as the inferior and negative opposite of modern science—that which *lacks* what modern science has—but as an autonomous, equally valid mode of knowing. Emphatically asserting the autonomy of savage or magical thought, he presents it as "complete in itself" and "a well-articulated system," "independent of that other system which constitutes science" (13). It is worth looking closer at the passage in chapter one, where Lévi-Strauss is comparing these two forms of knowledge in order to establish the autonomy of savage or mythical thought:

> I am not however commending a return to the popular belief (although it has some validity in its own narrow context) according to which magic is a timid and stuttering form of science. One deprives oneself of all means of understanding magical thought if one tries to reduce it to a moment or stage in technical and scientific revolution. Like a shadow moving ahead of its owner it is in a sense complete in itself, and as finished and coherent in its immateriality as the substantial being which it precedes. ... It is therefore better, instead of contrasting magic and science, to compare them as two parallel modes of acquiring knowledge. Their theoretical and practical results differ in value, for it is true that science is more successful than magic from this point of view, although magic foreshadows science in that it is sometimes also successful. Both science and magic however require the same sort of mental operations and they differ not so much in kind as in the different types of phenomena to which they are applied. (13)

In the context of the Western tradition of thinking about the relation between the savage and the civilized, several aspects are telling in this quote, including a remarkable ambiguity. First of all, there is Lévi-Strauss's reference to the common idea that magic would be a prefiguration of what later would fully develop into science—an idea that he considers inadequate. This idea in fact, would nicely fit in with the shift in time that Fabian addressed: the idea of the savage mind belonging to an earlier phase of humanity's development. By contrast, Lévi-Strauss explicitly rejects the evolutionary scheme in which the savage had been implicated since the eighteenth century—for him, savage thought and science are "two parallel modes of acquiring knowledge" (13). He thus appears to argue that magic is a fully developed practice on its own. Yet two times in the same paragraph, there is a metaphor that complicates this assertion, which is the metaphor of the shadow. This metaphor suggests that the one haunts the other, suggesting a degree of codependency between them, and seems to equate, by analogy, science with the substantial, and magic with the ungraspable or immaterial. If this metaphor seems to re-establish a certain hierarchy between the two (with magic as an immaterial, incomplete shadow, anticipating modern science) this suggestion is then explicitly countered again when the two are described as "parallel" in terms of the human potential to acquire knowledge. Although such equality between magic and science is somewhat contradicted again when the *success* of both appears to be unequal, the two become equal again as one of a kind in terms of mental operations, only differing as to the things to which they are applied.

Thus as we can see, even as Lévi-Strauss claims the equality of mythical (or savage) and modern science and their respective autonomy, thereby going against a long tradition in European thought, he cannot fully escape the hierarchical assumptions that are imbued in the categories he uses. These assumptions create contradictions and ambiguities in his use of these categories. Succeeding in developing a new use of the "savage" is not merely a matter of individual intention, as all the categories involved in Lévi-Strauss's distinctions carry a deep-rooted history: the ideological underpinnings of this history become manifest in the metaphors and tropes that Lévi-Strauss uses in the above passage, which make it clear that every attempt to radically redefine savagery and civilization is haunted by the "shadow" of the previous established meanings and connotations of these categories.

Nevertheless, the tactic of Lévi-Strauss is clear regarding his dealing with the problem of the savage. The general gist of his argument in this book is that what is savage is not something of the past, or of the non-civilized other elsewhere. Similar to civilized thinking, savage thinking is also structural and follows similar mental operations that are based on binary oppositions. Considered as such the two are indeed parallel and their difference is not absolute (19). At the same time there are clear differences in play in terms of their materiality, success, or objects of application. Later on in the chapter, he elaborates on those differences. For example although these are "two distinct modes of scientific thought," magic thought is based

more on "sensible intuition" than modern science (15), which is also why Lévi-Strauss calls magic thought "the science of the concrete" (16). This science is not devoid of speculation and abstraction. Myths and rites are part of it, since Lévi-Strauss sees mythical thinking not as a removal from reality but as a valid mode of knowing that preserves "the remains of methods of observation and reflection which were (and no doubt still are) precisely adapted to discoveries of a certain type" (16). Magic science also tends to presume causal relationships between similarities among members of a species (16). As a mode of inquiry, it has a "heterogeneous repertoire" which is, however "limited" (17). "It has to use this repertoire ... whatever the task in hand because it has nothing else at its disposal" (17).

For Lévi-Strauss, the differences between these two modes of thinking and knowing need not be hierarchized, as it almost automatically happens for instance in an opposition between primitive and civilized (and let me note that this was the very reason why Lévi-Strauss refused to use the term "primitive"). In his attempt to de-hierarchize the distinction between the savage and the civilized—also taking into account the discontents and problematic aspects of this attempt—I consider Lévi-Strauss's text paradigmatic for a structuralist way of dealing with the problem of the savage.

1.2 The Powers of *Vraisemblablisation*

As said, I will bring Lévi-Strauss's text in dialogue with Golding's *Lord of the Flies*. The dystopia depicted in *Lord of the Flies* will allow me to test the structuralist attempt to move away from the use of the Western concept of the savage as the inferior part of a hierarchical opposition with civilization, as we see it in Lévi-Strauss. In order to scrutinize the ways the novel deals with, and frames, the "savage," first it is necessary to revisit the novel's own framing by other critics, given the fact that it is considered as a canonical work and has attracted much literary criticism. This will allow me to situate my own approach and differentiate it from previous readings. In order to frame my account of the novel's reception, I will turn to one of the great scholars of literary theory and potential of the structuralist approach in the domain of the humanities: Culler, and his study *Structuralist Poetics*.

Culler is very clear on the ideological implications of culture's ability to make logical structures on the basis of oppositions. When confronted with new material, anyone trained in a culture is inclined to assimilate or interpret it in such a way that the new element is brought "within the modes of order which culture makes available, and this is usually done by talking about it in a mode of discourse which a culture takes as natural" (1975, 137). This is to say that in the case of texts, the interpretation of one text will take place in the context of other texts, which are culturally available and, because they are so well known, come to be taken as self-evident, likely, and in the ultimate sense as natural. Aspects of this process of interpretation and assimilation get different names in structuralist writing, such as "recuperation, naturalization, motivation," but Culler is especially interested in the process he calls *vraisemblablisation* (138). In this section, I will use the term

vraisemblablisation, which "stresses the importance of cultural models of the *vraisemblable* as sources of meaning and coherence" (138). The way readers make sense of *Lord of the Flies*, I argue, is based on "*vraisemblablisation*": despite the obvious absurdity of the situation (a group of children as the only survivors on an uninhabited island), the situation in the novel manages to come across as somehow "likely." This, at least, is evidenced by critical responses to the novel.

Vraisemblance is one of the best-known notions in the poetic demands of French classicism, that in turn found its inspiration in Aristotle's demands that a plot be true to reality.[2] In French classicism the demand was that a theatre play should offer a story and a plot that would be *vraisemblable*, or "likely," conceivable, probable, trustworthy. Formally this also implied that an actor on stage could not address the audience because this would breach the likelihood of the *diegesis*. Taking up that notion in the context of structuralism, Culler argues that strategies of vraisamblablisation are aimed towards correspondence, and in that context he introduces five levels of this strategy in a chapter entitled "Convention and Naturalization":

> First there is the socially given text, that which is taken as the 'real world.' Second, but in some cases difficult to distinguish from the first, is a general cultural text: shared knowledge which would be recognized by participants as part of culture and hence subject to correction or modification but which none the less serves as a kind of 'nature'. Third, there are the texts or conventions of a genre, a specifically literary and artificial *vraisemblance.* Fourth comes what might be called the natural attitude to the artificial, where the text explicitly cites and exposes *vraisemblance* of the third kind so as to reinforce its own authority. And finally, there is the complex *vraisemblance* of specific intertextualities, where one work takes another as its basis or point of departure and must be assimilated in relation to it. (1975, 140)

Before discussing how different critics interpret the novel, I would like to illustrate first how *vraisemblablisation* works on these five levels through the novel. At the first level, *vraisemblance*, "is best defined as a discourse which requires no justification because it seems to derive directly from the structure of the world" (140). The text is taken, then, as a realist description of what happens in reality. In the novel, these children are left on the island because of an air crash. Just as the news we read in the newspaper or see on television, an air crash can happen in daily life. That is to say, at this level, what the novel tells us can be regarded as a "simple, coherent and true" description of reality. In addition, we know that the Second World War took place and that it involved massive amounts of aircraft crashes, even with people ending up on uninhabited islands of the Pacific Ocean. The second level

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[2] For Aristotle, the plot "goes to the bodying forth of reality, the essential truth about human beings and their actions, not the invention of fantasies or private worlds" (Preminger, Warnke & Hardison 130).

is addressed as "cultural *vraisemblance*," which includes "a range of cultural stereotypes or accepted knowledge" (141). Here Culler first admits that it is difficult to distinguish this level from the first one. Yet what is emphasized at this level is the role played by culture in constructing what is taken as generally likely and in that sense almost "natural." For example, when the novel introduces that it concerns a group of children, most readers will not start to ponder immediately what the term "children" means. The meaning of the term is self-evident. Still, the concept of who or what can be called a child changes over time, or may be culturally variable. In the European Middle Ages, "Ages of consent to marry varied according to time and place, but most agreed that girls were able to marry from the age of 12, while boys could marry once they reached the age of 14" (Bardsley 98). So, at that time, children at the age of 12 were regarded as old enough to get married. By contrast, in the novel, the older children are also around 12 years old, but contemporary readers will consider them to be children and not close to being able to enter an adult relationship such as marriage. Here we can see that although the concept of child has been constructed differently in different cultural and historical contexts, within the limits of each period and context it is considered to be self-evident as to what a child is.

At the third level, *vraisemblance* emphasizes the models of a genre, which "involves a specifically literary intelligibility: a set of literary norms to which texts may be related and by virtue of which they become meaningful and coherent" (1975, 145). At this level, for instance, the same sentence may be interpreted differently "if found in an ode and in a comedy," because of the different literary norms in play (147). *Lord of the Flies* is a novel, which is a genre that projects its own specific legibility and intelligibility. It depends on a narrative plot, for instance, and connotes both fiction and realism. There are also genres operative *within* the novel. In order to survive on the island, Piggy and Ralph think that it is wise to have meetings together. The meeting can be regarded as a well-known genre too, with specific rules, one of which is that every participant is assumed and expected to be serious. However, lacking any idea of the regulations of meetings, the smallest children, called "littluns" in the novel, giggle during the meeting, and in doing so break the rules—and are criticized for it. Thus they prove how the genre of the meeting, in following a set of intelligible norms, "naturally" expects a response of assimilation.

At the fourth level, to assist the interpretative process, Culler emphasizes how breaking a convention can be the very thing to make something "likely." To this order one is required to have "a repertoire of traditional functions of literature and attitudes towards it… and a sense of how to read particular elements or images as instances of the literary process" (151). This fourth level is closely related to the third, but whereas genres indeed function on the basis of norms, here the issue is whether people are aware of the functions of literature, know how to adopt an attitude towards it, and, most importantly, know how to twist expectations. We do not take *Lord of the Flies* as a news report or a historical study because we know it is literature; fiction. Yet in giving it meaning, we might be inclined to consider its function to be an allegorical one (as most critics did) which means that it has a function opposite to fiction (understood here as opposed to "reality"). Viewed as an

allegory it has to show us a truth, perhaps even a higher truth. Within the novel again, to have an organized meeting, Piggy suggests that whoever wants to speak has to hold the conch. After we, as readers, learn what the function of this conch is, we adopt an attitude towards it: we understand the gesture and believe it in all likelihood. At the same time, the conch has now become something that can be used meaningfully precisely because some characters fail to follow its convention: this failure to comply with the convention in the case of the smallest children makes us aware of the function of the convention itself.

At the last, fifth level of *vraisemblence*, to interpret the text one has to keep two elements in mind, which include "the order of the original and the point of view which undermines the original" (152). Here the idea might be not so much to break with a convention or follow an opposite logic, but rather to undermine the convention through parody and irony. The novel is engaged with many classical or even foundational works, such as the Bible. For instance, the symbolical appearance in the novel of the pig's head on the sharpened stick may connote sin, or evil, and thus can be read as a parody of Christ on the cross to save people's sins. Still, this parody at the same time confirms the importance of the symbol of the crucified Christ.

Culler's ideas of how texts can come to be accepted as likely are enlightening when we consider how critics have culturally and ideologically "assimilated" and interpreted the novel at the mentioned five different levels of the *vraisemblable*. First, the novel is read as a representation of what is "real," as when it is thought to "be telling us something simple, coherent, and true" (141). Since the novel was written after the Second World War, in 1954, many critics read the novel as a reflection of that war. The already mentioned Talon, for instance, considered that the novel reflects the brutality and cruelty of the war, which wounds and saddens "supposedly civilized Man" (296). In this context, the dead body of a parachutist in the novel was a clear hint that the story is not to be read as purely fictional. The dead parachutist represents one of the many casualties caused by the war and colors the entire story with "the reality" of the Second World War. L. L. Dickson argues: "The protagonist's ironic 'rescue' by a naval officer, who is himself engrossed in the savage business of international warfare, reveals that the chaotic island-world is but a small version of a war-torn adult world" (12). What has happened on this island is a mise-en-abyme of the world tortured by the Second World War. Thus Wayland Young argues: "you realize after a time that the book is nothing less than a history of mankind itself; of its politics, its economics, its religions, all its forms of existence except reproduction" (478-79).

The second level refers to cultural *vraisemblance*, depending on the common sense, or the general knowledge of a specific culture. Here, many critics read the novel as an exemplification of child psychology, and according to the rules of cultural *vraisemblance*, started to ponder about the reasons why children can behave so (stereotypically) savagely. Their works were not limited to the psychoanalytical theories proposed by Freud or Carl Jung, but involved discussions on the influence of social organization upon children's personality and different stages in child

development. For example, in order to analyze how different forms of social organization can influence a person's personality, Hamish Canham distinguished between the concept of the group from the concept of the gang by discussing their separate structure, and explored their respective influences upon the states of mind of the children. According to Canham, within a group, it is much easier for children to develop a positive personality, while within a gang, children tend to take on a negative personality and behave badly. In his reading, then, the children formed a gang rather than a group and thus they behave savagely in the end. As to different stages of child development, Minnie Singh found that the novel described how children develop from boyhood to adolescence. Breaking away from the literature of boyhood, which is full of "innocent homosocial pleasures," *Lord of the Flies* "invented the genre of adolescent writing," which is featured by "the potent but shameful solitude of adolescence" (211). Moreover, Singh also discussed the significance of female figures in boyhood as well as in adolescence. For example, in *The Coral Island*, as Singh argued, thanks to the female character, boys live with restraints and behave themselves, while in *Lord of the Flies*, where the female is absent, boys live on their own and therefore become savages. In fact this is why they are no longer "boys." Several critics think highly of boys and boyhood. Steven Marcus is one of these, in arguing that:

> In no other language does the word for boy have the kind of resonance that it does in English … In what other language is there such an epithet as "Oh, boy!"—an expression of the very essence of spontaneous delight … boy is one of the sacred words of the English language; boyhood is—or for one hundred and fifty years was—a priestly state or condition; and the literature of boys and boyhood has had, for a secularized era, something of the aura of doctrinal or holy writ. (152)

The cultural reading of the novel is almost paradigmatic, here. From such readings of the novel, we can gather that cultural *vraisemblance* is used as a tool to explain, that is to say, to make natural, why these children become savages. As Culler puts it: "Most elements of the second level function in this way: one is aware of them as generalizations or cultural categories which may oversimplify but which at least make the world initially intelligible and consequently serve as a target language in the process of naturalization" (1975, 142).

In correspondence with Culler's third level, many critics read the novel as an allegory of distinct social and political systems. For instance, in "From War to War: *Lord of the Flies* as the Sociology of Spite," Bülent Diken and Carsten Bagge Laustsen considered the novel to be "an allegory of a biopolitical or postpolitical society" and discussed the fragile balance between "democratic utopianism versus fascist violence, society versus the mob" (431). The novel was read as an allegory of the conflict between two political systems—the democratic system and the dictatorial system. Likewise, based on his research on social relations and power systems in the novel, Keith Selby distinguished "the rational society led by Ralph and the primitive,

tribal society led by Jack" (57). Such allegorical readings, that stick to the norms of the genre, would be equally generic in their translating the norms set by Ralph and Jack in the novel to the norms established by different social and political systems. Yet these readings also fall under the rubric of a fourth category introduced by Culler. Instead of reading the novel as mere fiction, they considered it to be a case of mimesis by means of which they adopt an attitude towards the novel in terms of the ethical stance expressed in the novel. Ralph's group versus Jack's group would be labeled as democratic system versus dictatorial/totalitarian system respectively. Ralph's group would be more civilized and more advanced and morally better than Jack's group, because of the generally accepted idea that democracy is superior to totalitarianism.

Reflecting the fourth level, the novel was read in the Western context as both confirming and breaking away from well-known conventions. Enlightenment would offer powerful examples of literary texts in which children would be the very embodiment of purity. Here, the novel could be considered as "likely" precisely because it did away with the naïve idea that children would be the vessel of purity. Second, in the Christian tradition, the son of God is the embodiment of innocence that would save mankind from the Fall. In Christianity, people are thought to be born as fallen human beings, corrupted by the original sin. Perhaps the children's falling from the sky could be taken figuratively here as a Fall. Golding's own reflection on the novel can be read as an interpretation at this level. Instead of following colonialist or mythological discursive traditions, in which children or colonized people are often depicted as "lacking coherent speech, and thus unable to represent themselves and take charge of their countries," Golding represented the children in the novel to be fully grown men (Acheraïou 70). And fallen men at that: "Man is a fallen being. He is gripped by original sin. I ... try to show how the shape of the society they evolved would be conditioned by their diseased, their fallen nature" (Golding 1965, 88). Then, biologically or anthropologically speaking, the third aspect is that, in the Western tradition since the nineteenth century, people are believed to have instincts. Although *Lord of the Flies* on the face of it could be seen to be a children's adventure book, it broke away with that convention in the eyes of critics. They thus approached the novel in order to illustrate certain scientific conventions. On the scientific side, Afaf Ahmed and Hasan Al-Saidi propose the idea of "savage instincts"; they argue that "savage instincts lurk within all human beings" and state that "Golding's central point in the novel is that a conflict between an impulse toward civilization and the impulse toward savagery rages within each human individual, regardless a child or an adult" (133). Similar to Ahmed and Al-Saidi's reading, Fatima Anjum, Sana Nawaz, and Muhammad Ramzan discuss the "feral instinct" and the "civilizing instinct." The latter coexists with the "feral instinct" but further ensures that people behave in a decent way. In this light, they argue that "*Lord of the Flies* dramatizes the fundamental conflict between civilization and savagery, endorsing the essential evil nature of human beings meant to bend towards the destructive side in the absence of any civilization" (124). For children in the novel, the "civilizing instinct" is overcome by the "feral instinct" as a result of

which civilization gradually waned. Finally, and again along similar lines, when discussing evil in the novel, Theodore Dalrymple argues that "evil does not have to be introduced into the heart of man from without, it is always lurking within, awaiting its opportunity to take over, and we are never safe from its predations" (26). Phillip Redpath, who in his article "Doorways through Walls: *Lord of the Flies* and *The Inheritors*" presents a structuralist reading of Golding's fiction and also discussed *Lord of the Flies,* argues that although it seems that in the novel there is an "antithetical structure" between reason and unreason, the civilized and the savage, it is impossible to apply "exclusive moral values" to them, because these two seemingly opposite sides emerge as one (93). It is impossible to argue for the goodness of the civilized and the evil of the savages, since "it is a condition of *Lord of the Flies* and *The Inheritors* being written in the first place that man occupies the dividing bar where both the sides merge and become one and the other" (98).

In correspondence with Culler's final level, critics also read the novel intertextually, as either confirming, parodying or ironizing in relation to other texts. "A work can only be read in connection with or against other texts, which provide a grid through which it is read and structured by establishing expectations which enable one to pick out salient features and give them a structure" (Culler 1975, 139). At this level, the novel is often read as a rewriting of classical works. Critics often engage in its close relationship with classics, such as the Bible, the Homeric epics and Euripidean tragedy. For example, in "Butterfly and Beast in *Lord of the Flies*," Robert J. White reveals how Golding uses classical themes and images in *Lord of the Flies,* and Robert C. Gordon discusses "Golding's use of Homeric and Euripidean elements" (424). In "The Savages in the Forest: Decolonising William Golding," Stefan Hawlin argues that "*Lord of the Flies* is a faint rewriting of Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*," because both of them involved the tension between the colonizers and the colonized (73). In "Good Grief: *Lord of the Flies* as a Post-war Rewriting of Salvation History," Marijke van Vuuren discusses biblical symbols in the novel and considered the novel as "Golding's bleak but certainly not hopeless rewriting of the salvation story for a post-faith readership" (1). Van Vuuren argued that the novel is not only a parody of the Bible, but also a reflection of the disillusionment of people after the Second World War.

As the above analysis shows, the majority of the novel's criticism can be regarded as fitting into the five different levels of *vraisemblablisation*. They all bring elements or aspects of the novel into correspondence with something else outside the novel. Culler's structuralist insights relate in this respect to Lévi-Strauss's. In *Structural Poetics*, Culler starts with Saussure's theory of linguistic structuralism. Following a structuralist approach he explains that, just as language is a system of arbitrary vocal symbols, in cultural objects there is also a system of underlying patterns that help to organize different worldviews. To work on these cultural objects means to discover a system of different underlying patterns. In that context critic Ino Rossi contends that "All too often structuralism has been dismissed as a logical exercise which reduces cultural data to abstract entities and produces explanations which cannot be verified through empirical observations" (188).

Lévi-Strauss argues and tries to avoid such a misunderstanding by contending that structural anthropology was not inductive, but a system of different principles or structures. The task of anthropologists was "to identify and to classify types, to analyze their constituent parts, and to establish correlations between them" (Lévi-Strauss 1976, 12). As if to argue against abstraction, Lévi-Strauss adds: "An arrangement is structured which meets but two conditions: that is a system ruled by an internal cohesiveness and that this cohesiveness, inaccessible to observation in an isolated system, is revealed in the study of transformations through which similar properties are recognized in apparently different systems" (18). He emphasizes that the cohesiveness of a structure is not accessible within one system, but reveals itself through its relations with other systems.

Lévi-Strauss's approach to structural anthropology becomes manifest in *The Savage Mind*, in which he proposed the idea that savage thinking was another way of thinking; in order to elucidate the structural operations of "savage" and "modern" science, he compares these models to see how they relate to each other. There, as Arie de Ruijter notes, "Lévi-Strauss is of the opinion that the brain functions by means of a mechanism of opposition and correlation, also designated as the principle of reciprocity and bipolarity, or as the unconscious" (275-76). As such, for Lévi-Strauss savage thinking and modern scientific thinking are parallel to each other and they can be thought as different systems with similar structures.

Culler follows this principle, but with an included pivotal element. Culler shows how such a correspondence always has to take place on the basis of an already established cultural and structuring system. Consequently, through *vraisemblablisation*, the opposition between savagery and civilization at play in the novel is naturalized, which is to say: brought into correspondence with the already existing cultural system *as an opposition*. This is also one reason why it is difficult to dismantle this opposition if we remain within a structuralist framework.

However, perhaps a structuralist reading of the novel that focuses on how the term savage is produced through several oppositions that, taken together, form a differential dynamic may offer an alternative. This is what I will now put to the test.

1.3 The Term Savage as an Elusive Sign: A Differential Dynamic

In "Nature of the Linguistic Sign," Ferdinand de Saussure illustrates the concepts of sign, signified and signifier and proposes "to retain the word *sign [signe]* to designate the whole and to replace *concept* and *sound-image* respectively by *signified [signifre]* and *signifier [signifiant]*" (67). For him, the sign is composed of two parts, signified and signifier, which refers to concept and sound-image respectively. He emphasizes the arbitrary nature of the sign: the relationship between signified and signifier is not consistent, motivated or unchanging. Based on Saussure's ideas, the sign savage is also made up of two parts, the concept of the savage and the sound-image of the savage. The arbitrary nature of that link might offer a basis for dismantling the negative connotations of the term, since the implication is that there is no essential "savage." Yet it is not just the arbitrary nature between signifier and signified that

determines the concept. Saussure also introduces a differential logic in arguing that it is the differences between signifiers (and consequently signifieds) that determine meaning. In the following section we will look at multiple usages of word *savage* in the novel and I will discuss how, following this differential logic, the sign savage may come to function as a site of conflicting and evolving meanings.

The structuralist approach is different here from an etymological, semantic or genealogical one. The word *savage*, coming from the Latin word for forest, grove or wood (*silva*), "was first used to represent men who lived in the German forests without any organized society" (Salter 20).[3] Semantically speaking, it can be used as a noun, verb and adjective to describe animals, plants, people as well as places although such a description usually carries an evaluative attitude. According to Brown, in Enlightenment thought "The word *savage* itself signals the lack of separation. As a predicate it can be attached to a person, to a scene, or to a product of nature. In each use the category remains "savage"; differentiation takes place only within the limits of that category (a savage human or a savage scene of nature)" (66). The term can be further broadened, for example, according to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, the adjective *savage* refers to being "in a state of nature, wild" but "in extended use" can be used "with reference to behavior, disposition, or character."[4] The same expanding force would hold for the noun, with savage referring first to "A person living in a wild state" but also to "a member of a people regarded as primitive and uncivilized," "A cruel or brutal person; (also) a person who is coarse, rough, or uncouth," "A wild or untamed animal," "a person dressed in greenery, representing a wild man of the woods" and others.[5] As a verb, savage can mean to "act in a savage manner; to be cruel or barbarous," "To make savage, barbarous, or fierce," "To attack verbally; spec. to subject to severe or brutal criticism," "Of an animal or (occas.) person: to attack ferociously, esp. by biting and tearing; to maul" and "to damage or harm (a person or thing); to treat harshly or savagely."[6] All these different meanings in play are documented and can be looked up, and some of them are well-known. However, a structuralist approach starts from a *systematic* and contrasting analysis of how the term appears meaningfully in a certain context. So let me do that for the novel.

In *Lord of the Flies*, the term "savage" appears 59 times. Its other two closely related words *savagely* and *savagery* appear once and twice respectively. As a frequently used word, *savage* also appears in multiple grammatical forms: as an adjective, a verb and a noun. As an adjective, it is used to describe fierce heat, the forest on fire, or uncontrolled emotions. For instance, during the first time that the children raise fire on the island, "the fire thrust out a savage arm of heat that crinkled hair on the instant" (Golding 1954, 41). Tellingly, this is the first time the word *savage* appears in the novel, and it is used not to describe a type of human beings, but the fierce and destructive force of a natural element: the heat of fire. Later, when the fire becomes so strong that a large area of forest is full of smoke and

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[3] On the etymology of *savage*, see <http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?term=savage>.

[4] See <http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/171433?rskey=2EjBg6&result=2&isAdvanced=false#ei>.

[5] See <http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/171433?rskey=2EjBg6&result=2&isAdvanced=false#ei>.

[6] See <http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/171434?rskey=2EjBg6&result=3&isAdvanced=false#ei>.

flames, the term "savage" is used as a predicative: "Beneath the capering boys a quarter of a mile square of forest was savage with smoke and flame" (44). It is only then that the so-called savage force of nature is transferred to a human being. When Ralph realizes the danger of this uncontrollable fire, we read that "The knowledge and the awe made him savage" (44). Later, after learning that a ship has passed by, Ralph tells the hunters that the ship that could have rescued them has gone. Of his voice the author writes: "His voice was loud and savage, and struck them into silence" (70). In its adverbial form *savagely* is used to describe an action. When the children hear the news that there may be beasts on the island, they become very frightened and "The assembly cried out savagely" (89). In all these cases he term is used to indicate something overpowering, forceful and threatening, often verging on the sublime, as is indicated by the term "awe."

However, the word *savage* is most often used as a noun, whose referent or signified, is not static but rather changes frequently. At first, the children's use of this noun follows the generally acknowledged Western anthropological consent that was defined by James Clifford. It follows: "It has become clear that every version of an 'other,' wherever found, is also the construction of a 'self'" (23). Indeed, at first the children define their "others" as savages and construct themselves as opposite to savages. As Ralph notes: "After all, we're not savages. We're English, and the English are best at everything. So we've got to do the right things" (Golding 1954, 42). In the beginning there appears to be a clear boundary between undefined (and invisible) savages and "the" English. However, after missing the chance to get rescued, the children begin to doubt their identity, not only as English, but also as human beings. Instead of asking "who are we," Piggy asks: "What are we? Humans? Or animals? Or savages? What's grownups going to think?" (91). Piggy's questions on the one hand imply hierarchical structures: between adults and children, and between humans, animals and savages. On the other hand, the questions imply the possibility that these children may become savages themselves. By asking these questions, Piggy wants to urge the children to stick to existing hierarchical structures. They have to think about themselves in terms of how adults would think about them, and, accordingly, they have to stick to the sharp distinctions between humans, animals and savages. However, all the efforts to keep the savage as the "other" turn out to be in vain. After Jack breaks off from Ralph's group and creates his own group, Jack's followers are directly addressed as "savages" by the narrator. For instance, while hunting, "Jack and the two anonymous savages with him swayed, looking up, and then recovered" (140). Although these "two anonymous savages" have their own names, namely Maurice and Robert, they have now lost that distinction in the narrator's language and are addressed as undefined savages. If their names indicated some traces of the civilized world, the narrator's addressing them as savages rather than by their names implies the eradication of the traces of their former civilized world, the loss of their identity as civilized, and their integration with an undifferentiated notion of the savage "other." Moreover, not only Jack's group becomes a group of savages. Ralph himself begins to admit that he finds joy being a savage and that he is fascinated by the prospect of being savage. He says: "I'd like to

put on war-paint and be a savage. But we must keep the fire burning" (142). The savage is regarded as a warrior here by Ralph. His image of the savage's appearance here most probably alludes to popular representations of Native Americans as "savage" warriors, as is indicated by the war paint.

Being savage is not a state in the above case, but rather is something that involves performing and acting. One is not born a savage, but can become one by performing the savage. The strict hierarchical order of the civilized self versus the savage "other" and the essentialist character of this opposition is overturned here and the savage "other" even turns into a positive signifier for self-definition: as Ralph's words suggest, he desires leaving behind his civilized "nature" to embrace savagery. Yet, there is more to this than simply playing the Indian in a Peter Pan-like mode, and this is proven with the killing of Simon and Piggy. In the hunting game in which Simon is murdered, all the participants paint themselves first, and then enjoy the game so much that none of them feels guilt afterwards or wants to take responsibility for the murder. It is evident that painting their faces frees them from any restraint so that they can do anything. The narrator makes this explicit when he states that the children "understood only too well the liberation into savagery that the concealing paint brought" (172). Savagery now comes to dominate the island in both positive and negative senses, depending on the point of view. For example, when Ralph meets his former friend Bill, he reflects: "But really, thought Ralph, this was not Bill. This was a savage whose image refused to blend with that ancient picture of a boy in shorts and shirt" (183). Playing the Indian, or performing the savage, has become a matter of cruel reality. In the same way that his former friends have started to kill pigs, so Ralph now has to admit, they have started to kill people. His conclusion is: "They were savages it was true" (185). Instead of being a matter of putting on war-paint and playing or performing, savagery has become a term that in speech act theory would be called a constative, or one that purports to truthfully describe another's *subjectivity*.[7] Naming themselves "savages" creates them as savages.

In Ralph's "nightly game of supposing," his mind "skated to a consideration of a tamed town where savagery could not set foot" (164). Here the former hierarchy of a civilized self that defines itself on the basis of an imaginary other is reversed. The supposition or consideration of a civilized existence is envisioned as an imaginary alternative elsewhere in space and time. This elsewhere is here rather than the savage's "elsewhere" in time or space. Savagery is now the point of departure in the here and now, and civilization has become the elsewhere in space and time. Whereas painting their faces provided the children with a mask so that they could engage in violent or brutal activities they did not dare do before, the mask gradually becomes a new face, one that, by consequence, turns the face of civilization into a mask.

As a verb, *savage* only appears once. After learning that there is a ship passing by and not being sure whether there is enough smoke coming from the fire the boys kept going, Ralph "blundered on, savaging himself, as the wisp of smoke moved on"

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[7] On the link between performative speech acts and constatives, see Judith Butler's *Excitable Speech: A Politics of the Performative* (1997).

(67). Here, as opposed to the common meaning and usage of the verb *to savage* (to attack others furiously and harshly), this self-reflexive use of the verb refers to a form of punishment of Ralph himself. To savage and to blunder on come to imply one another and Ralph's self-harm can be seen as a mise-en-abyme here for what happens to the children as a collective. Ralph cannot help torturing himself, while the smoke that is an index of civilization vanishes beyond the horizon.

On the basis of the analysis above, in which the meaning of "savage" proved to be flexible depending on several different oppositions in play, we might be inclined to follow Saussure in his saying that "language is a system of arbitrary signs and lacks the necessary basis, the solid ground for discussion" (73). Yet the arbitrariness of the sign itself becomes something else in a differential dynamic, when the sign is not so much arbitrary but shifting due to the interplay of different oppositions. The term "savage" does not simply have the capacity to take on any meaning; rather its multiple signifieds are constantly motivated by a contextual process in time or situation in space. As a result the term becomes elusive rather than arbitrary, or, more importantly, it acquires a quasi-natural status because it *carries a historicity*. This is an element of *vraisamblablisation* that Culler does not mention—and a process that is distinct from what under post-structuralism would be called a "floating signifier." Structuralism operates synchronically, which means that it does not account for variable relations between signifiers and signifieds that have to do with the ways they evolve historically or diachronically.

This evolvement can be traced when in the beginning of the novel, "savage" refers to "the other" who lives far away from the English children and is inferior to them. Later, the children, by playing the role of savages, promote the development of savagery. As a consequence, savagery is no longer safely located in history, but is a matter of the present; it is no longer safely located elsewhere, but rather defines the here. On the one hand, this transition of the savage from denoting the other to denoting the self reveals the uncontrollability of its meaning. Or, the uncontrollability of the signified may be an icon for the fact that savages are so violent and brutal that it is difficult to put them under control. On the other hand, the uncontrollability of the signified may disclose the vulnerable boundary between savagery and civilization, which is constantly questioned and challenged by issues such as the violence of the civilized or the nobility of savages. This may point to a distinct limit of structuralist thinking, namely that it is not able to deal with difference *within* (which will be the theme of the next chapter).

For now, more importantly, the structuralist approach taken to its own logic can trace but not fix the movement of the signifier through the differential field. Consequently, the notion of savage can be followed and analyzed but not eradicated within the framework of structuralism. On the contrary, the structuralist approach, as an a-historical synchronic approach, is not able to trace *evolving* meanings in time, and gives these meanings a quasi-natural aura. There is a form of *vraisemblablisation* at stake here that Culler skipped but that has its own force. In the next section, I will direct my attention to the historicity of the savage by looking at the ways the novel re-enacts several features of the savage that are derived from popular figures of the

savage in European history. In its differential logic, so I will argue in the next section, the novel can be seen to re-enact an entire discussion on the nature of the savage in European thinking and it is through this re-enactment that the evolvement of the meaning of the savage may appear to be "realistic."

1.4 Noble and Ignoble Savages in *Lord of the Flies*

Whereas so far I have been talking about the children in the novel as if they were a collective group, it is now time to take seriously what a structural analysis of this group will bring forward. When I systematically traced the oppositions that are operative within the group, I came to notice that, in contrast to the older boys who are engaged in raising fire, building up shelters and hunting, many of the younger children, the so-called "littluns" follow another way of life. It is one that connotes, so I will argue in this section, the figure of the noble savage. The older boys, on the other hand, seem to connote an opposite but adjacent figure to the noble savage: that of the ignoble savage. At the same time, the older boys also pose as the superior agent in their treatment of the littluns, emulating the "civilized" colonizers' treatment of the colonized. In this section, by scrutinizing the representation of the littluns and the older boys, I will examine the ways in which their representation evokes the figures of the noble savage, the ignoble savage and the civilized/colonizer and to what effect, in order to probe the structures that underlie their representation and their interaction in the novel.

Although the noble savage does not become a dominant trope until the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, traces of this trope can already be found in ancient Greece, "where Homer, Pliny, and Xenophon idealized the Arcadians and other primitive groups, both real and imagined."[8] After the Conquest of the New World, the term "savage" was frequently associated with Native Americans. In European discourse, one of the earliest representations of Native Americans can be found in Columbus's diary, in which he describes Native Americans either as good or bad, depending on the context in order to serve different purposes. In *The Conquest of America*, Tzetan Todorov offers an illuminating and critical analysis of first recordings of this encounter between Europeans and Native Americans, including Columbus's diaries. In their first encounter, Columbus was struck by the nudity of Native Americans. "'They all go naked, men and women, as the day they were born' (6/11/1492). 'This king and all his people went naked as their mothers bore them, and their women the same, without any shame' (16/12/1492)" (Todorov 35). The nudity of Native Americans was read by Columbus in two different ways. On the one hand, Columbus saw it as a symbol of lacking civility and, on the other hand, he took it as a sign of their intellect, cultural "nudity" and innocence. As Todorov notes: "Physically naked, the Indians are also, to Columbus's eyes, deprived of all cultural property: they are characterized, in a sense, by the absence of customs, rites, religion" (35). In fact, in Columbus' writings, we can see that Native Americans form a "double

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[8] See <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/416988/noble-savage>.

faced" trope: the "good Indian" one on the one hand, and the "bad Indian" on the other. Columbus presupposes that Native Americans are good at the start, and he declares that "'They are the best people in the world and the most peaceable' (16/12/1492). ... 'l do not believe that in all the world there are better men, any more than there are better lands' (25/12/1492)" (36). He sees Native Americans as pure, innocent, able to receive civilization. The trope of the "good Indian," which Columbus here seems to initiate, was used to serve the European colonizers' civilizing mission to convert Native Americans into Christians. Columbus too, as a Catholic, aims to spread the Gospel and assumes the purity, nobility and cultural/intellectual "nakedness" of Native Americans in order to support the possibility of them being converted and redeemed. "Columbus will declare the Indians the most generous people in the world, thereby making an important contribution to the myth of the noble savage" (39). The depiction of the Native Americans as pure and generous in Columbus's writings can be seen as a first articulation of the idea of Noble Savage, even though the phrase "noble savage" was not in use yet.

However, this did not mean that Columbus thought all Native Americans were good. "Further, when he (Columbus) knows the Indians better, he will leap to the other extreme," which is that Native Americans are violent, treacherous and brutal savages (36-38). The assumed violence and savagery of Native Americans was used to justify their violent extermination and their enslavement by European settlers. This trope of the "bad Indian" therefore provided legitimation in the sixteenth century for "the greatest genocide in human history" (5). As is well-known, shortly after those first encounters with European explorers, the number of Native Americans decreased rapidly due to their intended extermination and maltreatment by Europeans, and also by the unintended diseases spread by Europeans (133). As Todorov rightly argues, the adoption of the trope of "the *good/wicked* type" of Native Americans in Columbus's writings tells nothing about the natives themselves, "not only because these qualities depend on the point of view adopted, but also because they correspond to specific states and not to stable characteristics, because they derive from the pragmatic estimate of a situation and not from the desire to know" (38). That is to say, the trope of good/bad Indian does not amount to a reliable account of these populations that stems from Columbus's actual desire to know the other: Columbus simply sees in those natives what *he* wants to see, as his perception is determined by his culturally determined preconceptions and expectations, and changes in different contexts for different purposes.

The trope of good/bad Indian gradually crystallizes into the trope of noble savage/ignoble savage in the writings of European intellectuals. The trope of noble savage first appears in French. In French, the origin of the noble savage as a trope can be traced back to Montaigne's essay "On Cannibals" (c. 1580), in which "Montaigne represents 'the cannibals' as noble savages, who are free from the corruption of decadent society," even though he does not use the term "noble savage" (Salter 21). The notion of noble savage is further developed by a French lawyer-ethnographer, Marc Lescarbot, in his ethnography of the Native Americans of

eastern Canada, *de la Nouvelle France* (1609) "as a concept in comparative law" (Ellingson xv). Lescarbot describes Native Americans as people "of a 'noble heart'" who "lived by the law of 'Nature'" (Sheehan 30). According to ethnomusicologist Ter Ellingson, the translation of Lescarbot's study into English marked the entrance of the noble savage into English literature (21).

The trope of noble savage appears quite late in English and it is mainly used to criticize the European civilization. The term "noble savage" is first used in English literature in John Dryden's *Conquest of Granada* (1672). Dryden writes:

> I am as free as Nature first made man,
> Ere the base Laws of Servitude began,
> When wild in woods the noble Savage ran. (34)

Depicted as free and independent, noble savages here form a sharp contrast to civilized men, who have subjected themselves to the laws established by European society.

In connecting goodness and innocence to uncorrupted Native Americans, French Enlightenment philosopher Jean Jacques Rousseau is often mistaken as the inventor of the figure of the noble savage, yet he never used the phrase of noble savage directly (Ellingson 81). In *Discourse on the Origin of Inequality* (1755), he does compare "the savage" and "the civilized man" and points out that they:

> ... differ so greatly in the depths of their hearts and in their inclinations, that what constitutes the supreme happiness of one would reduce the other to despair. Savage man breathes only tranquility and liberty; he wants simply to live and rest easy ... On the other hand, the citizen is always active and in a sweat, always agitated, and unceasingly tormenting himself in order to seek still more laborious occupations. (1992, 69-70)

Compared with the civilized, the savage enjoys more freedom and does not have to suffer from heavy labor because he is content with what he already has. In *Émile: or On Education* (1762), Rousseau further described the life of the noble savage as follows:

> Attached to no place, without prescribed task, obeying no one, with no other law than his will, [the savage] is forced to reason in each action of his life. He does not make a movement, not a step, without having beforehand envisaged the consequences. Thus, the more his body is exercised, the more his mind is enlightened; his strength and his reason grow together and one is extended by the other. (1979, 118)

Here, the noble savage is presented as free, strong, independent, and unrestrained by social norms and prescriptions. Remarkably, Rousseau here also ascribes to noble

savages a form of reason that stems from an organic interaction between mind and body, and this makes them "enlightened"—a move that may appear as a rudimentary attempt to claim an autonomous form or reason or thinking for these people, which Lévi-Strauss would take up more systematically two centuries later. Savages for Rousseau do not have to obey any person or law, and become intelligent on their own. Rousseau's casting of the noble savage contributed greatly to the popularization of this figure in the thought of Enlightenment but also in Romanticism. This figure mainly served critiques of European society. As Sheehan writes, "Cultural critics from Montaigne to Lahontan to Rousseau invoked the example of indigenous American peoples to condemn tyranny, religious persecution, social inequality, and artificial, alienating culture in Europe itself ... the noble savage came to represent egalitarianism and a sort of romantic anarchy" (69).[9] For these Renaissance and Enlightenment thinkers, such as Montaigne, Lahontan and Rousseau, stressing the virtues and independence of Native Americans functioned as a means of criticizing the corrupt European civilization by counter-projecting it to an idealized state of man.

Although the trope of noble savage was popularized through Rousseau's writings, not everybody shared his admiration for Native Americans as noble savages. In fact, the notion of noble savage was criticized by many leading thinkers of the Enlightenment, "including Voltaire, who linked the life of Rousseau's savage to that of the orangutan" (M. Clifford 2). Like the "good Indian" in contrast to the "bad Indian," the figure of noble savage thus often went hand-in-hand with its negative counterpart, the ignoble savage. Like the "bad Indian," the ignoble savage is violent, brutal and dishonorable. The ignoble savage can be a drunkard, a murderer, a beggar, a thief, or an untamed demon. Natural historian George Louis Leclerc, Comte de Buffon (1707-1788), also criticized the idea of the noble savage and declared that Native Americans were "'less strong in body... less sensitive, and yet more timid and cowardly'... 'cold and languid' and... 'have no love for their fellow man'" (2). Also, Dutch philosopher Cornelius de Pauw (1739-1799) related numerous curious and bizarre figures—"cannibals, albinos, giants, and hermaphrodites"—to Native Americans in his famous book *Recherches Philosophiques sur les Américains* (1768-1769), which "is best known for its sustained stress on the ignobility of the Americans" (Meek 145). Based on works by Buffon and de Pauw, Scottish historian William Robertson (1721-1793) described Native Americans "much more as ignoble than as noble savage" (qtd. in Meek 145). As these sources also suggest, the figure of the ignoble savage was also widely used in depicting Native Americans.

The figures of the noble and ignoble savage are opposites in many obvious ways, but they could also function next to each other in European colonial discourse, as they both served different aspects of colonial ideology. As the writings of Montaigne

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[9] On Lahontan's contribution to the study of Native Americans, see (Harvey 2012). According to David Harvey, "... the baron Louis-Armand de Lahontan, popularized the noble savage trope with a series of lively texts, notably a philosophical dialogue with a fictionalized Huron chief, Adario, who stressed the superiority of the natural simplicity and rational religion of the Native Americans to the artificial, alienating culture of Christian Europe" (71). "If Lahontan is remembered today, however, it is primarily as a forerunner of Jean-Jacques Rousseau,..." (73).

and Rousseau suggest, the trope of the noble savage is mainly used to criticize European colonialism and the corruption of European societies. However, the "good Indian" trope, as we saw, could further support the colonial project's "civilizing mission." Following the trope of the "good Indian," Native Americans are pure, innocent, and uncorrupted—a "tabula rasa," able to receive the benefits of civilization. Thus, the civilized need to educate Native Americans in order to save them through Christianity and European civilization. By contrast, the trope of the ignoble savage contributes to constructing Native Americans as corrupted, irredeemable, brutal cannibals, which justifies their extermination or enslavement by European settlers. That is why, as Christer Lindberg argues, "the concept of the ignoble savage dominates in periods of intense European expansion, that is, the discovery and initial conquest and later the conquest of the American West" (23).

In the novel, the trope of the noble savage underpins the representation of the *littluns*. They enjoy peace and freedom while living in harmony with nature, free from the corruption and burdens of civilization, and they stand for goodness, innocence and purity. The littluns are around six years old and lead "a quite distinct, and at the same time intense, life of their own" (Golding 1954, 59). Their behavior appears to be without restraint and from the way they wander around the island it is almost impossible for a reader to calculate their number or to make a list of their names. Instead of resembling English boys, their representation draws from vague stereotypical images of Native Americans. As savages, they are mainly engaged in three activities: eating, sleeping and playing. They are innocent, naïve, emotional, and easily bullied by older boys. They cannot immediately understand rules made by the older boys. They do everything based on their intuitions and cannot preconceive the danger or the consequences of their behavior. For instance, after missing the chance to be rescued, they attend the meeting without any resentment towards the hunters who are responsible for the missed chance and they only feel "impressed by the general air of solemnity" (78). As such, the littluns appear rather ignorant—so ignorant that they are not aware of the consequences of losing the chance to be rescued. Nor can they understand why Jack's group should be blamed. Likewise, they cannot see a reason to build a lavatory.

After Jack breaks off from Ralph's group, Ralph's group has to raise the fire again. Seeing the fire, the narrator states: "The littluns who had seen few fires since the first catastrophe became wildly excited. They danced and sang and there was a partyish air about the gathering" (130). The littluns appear not to realize the difficulty involved in maintaining the fire, nor are they aware of the serious crisis that has taken place now that Jack has begun to set up his own group. They cannot see through the event and just feel pleased to have fire again. They appear gullible and tend to believe in what they are told without any hesitation. For example, "if he had been told that the other boy had gone home in an aircraft, he would have accepted the statement without fuss or disbelief" (60). Because they cannot make sense of the mysterious and the unknown in a scientific way, as Piggy does, they start to make up stories about ghosts, spreading "fear talk" (82). In this fear talk, they cannot distinguish what they see in reality from what they dream about, which

suggests that in their mind reality and magic or dreamlike images become indistinguishable.

As the narrator states, the littluns live a "passionately emotional and corporate life" (59). They do not know how to restrain their feelings or emotions, and they express themselves freely. When they see the lightning and hear the thunder, they become scared and begin to whine or run about screaming. They are also easily frightened by imagined mysterious animals. They scream at the idea of the beast or the snake and are terrified by darkness. Moreover, their emotions are far from stable and their moods fluctuate easily from gloominess to happiness. For instance, they are sad and frightened by the fact that there might be a ghost or beast on the island, but after they see Jack's funny behavior, they immediately stop crying and begin to laugh. When the older children discuss the question of the existence of ghosts or beasts, they do not reach an agreement or come to a conclusion. However, this does not seem to bother the littluns: after the assembly, these "littluns that had had enough were staggering away, howling" (92). No longer bothered by the unsolved question, they seem to forget their sorrows at once. They feel satisfied just by having enough food and wander around like animals. In addition, it is easier for them to share their feelings and sense the emotions of their peers. It is often the case that they will "cry in sympathy" after hearing about the sorrows of their peers (87). It seems that this kind of sorrow suffered by their peers "was universal" (87). Instead of reflecting rationally on others' sorrows or giving others reasonable advice, the littluns have an increased capacity for empathy and share their sorrows instinctively, without the involvement of rationality. It is also remarkable that they seem not to understand the hostility, aggression or hatred against them; even when they are bullied, they take it as a kind of game, as innocent teasing. When Roger throws stones at Henry, for instance, Henry's first reaction is that he is attracted by the "plopping sounds in the water" (62). He then tries to find where the stones come from.. When he finds out that it is Roger who is throwing the stones, he laughs and does not regard Roger as an enemy, but as "the friend who was teasing him" (62). The littluns do everything for fun and do not show evil intentions or harbor hostile feelings even when treated badly.

What has been said about the littluns shows that their representation generally follows the conventions that accompany the trope of noble savage. According to Rousseau, noble savages were characterized by "the calm of the passions, and ignorance of vice" which hindered them "from doing evil" (1992, 36). Being too innocent and naïve to do something evil is indeed characteristic of the *littluns*. Because of their innocence and naivety, noble savages are usually the prey of evildoers—something that also fully applies to the littluns. In the novel, the littluns are attacked by the older boys and their words are not taken seriously. In a sense the harsh treatment of the littluns by the older boys emulates what Montaigne, Rousseau and other thinkers saw as civilization's unjust attack on noble savages; assuming that the reader is more inclined to side with the littluns and spot the injustice in their treatment by the older boys, we could argue that the novel here iterates Rousseau's critique on "civilization," since it is clear that the older boys will not succeed either.

Even though they scorn the littluns and do not take them seriously, the older boys in the novel do not emerge as (intellectually) superior to the littluns from their interaction with them.

In chapter five called "Beast from Water," Ralph calls for an assembly and restates some rules, such as how to raise a fire, build shelters, get water and use rocks for the lavatory. In that meeting, he also wants to discuss the talk of fear by the littluns, who see a beast in their dreams. Ralph argues: "But that's littluns' talk. We'll get that straight. So the last part, the bit we can all talk about, is kind of deciding on the fear" (Golding 1954, 82). The talk of fear by the littluns is considered irrational and nonsense, and thus it becomes the task of the older boys to enlighten the littluns and set things straight. However, Ralph and the older boys fail to solve the problem of the littluns despite many attemps. For example Percival (a littlun), continues to describe the frightening squids and claims that the beast comes out of the sea, even after Jack declares that there is no beast on the island since he has already explored it completely. Simon (an older boy) tries to tell them that they themselves or something inherent in their nature may be the beast or the ghost they fear, but nobody listens to him. At the same time, Piggy claims that there is no ghost at all and that he does not believe in ghosts. Many of the older boys show contempt for the littluns' imagination and wild fantasies, but they simply fail to come up with a satisfactory explanation for the littluns' imagination of the ghost. They reject the littluns' understanding of the world, which allows for a blurring of magic or imagination and reality. However, their rational mode of thinking dismisses the littluns' fear without really managing to help them process it. The children's discussion of fear in the novel implies two different modes of thinking by two different groups in the novel. Simon and Piggy, from the group of older boys, will resort to rationality and argue that there is no ghost; even if there is ghost, they argue, it resides in the inner self of human beings. Their so-called rationality has its own limitations and fails to solve all problems presented in the novel. By contrast, the fear of the littluns evokes another form of reason, one that typifies the noble savage, as Rousseau indicated. To make sense of their lives, these littluns think differently from the older boys and assert the existence of mysterious forces that cannot be explained based on a scientific rationality.

Next to the stereotype of the noble savage, the novel also seems to draw from this figure's "evil twin"—the ignoble savage—in its representation of the older boys in the novel. Although there is no ignoble savage as an external other in the novel, most of the "civilized" English boys become ignoble savages themselves in the process, as can be seen both from their behavior and visual appearance. Their process of de-civilization seems to be the dialectical counterpart of the civilizing mission of the West, in the sense that they show what becomes of "civilized" people when they find themselves away from the restraints and rules of civilization. After living on the island for a while, the children gradually forget their "European manners." When still in England, Jack's group was a choir and they wore "strangely eccentric clothing" (19). Their dress code included cloaks, shorts, shirts, as well as caps. "Their bodies, from throat to ankle, were hidden by black cloaks which bore a

long silver cross on the left breast and each neck was finished off with a hambone frill" (19). Their bodies used to be almost completely covered by clothes, which forms a sharp contrast with their subsequent nakedness on the island. At first, they are very disciplined on the island and stick to the rules of their former world. During their first meeting in the morning, despite the hot weather and "the complexions of newly washed plums," they don't dare to take off their clothes (19). After the meeting, "As if released from class, the choir boys stood up, chattered, piled their black cloaks on the grass" (23). The former choir boys feel relieved when they find out that there is no adult on the island, and take off their cloaks instantly. During their second meeting in the afternoon, they have forgotten all about their cloaks: "The choir, noticeably less of a group, had discarded their cloaks" (32). In the end, the choir-boys discard nearly all clothing and the norms that accompany it: "Some of the boys wore black caps but otherwise they were almost naked" (68). Even their leader Jack was naked "except for a pair of tattered shorts held up by his knife-belt" (48). If the cloak or their clothes are a symbol of European manners in their former world, their discarding of the clothing implies a deviation from their former world, leading them towards savagery. Following the trope of the (noble or ignoble) savage, the boys' nakedness also suggests their proximity to a more natural state.

Apart from their nakedness, their long and messy hair is another typical feature of their gradual adoption of a "savage" exterior. For instance, one group member, Roger's longer and thicker hair not only fits his gloominess, but also makes him more repulsive. His longer and messier hair functions to distance him from the civilized state. Similarly, Ralph also finds their hair, including his own, "much too long, tangled here and there, knotted round a dead leaf or a twig" (110). Their hair is so long and messy that it even forms a screen over their eyes and blocks their vision. During a debate between Jack and Ralph, they "glared at each other through screens of hair" (126). Annoyed by his long hair, Ralph wants to cut it off: "He would like to have a pair of scissors and cut this hair—he flung the mass back—cut this filthy hair right back to half an inch" (109). Yet without scissors, he fails to do so. Initially, Ralph refuses to tie his hair back, because he wants to stick to the norms of civilized English society and believes that tying hair back is feminine. However, after seeing Jack's group tie their hair back, he decides to also follow their hairstyle (175). In many Native American tribes it is a custom to tie the hair back, and thus we could also argue that long hair is no longer annoying or repulsive and is accepted as a common part of the boys' new appearance as savages.

The painted face also contributes to the visual staging of their savagery. In the novel, painting is a double-edged blade, because on the one hand it helps them hunt pigs so that they have meat to eat, but on the other hand it becomes a mask that frees them from responsibility for the murders and thus promotes the production of savagery. After their first failed attempt at hunting, Jack decides to paint himself so that pigs cannot see him clearly. Ralph is more skeptical towards painting, however after seeing how paint has a practical purpose to hunting, even he says: "I'd like to put on war-paint and be a savage" (142). However, later when his group members propose that they painted themselves, Ralph rejects their suggestion stringently,

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even though "They understood only too well the liberation into savagery that the concealing paint brought" (172). Ralph's ambivalent attitude towards the painting of the face is indicative of his inner conflict: on the one hand, he acknowledges the practical benefits of this act (it makes it easier to hunt pigs), but on the other hand, he cannot let go of the conventions of civilization that dictate a certain appearance. For Jack's group, however, being painted becomes the new norm. During one meeting, "Jack, painted and garlanded, sat there like an idol" (149). Painting provides them with a mask that allows them to retain a "civilized" inner self by claiming that they have not committed murder, but rather the murder was done by the personas that the masks of paint construct. Painting helps Jack's group free themselves from their sense of guilt. Gradually, however, these masks turn into a new reality, showing how the performative becomes constative again: they help them part with their civilized identity and recognize themselves as savages. During the last time that Ralph calls a meeting, the narrator informs us that "Savages appeared, painted out of recognition" (175). Painting ends up establishing their identity as savages. When Ralph fights with Jack in the end, he "gazed at the green and black mask before him, trying to remember what Jack looked like" (177-78). Jack's newly painted face helps produce his new savage identity. Echoing a strongly Eurocentric perspective, the children's assumption of a savage identity goes hand in hand with an erasure of individuality, as savages are commonly understood as a homogeneous group without internal differentiation: the narrator thus talks about "the painted anonymity of the group" (178), "The painted group" (178) and "the group of painted boys" (201) to refer to Jack's group.

Particularly through the behavior of the older boys, we can clearly trace the features of the "ignoble savage." The brutality and violence used in the murders of Simon and Piggy, as well as their attempt to kill Ralph are examples. "The ignoble savage is always unpredictable," Lindberg argues (22). As ignoble savages, the older boys in the novel enjoy punishing others and even killing their peers. In the beginning, perhaps still under the influence of their former world, they do not have the strength or courage to kill a pig. It is not until they learn to paint themselves that pigs cannot see them easily and they succeed. After successful hunting, they not only enjoy the meat, but are also fascinated by the idea of hunting. Eventually, they enjoy hunting so much that they want to perfect their hunting skills through hunting games. The hunting game requires pigs, but without any live pigs available they begin to use human beings as a substitute. Simon becomes the victim of such a hunting game and is killed like a pig. Nobody claims responsibility for his death. In order to justify their behavior, the children downplay its seriousness by presenting it as a game: they argue that it is just a hunting game and nobody had the intention to kill Simon. While Simon's murder forces them to reflect upon their behavior and justify it, Piggy is killed brutally without any form of reflection or remorse. When Piggy tries to make them rethink their way of life as cruel hunters, he is intentionally killed like an animal. Worse still, when they plan to kill Ralph, they use exactly the same tools as they use to kill pigs with. The savagery of the older boys develops to the point they begin to treat human beings as animals.

As we saw in the novel, external features, such as nakedness, long hair and painted faces make the older boys resemble "ignoble savages." This "looking like savages" starts out as a performance that will result in them becoming savage through their engagement in violent and brutal activities. This gradual development of their savage appearance to savage behavior might seem to enhance their representation on the basis of the figures of the "ignoble savage," thereby showing what happens when the civilized regress to a savage state. However, in fact, if we look closer, we will see that their violent behavior is largely the result of their adoption of a colonizers' superior attitude to others and to the natural world. For example, the harsh treatment of the littluns by the older boys stems from the older boys' animalization of the young members of the group. The dehumanization and animalization of others does not so much typify the trope of the ignoble savage, but rather the colonizer's attitude towards the colonized in the Americas, who were often reduced to animals. Animalization of the other is one of the key tropes in the discourse of European colonialism. The colonized are often represented in the colonizers' eyes "as wild beasts in their unrestrained libidinousness, their lack of proper dress, their mud huts resembling nests and lairs" (Shohat and Stam 1994a, 137). Colonized people, such as Black people from Africa and Native Americans, were often taken back to Europe and exhibited in cages, and "the very fact of exhibition in cages" implies "that the cages' occupants were less than human" (108). Black people and Native Americans were often yoked together with animals. Columbus also objectifies the natives he meets: he "does not grant the Indians the right to have their own will," and "judges them, in short, as living objects" (Todorov 48). Out of "his naturalist's enthusiasm, he always wants to take specimens of all kinds back to Spain: trees, birds, animals, and Indians," which implies that for him, Indians are on the same level as trees, birds, and animals (48). The brutal massacre of Native Americans by the Spaniards further illustrates the fact that Native Americans were identified and treated as animals (144). Their mode of enslavement suggests that they were "identified with animals for the slaughterhouse" (175). In *The Savages of America: A Study of the Indian and the Idea of Civilization* (1953), literary critic Roy Harvey Pearce argues that in Western discourses, the Native American is often depicted as fierce and animal-like. He has little time or reason to think; his intellectual powers and attainments are few and limited" (86-87). Native Americans are often represented as those who cannot think rationally and tend to behave fiercely. This assumed animal-like behavior justified their treatment like animals by the colonizers.

Similarly, the animalization of the littluns justifies their harsh treatment by the older boys. When the older boys want "a real pig," Jack answers: "Use a littlun" (Golding 1954, 115). One might be inclined to interpret Jack's answer as a joke, but the very joke implies the older boys' hatred towards the littluns, as well as reveals the littluns as being assumed inferior and in an ambiguous state between man and animal in the eyes of the older boys. The littluns' dehumanization and animalization by the older boys serves to fend off the anxieties of the older boys. When Ralph fears that the beast may come to eat him, he "prayed that the beast would prefer littluns"

(167). Thus, the littluns are supposed to act as scapegoats and stand-ins of prey for the beast. The animalization of the littluns is also implied in the metaphors the older boys use to refer to them: complaining about the difficulty of making a list of names of the littluns, Piggy says: "How could I with them little 'uns running round like insects?" (46). Their comparison with insects on the one hand underscores their uncontrollable nature, and on the other hand, suggests that the littluns can be easily and justifiably killed. As these examples indicate, the older boys' behavior and attitude towards the littluns emulate that of the colonizer towards the colonized, who are assumed to be inferior—to the extent that they acquire an animal-status—and in need of discipline, control or (when these fail) extermination.

However, parallel to the English children's assumption of the role of the "civilized" colonizer in their treatment of the littluns, the novel shows how they themselves function as animal-like savages *at the same time.* After living on the island for a while, the boundary between animal and human is not only crossed in the older boys' perception of the little ones, but also in the way the narrator presents the older boys. Far away from English manners and customs, almost all boys on the island exhibit animal-like features and behavior, as is illustrated through the narrator's use of animal-based similes and metaphors in descriptions of the boys. For example, after they carry woods to raise fire for the first time, "The boys lay, painting like dogs" (41). They are exhausted like tired dogs. During the hunting, Jack "lowered his chin and stared at the traces as though he would force them to speak to him. Then dog-like, uncomfortably on all fours yet unheeding his discomfort, he stole forward five yards and stopped" (48). Like a dog, Jack lies with his arms and legs on the earth and hunts in a way similar to that of dogs. Since dogs are good at hunting, Jack's comparison to a dog highlights his competence in hunting. When Ralph eats meat, he "gnawed it like a wolf," a simile that suggests Ralph's greed and unwillingness to share meat with his peers (73). The narrator's representation of the boys as animal-like can also be detected from descriptions of their gestures. For example, when they explore the island, they "used hands as well as feet" to make their way through the cliff (116).

The narrator's own "animalization" of the older boys in these descriptions makes him complicit with processes of animalization of others and the potential consequences of animalization. Consequences such as we have see in the older boys' animalization of the littluns. While the older boys construct the young ones as their inferior "others," they, too, are constructed as savage, animal-like others through the narrator's vocabulary. The narrative may thus problematize a strict binary distinction between savage and civilized, but its vocabulary shows that it still draws from a colonially-inflected discourse that mobilizes the same tropes and modes of representation on which these oppositions are premised. The "savage" is thus not a univocal figure in the novel, but has a differential structure within itself. The transformation of the civilized English boys to savages makes it difficult to identify the savage as the opposite of the civilized in the novel. Further and building on that, then their differentiation into different savage figures, noble and ignoble, makes the

novel's treatment of the "savage" more complicated and introduces a certain instability in the opposition between civilized and savage.

The instability within the category of the savage, but also in the savage/civilized opposition, is enhanced as the older boys concurrently assume the position of the ignoble savage (in the way they behave) and of the ("civilized") colonizer (in their harsh treatment of the littluns). The older boys seem to combine features of the ignoble savage—who is considered as cruel, brutal, irrational and exercising unpredictable violence—with the ugly side of civilization itself, as it became manifest during the process of European colonization. In the representation of these boys, the ignoble savage figure thus merges with the figure of the colonizer: they are visually cast as savages and engage in acts that, from a Eurocentric perspective, would typify the (ignoble) savage. Yet at the same time they behave as colonizers in the way they animalize and dehumanize the littluns and try to maintain control over them. Their concurrent embodiment of both tropes suggests the simultaneity of two figures that are traditionally thought to represent two temporally distinct phases in an evolutionary development: the savage and the civilized. In other words, contrary to how the novel has traditionally been read, I argue that in the novel we are less faced with a *regression* from a civilized to a savage state, but rather with a staging of the simultaneity of the positions of (ignoble) savage and (civilized) colonizer, as they appear to coincide in the same subjects (the older boys). The assumption of a savage identity by the older boys thus does not really result in their dissociation from their civilized identity: their savage status turns out to be perfectly compatible and concurrent with their assumption of a colonizer's stance towards the littluns. Here the ignoble savage does not pose as the opposite in a binary with civilization, but is presented as overlapping and contiguous with the role of the "civilized" colonizers (who did not hesitate to eliminate their supposedly ignoble savage others).

The coexistence of civilization and savagery is also staged in the last scene of the novel. The Naval Army rescues the boys and thus violence and savagery are suggested as an integral part of the civilized adult world too. In this scene, the boys' rescue does not bring them joy or relief. On the contrary, we read: "great, shuddering spasms of grief that seemed to wrench his [Ralph's] whole body"; "and infected by that emotion, the other little boys began to shake and sob too" (202). The children appear quite depressed when rescued. "Ralph wept for the end of innocence, the darkness of man's heart"(202). This sadness may not only have to do with a reflection of their deeds on the island, but might also be due to their realization that the adult world to which they are going back is not ideal either. They realize that in the adult world is quite similar to the island, contrary to what they initially assumed. The encounter between the naval officers and these boys reminds the characters and the readers of the violence of the "civilized" adult world. Contrary to Piggy's idealized image of the civilized adult world as reasonable, lawful, peaceful, this world turns out to be full of conflicts, fights and wars. Apart from the boys' painted faces and savage appearance, there are few differences between these savage boys and their civilized adult saviors, as both groups are engaged in cruel wars and power games. This correspondence is of course commonly noticed in many readings of the

novel by aforementioned critics, such as Talon, Dickson, and Young, who argue that civilization is not free of savagery, and read the novel as an analogy between the life of the boys on the island and of the adult Europeans.

Yet I contend that the novel's dealing with the opposition between savage and civilized is not merely a repetition of the (by now) commonplace idea that civilization hides a savagery within it, which threatens to resurface in times of crisis. This idea has led to the formation of another trope, that of the "wild man within," which owes a lot to Freud's views on the human psyche and the way he extrapolated these views to civilized societies in *Civilization and Its Discontents*. In this text, he advanced the claim that the civilized psyche (and civilization in general) is based on a repression of savage, violent instincts that belong to man's primitive past, which nevertheless never fully disappear, always threaten to resurface, and pose a constant danger to civilization. This idea, even though it asserts a certain concomitance of civilization and savagery, is still premised on the temporal separation between the two as distinct phases in man's development.

In the novel, the coexistence of the ignoble savage and the civilized colonizer in the boys' representation works somewhat differently. The co-existence of the figures of the ignoble savage and civilized colonizer in the representation of the older boys is not suggestive of the return of a "repressed" savage instinct that resurfaces and enters into conflict with the boys' civilized identity. Rather, their actions and behavior often suggest that they combine the two tropes, next to each other, without presenting them as mutually exclusive. This simultaneity of the two tropes contradicts the temporal separation of savage and civilized, and seems to be in tune with structuralism's focus on (ahistorical) synchronic structures that co-exist within the same system of meaning. Thus, the way the novel combines the figures of the ignoble savage and the colonizer as simultaneously present in the same subject can be seen as analogous to the way Lévi-Strauss moves away from a diachronic to a synchronic treatment of savage thinking and modern science, even though, contrary to Lévi-Strauss's distinction, the novel stresses the *compatibility* of these tropes rather than their autonomy and difference. The one position (civilized) does not give its way to the other (savage) as a result of the boys' *regression* to an earlier stage; behavioral patterns and relations that are ascribed both to savagery and civilization are present in them at the same time.

1.5 Persistence of Binaries in Lévi-Strauss and *Lord of the Flies*

By proposing the notion of savage thinking, Lévi-Strauss assumes an ahistorical, synchronic perspective: he does not discuss the operation of a particular mind at a particular time, but studies how the human mind works in general. One of his claims is that the human mind understands the world by way of binary oppositions. For him, "Not only the thought process but also perceptual experience displays binary organization" (qtd. in Pettit 75). He thereby seems to suggest that savage thinking also cannot do away with binary oppositions. In "Structuralism and Ecology," he writes: "From the very start, the process of visual perception makes use of binary

oppositions" (1972, 22). Human beings thus perceive things through binary oppositions, although their understanding of things may turn out quite different. This assumption of a binary mode of thinking as rooted in universal mental operations is, in fact, one of the main premises of, structuralism for which Lévi-Strauss has often been criticized. As Philip Pettit notes, "His [Lévi-Strauss's] binarism is presented as a general theory about the way the human mind works" (75). In *Structuralism and since: from Lévi-Strauss to Derrida* (1979), John Sturrock also criticizes Lévi-Strauss as a universalist, since he "claims to have located, behind a diversity of empirical facts, a universal mental structure" (4). Lévi-Strauss's insistence on binaries is also manifest in his use of the binary distinction between savage and civilized to theorize two basic contrasting modes of knowledge acquisition, which he relates to mental processes common to all human minds. If these modes correspond to universal, ahistorical mental operations, it would make it virtually impossible to do away with the opposition between savage (or mythical) and civilized knowledge.

Nevertheless, Lévi-Strauss's notion of savage thinking has also been useful in the articulation of critiques of deep-rooted hierarchical oppositions. Take for example Edward Saïd's *Orientalism* (1979), a well-known exposition of how the binary opposition between "the West" and "the Orient" is developed and has functioned in Western discourses. In the text Saïd brought in Lévi-Strauss's notion of the "science of the concrete," with which Lévi-Strauss referred to mythical or savage science. Saïd followed here the contention of Lévi-Strauss that the savage mind is the substratum of the modern mind. Saïd's reflections on this issue did not come out of the blue. One of the first reviews of Lévi-Strauss's *The Savage Mind* to appear in the US context was written by Saïd in 1967. In that review he had already emphasized Lévi-Strauss's idea that the mind needs order, and order is established through rudimentary classification, which is "the primary activity of the mind... an activity that always takes place on an unconscious level" (1967, 259). Like the relationship between signifier and signified, this kind of classification by the mind is not neutral, but is arbitrary. "It used to be thought that primitives name things that are naturally useful to them. The converse is true: things are useful *because* they are named" (259). Eleven years later Saïd comes back to this and I would like to give one passage in full, here, from Saïd's chapter one: "The Scope of Orientalism" in part II "Imaginative Geography and Its Representations: *Orientalizing the Oriental*:"

> Despite the distraction of a great many vague desires, impulses, and images, the mind seems persistently to formulate what Claude Lévi-Strauss has called a science of the concrete. A primitive tribe, for example, assigns a definite place, function, and significance to every leafy species in its immediate environment. Many of these grasses and flowers have no practical use; but the point Lévi-Strauss makes is that mind requires order, and order is achieved by discriminating and taking note of everything, placing everything of which the mind is aware in a secure, refindable place, therefore giving things some role to

play in the economy of objects and identities that make up an environment. This kind of rudimentary classification has a logic to it, but the rules of the logic by which a green fern in one society is a symbol of grace and in another is considered maleficent are neither predictably rational nor universal. There is always a measure of the purely arbitrary in the way the distinctions between things are seen. And with these distinctions go values whose history, if one could unearth it completely, would probably show the same measure of arbitrariness. This is evident enough in the case of fashion. … But if we agree that all things in history, like history itself, are made by men, then we will appreciate how possible it is for many objects or places or times to be assigned roles and given meanings that acquire objective validity only after the assignments are made. This is especially true of relatively uncommon things, like foreigners, mutants, or "abnormal" behavior.

It is perfectly possible to argue that some distinctive objects are made by the mind, and that these objects, while appearing to exist objectively, have only a fictional reality. (1978, 53-54)

Much of what I have dealt with in the previous sections is being called upon here. There are many distinctions and oppositions possible, all of them in a sense arbitrary, but they are all caught within a certain order of knowledge that appears as non-arbitrary. Saïd is on his way, here, to argue that only after a kind of arbitrary classification or assignment do objects get meanings that acquire "objective validity," in a process akin to what Culler described as *vraisemblablisation* (54). This also applies to the distinction between "Oriental" and "Western" or savage and civilized. Obviously, the "objective validity" of objects that are defined as such does not mean that these "distinctive objects" *are* objective. As the last sentence of the quote suggests, they are only "fictional" (54). Regarding Westerners and Orientals, then, Saïd appears to argue that the distinction between them is arbitrary, produced in the mind of Westerners. While for Westerners the very entity of the Oriental turns concrete and "objective," it is in the end nothing more than fictional. Yet this notion of the fictional is not elaborated to the full in Saïd's text. One could in fact argue that fictional realities are as concrete as any other, in the sense that they can have material effects in people's lives.

Following Saïd's reading of Lévi-Strauss's "science of the concrete," we could argue that the distinction between "the civilized" and "the savage" functions in a similar way.[10] The very distinction is, in a sense, arbitrary but it is by means of this distinction that the savage is defined and constructed in the mind of the civilized. In

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[10] The construction of savage and the arbitrary opposition between the civilized and the savage are also noticed by Ter Ellingson, who argues: "The 'Savage' and the 'Oriental' were the two great ethnographic paradigms developed by European writers during the age of exploration and colonialism; and the symbolic opposition between 'wild' and 'domesticated' peoples, between 'savages' and 'civilization,' was constructed as part of the discourse of European hegemony, projecting cultural inferiority as an ideological ground for political subordination" (xiii).

order to establish an orderly system, the civilized categorize anything unfamiliar, exotic or unusual as savage: their perception and understanding of others is thereby shaped by this pre-existing category. They only differentiate among savages, for example, if this differentiation corresponds to other tropological binary distinctions within this category: the *noble* and *ignoble* savage. *Lord of the Flies* also makes use of binary tropes in its depiction of characters (noble versus ignoble savage, savage versus civilized), thereby showing how dependent we are on such structures of thinking. Dependent, even if the novel also complicates those structures by revealing the intertwinement of the figures or by revealing that the savage and the civilized exist on multiple levels. But how does this process of constructing binary distinctions in order to make sense of reality work in the novel?

As the older boys gradually come to simultaneously embody features of the ignoble savage and colonizer, in the process they experience identity-conflicts: being preconditioned to draw strict binary lines between "savagery" and "civilization," as I will show in the following, they regularly experience these two positions as mutually exclusive and oppositional. Thus, they feel that they need to choose between them, something that often results in an identity crisis.

Although the children are far away from civilization, they have internalized the habit of making these distinctions. The novel stages the persistence of binary thinking through the children's inability to get rid of the habit of defining themselves and others in terms of hierarchical oppositional categories. Such a habit is, for example, the European's understanding of the savage as less-than-human or even non-human. Ralph's reflection on the savagery of Jack's group is telling in this respect. When Ralph is the only one left in his group, he begins to consider Jack's group as savages: "They were savages it was true; but they were human" (Golding 1954, 185-86). Even though Ralph here in fact acknowledges the humanity of Jack's group, he still posits this humanity as the opposite of savagery by using the word "but," and thus affirms the basis of the opposition of savage and human, which in colonialism served as a legitimizing mechanism for extermination or enslavement of "savages." In other words, if savages are also humans, as Ralph's words suggest in the case of Jack's group, this appears as an exception to the rule rather than the rule itself. When it comes to self-identification, the children's understanding of themselves through the category of the civilized offers them a sense of safety and control. This can be traced, for example, in Ralphs' words when he tries to assure the other children that they will be rescued, *because* they are English boys. Ralph says: "My father's in the Navy. He said there are not any unknown islands left. He says the Queen has a big room full of maps and all the islands in the world are drawn there. So the Queen's got a picture of this island" (37). The idea that the English Navy knows every island and consequently can take control of every island, makes the children feel that they are still under the protection of the English and part of this civilized community. After hearing what Ralph says, there "Again came the sounds of cheerfulness and better heart" (37). The children believe that as long as they are English, they will be protected and rescued. At this time, their identity as civilized and English is clear to them and they are very proud of it. Even Jack despises savages

and thinks the English are much superior to them. He says: "I agree with Ralph. We've got to have rules and obey them. After all, we're not savages. We're English, and the English are best at everything. So we've got to do the right things" (42). Thus at the beginning, the boys draw a clear boundary between savagery and civilization, and their identity as English guarantees not only their good behavior but also their safety.

Once conditions on the island start to change radically, the boys still try to make sense of their new reality by hanging on to these distinctions. Eventually, the boys desert Ralph as their leader, and under the guidance of Jack they begin to play the role of savage Indians by engaging in violent activities, as we saw. In order to prevent his peers from becoming savages and safeguard the line between civilization and savagery, Piggy asks them three questions: "Which is better—to be a pack of painted Indians like you are, or to be sensible like Ralph is?"; "Which is better—to have rules and agree, or to hunt and kill?"; "Which is better, law and rescue, or hunting and breaking things up?" (180). Through these three questions, Piggy intends to remind the children of the superiority of their former civilized life and encourage them to maintain this standard. In his first question, he juxtaposes "painted Indians" and the rational Ralph, thereby confirming the stereotype of the irrational, emotional, and savage Native Americans versus rational and enlightened Europeans. In the second question, he compares two different ways of living—"to have rules and agree" and "to hunt and kill"—which also evoke stereotypical and oppositional understandings of a Western and a Native American mode of living respectively (180). In his last question, in which he confronts "law and rescue" to "hunting and breaking things up," he hints at the supposedly anarchical and lawless character of Native American societies, though which the image of the rational, sensible, and lawful European is established and affirmed. However, this seemingly clear boundary between Native American savagery versus European civilization is shaken in multiple ways in the novel. Let me just mention here the contrast between the aforementioned dead parachutist and the several maps in the Queen's office, which implicitly links the exploration and "mapping" of the earth with the casualties of wars and European conquests of other places. Piggy's brutal death of course also implies the children's failure to maintain the binary line between civilization and savagery.

As it becomes increasingly difficult for them to uphold this distinction, they experience an identity crisis. This crisis is strongly suggested towards the end, when the children appear unable to claim a stable identity for themselves when asked by their rescuers to identify themselves. When they see the navy officer, "One of them came close to the officer and looked up.// 'I'm, I'm—'// But there was no more to come" (201). Asserting their civilized English identity does not offer them the safety and security it did in the beginning. However, nor can they fully identify themselves as savages, despite the fact that some of them enjoy their "savage" identity for a while. As we saw, in the novel the civilized identity is not successfully replaced by a savage identity: the children simultaneously reflect features that belong to both tropes. Their identity crisis indicates that they have internalized the idea that savage

and the civilized are mutually exclusive and belong to different evolutionary phases, and thus cannot coexist in the same subject.

Conclusion

How does the novel's treatment of the savage and the civilized, then, relate to the two modes of thinking that Lévi-Strauss delineates in *The Savage Mind*? In order to elucidate the operational mode of the "science of the concrete," Lévi-Strauss uses the notion of the "bricoleur" and contrasts it to the "engineer" (1966, 16). The engineer's mode of action is taken as exemplary for modern scientific thought, while mythical thought is compared to "an intellectual bricolage." It is worth looking at how Lévi-Strauss lays out the difference between these two figures, and, by extension, between modern and mythical (or savage) science:

> The 'bricoleur' is adept at performing a large number of diverse tasks; but, unlike the engineer, he does not subordinate each of them to the availability of raw materials and tools conceived and procured for the purpose of the project. His universe of instruments is closed and the rules of his game are always to make do with 'whatever is at hand', that is to say with a set of tools and materials which is always finite and is also heterogeneous because what it contains bears no relation to the current project, or indeed to any particular project, but is the contingent result of all the occasions there have been to renew or enrich the stock or to maintain it with the remains of previous constructions or destructions. The set of the 'bricoleur's' means cannot therefore be defined in terms of a project (which would presuppose besides, that, as in the case of the engineer, there were, at least in theory, as many sets of tools and materials or 'instrumental sets', as there are different kinds of projects). It is to be defined only by its potential use or, putting this another way and in the language of the 'bricoleur' himself, because the elements are collected or retained on the principle that "they may always come in handy". … They each represent a set of actual and possible relations; they are "operators" but they can be used for any operations of the same type. (17-18)

The bricoleur, as a figure that exemplifies savage thought, uses materials and tools from a wide repertoire that is available to him without subordinating those to a larger project, like the engineer does. His materials "represent a set of actual and possible relations" but their combinations do not create radically new relations that exceed the available possibilities. The bricoleur thus turns "back to an already existent set made up of tools and materials, to consider or reconsider what it contains and … to engage in a sort of dialogue with it" (18). Although he can critically interrogate the objects of his "treasury" in the course of this dialogue, the set of relations he produces can only differ from his set of instruments "in the internal

disposition of its parts" (18). In this mode of knowing, "the possibilities always remain limited by the particular history of each piece [that the bricoleur uses] and by those of its features which are already determined by the use for which it was originally intended" (19).

This delineation of the bricoleur, I argue, applies to the way the novel deals with the notion of the savage. The novel uses "materials" that are already available in European discourses and carry a certain historicity: the self-image of the "civilized" English or Europeans and the stereotypes surrounding the figures of the noble and the ignoble savage. It manages to re-arrange these materials in combinations that result in a critical interrogation of those figures and their implications. Nevertheless, it does not radically question the modes of knowing that these "materials" carry with them by counter-proposing an alternative mode of understanding the self and the other that could allow us to do away with the category of the savage. The novel needs this category as part of its instrumentarium, in order to showcase the coextensiveness of savagery and civilization and reveal the savage sides of civilization itself. As it interrogates the binary however, it is also complicit with the discourses that produce it, and sometimes even reinforces them, as we saw in the narrator's "animalization" of the children in his descriptions.

The novel questions the temporal evolutionary structure that runs through the figure of the savage by combining this figure with that of the (civilized) colonizer, and positions that (some of) those children can simultaneously occupy both figures, without having to necessarily choose one over the over. In doing so, as we saw, it comes close to Lévi-Strauss's rejection of this temporal structure and his postulation that savage and modern thought are two concurrent modes of inquiry. However, whereas Lévi-Strauss asserts the autonomy of these two modes (even though he also traces convergences between them), the novel, as I have showed, shows these categories of identity as constitutive of the same subjects—the children: that is because, ultimately, *both these categories do not represent different modes of knowing in the novel, different sciences, but are materials that belong to the same Eurocentric binary mode of thinking*. The novel does not manage to introduce a *radically different* mode of inquiry—a mode of thought other than the one dictated by the long tradition of binary thinking in which the category of the savage is immersed. Let us not forget that there are no actual "savages" making an appearance in the novel: there are only different faces of the European self, some of which may be estranging and uncanny, but are nonetheless constructed by the same materials that the author/bricoleur has at its disposal.

Thus in that sense, there is no actual encounter with the other in the novel. Both the narrator and the children themselves use the materials they know all too well—stereotypical representations of Native Americans as savages, the features of the noble and ignoble savage—reshuffling them towards a critical interrogation of the self, which, however, remains solipsistic in that it makes no actual attempt to open up to new perspectives and modes of knowing. Native Americans thus remain absent in the narrative: ghosts that are only conjured through their highly mediated and stereotypical representation through these children. The absence of the other

from the critical dialogue that the novel stages between known materials may be taken as indicative of the limitations of the Eurocentric discourses that produce the "savage." It is also indicative of the limitations of the novel itself, which uses the very same materials in its language. The materials of the bricoleur are "pre-constrained" and their possible combinations "are restricted by the fact that they are drawn from the language where they already possess a sense which sets a limit on their freedom of manoeuvre" (19). Similarly, the novel is restricted by the Eurocentric language that produces savagery and civilization. Paradoxically, perhaps, the bricoleur's operation—which for Lévi-Strauss typifies mythical, savage science—is shown to be much closer to the operations of modern European discourses of the savage of which the novel also partakes.

Further, this is ultimately indicative of the limitations of Lévi-Strauss's structuralist thinking. Despite Lévi-Strauss's revising of several aspects of the Western production of the "savage" as the "pre" and the "non" of civilization, his distinction follows the same binary modes of thinking, to which it even ascribes universal validity. In that sense, Lévi-Strauss's "savage mind" may have been a well-intended attempt to assert the autonomy of the other's thought, but the attempt remains somewhat constrained by the Eurocentric bias of Lévi-Strauss's language—a language that contains materials that cannot be easily shaken off, including the term "savage" itself. If savage thought "is imprisoned in the events and experiences which it never tires of ordering and reordering in its search to find them a meaning" then this preposition may also be applicable to Lévi-Strauss's structuralist language and its dependence on binaries (22). His "savage science" is thus still part of the "self" that describes it and does not manage to radically exceed the limits of a Eurocentric discourse that produces specific oppositional versions of the self and its others.

Whereas the bricoleur's operation is "retrospective" (18), drawing from existing materials which carry an inescapable historicity and always remaining within socially imposed limits, the engineer, Lévi-Strauss writes, "questions the universe" and is "always trying to make his way out and go beyond the constraints imposed by a particular state of civilization" (19). If this is the case, then, both the novel and Lévi-Strauss himself operate more as bricoleurs than engineers, even though they express a *desire* for crossing the limits that constrain their language, towards another mode of understanding the universe.

Remarkably, Lévi-Strauss places art as situated in-between modern scientific knowledge and mythical or savage thought—the artist is both a scientist and a bricoleur (22). "Art," Lévi-Strauss writes, "proceeds from a set (object + event) to the discovery of its structure" unlike myths that use a pre-existing structure to construct "a set of events (26). As a work of art *Lord of the Flies* indeed manages to explore the structures of thinking that produce the savage and the civilized in European thought, and the novel even questions the validity of these structures by re-arranging their constituent parts. Even though the novel arranges its materials more in the mode of a bricolage, its re-arrangement of long-standing tropes initiates an identity crises and yields combinations that deprive these categories of their comforting familiarity: this is indicative of a desire to exceed the limits of these categories—the engineer's desire.

The question remains, however, whether and how literary works or other forms of art can take the step from exposing an underlying structure to proposing a radically different structure that could challenge the one the author or artist is familiar with. The children's identity crisis, as well as their concurrent inhabitation of two identity positions that are considered opposed, may hint at the limits of "the science of the concrete," according to which reality is shaped and partitioned based on "fictional" binary categories of the mind. The crisis of (self-)representation that the novel can be said to initiate evidences a certain resistance to the categories through which "the mind" purportedly creates fictional objects as objective realities. The "fictional" binary categories we need in order to naturalize and understand reality (according to Lévi-Strauss) sometimes get so intertwined and confusing that we as readers, just as the boys in the novel, are forced to acknowledge their *fictionality*. Fiction makes that possible here. However, as long as the structures of thinking that produce violent oppositional categories are linked to universal mental operations, as Lévi-Strauss sees them, the possibilities for radically contesting and replacing these categories, even if their fictionality is acknowledged, appear restricted. If, however, they are decoupled from universal operations and instead studied as historically specific constructs, then their "fictionality" (as Saïd saw it) is seen as derived from this very historicity: they appear as products not of a universal mind but of (contingent) historical and cultural conditions. This historicity may be what makes them persistent, but acknowledging this historicity also makes these categories potentially more contestable. This, however, would be the task not of a structuralist, but a poststructuralist, deconstructive approach. The next chapter will put such a deconstructive approach to work in Huxley's *Brave New World*.

Chapter Two

Diremption, Satire and Difference within: Strengths and Weaknesses of a Poststructuralist Attempt to do away with the Notion of "Savage"

Introduction

The title of this chapter may seem immediately flawed. Anyone only slightly familiar with poststructuralism or deconstruction would immediately counter that neither poststructuralism nor deconstruction attempt "to do away with" concepts. Yet, what do they do with notions such as "the savage"? Poststructuralism and deconstruction clearly do not accept this notion as the building block of a hierarchical opposition. Thus we can conclude that there is at least something they want to do away with. As such, question in this chapter will be: to what extent can poststructuralism or deconstruction do away with the notion of the savage?

In the previous chapter, in a re-assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of a structuralist attempt to deal with the savage-civilized opposition, I discussed the dialectical and hierarchical relation between savagery and civilization. I also considered Lévi-Strauss's attempt to bring in the notion of savage thought as the substrate of scientific thought and how this structure was also traceable in Golding's *Lord of the Flies*. The results noted that there was not so much a master-slave dynamic in play between savagery and civilization, but rather an architectural relation that questioned the logic of oppositional categories as mutually exclusive, and further drew attention to the stubborn historicity of these categories, which enhances the difficulty of discarding them. The persistence of categories and tropes that define the relation between self and other, as I showed, makes the writer of *Lord of the Flies* a "bricoleur," limited by the materials at his disposal, even though he manages to re-arrange these materials in combinations that deprive them of their comforting familiarity.

In this chapter, I work on the notion of savage in terms of "difference within," which means that I will look at the inner dynamic of civilization that is energized or propelled due to its entanglement with the concept of the savage.

As to the meaning of "difference within," Barbara Johnson argues: "Difference… is not what distinguishes one identity from another. It is not a difference *between* (or at least not between independent units). It is *a difference within*" (3). In contrast to "difference between," "difference within" does not suggest a comparison between different entities, but looks into one entity without assuming a totalized and integrated identity of this entity as it stands opposite to, or at least remains distinct from, another one. To read "savage" as a difference within means to subvert the idea of an

essentialized identity of "the" savage, to infinitely defer the process of reaching a universal and totalized notion of the savage, or to study how its definition is constantly produced by an internal dynamics.

To that aim I will stage a dialogue again between two paradigmatic texts, this time Huxley's novel *Brave New World* (1932), which depicts a so-called civilized world and reveals different positions taken in it by savages, and two texts by the poststructuralist historiographer Hayden White. As to the theme of the intertwinement of civilization and savagery, White discusses it specifically in his article "The Forms of Wildness: Archaeology of an Idea," published in a volume under the telling title *The Wild Man Within: An Image in Western Thought from the Renaissance to Romanticism* (1972), edited by Edward Dudley and Maximillian E. Novak. In another seminal study titled *Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-century Europe* (1973)—the second work by White I will mobilize in my analysis—White emphasizes the literary origins of historiography and explains different styles of historical accounts. As will become clear, the relationship between civilization and savagery differs in each of the historiographical styles distinguished here by White, and one of them is of special relevance to *Brave New World*. Based on White's ideas, the novel can be read both as satire, a literary genre, and as Satire, in a historiographical sense: as a form of history in which civilization and savagery intertwine and wrestle with each other. The question addressed in this chapter is whether deconstructing such an "intertwinement" can really open up an alternative to the dynamic in play.

My argument will develop in four steps that all relate to my conclusion of deconstruction as satirical in nature or as White's Satire. First, I will consider the novel as literary (postmodern) satire. Here I will take the etymology of satire seriously. It has two major sources: one is *satyr* and the other is *lanx satura*. *Satyr* is "the half man-half beast, suggesting that satire is lawless, wild, and threatening," while *lanx satura* is "the 'mixed' or 'full platter,' suggesting that satire is a formless miscellany, and food for thought" (Griffin 6). Second, I will consider the mode of historiographical emplotment that White defined as Satire and examine how this can be brought to bear on the novel. In this context, I will also consider a genealogical tendency in deconstruction as a mode of Satirical emplotment itself. Third, I will consider how the novel can be seen as a deconstructive attempt *avant la lettre* with the subjects' being the captive to their world, or of a world, as its major theme.[1] Finally, and fourth, I will discuss how one can deconstructively satirize such captivity, but perhaps without escaping the fact that one remains captured in deconstructive Satire. To this order I will focus particularly on the representations of Native Americans in the novel to see how in relation to them the deconstructive attempt works out (or does not work out).

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[1] The theme of captivity will be further discussed later in this chapter. For example, in the novel, John the savage tries to break through the boundary of the civilized world, but still cannot live independently and remains the captive of the civilized world.

2.1 *Brave New World* as satire[2]

After one hundred years, Huxley's novel continues to enjoy an international reputation.[3] His works in general have drawn interest since initial publication, but *Brave New World* stands out and has been discussed amply.[4] Because of the popularity of the novel, the phrase *brave new world* has even become a ubiquitous catchphrase in the titles of articles and books, for instance, in the biotechnological field. Titles such as "Gene regulation: The brave new world of RNA," *Designing Babies: The Brave New World of Reproductive Technology*, or *Remaking Eden: Cloning and beyond in a Brave New World*, are cases in point. These works use *brave new world* to refer to a world that is different, more advanced, and further developed.

However, even by looking at the etymology of the word *brave*, we find that *brave new world* does not signify a more civilized or superior world at all and that the title is, actually, an ironic one. The title is a quote from Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, which is in turn one of the most studied texts by Shakespeare in the context of postcolonialism, with the character of Caliban as a paradigmatic figure of the ignoble savage. In Act V, scene 1 of the play, the daughter of the protagonist, Miranda, misjudges some people who have been magically conjured up on the uninhabited island where she and her father were left stranded. She exclaims what wonderful new creatures have come into their lives and what a brave new world this will make possible. At the time the word *brave*, derived from "late 15c., from Middle French *brave*," would still mean "splendid, valiant," from Italian *bravo* "brave, bold." Yet originally the term would also mean "wild, savage," possibly from Medieval Latin *bravus* "cutthroat, villain," and from Latin *pravus* "crooked, depraved."[5] That is to say, etymologically *brave* is used to refer to both excellence and wildness, savagery and violence. As a title, *brave new world* itself comes to connote a paradox, then, in which *brave* and *new*, savagery and civilization coexist. As a consequence, the title opens the possibility to read the novel as satire—in the sense of the literary genre.

Generally the novel has been read as paradigmatic of modernism. In a study that deals with its influence on Kurt Vonnegut's first novel, *Player Piano*, Todd F. Davis contends:

> Vonnegut, like Huxley and Orwell, concerns himself with science and sociology but the manner in which he approaches his subject differs so

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[2] As will be explained further in the end of this section, here I intend to use *satire* with a small letter "s" to refer to literary genre in order to distinguish it from *Satire* with a capital letter "S" in White's sense.

[3] At the turn of the twenty first century, the International Aldous Huxley Society (AHS) has been founded to promote the academic study of Huxley's thoughts and writings and to support the Centre for Aldous Huxley Studies (CAHS) to organize academic meetings and send delegates to international conferences, see <https://www.uni-muenster.de/Anglistik/Huxley/ahs.html>. At the same time, CAHS is responsible for two publications *Aldous Huxley Annual: A Journal of Twentieth-Century Thought and Beyond* edited by Bernfried Nugel and Jerome Meckier and series "Human Potentialities" edited by Lothar Fietz and Bernfried Nugel.

[4] Most recent research can be seen from Gavin Keulks's article "Aldous Huxley: A centenary bibliography (1978-1995)." In this article, Keulks provides a detailed bibliography of works on Huxley, in which themes, such as Huxley and Shakespeare, Huxley and Utopia, Huxley and satire are discussed extensively.

[5] On the etymology of *brave*, see <http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?term=brave>.

radically from his precursors that to speak of their work in the same breath is oxymoronic. The more than half century … affords us … to discern the absurdly satiric nature of Vonnegut's social criticism. The seeds of postmodern thought beginning to sprout … are truly revolutionary when measured against the modernist ideas of Orwell and Huxley. (41)

Here *Brave New World* is considered to be serious as opposed to Vonnegut's satire. Yet the satirical quality of the novel is not ignored completely and is mentioned by critics, for example, Jerome Meckier who stated that the novel is "less a traditional anti-utopia and more a satirical novel of ideas" (450). Now satire, of course, may simply have the aim to ridicule another's position. Yet it may also aim to explicitly satirize something while implicitly exploring a serious suggestion for something else. For instance, in his travel book, *Beyond the Mexique Bay* (1934), Huxley stated that Europeans and Americans would benefit from "a salutary element of primitivism" (257). He may have suggested this in the context of a deeper pessimism that became evident in the 1946 foreword to *Brave New World*. In the foreword he stated that the novel was written with the idea that "human beings are given free will in order to choose between insanity on the one hand and lunacy on the other." Given this choice, which is satirical in its phrasing, the novel could have implicitly proposed an alternative, one other than the choice between "an insane life in Utopia, or the life of a primitive in an Indian village" (1946, vii-viii). It becomes clear that here the primitive is no longer "salutary" but connotes "lunacy." He or she cannot provide a "salutary" alternative, in the sense of something like an ideal community where life would somehow be "whole," lived free from tragedy, or lived in truth (1931, 3-18). So, both societies introduced in the novel are "posited upon a negation of this 'whole truth'" and the novel is described in this context as, again, "a bitterly destructive satire" (Firchow 1966, 460).[6]

Now as the very terms "utopia" and primitivism suggest, the satire deals with a certain concept of history, here, that involves past, present situation and future ideal. Especially the novel's reflection on the *past* might not be evident in first instance since it is often characterized as the sketch of a future: "*Brave New World* is either a perfect-world utopia or its nasty opposite, a dystopia, depending on your point of view: its inhabitants are beautiful, secure, and free from diseases and worries, though in a way we like to think we would find unacceptable" (Atwood ix-x). Most critics of the novel read it as a "dystopia as well as anti-utopia" (Nugel, et al. 287).

The very underpinning of the gloomy worldview captured by the dystopian sketch allows for a comparison between Golding in the previous chapter and Huxley in this one. Both Huxley and Golding believed that the First World War (in the case of Huxley) and the Second World War (in the case of Golding) had changed the consciousness of human beings, and their consciousness had been alienated and invaded by "strangers from within," which was the original title of the manuscript that Golding submitted for *Lord of*

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[6] Huxley discusses the "whole truth" in "Tragedy and the Whole Truth," an essay in *Music at Night and other Essays* and argues that "the whole truth," correspond fairly closely with our actual or potential experience.

the Flies (Baker 321). It led one of the early Golding scholars, James R. Baker, to state that: "The theme of demonic possession was most vital to Golding's purpose, and again it demonstrates the bond with Huxley" (321). As Baker's choice of words suggests, there is not an outside force taking control of people (much like Prospero in *The Tempest* has magical control over others), rather people are possessed by demons that they carry with them and in them.

I will partly follow the trend of reading the novel as anti-utopia, because it is far from introducing an ideal world. It is more like a prophecy of the danger of an emerging world controlled by biotechnology and in that context satirizes the efforts to establish an ideal civilized world. Yet precisely because of this latter aspect, the novel also reflects a distinctly Western history of progress and Enlightenment, in which the figure of the savage plays such an important role. This was already hinted at as well in Huxley's fascination with primitivism (a fascination that was more generally shared by modernist authors).[7]

The theme of the savage in this novel cannot be missed. Its main protagonist is called John the Savage and the novel depicts the efforts of people in the civilized world to keep savagery and civilization apart. They do this by means of building wired fences between the civilized world and what is called the Savage Reservation, located in New Mexico.[8] This was a state that had only recently, from Huxley's 1932 perspective, become a part of the United States. In 1912 it had become the 47th state (followed by Arizona, also in 1912). Thus, the "New" of "New Mexico" is on the one hand a matter of historical reality, but also a hint that the novel might be as much about the past as about the future. It connotes the colonial New World from which savages would have to be, and in fact *were* chased away. By implication, it connotes both the colonial and neo-colonial endeavor of the United States with their "manifest destiny," which was to replace the old and tired colonial powers of Europe. Yet within the novel it also connotes another new world, namely the world that readers view as a future world. In the novel, this new world opposes the old one: in the new world people are mechanically produced and as a result sex is freed from any procreative function, while in the old world people lead primitive lives and have sex to procreate. It is within this context that the "savage within" comes to play such a dominant role, for explicit and implicit reasons. Explicitly, the United States, and New Mexico in particular, have former "savages" "within." New Mexico has several important reservations where Native Americans lived at the time. The diegesis of the novel, obviously, concerns a different reservation, but it is hard to miss the reference.[9] Moreover, as a differing figure, the savage is both a defining and

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[7] For studies on the relation between the savage and Enlightenment, see Barkan et al. (1995), Camayd-Freixas and González (2000), Sweeney (2004), and Hutchinson (2009).

[8] In this chapter, "the civilized world" and "the Savage Reservation" are used as neutral terms to refer to different places discussed in the novel.

[9] It is almost an agreement among Huxley scholars that the Savage Reservation scenes and John's Indian vocabulary, which "come from the Zuni and the Hopi pueblos in New Mexico and Arizona," probably reached "Huxley through D. H. Lawrence's several essays on tribal dances and his novel *The Plumbed Serpent*" (Higdon 137). With particular regard to the Snake Dance, David Leon Higdon argues that Huxley's accurate depiction of Indians is mostly based on his own life experience to New Mexico in 1926 and his readings of books, such as Annual Reports of the Ethnographical Division of the Smithsonian Museum and anthropologist Frank Hamilton Cushing's writings on Zuni life and culture.

uncontrollable signifier, as becomes clear in the novel through the role of John the Savage and of Native Americans in it.

The character of John is not a savage ethnically or anthropologically. In fact he is born from a relation between the Director (who is in charge of the biotechnological baby factory in the civilized world that produces happy human beings), and Linda (a woman left by the Director in the Reservation in New Mexico). John the Savage's trip to the civilized world breaks the assumption that savages live somewhere else or in the past. The novel is an embodiment, here, of what Brown argued in his analysis of the Enlightenment problematic of the savagery-civilization opposition: "One cannot locate the savage clearly on the outside, in the place of a non- or pre, precisely because it is sought to make up for an internal insufficiency" (70-71). That is to say, it is imprecise to locate the savage in a geographical outside (somewhere else), or a historical outside (long ago), because the construction of modern civilization requires savagery as its internal partner. The concept of savage does not have a solid or a fixed position in this context, but is "a differing figure of uncertain position within a system of positioning," in the context of a more general reflection on Western history (71).

The historiographical quality of the novel is partly evidenced by the fact that it is based on historical research. It should be noted that during the 1930s when the novel was written, there was an American craze for everything Mexican-Indian. However Huxley was not so much carried away by this fancy (Kiernan 112) and when Huxley dealt with Native American customs in the novel, this is the result of research, and was not simply a matter of repeating well-known clichés of the time. As Huxley admitted in an interview with George Wickes and Ray Frazer, "I had to do an enormous amount of reading up on New Mexico, because I'd never been there. I read all sorts of Smithsonian reports on the place and then did the best I could to imagine it" (1963, 198).[10] He did so in an explicit struggle with the way in which the novel related to the history of "the" world. Huxley believed that human history is unfixed and always under construction, and stated:

> Generalized history is a branch of speculation, connected (often rather arbitrarily and uneasily) with certain facts about the past. Circumstances alter; each age must think its own thoughts. Not until there is a settled and definitive world order can there be such a thing as a settled and definitive version of human history. (1932, 15)

Depicting history through the particularity of the novel had a more general aim then. Huxley sketched the efforts of people in a so-called civilized world to achieve a pure civilization, while indicating that in this endeavor savagery was only seemingly something "out there." For him, human history was not a matter of continuous change, let alone progress, but something intrinsically fragmented. This fragmentation may be a modernist issue (according to the logic of "the centre cannot hold") but as we will see in the last part of this chapter, it is very well possible to read the novel as postmodern, or as a form of deconstruction *avant la lettre*. Or, it appears to be adequate to read the

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[10] Here Huxley seems to forget his trip to New Mexico in 1926.

novel as a satire aimed at those who think they can build a new world with a "settled and definitive world order."

The figure of the savage is an ideal vehicle to study the modes of positioning that are demanded in the construction of Western history in its attempt to fend off contingency and consider history in terms of its so-called civilized aims and goals. To study this historiographical construction, I will use a study that can be called paradigmatic for a poststructuralist approach to history: White's *Metahistory: The historical imagination in nineteenth-century Europe*. I do so to investigate whether or how the poststructuralist approach, still an avant-garde matter in the early seventies of the twentieth century before it got institutionalized, is successful in its attempt to deal with the damaging consequences of the concept of the savage on the level of representation. As will become clear the novel embodies the possibility of reading it *historiographically* as what White defined as Satire. So, again, in what follows I will use "satire" with a small letter "s" to indicate the literary genre and "Satire" with a capital letter "S" to indicate the historiographical mode of writing and its potential in the writing of history that White is talking about. My question is: How is Satire—this very historiographical form—used in relation to savages?

2.2 Prefigurative Emplotment of History: Historiography and the Potential in Satire

In *Metahistory*, White analyzes "the deep structure of the historical imagination of nineteenth-century Europe" (ix). He works on historical accounts by both historians such as Jules Michelet, Leopold von Ranke, Alexis de Tocqueville and Jacob Burckhardt, and philosophers of history, such as Georg Hegel, Karl Marx, Friedrich Nietzsche and Benedetto Croce (x). His study was meant as an intervention in the debate at the time "over the nature and function of historical knowledge" (2). For him, historical work is "a verbal structure in the form of a narrative prose discourse" (2). That is to say, the writing of history does not limit itself to the description of events that take place in a chronological order, but it is an all-encompassing narrative process of construction. As White makes clear, historiography thus becomes an aesthetic construct:

> I believe, the historian performs an essentially *poetic* act, in which he prefigures the historical field and constitutes it as a domain upon which to bring to bear the specific theories he will use to explain "what was *really* happening" in it....
> Through the disclosure of the linguistic ground on which a given idea of history was constituted, I have attempted to establish the ineluctably poetic nature of the historical work and to specify the prefigurative element in a historical account by which its theoretical concepts were tacitly sanctioned. (x-xi)

For White, then, historical work does not include "objective" historical facts, but becomes a poetic act performed by the historian. This is because before the historian represents or explains what has happened in the historical field, he already has specific

literary prefigurations in his mind in which he embeds the historical facts. It is this prefiguration, or emplotment, that vectorizes history. Or, as White argues: "In the poetic act which precedes the formal analysis of the field, the historian both creates his object of analysis and predetermines the modality of the conceptual strategies he will use to explain it" (31). This is to say that in the performance of historiography as a poetic act, before the historian encounters the data of the historical field, there is already a prefigured structure in his mind that can be used to represent and explain these data. The historian not only creates his object of analysis, but also pre-determines the conceptual strategies he uses to explain his object as existent in time, and determining "history."

As a consequence, in a sense every historical work has a metahistorical basis, which is comprised of "the dominant tropological mode and its attendant linguistic protocol" (xi). Like a deep structure within language, there is also a poetic structure within historical works. To explain the "metahistorical" basis or the poetic structures, White argues that there are five different levels of conceptualization in the historical works: chronicle, story, mode of emplotment, mode of argument, and mode of ideological implication (5). These different levels of conceptualization answer questions in different ways and make different "styles" of historical thinking possible. In White's view, "a historiographical style represents a particular combination of modes of emplotment, argument, and ideological implication" (29). "Emplotment is the way by which a sequence of events fashioned into a story is gradually revealed to be a story of a particular kind" (7). Following the line indicated by Northrop Frye in his *Anatomy of Criticism,* White distinguishes four different modes of emplotment: Romance, Tragedy, Comedy, and Satire (7):

> By an extension of Frye's ideas, it can be argued that interpretation in history consists of the provisions of a plot structure for a sequence of events so that their nature as a comprehensible process is revealed by their figuration as a *story of a particular kind*. (1978, 58)

In other words, in order to interpret historical events and also to organize them in terms of a sequence or plot, historians have to resort to a structure that is *generically* marked, like in Romance, Tragedy, Comedy and Satire. Every plot structure also defines the prefigurative element in historiographers' minds (as discussed above). It is the plot structure that "transforms a chronicle of events into a 'history'" (62).

Specifically, Romance is "a drama of self-identification," including the hero's transcendence, victory and finally liberation from the world (1973, 8). Satire is the opposite of Romance, in offering a history in which people remain "captives of the world" (9). In Comedy, there is harmony between the natural and the social, which is worthy of celebration, while in Tragedy, after extensive struggle, a hero reconciles with the world and works within the limitations of the world (9). Apart from modes of emplotment, modes of argument are another way in which historians interpret historical material and give their text a specific shape. White introduces four different modes of argument: formalist, mechanistic, organicist and contextualist. Formalist historians emphasize the

importance of categorization, labeling, and identification of objects, while a contextualist argument explains events in terms of similar events and their contexts. Organicist historians "tend to be governed by the desire to see individual identities as components of processes which aggregate into wholes that are greater than, or qualitatively different from, the sum of their parts," while the mechanistic argument seeks to find the laws that govern human activities (15).

Satire can resort to all four aforementioned modes of argument. However, because there is "a certain elective affinity between the mode of explanation and the mode of emplotment in historians of undeniably classic stature," Satire is often bound with the contextualist mode of argument (1978, 66). As White contends, the choice for a certain mode of emplotment and certain mode of argument "are products of a third, – more basic, interpretative decision: a moral or ideological decision" (67). White introduces four modes of ideological implication, namely anarchist, radical, conservative and liberal, and then claims that "Satire can be used… for either Conservative or Liberal purposes, depending upon whether the object satirized is an established or an emerging social force" (1973, 67). If the object satirized concerns an established social force, then the use of Satire is liberal, and if the object is an emerging social force, of, say, progress, it is conservative.

What the novel satirizes through fiction are the emerging results of biotechnological and socio-scientific techniques. As such, one could argue that the novel is conservative in that it wants to propagate what the novel deems a "savage" reservation. Yet what is also satirized is the attempt of so-called civilized powers to distinguish themselves from savages. Here the use of satire would fit in with a liberal agenda, given that the people who are satirized are those who claim to have civilized themselves, leaving behind a savage pre-history. The two ambiguously come together when those who are satirized are those who want to counter a newly emergent order, not as the inevitable result of biotechnological developments, but as the possibility of a new savage order. So as for being liberal or conservative in terms of White's Satire, the novel is ambiguous. In what follows I would like to work out in more detail why this is so.

As has been hinted at above, Huxley's novel can be considered as a straightforward literary satire, in the context of it being an (anti-)utopian narrative. Yet by suggesting a history that considers civilization to be superior to savagery, the novel also inscribes itself in a form of historiography. Is this inscription modeled according to the literary prefiguration, as Satire? According to White, such Satire is different from other modes of emplotment in that:

> The archetypal theme of Satire is the precise opposite of this Romantic drama of redemption; it is, in fact, a drama of diremption, a drama dominated by the apprehension that man is ultimately a captive of the world rather than its master, and by the recognition that, in the final analysis, human consciousness and will are always inadequate to the task of overcoming definitively the dark force of death, which is man's unremitting enemy. (9)

So contrary to Romance, where there is still hope of mankind being saved in some way or another ("redemption"), satire is hopeless in that it confronts mankind with a fragmented world ("diremption"). This implies that human beings cannot master the world, but remain the captives of a world that is ruled by a definite end point: death. In the novel, this attitude is embodied most explicitly by John the Savage, who tries to be the master of his own fate, and yet cannot change this fate or the world defining it. Thus, he remains captive to a fragmented world, as a result of which he feels forced to commit suicide.

According to White, and contrary to stories cast in other plot-modes, such as Romance, Comedy and Tragedy, stories cast as Satire gain effects by "frustrating normal expectations about the kinds of resolutions" (8). In Satire, people cannot find resolutions and its authors tend to have a pessimistic view. In *Metahistory*, White for instance reads Burckhardt's famous cultural historical studies in the nineteenth century as Satire, and argues that in Burckhardt's estimation: "The truths taught by history were melancholy ones. They led neither to hope nor to action. They did not even suggest that humanity itself would *endure*" (230). Similarly, Huxley's novel holds a melancholic attitude towards the future, which is why, when compared with H. G. Wells (or the prophet of scientific optimism), Huxley is understandably called a "prophet of gloom" by Peter Bowering (98). Huxley does not believe that humanity itself can endure and he shares with Burckhardt the same kind of pessimism towards the world. This can evidenced explicitly in the ending of the novel, the suicide of John the Savage.

Satire refuses "to provide the kinds of formal coherencies one is conditioned to expect from reading Romance, Comedy, and Tragedy," and this is also formally evidenced in the novel by the frequent recurrence of Shakespeare quotes (H. White 1973, 28). Studying several quotes from Shakespeare's works, Morag Shiach argues that they embody the "characteristic universe of Huxley's fictional parties, where meaning emerges from the cumulative drops of fragmented conversation and quotation rather than presenting itself as continuous or coherent" (214). That is to say, these quotes, in the end, are not taken up in a coherent whole, but develop into what is a disparate collection, through accumulation of the seemingly unrelated fragments. They may even be analogous, here, to the historical works by Burckhardt, that were defined by White as "an 'arbitrary' arrangement of the materials for purposes of presentation and analysis" (H. White 1973, 237).

Such arbitrariness can be traced in the figure of John the Savage, precisely in his relation to Shakespeare. As a child John finds it difficult to understand life in the Savage Reservation, because the only person he can ask questions to is his mother, and she does not understand life in the Savage Reservation either. He does not like the Native American Popé, who sleeps with his mother, but he does not know why he has this dislike. He struggles with the problem until one day he comes across a book *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare* (Huxley 2007, 113). This is an arbitrary encounter, though not that arbitrary, of course, in the context of Europe's cultural history and Shakespeare's towering position in it. After reading the book, he finds that "they gave him a reason for hating Popé; and they made his hatred more real; they even made Popé himself more real" (114). This is to say, the works by Shakespeare provide

John with "the prefigurative element" discussed by White, so that John is not only able to express himself but also to understand his life in a larger picture, which is a picture framed by the European canon (1973, xi). Still, one can easily imagine that he could have found another book, through which this very construction might have been shaped in a radically different way, which brings us back to arbitrariness.

In the context of European and Western history, John's hatred for Popé may not be that arbitrary, considering that Popé is a Native American. Furthermore, neither the character's name, John the Savage, nor the concept of the savage itself, are arbitrary in the novel and in Western history. With respect to this, can deconstruction deal with the concept of the savage in a liberating (say emancipatory) way? Or is deconstruction Satirical in itself, in White's sense of the word, as a result of which we remain "captives of the world" in which the savage has at some point been introduced without ever going away anymore, or connoting the dark end point of life: death (9)? Let me consider this by focusing on the genealogical aspects in White's work, and in the novel's performative reconstruction of a genealogy as satire.

As a strategy of reading, deconstruction became well-known through works of Jacques Derrida who defined its quality and aims differently, or gave it different emphases. In *Positions*, he mainly discusses an important step in deconstruction—the reversion of the hierarchy between oppositional terms: "To deconstruct the opposition, first of all, is to overturn the hierarchy at a given moment" (1981, 42). In *Limited INC*, he further describes two processes involved in the deconstruction of the opposition, which are "a *reversal* of the classical opposition *and* a general *displacement* of the system" (1988, 21). "Deconstruction does not consist in moving from one concept to another, but in reversing and displacing a conceptual order as well as the non-conceptual order with which it is articulated" (21). To reverse the hierarchy between the oppositional terms is an important step in deconstruction, and to criticize the very system on which the hierarchy is established is the second step in this process. It is also crucial for Derrida that deconstruction does not appeal to "higher logical principle or superior reason but uses the very principle it deconstructs" (Culler 1982, 87). The practitioner of deconstruction, as Culler lucidly explains, "works within the terms of the system but in order to breach it" (86). Laying out Derrida's practice of deconstruction, Culler notes: "To deconstruct a discourse is to show how it undermines the philosophy it asserts, or the hierarchical oppositions on which it relies, by identifying in the text the rhetorical operations that produce the supposed ground of argument, the key concept or premise" (86). In this context, deconstruction is much more than a reading practice. Terry Eagleton made the political potential of Derrida's deconstruction explicit and argued that deconstruction is "an ultimately *political* practice, an attempt to dismantle the logic by which a particular system of thought, and behind that a whole system of political structures and social institutions, maintains its force" (1996, 128). That is to say, the task of deconstruction is not to dissolve all truths, meanings and identities, but rather to discover and dismantle the way these terms are produced by language, social institutions and practices. In this way, deconstruction opens up possibilities for multiple truths, meanings and identities.

Yet the multiple meanings disclosed by deconstruction depend on the genealogical

tendency in deconstruction. Etymologically, genealogy refers to "tracing of a family," "making of a pedigree," and "folk tale."[11] That is to say, genealogy involves a continuous process of movements as well as traces left by these movements. The reference to "folk tale" implies that genealogy is not limited to the elite, but opens up plenty of possibilities. Similarly, deconstruction does not entail an overthrowing of all the meanings of the text by declaring the text's meaninglessness, but rather a discovery of the multiple and even contradictory meanings of the text in relation to its historical background (but also all other contexts in which it is called to function). As to the binary opposition between civilization and savagery, the task of deconstruction is not to eliminate the opposition once and for all, but to work on the dynamic relationship of its terms and expose how these dynamics are produced in its historical and contemporary contexts.

In tracing the idea of the savage as a wild man in his article "The Forms of Wildness: Archaeology of an idea," White describes a genealogy of wildness and argues that in modern times, wildness is more related to a form of lunacy:

> In modern times the concept of wildness … tends to be conflated with the popular notion of psychosis, to be seen therefore as a form of sickness and to reflect a personality malfunction in the individual's relation with society, rather than as a species variation or ontological differentiation. (1972, 35)

This is like saying that in modern times, wildness, and by implication savagery, have shifted meaning, following the logic of Derrida's *différance*. In his discussing the intertwinement of civilization and savagery, White argues that the meanings of those "self-authenticating" terms, such as "wildness," "madness" and "heresy," are not stable, but are complicated and constantly in flux. White argues: "They are rather, complexes of symbols, the referents of which shift and change in response to the changing patterns of human behavior which they are meant to sustain." (5). As a consequence, wildness does not refer to something ontologically different from civilization, but has been internalized, not just with, but also through, a *difference*. This kind of "internalized" savagery not only questions the boundary between civilization and savagery, but also affirms the value of the savage's dialectical antithesis "civilization." White argues:

> The notion of "wildness"… the ideas of "madness" and "heresy"… These terms are used not merely to designate a specific condition or state of being but also to confirm the value of their dialectical antitheses: "civilization," "sanity," and "orthodoxy," respectively. (4)

The terms "wildness," "madness" and "heresy" are used to refer to a specific condition or state of being as "culturally self-authenticating devices." On the one hand, they define themselves, in the sense that their meanings are so pellucid that they do not need other

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[11] Etymologically, genealogy refers to "early 14c., 'line of descent, pedigree, descent,' from Old French *genealogie* (12c.), from Late Latin *genealogia* 'tracing of a family,' from Greek *genealogia* 'the making of a pedigree,' from *genea* 'generation, descent' (see *genus*) + -logia (see *–logy*). An Old English word for it was *folctalu*, literally 'folk tale.' Meaning 'study of family trees' is from 1768." For more information, see <http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?term=genealogy>.

concepts or further explanation to confirm their values (4). On the other hand, they contribute to confirming the values of their antitheses, such as "civilization," "sanity," and "orthodoxy," which implies that it is necessary to dwell upon their meanings always in connection to their antitheses.

Simply put, the terms "wildness," "madness" and "heresy" are context-bound and have different contents at different times. Here, White brings in the comparison with Foucault's *Madness and Civilization: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason*, which shows how the different contents of "insanity" operate in different religious, political and economic contexts. Thus "the term 'insanity' has been filled with a religious content during periods of religious enthusiasm, with a political content during times of intensive political integration, and with an economic content during ages of economic stress or expansion" (Foucault in H. White 5). Similarly, the meaning of savagery is also context-bound. In some contexts, the savage is closer to the trope of ignoble savage, someone to fear since he is mad, insane, morally corrupted, evil and uncivilized. In other contexts, the savage evokes the trope of the noble savage, someone to admire and to desire for since he is pure, innocent and noble.

Taking all these in consideration, it is possible to read *Brave New World* in a poststructuralist way. It is not immediately clear whether the novel deconstructs or supports the well-established hierarchical opposition between savage and civilized. The latter option, though, seems rather unlikely in the light of the novel's satirical nature.

2.3 *Brave New World* Considered as Deconstruction *avant la lettre*: Oppositions that Make one Captive of/to the World

The novel shows "how, in the future, mechanisms will have fully dehumanized us" and "subsequent generations will become the slaves and victims of metallic and mathematical monsters" (Clark 140). Despite the evident satire, here, there is a clear geographical boundary between "the civilized world," and "the Savage Reservation," which confirms the binary opposition between the civilized and the savage (Huxley 2007, 89, 38). In the civilized world, people think that they are more advanced, developed and progressive than inhabitants in the Savage Reservation. To keep from being contaminated by the savages and to prevent savages from escaping, a high-tension wire fence has been built to set the civilized world apart from the Savage Reservation. "To touch the fence is instant death," and usually people born in the Savage Reservation are not allowed to leave and "are destined to die there" (88). Only a limited number of people in the civilized world can go to the Savage Reservation. As the pilot told Bernard Marx and Lenina Crowne during their trip to the Savage Reservation, the inhabitants in the Reservation have to be obedient to the civilized, since they "have got enough experience of gas bombs to know that they mustn't play any tricks" (91). This also indicates that the boundary has been established through the violent oppression of savages by the civilized.

However, the sharp geographical boundary is constantly challenged by travels of people from the civilized world, as well as people from the Savage Reservation. For people in the civilized world, the Savage Reservation is so different from their world that it has become a place of interest. Thus, Bernard and Lenina travel from the civilized

world come to visit the Savage Reservation to see something exotic and different. Lenina is shocked to see life in the Savage Reservation, because what she assumes to be civilized is questioned in this Reservation. During their trip, they come across John the Savage, who is born in the Savage Reservation but has civilized parents, mother Linda and father Thomas, director of the London Hatchery and Conditioning Center (D.H.C.). After learning that John is a son of the director Bernard is very interested, particularly because the very same director aims to exile Bernard. Thus, Bernard decides to take John back to the civilized world, because he wants to leverage John's identity to humiliate the director and avoid being sent away by him. John's travels to the civilized world help us chart the topography of the novel, which mainly consists of four different places: the Savage Reservation, the civilized world, exile places, where Bernard and Helmholtz Watson are sent away, and the lighthouse, where John ends his life. Through this topography, the novel shows us a mixture of savagery and civilization, in which the Native American Reservation, the contemporary world, and the future mechanical world are sampled together.

Whether we can read the novel as a satire depends on a play with oppositions that can be described as intertwined, like the intertwinement of civilization and savagery. Dustin H. Griffin writes, if "satire is often an 'open' rather than a 'closed' form, that it is concerned rather to inquire, explore, or unsettle than to declare, sum up, or conclude" (95). Read as satire, the novel can never be finally nailed down to a single interpretation of civilization or savagery, because multiple meanings and voices can be heard within it. These multiple meanings make it possible to read the novel as performing a deconstructive practice. This brings us back, however, to a principal distinction between literal satire and historiographical Satire.

In *Grotesque Anatomies: Menippean Satire Since the Renaissance*, the Australian scholar and poet David Musgrave highlights the satirical potential in Derrida's work. Musgrave quotes Derrida by stating that the secret or the meaning of the text is closely linked "with the realm of the grotesque: the margin, the shadows, the underground" (207). Deconstructive practice means to show "how texts come to embarrass their own ruling systems of logic" and "show this by fastening on the 'symptomatic' points, the *aporia* or impasses of meaning, where texts get into trouble, come unstuck, offer to contradict themselves" (Eagleton 116). The grotesque shifts into satire, then, when a text implicitly comes to make ridiculous the very thing it purports to say, as a deconstructive practice: a "self-defeating, self-deconstructing." As such, the novel works on a double level. As a literary satire, it projects its criticism outside of the text, which is why its agenda can be liberal or conservative, or both at the same time. As a deconstruction of Western history on a larger scale, the book works akin to historiography, however, thereby becoming Satire in White's sense. Here the protagonist, Western man, with its internal savagery, is not able to escape from a world by means of deconstruction, but stays caught within it. Let me test this out in relation to several aspects of the novel.

Lord of the Flies is a story about "sexless" boys in a sense that sex is not involved in the children's lives or at least remains invisible in the novel. Although these children can be categorized as both ignoble and noble savages, depending on their age, sex and human reproduction has not become a part of their lives. As such, the novel is

remarkable because in Western discourse, the sexuality of the ignoble savage and the noble savage is a major point of concern. The sexual activity of ignoble savage is regarded as violent and brutal, while in the case of the noble savage their sexual activity is often regarded as the ultimate manifestation of pure love or, at least, a love with harmonious connotations. As if forming the opposite of *Lord of the Flies*, *Brave New World* foregrounds sexual activity as a major theme. The savages who are clearly depicted here as ignoble, live a monogamous life and sexual activity is only encouraged between husband and wife for the sake of reproduction. That is to say, only adult couples are allowed to have sex and any other kind of sexual activity is regarded as obscene. By contrast, among the civilized, sexual activity is prevalent and they have complete freedom in having sex. The sexual age limit is nonexistent: even when they are children, "moderns" begin to engage in sex games. They cannot understand the conditions under which sex functions in the Reservation. However, while civilized people have complete freedom to have sex, it is regarded as unnatural and shameful to have children as the result of sexual activity. Linda, who is from the civilized world, at one point argues that having children is "like dogs. It's so revolting" (Huxley 2007, 105); it turns one "into a savage" (109). In the civilized world, there is another way of reproduction, which is faster and regarded as "lovely" progress by its Director (86).

It is not hard to see how Huxley is satirizing several positions at the same time here. He addresses what has been at the core of sexual acceptance for centuries within Christian context and shifts it to the Savage Reservation. And by uncoupling sex from its reproductive function, he shifts a colonial fantasy into the heart of a post-modern civilization. Yet where does this leave us in terms of White's Satire?

The question is pertinent because historiography is a major theme of the novel as well, or rather anti-historiography. "Huxley's future rulers" believe that "the past is dangerous," and as a consequence, people are trained to be hostile towards history (Firchow 2007, 69). In a lesson given by the Director, people are told that "most historical facts *are* unpleasant" (Huxley 2007, 19). He also warns his students that "when you're not accustomed to history, most facts about the past *do* sound incredible" (27). Later, the Controller also says: "I suppose, that beautiful and inspired saying of Our Ford's: History is bunk" (29). For him, history is uncultivated, savage and backwards, and thus should be discarded. Analogously the leaders of the civilized world hold a contemptuous attitude towards their ancestors. As the Controller says: "Our ancestors were so stupid and short-sighted that when the first reformers came along and offered to deliver them from those horrible emotions, they wouldn't have anything to do with them" (39). Because their ancestors have emotions, and do not take soma as the moderns do, they are regarded as fools. There is even "a campaign against the Past," in the context of which museums are closed and historical monuments are blown up (43). In accordance with this, historical books are forbidden. "For the same reason as we don't give them *Othello*: they're old; they're about God hundreds of years ago. Not about God now" (204). That is to say, in the civilized world, anything historical or old is equated with savagery, and thus should be eradicated.

In the civilized world, it appears then that people have a stable present *without* any connection to the past and future, just as in Zeno's paradox of the flight of an arrow, the

flying arrow is at rest.[12] What they can see or experience is only the ever present. However, the constant battle against the past and the future implies that the past or the future cannot be eradicated completely. In terms of deconstruction, the anxiously stabilized present requires, or even depends on both history and future as the opposite others. That is to say, as I will show in the following, the absolute distinctions between the past, the present and the future dissolve, and the present established by the Controller *contains* the past and the future, in the double sense of the verb "to contain": it comprises past and future and controls both, or keeps them bound (as in "containment"). In terms of the novel doing a deconstruction *avant la lettre*, here, there are some pivotal resonances with the way Derrida himself theorized the present.

In laying out Derrida's stance towards the present, Culler in *On Deconstruction* states the following:

> The past is a former present, the future an anticipated present, but the present instance simply is: an autonomous given. But it turns out that the present instant can serve as ground only insofar as it is not pure and autonomous given. If motion is to be present, presence must already be marked by difference and deferral. We must, Derrida says ... think the present starting from/in relation to time as difference, differing and deferral .... The notion of presence and of the present is derived: an effect of differences. "We thus come," Derrida writes, "to posit presence no longer as the absolute matrix form of being but rather as a 'particularization' and 'effect'. A determination and effect within a system that is no longer that of presence but of difference" (Marges, p. 17/"Differance," p. 147). (Culler 1982, 95)

I give the long quote because, to me, it appears to be pivotal in thinking through the critical (or satirical, or Satirical) potential in deconstruction, but also in its resonance with the way in which the present is dealt with in *Brave New World*. To be sure, as Derrida says, the present and presence have lost their absoluteness, that is to say: they have lost their hierarchical position of superiority. At the same time, we find ourselves in a closed circle or rather, the concentration that deconstruction demands implies that the flying arrow is brought to a standstill in an analysis of its ever deferred arrival, or its ever differentialized present-ness.

As Boletsi remarks in her analysis of Louis Althusser's theory: "Ideology – as well as language in structuralist theories – functions like a closed system, in which subjects are formed and trapped, as it were, without the option to escape" (2010, 206). Boletsi is dealing, here, with Althusser's "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses," in which Althusser resorts to a figure of a divine voice and argues that this divine voice not only constitutes its subjects, but also subordinates them through processes of interpellation, which further implies that ideology creates subjects. Here as well, it is as if the novel is ahead of its time, in describing a "Voice," which is constantly broadcast to people in the civilized world. It is a voice that helps to produce and subordinate its subjects, as well as

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[12] I take this image from Jonathan Culler's *On Deconstruction* (1982, 94).

keeps them trapped (Huxley 2007, 20). Sometimes, the Voice imposes ideas upon people, such as "everybody is happy now" (63). Because these sayings "are repeated a hundred and fifty times every night for twelve years," almost all people believe that, indeed, they are happy (63). Sometimes, the Voice also helps to solve a crisis. After John calls for the Deltas to give up soma, there is unrest among them. At this moment, "from out of the Synthetic Music Box a voice began to speak" (188). This "angelic Voice" tries to persuade them to be "happy and good… At peace, at peace" (189). Thanks to "the Voice's richly affectionate, baritone valedictions," "the Deltas were kissing and hugging one another" (189). This Voice helps to pacify people and prevents them from getting angry, which is an emotion that might produce change or that might disrupt the everlasting present. Moreover, the Voice is present in almost all the places in the civilized world, and its omnipresence makes it easy for people to accept "Voice" as the truth and firmly believe in its eternal authority. It even infiltrates the daily conversation of the civilized (like between Fanny and Lenina) with propaganda in such a way that conversation and propaganda fuse (43-47). The system is, indeed, closed—although it demands a lot of work from the Controllers to keep it closed.

Now, as Boletsi makes clear, Althusser's ideology concept can be placed within the context of structuralist linguistics. Derrida is post-structuralist, and in poststructuralism closed system is turned into a dynamic one, one of constant production through difference and deferral. In that context, for instance, the repetition of propaganda does not mean that its meaning remains the same, but that it may open up other possibilities. In *Limited INC*, Derrida argues:

> Iterability alters, contaminating parasitically what it identifies and enables to repeat "itself"; it leaves us no choice but to mean (to say) something that is (already, always, also) other than what we mean (to say), to say something other than what we say and would have wanted to say, to understand something other than . . . etc. (62)

That is to say, although we can repeat what we have just said, what we repeat is not something we have just said or something we would have wanted to say. It is no longer possible to fix the meaning of what we repeat, because meaning is always changing and renews itself through repetition. Of course, this does not indicate that the meaning of each repetition is completely different from that of previous repetitions; it is partly different and partly similar to the meaning of previous repetitions. Based on Derrida's idea, we can argue that through repetition, multiple and often conflicting meanings are continuously produced. This kind of repetition also happens in the novel. For example, after seeing the dirty conditions in the Savage Reservation, Lenina is shocked and repeats: "cleanliness is next to fordliness" (Huxley 2007, 94). She is conditioned to believe that civilization is always associated with cleanness and tidiness, whereas savagery is related to dirt. "Yes, and civilization is sterilization," Bernard answers (94). Here Bernard's answer is paradoxical, because of the different meanings of the word *sterilization*. On the one hand, *sterilization* implies tidiness, which affirms the boundary between civilization and savagery. On the other hand it refers to the state of being

lifeless and unable to reproduce, which implies the doom of civilization. The double meaning of the term is again satirical, in its ridiculing the idea that there could exist a world that is sterile (meaning clean). In this context, expanding on Derrida's work, Musgrave suggested that paradox "represents a puncturing of the notion that there can ever be a single, adequate system of thought, argument, or opinion to describe or account for the world" (199). That is to say, paradox opens up possibilities for the co-existence of different thoughts, arguments, and opinions. Or, Philip Holland argued: "Its proper force is not that of affirmation or negation but of experiment, of the testing of received ideas" (130). Paradox does not confirm or negate, that is, but brings ideas together in order to experiment or test these ideas. Bernard's repetition of "civilization is sterilization" paradoxically confirms *and* questions the hierarchical opposition between civilization and savagery and, through satire opens up another alternative attitude towards civilization.

Yet, although satire, paradox, and experiment may all seem to be liberating forces, they are so because with post-structuralism Boletsi's closed-ness is no longer there in terms of space (as when a voice envelops us in space). However, closed-ness now has come to reside in terms of time: the present is time and again produced as eternal and identical to itself. This allows deconstruction to be satirical, as when a system proclaims the present to be absolute and we can laugh at the anxious work to make it appear as absolute. Yet does such an "absolute" present allow deconstruction to be more than satire, or is it, basically, Satire in that we remain captive of an ever effectively made present world, in which false oppositions are time and again deconstructed but in doing so also effectively reproduced—be it with a difference?

The captivity of people is thematized and satirized extensively in the novel. The strongest metaphor for the character's captivity in their world is the use of soma. With soma, Huxley's characters become the positive counterpart to what a few decades later would be defined as the one-dimensional man, depicted by philosopher Herbert Marcuse in his book *One-Dimensional Man: Studies in the Ideology of Advanced Industrial Society*. In this society, people living in the real world would only come to pursue the false needs created by industrial society; they lack critical thinking, are numb and remain under complete social control. In the novel, soma makes all sorrows, worries and anxiety disappear; people become happy and relaxed and feel as if they have entered paradise. Within paradise, the concept of time changes dramatically as people cannot feel the transience of time. For example, when Linda is nearing death, she is given a lot of soma so that she will not feel pain. This overdose of soma is harmful to her health and will shorten her life. However, as Dr. Shaw explains, soma helps to lengthen life, because he tells John to "think of the enormous, immeasurable durations it can give you out of time. Every soma-holiday is a bit of what our ancestors used to call eternity" (Huxley 2007, 134). Soma helps people forget unpleasant situations and real life, including the passage of time. Without a concept of time, everything becomes eternal. With soma, people become "slaves," who assume that their society is stable and eternal in the sense of ever present (186).

Infantilism is another means through which ideology takes effect in its capacity to keep the characters captive of their world. Different from the infantilism as discussed in

chapter one, here infantilism refers to the self. The former kind of infantilism was used to degrade others as childish and naïve in order to conquer them or put them under control. Here infantilism is mobilized to make the self innocent and happy. Everybody is encouraged to be as naïve as infants, because as Lenina says at one point, "Our Ford loved infants" (81). Again, the satirical allusion to Christianity is obvious. It was Lord Christ who said: "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these" (*New International Version*, Luke. 18:16). Here the Christian allusion is transplanted to a quasi-secular system in which it is believed that a civilized simple mind is stable, while the mind of savages is full of possibilities and thus unstable. To produce a stable and simple mind, the Controller remade humanity and has to continue remaking humanity (Firchow 2007, 92).

This infantilism implies the absence of self-directed research or scholarly development. "Books and loud noises, flowers and electric shocks – already in the infant mind these couples were compromisingly linked; and after two hundred repetitions of the same or a similar lesson would be wedded indissolubly. What man has joined, nature is powerless to put asunder" (Huxley 2007, 17). So, people are held captive in that they are conditioned to hate books and to shun nature instinctively and unalterably. As nonreaders, they consume more, while they do not indulge themselves into intellectual thinking or the appreciation of the beauty of nature (19). Their main activities are working, consuming and having fun. They are limited within the "unseen wires," which implies that they are conditioned to love their servitude, accept rules without doubting them, and lose the ability to think or to ask questions (17). This measure is quite successful in producing dull and unintelligent citizens. For instance, when John asks his mother Linda more about chemicals, which are popular in the civilized world, "Linda never seems to know. The old men of the pueblo had much more definite answers" (113). Indeed, the old men in the Savage Reservation seem more intelligent and can account for their lives much better.

In a novel such as this the hatred towards books takes on a distinct satirical tone because it almost provokes one to move to a meta-level, as in Hutcheon's famous study on meta-history. Yet before moving to such a meta-level, let me give two last examples of characters being captured in the civilized world: one that is explicitly linked to the element of education, the other to the element of community.

As "an instrument of intellectual education," sleep-teaching or hypnopaedia plays a function in the novel similar to ideology. It is used to repeat slogans or propaganda and establish a stable society. "Sixty-two thousand four hundred repetitions make one truth" (40). For example, Lenina is born in the civilized world and she has been conditioned to such an extent that she only tends to repeat what she has been told. When she finds that Bernard is upset, she recommends soma to him and tells him that "Remember, one cubic centimeter cures ten gloomy sentiment" (77). After learning that Bernard wants to know what passion is and to feel something strong, Lenina warns him that "When the individual feels, the community reels" (81). She emphasizes the importance of individual peace, since she has been taught that emotions and feelings are bad for the stability of society. After she hears that Bernard will be sent to Iceland, she tries to comfort him and quotes: "Was and will make me ill,… I take a gramme and only am," which implies that

the past and the future will make one unhappy and as long as one has soma, one can still enjoy the present (90). When she feels uncomfortable in the Savage Reservation, she feels the need to have soma and says: "A gramme is better than a damn" (100). Even when John is furious towards her and accuses her of being a frivolous coquette, she stutters: "A gra-amme is be-etter…" (170).

To guarantee that every person and activity is under control, isolation is forbidden in the civilized world. When Dr. Gaffney introduces John to the civilized world, he tells him: "We don't encourage them to indulge in any solitary amusements" (142). Solitariness is not welcome and is regarded as kind of sickness, because an isolated space may escape from the supervision of the Controller and is thus thought to be harmful to the stability of the civilized world. In the novel, the exiles, such as Bernard and Helmholtz, suffer from this kind of sickness, since they often feel out of place and doubt society. Their behavior and thoughts keep challenging the psychological boundary between civilization and savagery that keeps the system in place.

Because of his "physical defect" Bernard, for example, is regarded as queer by others and girls do not like him either (57). To avoid embarrassment and humiliation, Bernard wants to remain alone and indulge in solitary amusements, which makes him even more queer. He once says: "It makes me feel as though… […] as though I were more *me*, if you see what I mean. More on my own, not so completely a part of something else. Not just a cell in the social body" (78). He is once accused by the Director because of "his heretical views on sport and *soma*, [by] the scandalous unorthodoxy of his sex-life, and [by] his refusal to obey the teachings of Our Ford" (129). Unlike other people in the civilized world, he doubts the sport they engage in and soma's ability to make people happy. He prefers to stay alone, so that nobody will bother him. This tendency to be isolated does not fit in the civilized world. He is labeled as "an enemy of Society," "a subverter," and "a conspirator against Civilization itself" by the Director (129-30). In the end, Bernard is exiled to Iceland for his queerness, just as his friend Helmholtz.

As such, it is clear that those who refuse to be the implicit captives of the world will be made captives explicitly; collective and happily embraced captivity is replaced by individual enforced and punitive captivity. In my final section I want to take the deconstructive, satirical quality of the novel in addressing this captivity to a meta-level in an attempt to answer the question posed above: Is Huxley's satirical deconstruction in the end analogous to deconstruction-as-Satire in that it keeps not so much the fictional characters captured in the world of the *diegesis*, but also the readers in the oppositions that structure their real world?

2.4 Savage Native Americans: Deconstruction as the Captive of Satire[13]

As a Satire, the novel satirizes seemingly correct and positive concepts, such as civilization, stability, progress, community and happiness. With respect to these, "The deconstruction of a text does not proceed by random doubt or arbitrary subversion, but by the careful teasing out of warring forces of signification within the text itself" (Johnson 3). Likewise, the novel does not randomly reverse the hierarchical opposition

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[13] Here "Satire" refers to the one in White's sense.

between civilization and savagery, but foregrounds the tension between civilization and savagery, which complicates the interrelation of these notions. In doing so, the novel itself can be regarded as performing a deconstructive practice. The novel does not abolish the boundaries or distinctions between civilization and savagery once for all, but shows the impossibility of establishing pure civilization or savagery, which emphasizes their dynamic relationship. In the novel, the spatialization and temporalization of savagery in terms of its being "out there" and "back in time" are explored due to the clearly demarcated geographical distribution of savage and civilized spaces. However, conceptually speaking, the savage lives within civilization itself and contributes to constructing civilization. In terms of space, the savage does not limit itself to the Reservation, but actually infiltrates the civilized world literally through the figure of John the Savage. In terms of time, the savage can exist in the past, the present and the future as well, and it can be either infant-like or adult-like. In this deconstructive practice, civilization fails to eliminate savagery, but depends on it in order to maintain an orderly system.

In the above, I argued that the distinction between satire and Satire implies a shift to a meta-level, in the sense that both fictional characters and readers remain captives of the world. This shift also applies to deconstruction itself, which keeps questioning the totality and unity of the contemporary world, but at the same time, remains captured by it. In "Grotesque logic in the work of Jacques Derrida: Menippean satire, deconstruction and postmodern," Musgrave defines deconstruction as satirical. To that order, he introduces a genealogy of Menippean satire, which can be traced from Menippus and Plato to Nietzsche, and to Derrida (192). Genealogically,

> As a grotesque form of literature, Menippean satire straddles the nihilistic, the affirmative, the speculative and the silly and represents a bewilderingly heterogeneous field for speculation, imitation and study....
>
> ... the Menippean interpenetrates with the scholarly or the philosophical discourse in a particularly concentrated way that often leaves the fantastic, or coarsely bodily to one side, substituting for it wildly digressive, often paradoxical and intricate arguments and scholarly sophistications that could be characterised as a *grotesque logic*. (31; 192)

Menippean satire plays a double role in that it both negates and affirms at the same time. Besides the grotesque logic, it also takes on several other prominent features, such as "Hybridity, irony, intertextuality, fragmentation, formal variation, parody and self-reflexivity" (195). In Derrida's writings, parody appears frequently, which is "typical of Menippean intertextuality and brings into play a multiplicity of voices" (205). The use of parody implies that there is no longer monologue, or one authoritative voice, but multiple voices can be heard simultaneously. Derrida's work "offer[s] the possibility of discovery with the grotesque operating as a mode that can yield liberating possibilities" (207). Specifically, these "liberating possibilities" interest me here, since I am looking at the possibility to liberate society from the civilization-savage opposition.

In the previous section, I discussed the novel as a deconstructive practice. As a deconstructive practice itself, the novel is open to further deconstruction, because "there is no definitive reading, all texts contain contradictions, gaps, and disjunctions – they undermine themselves" (Chandler 93). In my final section of this chapter, I will test the implications of this deconstructive expansion through focusing on the explicit representation of Native Americans in the novel. On the one hand, as I will show, their representation both confirms and questions Eurocentric ideas of Native Americans, while on the other hand it reveals the simultaneity of civilization and savagery. If, with respect to all this I want to ask whether deconstruction is perhaps not only satirical in nature but also, historiographically, Satire, and what are the consequences of this?

First, let me look at the Savage Reservation, which covers "... five hundred and sixty thousand square kilometers, divided into four distinct Sub-Reservations, each surrounded by a high-tension wire fence" (Huxley 2007, 87). This Savage Reservation is perhaps not a real description of, but at least similar to the modern Reservation for Native Americans, who are to inhabit a specific area with restrictions. The similarity is strengthened when in the novel the civilized people are told that "a savage reservation is a place which, owing to unfavorable climatic or geological conditions, or poverty of natural resources, has not been worth the expense of civilizing" (141). The conditions in the Savage Reservation are so terrible that people from the civilized society don't want to inhabit it or know more about it. As a result, they have no idea how many savages live in the Savage Reservation and cannot understand the customs of the savages, such as the ritual through which they ask for rain. In their mind, "repulsive habits and customs" are kept in the Savage Reservation, which is indicative of their haughty and scornful attitude towards "Indians and half-breed… absolute savages" (88-89).

For my argument it is of relevance, here, that the literary world of satire suddenly becomes uncannily *referential* here. When John the Savage addresses the civilized world as "the Other Place" or refers to it by its geographical name, London, this London feels appalling. For example, when John sees that here conception and birth have been removed from human bodies to labs and everyone is "decanted" from bottles (6). He is shocked to see that ideas, such as family, marriage, father and mother, are regarded as taboos. His reaction to the civilized world may, in a deconstructive sense, question the assumed civilization, yet that civilization is in its description clearly fictional. So, whereas the mechanical reproduction of human beings has no referential status and remains fictional (at the time of the novel's writing), with the Indian reservation we have an opportunity to at least sense the reality of real people living in real reservations.

This shimmering through of people in a real world in characters or situations portrayed in the novel can also be evidenced in quotes such as this:

> "Queer," said Lenina. "Very queer." It was her ordinary word of condemnation. 'I don't like it. And I don't like that man.' She pointed to the Indian guide who had been appointed to take them up to the pueblo. Her feeling was evidently reciprocated; the very back of the man, as he walked along before them, was hostile, sullenly contemptuous. (92)

Here Lenina and her Native American guide are brought together in an asymmetrical distribution of colonial contempt that again connotes the reality of such meetings and confrontations. So what we have on the one hand, then, is the satirical deconstruction of well-known oppositions and on the other hand the *reality* of them. The result is confusing.

In *Lord of the Flies*, there are a few explicit references to Native Americans, but they are clearly *played* by young boys. In contrast, in *Brave New World*, representations of Native Americans are plentiful. Note, these depictions are far from being "adequate" representations. They seem rather distorted, because of the Eurocentric perspective of the narrator. Consequently, we can hardly find any positive image of Native Americans. The following passage is indicative of the novel's negative, derogatory representation of Native Americans:

> An almost naked Indian was very slowly climbing down the ladder from the first-floor terrace of a neighboring house – rung after rung, with the tremulous caution of extreme old age. His face was profoundly wrinkled and black, like a mask of obsidian. The toothless mouth had fallen in. At the corners of the lips, and on each side of the chin, a few long bristles gleamed almost white against the dark skin. The long unbraided hair hung down in grey wisps round his face. His body was bent and emaciated to the bone, almost fleshless. Very slowly he came down, pausing at each rung before he ventured another step. (94-95)

The old Native American man forms a sharp contrast with the young, energetic and happy people in the civilized world. People in the civilized world can change the process of ageing to such an extent that they remain young-looking and healthy until the age sixty. In their sixties, they die in a special Hospital for the Dying in a soma-induced ecstasy. As the Controller says: "They're well off; they're safe; they're never ill; they're not afraid of death…" (194). Even though one day they will die, "They learn to take dying as a matter of course" (142). Death does not terrify them and does not involve any sorrow or sadness.

The contrast between the old Native American and the young civilized people seems to imply, then, the superiority of civilization over savagery, of life over death, or at least, the cruel inevitability of aging and death. Given the novel's satirical tenor, however, we infer that the opposite holds. The so-called happy shiny civilized society is in fact considered to be inferior. The one aspect that troubles such a satirical reading is mentioned almost in passing here, though it is pivotal. Whereas the old man is described almost entirely in terms of what is the case with his aging body, there is one *metaphor* that disturbs:

> His face was profoundly wrinkled and black, like a mask of obsidian

With the mentioning of obsidian we find the same mixing of satire with the real as we discovered in the passage dealt with above. Obsidian is a glass-like, volcanic material

that was used in prehistorical times and by Native Americans to make cutting tools, arrowheads or plates. As the illustration of "obsidian" by Wikipedia has suggested, "Native American people traded obsidian throughout the Americas."[14] Moreover, obsidian can be found abundantly in New Mexico; obsidian nodules found there run under the name of "Apache Tears."[15] It is a name derived from an Apache legend: during an ambush by soldiers of U.S. Cavalry, 50 of the Apache warriors are killed within minutes and the left 25 Apaches chose to jump over the cliff to their deaths rather than being killed by the White. After hearing the news of their death, the Apache women become sad and their tears become black stones—Apache Tears—upon hitting the ground (Grimes).[16] Apaches Tears are thought to have the healing power and are able to "heal grief, providing insight into the source of distress and promoting forgiveness" (Hall 216). It is said that those who possess such stones do not have to cry again. In this context, on the one hand, Apache Tears seem to connote the forgiveness of Native Americans. On the other hand, ironically, the sorrows of Native Americans have been kept in the form of stone, which may indicate that their sorrows may last forever. So, if the face of the old Native American is compared to obsidian this is not just an accidental metaphor. With it, the historically real imposes itself. Moreover, in this choice of words, a colonial mode of reading the savage face is connoted as the word suggests that this face is "impenetrable." As a consequence, the distinction civilized-savage is not deconstructed through satire. It is rather, confirmed. It is even confirmed by repetition, as when a dancing performance by several young Native Americans is described as follows: "Bright blankets, and feathers in black hair, and the glint of turquoise, and dark skins shining with heat" (Huxley 2007, 97). Here the "dark skins shining with heat" resembles both the volcanic and the glassy appearance of the skin.

However, Native Americans may not simply be an easy vehicle for colonial projection, particularly if we take gender and sexuality into account too. Linda is not a Native American woman, but she is mistaken to be one because of the assumption in the civilized world that everybody in the Reservation is a savage Native American. Based on the way she is depicted from Lenina's perspective, stereotypes of savage Native American women come distinctly in play:

> A very stout blonde squaw stepped across the threshold and stood looking at the strangers staring incredulously, her mouth open. Lenina noticed with disgust that two of the front teeth were missing. And the colour of the ones that remained... She shuddered. It was worse than the old man. So fat. And all the lines in her face, the flabbiness, the wrinkles. And the sagging cheeks, with those purplish blotches. And the red veins on her nose, the bloodshot eyes. And that neck – that neck; and the blanket she wore over her head – ragged and filthy. And under the brown sack-shaped tunic those enormous breasts, the bulge of the stomach, the hips. Oh, much

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[14] See <http://casitasdegila.com/blog/obsidian.html>.

[15] "A more recent, common name that is often given to these obsidian nodules is that of 'Apache tears,' a name coined by mineral collectors, rockhounds and lapidary enthusiasts for the obsidian nodules found in the American Southwest..."(de Gila).

[16] See <http://www.nativehistorymagazine.com/2013/02/the-legend-of-apache-tears.html>.

> worse than the old man, much worse! And suddenly the creature burst out
> in a torrent of speech, rushed at her with outstretched arms and … (102)

In the next chapter I will come back to the qualification of women—like this female character here—as "squaw," a name often used pejoratively.[17] What is of more interest, here, is the repeated bodily degradation that connotes savagery: the missing front teeth, the color of the rest of the teeth, the flabbiness, the wrinkles, the sagging cheeks, the "enormous breasts, the bulge of the stomach, the hips." In Western discourse, there is a tradition to depict Native American women as savages, with hanging breasts in order to degrade them.[18] Here Linda's "enormous breasts" define her as savage, which is grotesque, since she is, originally, not one of the savages. Accordingly she can become "the creature," as a monstrous mixture of both human and animal.

The theme of the gendered body is extended to that of sexuality when the narrator comes to speak of their marriage system. For Native Americans, marriage is "For always. They make a promise to live together for always" (168). The Warden, one of the Alpha-Minus and chief administrator, depicts the Savage Reservation to Bernard and Lenina before they set off as follows:

> … about sixty thousand Indians and half-breeds… absolute savages… our inspectors occasionally visit… otherwise, no communication whatever with the civilized world… still preserve their repulsive habits and customs… marriage, if you know what that is, my dear young lady; families… no conditioning… Monstrous superstitions… Christianity and totemism and ancestor worship… extinct languages, such as Zuñi and Spanish and Athapascan… pumas, porcupines and other ferocious animals… infectious diseases… priests… venomous lizards… (88-89)

Here the ellipses one the one hand indicate Warden's manner of speaking: "Once started, he went on and on – boomingly," while on the other hand, they are icons for the awkward silences during his speech, because neither Bernard nor Lenina is interested in his talk (87). More importantly, the entire passage is the linguistic variant of a collage: a set of thematically loosely connected fragments glued together. Superficially read, Walden's contemptuous and arrogant attitude towards Native Americans in the Reservation confirms conventional Eurocentric images of Native Americans. Yet on closer examination it appears that he is mixing up all sorts of groups, beliefs, practices and languages. For example he mixes up "Zuñi and Spanish and Athapascan." Zuñi and Athapascan are indeed spoken by Native Americans in New Mexico and Arizona. Yet Spanish has a radically different historical background. Likewise, Christianity, totemism, and ancestor worship are mentioned in one breath here too, despite different origins.

The mixing up of things is less explicit, but with greater implications, in relation to gender and sexuality. This aspect is alluded to here by the fragments "half-breeds" and "marriage, if you know what that is, my dear young lady." In reality, Native American

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[17] The origin of squaw will be discussed in detail in chapter three of this thesis.
[18] See Rawson (2002).

ideas on sexuality, gender and marriage were quite different from those of Westerners. The socio-cultural anthropologist Evelyn Blackwood, who worked on the cultural significance of female same-sex relations among Native Americans of the western tribes, argued that: "The Western ideology of feminine and masculine traits actually has little in common with these Native American gender systems, within which exist large areas of overlapping tasks" (42). Much like the civilized people in the novel, Native Americans in the western tribes enjoyed the freedom to have sex outside or next to marriage. They could have premarital and extramarital sexual relations and "Sexuality clearly was not restricted by the institution of marriage" (35). Differently, then, from "Indians" in the novel, the marriage of Native Americans was not "for-ever" (Huxley 2007, 120). Among them, "individuals often had a series of marriages, rather than one permanent relationship; divorce was relatively easy and frequent for both women and men" (Kelly and Spier qtd. in Blackwood 34). At the same time, same-sex relations were widely accepted among Native Americans. "Natives did not construct gender deductively and intransitively, they did not view masculinity and femininity as mutually exclusive genders" (Valdes 210). They were "neither essentially androsexist nor essentially heterosexist" (210). They did not adopt a strict distinction between male and female, but acknowledged and welcomed the two-spirit people, who carried features of both masculinity and femininity.[19] In contrast, in the novel, "Indians" are both androsexist and heterosexist and we cannot see any trace of two-spirit savages in the Reservation.

What we see, then, is rather that the "Indians" in the novel have been moralized as Christians, something is hinted at here by the mentioning of "marriage" next to "Christianity" and "priests," who are mentioned in one breath with "venomous lizards." It is only in this light that it is understandable that the Indian children in the Reservation are prohibited to have sex before marriage. Also, based on the way John the Savage describes marriage among "Indians," we can see that their marriage is monogamous and "can't be broken" (Huxley 2007, 120). Distinctly different from actual ideas on marriage by Native Americans, as introduced above, the marriage among Indians in the novel is, again, more similar to Christian marriage. In fact, their belief system seems to have been Christianized as well, such as when both Jesus and their traditional gods (such as "Pookong") are worshipped at the same time (101). Ironically or satirically, in terms of sexuality, marriage and belief system, it seems that the "Indians" presented in the novel are more like Christians.

The question, however, is how much of this deconstruction-in-practice survives when it is superimposed by classical European descriptions of Native-American rituals. For instance, in the novel, the performance of a Snake Dance is depicted as follows:

> A padding of soft feet made them turn round. Naked from throat to navel, their dark brown bodies painted with white lines ("like asphalt tennis

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[19] Lots of research has been done on the two-spirit Native Americans, and Gregory D. Smithers has gave us a good summary in his article "Cherokee 'Two Spirits': Gender, Ritual, and Spirituality in the Native South." According to his research, there are many terms used to refer to the queer or gay Native Americans, such as *berdache*, *cross-gender*, and *two-spirit*. Before the early 1990s, in scholarly discourse, the term *berdache* is more commonly used (Smithers 633). To emphasize the female role, J. M. Carrier uses *cross-gender* instead of *berdache* and *two-spirit*.

courts," Lenina was later to explain), their faces inhuman with daubings of scarlet, black and ochre, two Indians came running along the path. Their black hair was braided with fox fur and red flannel. Cloaks of turkey feathers fluttered from their shoulders; huge feather diadems exploded gaudily round their heads. With every step they took came the clink and rattle of their silver bracelets, their heavy necklaces of bone and turquoise beads. They came on without a word, running quietly in their deerskin moccasins. One of them was holding a feather brush; the other carried, in either hand, what looked at a distance like three or four pieces of thick rope. One of the ropes writhed uneasily, and suddenly Lenina saw that they were snakes. (93-94)

Almost everything in this passage belongs to the Eurocentric stereotypes of Native Americans as savages. Here, I agree with Hisashi Ozawa who argued that the "image of the Reservation inhabitants, although free from the conventional view of 'vanishing Indians,' is still subject to another prejudice... the views of 'primitive Indians'" (140-41). In her analysis of the role that snakes play in Huxley's work, Eva Opperman argued that it "seems as if Huxley had deliberately mixed the Indian and the Christian religions in order to create an especially striking contrast by juxtaposing savage religiousness with 'civilized' atheism" (193). That is to say, on the one hand, the grotesque mixture of Native American customs and Christian beliefs enables the ritual by the Reservation inhabitants to take on some "civilized" elements, while on the other hand, it can also be read as a satire of the civilized Christian religion in the sense that it is not superior or more advanced but actually similar to the rituals of Native Americans. Thus, the pertinent question is what the end sum may be of this "mixing." The question can be answered by considering the difference between satire and Satire in relation to deconstruction.

Conclusion

In "The Deconstructive Angel," M. H. Abrams treated deconstruction "as parasitic on the main text" (Nayar 46). In response to Abrams, in "The Critic as Host," J. Hillis Miller worked on the etymology of both parasite and host to show that deconstruction is part of every text, as Derrida himself had also argued already. For Miller, "'parasite' was originally something positive," while 'host' can be either a guest or a strange entity and even an enemy (442). In discussing the parasitic nature of deconstruction he argued: "On the one hand, the 'obvious and univocal reading' always contains the 'deconstructive reading' as a parasite encrypted within itself, as part of itself, and, on the other hand, the 'deconstructive' reading can by no means free itself from the metaphysical, logocentric reading it means to contest" (Miller 444-45). In a sense Miller confirms, here, what I have been arguing above, in a double sense. Due to its satirical nature, Huxley's *Brave New World* is an almost explicit deconstruction itself, what I called deconstruction-in-practice. Yet, as such, it cannot free itself from what it contests. I would like to rephrase this as: it remains *wedded* to what it contests. To be sure, the parasitic analysis implies, as Miller states, that there is always "alien guest in the home"

(443). That is also why Miller argues that deconstruction is a "rhetorical discipline" (443). As the *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy* explains, "deconstruction is parasitic in that rather than espousing yet another grand narrative, or theory about the nature of the world in which we partake, it restricts itself to distorting already existing narratives, and to revealing the dualistic hierarchies they conceal" (Reynolds).[20] Like a parasite, deconstruction keeps troubling the very system it depends on.

Consequently, whereas the satirical element in deconstruction may lead towards heterogeneity, I want to argue that the result of deconstruction's historiographical and parasitical nature will tend to be Satirical in White's sense, in that we remain captive of the world from which we try to escape. Let me give just one more example of this historiographical and parasitical nature of deconstruction: the basically *tracing* tendency in deconstruction's attempt to do away with hierarchical oppositions that does not get us out of world, but leaves us within one.

In the novel, hierarchy is satirized. For instance, in the civilized world, after the "Bokanovsky Process" and the "pre-natal treatment of the embryos," people develop into five different groups: Alpha, Beta, Gamma, Delta, and Epsilon. Among these five groups, there is a hierarchy, in which Alphas form the elite, while Epsilons are at the bottom of the ladder. In terms of human intelligence they are not equal. For example, Epsilons "don't need human intelligence," while Alphas are the most intelligent (Huxley 2007, 11). This kind of class hierarchy is necessary to maintain social stability, because as "the result of the Cyprus experiment" has shown, if everyone in the society is Alpha, it will not be stable (196). So far the satirical deconstruction-in-practice may be clear, for any natural underpinning of hierarchy is explicitly made artificial here. Yet what happens if this is linked to *racial* hierarchy, with its more pertinent rhetoric-biological implications?

At some point, John the Savage remembers that "Othello ... was like the hero of *Three Weeks in a Helicopter* – a black man" (149). In the civilized world people are conditioned to hold a prejudice against Blacks, who are despised as inferior, but have an extraordinary ability to reproduce. For example, when the Director introduces the speed of fertilization in the tropical Centres, such as Singapore and Mombasa, he argues "... You should see the way a negro ovary responds to pituitary! It's quite astonishing, when you're used to working with European material. Still... still, we mean to beat them if we can..." (6). Blackness is involved as well in "Elementary Class Consciousness." In these lessons, Betas are told that "... Delta Children wear khaki." This leads to the response: "Oh no, I don't want to play with Delta children. And Epsilons are still worse. They're too stupid to be able to read or write. Besides they wear black, which is such a beastly colour. I'm so glad I'm a Beta" (22). This is clearly satire again and might yet be another example of deconstruction-in-practice. Yet deconstruction remains wedded to the strong oppositions that are being invoked; it has to retrace and retrace again, thus performing a Whitean *Satire* that does not manage to escape the world described.

Even when the binary opposition between the civilized White and the savage Native Americans has been overturned, twisted and mixed as impressively as in this novel, the deconstruction of the binary opposition between savagery and civilization can only get

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[20] See <http://www.iep.utm.edu/derrida/>.

that far. It may have shown that the civilized parasitically depends on the savage, which implies that the civilized need to define themselves through the exclusion and subordination of the savage. Yet it remains the case, as Jack M. Balkin noted: "Almost all deconstructive arguments can be understood to *depend* upon some form of nested opposition" (emphasis added, 1689). This "nested opposition" is "not a denial that a conceptual opposition is coherent, real, or useful in some contexts. It is rather a resituation of the opposition that allows us to see both difference and similarity, both conceptual distinction and conceptual dependence" (1671). The savage, as a difference-within, implies the nested opposition between civilization and savagery, in which both are mutually dependent and similar in some respects while nominally differentiated in other respects. Yet this is not where the dependence stops. Deconstruction also *depends* on the opposition.

Or, as a difference-within, savagery may be "set free" from the binary opposition with civilization, just as it may become an elusive concept impossible to locate or to eliminate. It is surely no longer limited to the place far away or back in history. It may take different positions and leave behind many traces, which make it possible to discuss it without pinpointing it. Yet in what can be described as a successful attempt not to essentialize "the savage," a poststructuralist approach cannot do away with the term either. I have argued that in following the many traces that the savage has left behind in European and Western history, poststructuralism remains in the end Satirical, in White's sense. It dirempts things, in the etymological sense of "taking apart," and by doing so, it shatters the illusion of unity and One-ness. It is liberal in that is satirizes the emergence of so-called civilization; it is conservative in that it satirizes the attempt of others to get away from an opposition that clearly "is" in the sense that it *remains*, in whatever shifted or deferred position. In both cases poststructuralism remains caught in the very world that it tries to take apart.

Chapter Three

The Savage Multiplied: *Inglourious Basterds* and *Unthinking Eurocentrism*

Introduction

In the previous chapters I looked at the ways in which the savage was considered either as an opposite and dialectical counterpart to the civilized and by implication civilization, or as a figure that marks a difference within. This chapter looks at the possibility that the concept and figure of the savage can also be considered in terms of multiplication. Such multiplication is related to a multiplication of history, which by implication is a multiplication of culture. Regarding the savage, such multiplication can result not so much in a wide variety of savages but, instead, in the possibility that the savage starts to function as a vehicle or embodiment of multiple characters and voices. In order to explore this operation of multiplication, I take my cue from chapter five of the momentous *Unthinking Eurocentrism: Multiculturalism and the Media* (1994), entitled "Stereotype, Realism, and the Struggle over Representation," where Shohat and Stam deal with the dominant power that speaks through cinema and other visual media when it comes to the representation of stereotypes, a dominant power that they term "the demagoguery of the visual" (1994a, 214). In this chapter, I aim to address such demagoguery by bringing the film *Inglourious Basterds* (2009), directed by Quentin Tarantino, to bear on Shohat and Stam's paradigmatic study. In the film, Native Americans are brought into play not through direct visual representation but through a plot that mixes up the histories of Native Americans, American settlers, African-Americans, Jews, Frenchmen, Germans and Italians.

In order to read this explicit but, in another sense, hidden or indirect appearance of Native Americans I will follow a tactic developed by Shohat and Stam that they propose in order to counter the aforementioned "the demagoguery of the visual" (214). They suggest that, in the context of critiquing ideologies, critics focus on the *voices* that are hidden in, or underneath, dominant visual expressions:

> It is not our purpose merely to reverse existing hierarchies - to replace the demagoguery of the visual with a new demagoguery of the auditory - but to suggest that voice (and sound) and image be considered together, dialectically and diacritically. A more nuanced discussion of race and ethnicity in the cinema would emphasize less a one-to-one mimetic adequacy to sociological or historical truth than the interplay of voices, discourses, perspectives, including those operative within the image itself. The task of the critic would be to call attention to the cultural voices at play, not only those heard in aural "close-up" but also those distorted or

drowned out by the text. The analytic work would be analogous to that of a "mixer" in a sound studio, whose responsibility it is to perform a series of compensatory operations, to heighten the treble, deepen the bass, amplify the instrumentation, to "bring out" the voices that remain latent or displaced. (214)

As may be clear from this quote, the idea is not so much to trace a "savage within," but to see how an "interplay of voices, discourses and perspectives," that is to say a multiplicity of elements, can be operative even within one image (214). Such an interplay should not be analyzed in order to determine the adequacy or inadequacy of (ethnic) representations of people but to make a dynamic of cultural voices palpable, voices which may seem upfront and clear, but also deformed ("distorted") or hidden ("drowned"). The terms chosen by Shohat and Stam clearly come from the domain of the audible, alluding to how sound can be distorted or certain sounds can be drowned out in the density of other sounds. In line with these terms, the critic's task, here, is not simply to un-mix but also to make things better heard by amplifying them. In this context, it is telling that the savages central to the previous chapters were often not seen but could be "heard" nevertheless.

By bringing *Inglourious Basterds* into dialogue with Shohat and Stam's paradigmatic study, I wish to tease out a third attitude regarding the problem of the savage: one responding to history written from a dominant perspective, to history written in such a way that this perspective appears to be the *only* one. Instead of deconstructing this perspective in terms of center and margin (with a possible reversal of these terms), the tactic here is to radically multiply history into a diversity of many histories. Along these lines, Shohat and Stam aim to replace the margin/center division with a polycentric model. This model, which puts emphasis on multiplicity, is indebted to a post-structuralist approach to history. In *Colonialism/Postcolonialism*, Ania Loomba discusses the role of post-structuralist theory in post-colonial thought and restates Jorge de Alva's suggestion that "postcoloniality is, and must be more firmly connected to, poststructuralist theories of history" (Loomba 17). Yet, a difference between poststructuralism and postcolonialism may, indeed, lie in their notions of multiplication. Whereas poststructuralism still clings to the dismantling of existing oppositions and a "suspicion of established truths," postcolonialism is also concerned with bringing in new and other forms of subjectivity through "the decentering of the human subject... as male and white" and regarding language "as a tool of domination and as a means of constructing identity" (39-40). Loomba also suggests that "in order to listen for subaltern voices we need to uncover the multiplicity of narratives that were hidden by the grand narratives, but we still need to think about how the former are woven together" (200). In postcolonial approaches, it is important not only to dismantle established hierarchies in a poststructuralist fashion, but also to situate the subaltern "within a multiplicity of hierarchies" and to discuss how these hierarchies are related (200). Similarly to this postcolonial approach, Shohat and Stam try to figure out how these hierarchies are related through amplification. For Shohat and Stam, "radical multiculturalism" and "amplification of voices" are integral to a study of cultural history

that is intrinsically related to social power and that starts from the premise that there is no equality between a diversity of viewpoints or voices (1994b). Following this premise, the savage would no longer be the ideal dialectical vehicle to define civilization but would become one figure in a dynamic field of multiple hierarchies.

Such multiple hierarchies also imply a multiplication of histories. In light of history's multiplicity, I will first deal with the film as a postmodern work of art, since the writing of history as a tool of power and the interplay of multiple histories are key aspects of postmodernism.

3.1 *Inglourious Basterds* as a Postmodern Work of Art: Parody and Meta-history

Although Tarantino's film was released fairly recently, there are already book-length studies on the film, such as *Quentin Tarantino's Inglourious Basterds: A Manipulation of Metacinema*, a collection of essays edited by Robert von Dassanowsky and published in 2012. The fact that *Inglourious Basterds* provoked such immediate and considerable public and scholarly responses, is a sign in itself; the film manages to combine popular consumption with academic reflection. In its blending of popular culture with high art and theory, the film is distinctly postmodern, both in terms of its intertextual play and its concern with a multiplicity of histories: histories moreover that can be either real or fictional, with a porous border in between.

The film consists of five separate chapters with the following titles, in different fonts: *Once upon a time in… Nazi-occupied France*; *INGLOURIOUS BASTERDS*; *GERMAN NIGHT IN PARIS 1944 JUNE*; *OPERATION KINO*; and *REVENGE OF THE GIANT FACE*. The first chapter title inscribes the film intertextually and thus introduces fiction, both in its literary and cinematographic mode. It repeats the opening phrase of fairy-tales, firstly, and, secondly, alludes to famous films such as *Once upon a Time in the West* (1968) and *Once upon a Time in America* (1984). At the same time, however, the title hints at a specific historical place and time that is not fictive at all: Nazi-occupied France. The other four chapter titles, set in a different font and written in capitals, sound more like the chapters from a book, thus hinting at the familiar postmodern strategy of mixing media. Taken together, the five chapters develop a plot, taking place during the Second World War, in France, and interweaving two primary story lines.

One story line concerns the revenge of a young Jewish woman, Shosanna Dreyfus [Mélanie Laurent], after her family members have been killed by SS Colonel Hans Landa [Christoph Waltz]. The other story line concerns the undercover operation of group of American-Jewish soldiers, the so-called "Basterds," led by Aldo Raine [Bradd Pitt], who later cooperates with British Lt. Archie Hicox [Michael Fassbender] and German film actress and spy Bridget von Hammersmark [Diane Kruger]. Both storylines come together in "Operation Kino." As may be evident from the title, cinema plays a key role here, and, as the subtitle of Von Dassanowsky's collection suggests, we may be dealing with a form of meta-cinema. The film ends with a successful act of revenge when many high-ranking Nazi members, including Adolf Hitler himself [Martin Wuttke], are burned to death in the cinema owned by Shosanna, where they had been enjoying a film on a German sniper killing hundreds of enemies.

As both the end of the film and the title of Von Dassanowsky's edited volume suggest, *Inglourious Basterds* can be considered as a meta-reflection on cinema itself. Such meta-reflection is a dominant characteristic of postmodernism, as scholars Patricia Waugh and Brian McHale suggest. Yet, the film is also clearly a reflection on history, not only because the Holocaust is not something to be "played" with, as seems to be happening here, but also because the film brings together different historical strands in a synchronic context, which makes it peculiarly contradictory and incoherent. The film thereby also provokes a reflection on history. Linda Hutcheon, the Canadian postmodern literary and cultural critic, argues that postmodernism is "resolutely historical" and a postmodern phrase such as "the presence of the past" indicates that postmodern writing "is always a critical reworking, never a nostalgic 'return'" (1988, 4). In other words, as a new way of thinking about history, postmodern writings of history are not authentic representations of historical events, but reworkings of history. In being radically subjective, personal, ambivalent, and opaque, many postmodern writings challenge "the assumptions of historical statements: objectivity, neutrality, impersonality, and transparency of representation" (92).

The epistemological and ontological implications of this postmodern sensibility have been amply noted in relation to Tarantino's film. As Imke Meyer states in her contribution to Von Dassanowsky's volume: "the historical truth is always already out of reach and all we can access are representation of history, rather than history itself" (25). Especially in relation to the theme of the Holocaust, it is relevant to note that such a postmodern conception of history does not mean historical truthfulness becomes irrelevant. On the contrary, postmodernism, according to Hutcheon, has a serious agenda. She argues that the "provisionality and uncertainty [of postmodern works] ... define the new postmodern seriousness that acknowledges the limits and powers of 'reporting' or writing of the past, recent or remote" (1988, 117). Thus, rather than being non-serious, or simply playful, postmodern writings provide a new kind of seriousness, which calls into doubt the conventional idea of history.

Building on Umberto Eco's distinction of three ways to narrate the past—the romance, the swashbuckling tale, and the historical novel—Hutcheon proposes historiographic metafiction as "a fourth way of narrating the past" (113). Her proposed term refers to "those well-known and popular novels which are both intensely self-reflexive and yet paradoxically also lay claim to historical events and personages" (5). One could include in this category not just novels, but also other works of art, like films. Different from late modernists' attempts "to explode realist narrative conventions ... historiographic metafiction's somewhat different strategy subverts [these conventions], but only through irony, not through rejection" (xii). Moreover, historiographic metafiction exposes the ways in which historiography properly makes the past become present through literary or historical texts. "The intertextual parody of historiographic metafiction enacts, in a way, the views of certain contemporary historiographers: it offers a sense of the presence of the past, but a past that can be known only from its texts, its traces – be they literary or historical" (125). In historiographic metafiction, simple mimesis disappears and "the very possibility of *any* firm 'guarantee of meaning'" is doubted (55). Instead, historiographic metafiction

suggests that "truth and falsity may indeed not be the right terms in which to discuss fiction … [for] there are only truths in the plural, and never one Truth; and there is rarely falseness *per se*, just others' truths" (109). One of the questions that one could ask in relation to *Inglourious Basterds*, then, is how it relates to and projects these multiple truths. Furthermore, one might ask: if there is a savage, or savages, lurking somewhere in this multiplicity, how are they projected and related to?

However, before moving on to this multiplicity, let me first consider, in relation to the histories of both Native Americans and European Jews, how postmodernism has been criticized precisely for this multiplicity. In relation to truth, and in contrast with Hutcheon's political take on postmodernism, Fredric Jameson considers postmodern works of art to be de-political or non-political, which means that there is little political relevance in these works. In relation to history, for instance, he writes that "a semblance of historical verisimilitude is vibrated into multiple alternate patterns, as though the form or genre of historiography … seems to offer postmodern writers the most remarkable and untrammeled movement of invention" (368). The first point that Jameson is making, is that historical verisimilitude is no longer a guiding principle for postmodernism, since it is only brought forward in terms of semblance. This suggests that there is no longer a claim to historical truth, not even in the ironic way that Hutcheon traces. Secondly, Jameson suggests that postmodern writers appear to know no restriction or restraint in their dealings with historical material, which, to them, becomes experimental "untrammeled" ground for invention. We might find this in Tarantino's film, in which different historical perspectives and realities (Germans and Jews, American soldiers and Indians) and different historical periods are juxtaposed and mixed together simultaneously. *Inglourious Basterds* never returns to an "objective" representation of historical events, nor is it a serious reworking of those events. Rather, historical figures such as Apaches, Jews or allied military men, seem to be shuffled "like so many cards from a finite deck" (367).

For Jameson, a film like this should and could not be taken seriously, while for Hutcheon the "provisionality and uncertainty" of historical pasts and figures could provide a new kind of seriousness, which might contribute to a rethinking and reworking of the past (1988, 117). If we follow her view, instead of making history of the "real" kind, the film is making history unreal, with the aim of working on historical pasts in a self-reflective and ironic way. This is why one critic argues that "*Inglourious Basterds* isn't even really Tarantino's war film; it's his film about war films and war stories" (Cederlund). It is safe to say that the way in which the film anachronistically stages different historical chapters interacting within the same cinematographic "universe," without claiming historical truth or accuracy, invites us to read it as a postmodern work of art. Yet, the question I would like to answer in what follows is whether, especially in relation to the figure of the savage, the film can be read in a politically relevant way, *a la* Hutcheon, or should be read in a playful but meaningless way, *a la* Jameson. The answer to this question pivots around how the historical past is activated or parodied in the film.

As hinted at above, *Inglourious Basterds* involves many different histories, many different ideas and stereotypes relating to different historical pasts. Are they presented as pastiche, sincerely imitating well-known historical facts, established events, or

familiar representations? Or, is this a form of parody that reworks all these in an ironic way, which could be either serious or not? For Jameson, pastiche refers to "the imitation of a peculiar or unique, idiosyncratic style, the wearing of a linguistic mask, speech in a dead language. But it is a neutral practice of such mimicry, without any of parody's ulterior motives, amputated of the satiric impulse, devoid of laughter" (17). Pastiche just imitates a style, then, in a mechanical and neutral way, without any ironic implication and without a particular motive or objective. Hutcheon proposes parody as another form of imitation, as "repetition with critical distance, which marks difference rather than similarity" (1985, 6). Different from pastiche, parody is not a simple combination of historical pasts, but reworks these pasts "both to enshrine the past and to question it," and "opens the text up" through irony, so that we can rethink these pasts and develop critical ideas through that rethinking (1988, 126).

I would like to weigh these options against one another by focusing on a scene right at the beginning of the film, when the history of Native Americans is brought in explicitly through Aldo. Aldo does not announce any historical facts about Native Americans, but he is playing with historical material. This might seem to fit Western discourse, in which Native Americans are often constructed as being history-less, both in the sense that they have always been the objects of history, not partaking in constructing it, and in the sense that they are regarded as living in a primitive time without any sense of history. However, in this scene, where Aldo introduces himself and immediately gives orders, he tries to associate himself with the history of Native Americans as "Indians," to use their history as it is framed by the Eurocentric perspective to define his own history and justify his mission. It is one of the moments where we have to use the tactic of amplification proposed by Shohat and Stam, since the term "Native American" is never mentioned in the film. There are only two occasions when the closely related term "Injun" is used.

The first time is when Aldo utters it in the aforementioned opening scene, addressing a speech to the Basterds before their departure from America to France:

> My name is Lt. Aldo Raine, and I'm puttin' together a special team. And I need me eight soldiers. Eight – Jewish – American – soldiers... Nazi ain't got no humanity. They're the foot soldiers of a Jew-hatin,' mass-murderin' maniac, and they need to be destroyed... Now, I'm the direct descendant of the mountain man Jim Bridger. That means I got a little Injun in me. And our battle plan will be that of an Apache resistance.

The here proudly mentioned "I've got a little Injun in me" is followed up in the "Operation Kino" chapter, when General Ed Fenech [Mike Myers] tells Lieutenant Hicox who the Basterds are and says that they are "like a red Injun." Moreover, in this opening speech there is an explicit reference to one so-called First Nation: that of the Apaches. In fact, this is also the nickname of Aldo, who is called Aldo "the Apache" Raine.

In this context it is either of relevance or a telling coincidence that in the same year as *Inglorious Basterds*, a Canadian documentary under the title *Reel Injun* was released. It is a documentary that focuses entirely on the ways in which dominant images of Native Americans have been produced produced by film "reels" and are, hence, less than real.

This problem of representation is bastardized in Tarantino's film by a character that claims to be of humble origin, as testified to by his slang, but with great ancestry. As for his slang, "Injun" is a term with specific connotations and, since it is slang, the official dictionaries will not be of much help here. In the *Urban Dictionary*, we read that "Injun" is "a racially offensive epithet used towards Native Americans" and "This word is to Native Americans as 'Nigger' is to African-Americans."[1] It is also "a word meaning idiot or retard." However, we also read that it is not necessarily derogatory, and it can be used as "a convention of the word indigenous which describes a group of people that inhabit a geographical area." Moreover, it is not limited to American Natives or people from India, but it is also used to refer to "other people who are 'down with the brown.' This EVEN includes white people, as long as they're tight with some Indians" (emphasis in the original). Thus, we can see that in colloquial language "Injun" can refer to, first of all, Native Americans, then Indians as "people of India," and finally white people associated with "brown" people (but, again, primarily Indians). Based on these definitions, "Injun" is used first and foremost as an offensive term to produce a certain stereotype of Native Americans. Yet, its use in this scene, uttered by this particular character, played by this particular actor, and played in a specific way, makes the term's function more "messy" and contradictory, as I will show in section 3.4, when I return to this.

The second utterance of the word "Injun" is during "Operation Kino," a secret mission to assassinate Hitler and several other high-ranking Nazi officials during the premiere of the Nazi propaganda film *Nation's Pride* at the Le Gamaar Theater in Paris. British Lieutenant Hicox, a secret service agent, is assigned to be a part of the Operation, and is asked to work with Bridget and the Basterds, but he has no idea who these Basterds are. Based on some of his questions—such as "why do they call him (Aldo, the leader of the Basterds) that?" and "Scalps, Sir?"—we can see that he is reluctant to take Aldo and his gang seriously. In order to make Hicox understand, General Fenech tells him that these Basterds are "like a red Injun." Based on what has been discussed about stereotypes of Native Americans in Western discourses, we know that they are often depicted negatively, as violent, irrational, cunning, and cruel. Here, the comparison of the Basterds to Native Americans seems to help confirm this stereotype of Native Americans. After being informed about the Injun-like Basterds, Hicox states about Aldo: "Rather gruesome-sounding little dickybird, isn't he?" Here Native Americans are compared to the small bird that in slang indicates "insignificance."[2] The metaphor serves to repeat the haughty and disdainful British attitude towards both Americans and Native Americans. As if to emphasize this, the General says: "No doubt the whole lot, a bunch of nutters. But you've heard the expression 'It takes a thief.'" This implies that for the General, both Americans and Native Americans follow the logic of the English proverb "it takes a thief to catch a thief." These Americans and Native Americans may contribute to the killing of Nazis, because both Indians and Nazis are as insidious and harmful as thieves. Distinct from in Aldo's case, the term "Injun" is not used for self-identification here but refers to an external perspective from which Native Americans are viewed

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[1] See < http://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=injun>.

[2] For more meanings of "dicky-bird," see <http://www.oed.com.ezproxy.leidenuniv.nl:2048/view/Entry/52272?redirectedFrom=dicky-bird#eid>.

through negative stereotypes. In the film, the term "Injun" seems to impose different masks each time it appears.

Countering the stereotypical idea of history-less Native Americans, Aldo inscribes himself into a history of representation by means of the term Injun. This inscription is also a kind of parody that relates both to the history of representing Native Americans and the history of famous prize winning actors in Hollywood films.[3] As Hutcheon remarks, "to parody is both to enshrine the past and to question it" (1988, 126). In this case, the reworking of the history of Native Americans and the way in which they have been represented is not simply nonchalant, empty play with historical facts; rather, it functions within an ironic context, fraught with intertextual allusions which make offensive, stereotypical terms like "Injun" confusing, contestable, and open to resignification. This is in accordance with Hutcheon's view on parody: "Parody offers a much more limited and controlled version of this activation of the past by giving it a new and often ironic context" (1985, 5). This kind of irony provoked by parody does "mark the difference from the past, but the intertextual echoing simultaneously works to affirm – textually and hermeneutically – the connection with the past" (1988, 125). That is to say: irony seems to be a form of rupture with the past, which is nevertheless closely connected with the past through postmodern intertextuality. The past is recontextualized in the present in such a way that viewers are offered access to the past in a new way.[4]

Even the very term "the past" is off the mark here. The film repeats and recasts deep-rooted stereotypes in unexpected, subversive combinations. It projects many stereotypical representations of the Native American as savage while also questioning these. Or, put another way, the film recasts these stereotypical representations through paradoxical confrontations with other historical figures. These confrontations, in effect, multiply history into histories.

3.2 Screening Native Americans: Or How to Multiply Within a Framing Gaze

A very famous Native American literary character plays a dominant role in what I want to term "the card game scene." To celebrate the birth of the son of a soldier called Wilhelm [Alexander Fehling], five Nazi soldiers come to a tavern called La Louisiane in Nadine. This tavern is also the place where the Basterds and Lieutenant Hicox are assigned to meet the double spy, Bridget, who also happens to be an actress. Just before the Basterds and Lieutenant Hicox arrive in the basement, Bridget is playing a card game with the Nazi soldiers. Each player has a card with the name of a famous person, real or imaginary, stuck to their forehead. Since the player himself cannot see the card and therefore doesn't know what name is on his or her forehead, he or she has to figure out who he or she "is" through asking questions.

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[3] In *Unthinking Eurocentrism*, Shohat and Stam declare that "we use the term 'Hollywood' not to convey a kneejerk rejection of all commercial cinema, but rather as a kind of shorthand for a massively industrial, ideologically reactionary, and stylistically conservative form of 'dominant' cinema" (7). In this chapter, I follow their description of Hollywood as a kind of dominant cinema.

[4] It is "a formal manifestation of both a desire to close the gap between past and present of the reader and a desire to rewrite the past in a new context" (Hutcheon 1988, 118).

From the names we *see* on their foreheads, a wide range of historical figures, real and fictional, parade before our eyes, such as the Polish actress Pola Negri, famous for her role as a femme fatale in silent films between 1910 and 1939, the German composer Ludwig van Beethoven, the infamous dancer Mata Hari who was accused of spying for the Germans and executed during the Frist World War, the immensely popular author of detectives and thrillers, Edgar Wallace, the great Mongol conqueror from the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, Genghis Khan, and the most famous Native American in European history, the bloodbrother of Old Shatterhand, as invented by the German author Karl May (1842-1912): Winnetou. Tellingly, the latter is the only fictional character in play. Yet, that does not make him less "real." In a sense, all these characters are "unreal" in that they are not present as straightforward images. Yet, they all call upon images, or even connote cinema, because they have either acted in films, written for them, or otherwise occupy a prominent place in what Tarantino's film and psychoanalytic theorist Kaja Silverman tellingly indicate with a cinematographic term: the cultural *screen*.

In the following, I will first discuss how the figure of Winnetou, and by implication the Native American, works stereotypically and ideologically, here, by analyzing the scene in terms of Silverman's notions of the look, the screen, and the gaze. I do so to indicate what the difficulties are in trying to multiply forms of subjectivity, as Shohat and Stam suggest. I will consider in and after my analysis what possibilities the terms of look, screen, and gaze, might offer for amplifying other voices hidden in the film.

As a postmodern work of art, the film brings many historical figures together. At the same time, however, there is a condensation of stereotypical representations of Native Americans. These stereotypical representations do not stand on their own, but invoke others, or are framed by others, because the camera is more than just an instrument to project images with. It is on the one hand closer to a machine than a tool, as Jonathan Crary claims in his study of nineteenth century visual culture. For this distinction Crary falls back on Marx, for whom, unlink a tool, a machine subjects man by means of "a relation of contiguity, of part of other parts, and of exchangeability" (131). Through the machine man is more closely related to others; the machine promotes more exchanges with others, but it also *subjects*. Yet, this is obviously not the work of the machine itself. Silverman emphasizes the *relational* function of the camera and argued that: "The camera is less a machine, or the representation of a machine, than a complex field of relations" (1996, 136). For her, the camera does not so much *represent* reality, or does so only secondarily. It first of all shows a complex system of relations.

To work out how the camera works through these complicated relations or how images are visually organized, Silverman rethinks and rigorously distinguishes three concepts of visuality: the look, the gaze, and the screen; she does so on the basis of Jacques Lacan's gaze theory. In order to better understand these three concepts, I will introduce Lacan's gaze theory first.

Departing from Cartesian optics, Lacan does not regard the observer as simply a geometric point from which to look and see other objects; on the contrary, the observer is simultaneously looked backed at by the object. This anonymous look from the object may stir anxiety or shame in the observer. Lacan terms "this anonymous look from the object" the *gaze*, describing it as "the gleam of light," which "is presented to us only in the

form of a strange contingency" and which surprises the viewer, "disturbs him and reduces him to a feeling of shame" (96)(84). In this way, the gaze involves anxiety and shifts the viewer from "the observer" to the passive position of "being looked at." Working on Lacan's gaze theory, cultural critic Henry Krips explained it further and argued that "in terms of the example of the sea-faring tin-can, the gaze may be thought of as an external point from which an anxiety provoking look assails the subject" (93).[5] Now, to avoid being captured by the gaze of the object, the screen can provide the subject with masks.

Working with Lacan's gaze theory, Silverman considers how Lacan "never properly interrogates that relation between camera and gaze, or proposes that it might be central to our present field of vision" (1996, 131). To further distinguish how the camera organizes cultural images, she made additional distinctions between the notions of the look, the gaze, and the screen. According to Silverman, the look "foregrounds the desiring subjectivity of the figure from whom it issues, a subjectivity which pivots upon lack, whether or not that lack is acknowledged" (1992, 143). The look is often situated on the side of desire and lack. Through looking, we can learn what is lacking within the subject as well as what the subject desires. The look can tell us a lot about what is looked at, and it can also help to disclose more about those who are looking.

Different from the look, Silverman argues that the gaze is "impossible to seize or get hold of," and "the relationship between eye [look] and gaze is … analogous in certain ways to that which links penis and phallus; the former can stand in for the latter, but can never approximate it" (130). That is to say, compared with the look, the gaze is more abstract and invisible, and "is merely the imaginary apparatus through which light is projected onto the subject" (145). Like Lacan, Silverman believes that the camera is more aligned with the gaze than the look, and argues: "Not only does the camera work to define the contemporary gaze in certain decisive ways, but the camera derives most of its psychic significance through its alignment with the gaze" (1996, 135). On the one hand, the camera determines the gaze or confirms the subject's identity; on the other hand, the gaze helps the camera to gain psychic significance, because when we feel the gaze upon us, we feel "framed," which provides the camera with psychic significance. In brief, and in line with how Mieke Bal reads Silverman's work, the gaze is "the ungraspable mechanism or structure," "situated outside the subject;" it "is comparable to a source of light, but it does not have a shape itself; it is formless" (1997, 65). Under this

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[5] Krips is referring here to the famous memory in Lacan's development of the issue: "It's a true story. I was in my early twenties or thereabouts—and at that time, of course, being a young intellectual, I wanted desperately to get away, see something different, throw myself into something practical, something physical, in the country say, or at the sea. One day, I was on a small boat, with a few people from a family of fishermen in a small port. At that time, Brittany was not industrialized as it is now. There were no trawlers. The fisherman went out in his frail craft at his own risk. It was this risk, this danger, that I loved to share. But it wasn't all danger and excitement—there were also fine days. One day, then, as we were waiting for the moment to pull in the nets, an individual known as Petit-Jean, that's what we called him—like all his family, he died very young from tuberculosis, which at that time was a constant threat to the whole of that social class—this Petit-Jean pointed out to me something floating on the surface of the waves. It was a small can, a sardine can. It floated there in the sun, a witness to the canning industry, which we, in fact, were supposed to supply. It glittered in the sun. And Petit-Jean said to me - *You see that can? Do you see it? Well, it doesn't see you!*" (Lacan 95).

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ungraspable, formless and invisible frame, subjects are captured and watched over. Through the gaze, what is hidden by the look may appear.

Standing between the look and the gaze, is the screen: a "culturally generated image or repertoire of images through which subjects are not only constituted, but differentiated in relation to class, race, sexuality, age, and nationality" (Silverman 1992, 150). The screen is like a cultural filter which both constitutes and differentiates subjects. As for its relation to the gaze, Silverman argues that the "screen represents the site at which the gaze is defined for a particular society, and is consequently responsible both for the way in which the inhabitants of that society experience the gaze's effects, and for much of the seeming particularity of that society's visual regime" (1996, 135). As the site where the gaze is defined, the screen determines both how subjects experience the gaze and how the society's visual regime functions. Simply put, the screen "makes the stereotypical, prefabricated images and ideal images available for the look" and shapes the formless gaze into forms (Silverman in Bal 1997, 65).

With these three notions of the look, the gaze, and the screen, Silverman successfully discusses how cinema visually organizes cultural images. However, this kind of cinematographic representation does not produce fixed representations of cultural images, because the contents of the screen are in a constant process of renewal. In the following, I want to analyze the stereotypical representations of Native Americans in *Inglorious Basterds* as part of this cultural *screen,* embodied, here, in the card game scene.

When in the scene Winnetou is introduced, and through him the image of the Native American is evoked, it is with a highly ironic twist. This irony is already captured by the fact that the entire scene is in German, whereas the only actual German figure the soldiers and women have on their foreheads is Beethoven. The German soldier whose card reads "Winnetou" asks questions to find out who he is, starting with the most basic one "Bin ich Deutsch?," that is "Am I German?" After the response "no," he finds out that he is a literary character and he ends up asking questions such as:

> … okay, I'm not German. Am I American? … If I had a wife, would she be called a squaw? … Is my blood brother Old Shatterhand? … Did Karl May write me?

As the questions suggest, he already knows who he is by then, and will gloriously conclude with drawing the card from his head and seeing that he, indeed, "is" Winnetou.

For Silverman, "the look apprehends what is already given to be seen" (1996, 175). We can look at images that are already available, whether on the cinematographic screen or from our broader repertoire of images. The question, of course is, what we *see*—historically, culturally, ideologically—in looking. In the film, the looks are organized through the use of the camera that is either showing us the group of soldiers playing the game from some distance, or appears to be looking from the viewpoint of one of them. Through the card game, these characters, looking and being looked at, invoke the cultural images of Winnetou, of his "squaw," and of his blood brother Old Shatterhand. This implies that cultural stereotypes are brought into play in the context of how people

look at things in a more general sense. For instance, the question of the German soldier—"Am I American?"—evokes two different ways of looking at things. It would seem to be an easy question to answer, but it turns out to be controversial, because one of the soldiers, namely the one with "Edgar Wallace" on the forehead, thinks that Winnetou cannot be regarded as American, because "he's never been translated into English... he's not an American creation." In contrast, Bridget provides another way of looking at things, believing that Winnetou "is" American and arguing that "the nationality of the author has nothing to do with the nationality of the character." She compares the character of Winnetou to Hamlet, who was Danish, and concludes that the most important thing is where the character is said to have been born. In a sense, her analysis is a mise-en-abyme for what the scene is doing. Simply putting on a card with a name turns one into someone who 'is' that person, as is evident in the question: "Am I American?" This points to the fictional operations involved in any practice of identity-assignment. By implication, to determine one's identity proves to be not at all an easy task, as even one's language is no longer a secure means of determining one's identity or nationality. This suggests that one's national identity is a fictional construction rather than a natural given, although the fact that one is said to be born someplace is also a determining factor. Most importantly, the card scene may imply that one's identity is determined by the card one has been arbitrarily given, which is literally the case here. This can also be understood metaphorically, as a comment on historical processes that determine subjectivities; some people, such as Native Americans, have been dealt "the wrong card."

After the German soldier successfully guesses the name of Winnetou, he stands up and gestures as if he is a great native leader, which is not necessarily a gesture mimicking the character Winnetou, but more a gesture taken from a general European colonial repertoire of images of Native American "chief-hood." How these German soldiers look at Winnetou is paradigmatic, then; it implies that how we look at others, in desire or fear, depends on what we already have in our cultural repertoire of images and that we may look at things differently depending on which images we have selected from this repertoire. This is what Silverman aims to indicate with the concept of *screen*. As has already been iexplained above, the screen contains many images and it functions as the cultural filter that both facilitates and inhibits subject's constitution and differentiation of themselves. Moreover, the screen is a "large, diverse, but ultimately finite range of representational coordinates which determines what and how members of our culture see – how they process visual detail, and what meaning they give it" (221). So, the screen contains not just images, since these function as representational coordinates that regulate what we see when we look, but it also contains how we look. That is to say, there is no immediate visual access to objects, and we are trained to see objects *through* images which are already available on the screen.

In *Inglourious Basterds*, the screen contains a repertoire of images that function in terms of gender, culture, civilizations old and new, cultural hierarchies, colonialism, and ethnicity. The German soldiers can only recognize or describe Native Americans based on images available from their cultural/ideological screen, as described by Silverman, and the same holds, by implication, for the audience of the film. A seemingly simple

question, for instance, is: "If I had a wife, would she be called a squaw?" This is a question that a general audience would probably have no problem with. Still, the term may indicate that what we look at (or listen to), is not necessarily what we "see." The *Urban Dictionary* mentions that squaw "has been a familiar word in American literature and language since the sixteenth century and has been generally understood to mean 'an Indian woman, or wife.'"[6] Yet, within circles of Native Americans and scholars, it is clear that:

> [Squaw] is not an Indian word. It was probably invented by European colonists who could not pronounce a longer Indian word. In the Algonquian languages, which were spoken on the East Coast and were the first to be encountered by Europeans, many feminine nouns end in a suffix with a "kw" or "skw" sound. For example, in Meskwaki-Sauk, Thakiwakwe means a Sauk (Thakiwa) woman; in Micmac muwineskw means a female bear (muwin); and in the Abenaki language, Cimakskwa means Mrs. Cimak. If the Europeans thought that meant "skwa" or "kwe" was the word for "woman," though, they made a mistake. It's just a suffix, like the English suffix "-ess" in "princess" or "seamstress."[7]

A similar idea is shared in an anthology called *Literature of the American Indian* edited by Thomas E. Sanders and Walter W. Peek, in which the origin of the word "squaw" is regarded as "probably a French corruption of the Iroquois word otsiskwa meaning 'female sexual parts'" (184). Not everyone agrees with this idea and there is still debate over the origins of "squaw." Regardless of the exact origins of the term, however, we are sure of the fact that, etymologically speaking, in Native American languages "squaw" is not a word, but rather a suffix used before many feminine nouns. Thus, it is a neutral term.

In contrast, the word "squaw" used by European colonists connotes their own screen on which Native American women appear as erotic, sensual, and lustful. In response to this ideologically produced screen, and in the course of Native Americans' battles against subjection, the term "squaw" has taken derogatory connotations over the years. It is now said to be "offensive to Indians, in the same way that 'nigger' is offensive to African Americans" (Bright 207). Thus, when the wife of Winnetou is referred to as a "squaw" in the film, the laughter that follows may be understandable from within the diegesis, showing that the company understands Wilhelm is close to a solution. At the same time, we can read it as the continuation of a derogatory attitude towards Native American women and their history by a general European or Western audience.

Taken up in an argument that explores the possibility of multiplying histories in order to get away from a stereotypical notion of the savage, Silverman's notion of the screen may hint at why such a multiplication is difficult. Take, for instance, another equally innocent question: "Is my blood brother Old Shatterhand?" Old Shatterhand, who "is" a German fictional character, but is also *from* Germany in the sense that he is created

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[6] See <http://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=squaw>.

[7] See <http://www.native-languages.org/iaq5.htm>.

by the German author May, is Winnetou's blood brother and the prototypical civilized man who is able to mingle with indigenous people. In *Winnetou der Rote Gentleman* (*Winnetou the Red Gentleman*), the title suggests that this savage is clearly noble because he is like a gentleman. By implication, this means he might also be worthy of being a brother—through blood. This type of blood-brothership is dealt with by historian Klaus Aschema, who states of May's novels that these "works are probably far more representative of the common German's opinion about foreign peoples than many ethnographic analyses" and mentions blood-brothership as one of the key elements of May's representations (275). Oschema quotes from May's novel, regarding Old Shatterhand:

> A blood-brotherhood then, a real, true blood-brotherhood; the one I have already read so much about! It exists amongst a variety of wild or semi-wild peoples and it is concluded either by the partners mixing their blood which they drink afterwards, or their mutually drinking each other's blood. As a consequence of this act, the partners stay together more intensely and altruistically as if they had been born as brothers. (qtd. in Oschema 275-56)

May seems to suggest, here, that any sort of European blood-brotherhood would be different from that of Native Americans, as the latter would be more real and true. Yet, although the general idea seems to be that blood-brotherhood is a typical feature of tribal and primitive societies, such as those of Native Americans, it is emphasized by anthropologists, such as Oschema, that this practice has a long history in Western discourse. It was "a part of discriminatory narrative strategies which aim at the exclusion of foreign and non-Christian cultures" (275).

When Shohat and Stam talk about voices that have been "displaced," this would be an apt case in point. While blood-brothership connotes the mixing of blood, this is not quite the case, or only so on the level of representation. In fact, purity of blood was one of the great obsessions of nineteenth century colonialism and racism. It was on the basis of the strict separation of bloodlines, for instance, that during the late 1800s in the United States, blood quantum was "initially used by the federal government to classify 'Indianness'" (Schmidt 1).[8] That is to say that "blood" was used as an effective method to determine one's membership in an Indian tribe. This of course holds only if one adopts an essentialist view on ethnic identity as determined by biological factors, bloodlines and blood relations. Such a view was, again, a Western obsession. In reality, many customs of Native Americans went against the separation and purity of bloodlines. For example, in cases in Southern American tribes, captives were allowed to live for long periods so that they could be assimilated into the tribe (de Castro 140).

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[8] Blood quantum as a means to identify Native Americans has also been discussed by Karren Baird-Olson, who argues: "The use of fractions of blood degree as the primary means of categorizing social groups was legally recognized as early as 1705 and later supported by scientifically racist theories and the ongoing hegemonic strategy designed to create the illusion that American Indians 'vanish' when their White or other non-Indian blood quantum reaches a certain level, typically considered to be three fourths. Today, this technique is called statistical genocide" (194-95).

The simple and almost natural term "blood-brother" then calls upon many histories, some of which connote essentialism: the very essentialism that Shohat and Stam are trying to get away from in considering identity as a continual cultural process rather than something inherent or innately fixed. Identity is always under cultural construction and is shaped through many factors. As viewers, we cannot simply *see* this in *Inglorious Basterds*, in the sense of simply seeing which factors influence characters' identities; simply seeing how such identities are both fictional and real, or simply seeing how identities are in a constant process of construction and reconstruction. In fact, if the idea is to multiply forms of identity and subjectivity, this demands conscious action; it implies the renewal and perhaps also the multiplication of the screen. Such renewal and multiplication is greatly hampered, in turn, by the fact that the screen is framed by the gaze, which is at stake in the last question that the German soldier asks: "Did Karl May write me?"

Basically, the question refers to the aforementioned German writer May, who was not only famous for his novels set on the American frontier but also those set in the Middle East, paradigmatic cases of Orientalism. Now, May never travelled to America before writing most of his well-known Western stories. Neither did he travel to the Orient or Middle East where another of his famous characters operated, on whom German films were made in the interbellum: Kara ben Nemsi. His stories are basically shaped by his own (deeply Romantic) imagination or his readings of documents related to the American West or the Orient. Yet, this seemingly personal imagination acquired its force and its immense popularity only because May tapped into an ideology that was "naturally" Eurocentric. On the one hand, May's work can be regarded as contributing many images of Native Americans to the screen; as a result, through this familiar screen, the soldiers are familiar with these images. On the other hand, the screen is not offering a neutral set of possibilities, here, but is highly ideological. In May's work, we detect the Western ideological landscape, the Western gaze.

In May's imaginative ethnography, "the Apache were the most peaceful tribe in the trans-Mississippi West, suffering vicious attacks from the most warlike tribe, the Sioux, their dreaded enemies" (Berkhofer 101). For May, the Apache were peace-loving and they only fought for justice, which fits a Romantic idea of the pure and noble savage. By contrast, in many Western novels by American writers, such as *Apache Ransom* by Clay Fisher and Will Henry, *Apache Hostage* by Lewis B. Patten, *Apache Massacre* by Lynton Wright Brent, the image of the Apache is one of an "irresistible, inhuman presence endowed with almost supernatural malice and cunning" (Sonnichsen 71). I will come back to this "supernatural" element at the end of this chapter. In works such as these, Apache chiefs are represented as cunning and treacherous, with great capacity for trickery and deceit. Yet, although May's works seem to contrast with these Western American forms of imagination, it does not necessarily imply principally different European and American ideological landscapes. May's novels have been said to have contributed to the strengthening of German nationalism and, particularly, the ideology of national socialism in Germany. Historian Robert F. Berkhofer argues that May's books "stressed German nationalism and shaped the outlook of many a German youth, including one devoted reader named Adolf Hitler" (101). Hitler used stereotypes of

Native Americans and Germans to reinforce purity in nationalism and to promote his ideology in Germany, which projected the nobility and purity of his own race while degrading other races, such as Jews. May's works were used as propaganda and were quite popular among Germans during the Second World War. His descriptions of Native Americans were widely accepted among Germans to fit not only a Western ideology, but a particularly German one, in which some Native Americans were regarded as savages, though pure or gentlemanly, whereas others represented the inferior races that Hitler came to define as Slaves.

As already hinted at above, the screen is framed by the gaze. This is not to say that the screen is stable or static. Historically, it has changed continuously, but this does not come naturally. Silverman proposes the idea of the *productive look*, which provides "the possibility of seeing something other than what is given-to-be-seen" (Baydar 40). This kind of look has "creative potential to occupy a different viewing position with respect to the screen to see in ways that are not entirely predefined" (40). This is to say that the productive look can adopt a different perspective and see what is not completely predefined by the screen. Images thus seen may become part of the repertoire, contribute to, and renew the screen. Through the productive look, parodic and ironic representations of images may emerge, which may reveal hidden, despised, or marginalized images. In this sense, the screen can be regarded as a "political arena" which provides a way to criticize dominant modes of representation. In this context, the film, as a postmodern work of art, has many opportunities to manipulate and renew the screen. Tarantino can be seen as playing with the screen and renewing it by parodying stereotypical representations of Native Americans. *Inglourious Basterds* represents them in an ironic way rather than providing "positive images" of Native Americans, because such images still work to resubstantialize and essentialize identity. Through playing with the screen, the film attempts to renew it. Yet, as already said, its success depends very much on how it fits into the gaze.

For Silverman, the gaze is analogous to the camera as it shows itself when its images are projected. When we sit in the cinema, we, the viewers, are inevitably gazed upon by what is happening on the screen. As Silverman argues: "The screen represents the site at which the gaze is defined for a particular society, and is consequently responsible … for much of the seeming particularity of that society's visual regime" (1996, 135). Through controlling what is to be included in the repertoire, the gaze has the normative power to screen the proper images and screen out improper ones. It has the power to naturalize the invisible center from which reality is organized. The screen "makes the stereotypical, prefabricated images and ideal images available for the look" and it shapes "the formless gaze into forms of reality" (Silverman in Bal 1997, 65). Returning to Tarantino's card game scene, the whole idea of the game in the diegesis of the film is to evoke familiar images and identities. Yet, as viewers in the twenty-first century, we occupy an interesting position. We are both caught in the same historical "cinema" that defines the gaze and able to look at Native Americans differently based on current screens. These help us to read the look of the German soldiers on Native Americans as, on one hand, familiar and parochial and, on the other hand, distorted and absurd.

The cinematographic power in all this is defined by film critic Shohini Chaudhuri, who focuses on the force of the gaze within which characters are brought or made to play, and then argues that although "Films have the ability to confer identity to subjects – this does not necessarily put them in thrall to the dominant fiction but can enable them to defy it" (115). Here, the dominant fiction refers to "the repertoire of images through which a society establishes consensus about its 'reality'" (119). That is to say, characters in the film are given a certain identity, but they may have the potential to defy their identity and with it a certain reality. In this case, Tarantino's stereotypes of Native Americans are assumed to be coherent with the dominant fiction, but they also take on new significance and put the dominant fiction in an ironic position. This will be discussed further in my final section, entitled "Repetition and Resignification of Stereotypes: The Ghost in Representation." There, I will further develop how the different screens in play do not simply help us to get back to one proper historical vision of Native Americans. Instead, their multiplication entails more a mixture of histories, such as those of Native Americans, Jews, and Black Americans. Before elaborating on this further, however, I will deal with another cinematographic power that concerns not so much characters as the actors that play them.

3.3 The Racial Politics of Casting

As an immediate form of representation, film casting is quite telling regarding hierarchical relationships between different ethnic groups. Actors from Europe or America dominate the screen, whereas non-European actors play the supporting role. As Shohat and Stam put it: "Within Hollywood cinema, Euro-Americans have historically enjoyed the unilateral prerogative of acting in 'blackface,' 'redface,' 'brownface,' and 'yellowface,' while the reverse has rarely been the case" (1994a, 189). The casting is Eurocentric and actors from other races are regarded as incapable of representing themselves. In *Inglourious Basterds*, white actors "play" characters like Aldo, who *claims* to be partly Native American ("Injun"). That is, a Euro-American again plays the role of (a partial) "redface," but the film also begins to complicate this role-playing. This becomes most evident in the scene where Aldo and his associates pretend to be Italians and not only fail to be convincing in their roles but are deeply inadequate. The practice of casting white American actors to play other ethnicities results in a ludicrous performance here, with "Italian" brought back to something analogous to the "How" that characterized stereotypical Indians, the very language indexically reduced to a simple set of deformed accents. In this way, with hindsight, in light of the Italian scene, the casting of a white man as partially, or posing as, Native American can also be read as a critique, and parody of, the politics of casting in Hollywood films and the absurdities it leads to.

By means of contrast, the scene also serves to highlight how English is used as a *lingua franca* in Hollywood films. It is spoken by ethnic "others" (including Native Americans) instead of their native languages, "thus contributing indirectly to the subtle erosion of the linguistic autonomy of other cultures" (Shohat and Stam 1994a, 192). Ethnic "others" are all supposed to speak English rather than their native languages,

which will gradually lead to the annihilation of native languages and cultures from the screen about which Silverman worries. As a potent symbol of collective identity, language operates within hierarchies of power: "Inscribed within the play of power, language becomes caught up in the cultural hierarchies typical of Eurocentrism" (191). The operation of language is not neutral, neither in this film nor ever, and in this case it is clearly Eurocentric, or American-centric. In Hollywood cinema cultural others are often either silent or speak an inferior version of English, implying that they are thought unable to master English.

As suggested above, in *Inglourious Basterds* this hegemonic use of English is both evoked and parodied. For example, as an Injun, Aldo might be expected to speak an Indian type of "pidgin English," but he speaks English with an all-American Southern, cowboy accent. Moreover, the domination of English is reversed when the American and British characters are exposed and ridiculed in their attempts to speak other languages. In the bar scene, Lieutenant Hicox, from England, pretends to be von Hammersmark's German friend, convinced that he is quite competent in German. However, his odd German draws the attention of a drunk German solder as well as the Gestapo officer Hellstrom. They become suspicious of his identity as a German general and ask Hicox where he is from. Hicox convinces them that he is from the German mountains, but his knowledge is based solely, and ironically, on German films. Similarly, in the cinema scene, Aldo and two other Basterds play the roles of Italians. The reason they decide to go through with this role-playing is their stereotypical assumption that "Germans do not have a good ear for Italian," and thus they are in no danger of being exposed. However, when they introduce themselves to Landa, he proves to be able to fluently speak Italian—alongside English, French, and (of course) German. A little earlier, Von Hammersmark ironically asked: "I know this is a silly question before I ask it, but can you Americans speak any other language than English?" The answer to this question is clear: no, they cannot. Thus, the cultural domination of the screen by the English language is parodied.

Moreover, if we try to *amplify* in the sense that Shohat and Stam suggest, this play with casting is also evident from the very beginning of the scene. Brad Pitt playing Aldo Raine is, visually speaking, an explicit reference, as many noticed, to Marlon Brando playing Don Vitto, the Godfather; their heads take the same position, with a raised chin and a downward look, and the jaws are held in exactly the same manner.[9] Yet, although many noticed this, few (no one to my knowledge) tried to answer the question: why specifically *this* reference? Indeed, in terms of what Shohat and Stam termed *amplification*, the possibility to address this question has largely been missed.

Marlon Brando was immensely popular and famous in the fifties, but grew almost invisible as an actor after the early sixties. He only became world famous again in 1972, with Francis Ford Coppola's *The Godfather*. With the Academy Awards ceremony in 1973, the actor used his popularity and his Oscar-winning performance in *The Godfather*, to bring the history of Native Americans into the national and internatonal limelight. He refused to receive the prize and instead asked Native American woman Sacheen Littlefeather to do so. Littlefeather, in full Apache attire, reported that the "poor

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[9] See "Inglourious Basterds Review" by Holtreman and "Revenge is Sweet" by Edelstein.

treatment of Native Americans in the film industry" had motivated Brando not to accept the award for best actor. This all happened in the midst of what later came to be known as the Wounded Knee Incident, which was much more than an incident; two hundred Oglala Lakota, together with members of the American Indian Movement, seized control of the town of Wounded Knee, a town infamous for the Wounded Knee Massacre of 1890, during which hundreds of Native Americans had been killed by American military men. By turning down the Oscar and refusing to endorse the Western screen, Brando expressed his objection to stereotypical depictions of Native Americans by Hollywood. His refusal implied his resistance to a Western ideology, under which Native Americans were often depicted as savages.

In Aldo's case, then, we have a white American, played by the white actor Brad Pitt, who mimics Marlon Brando's iconic embodiment of the Godfather. Brando rejected his Oscar and asked Littlefeature to represent him and deliver a speech of refusal. It is in this light that we should read the derogatory term "Injun" that Aldo uses as a mode of self-identification. Repeating the derogatory term could point towards a strategy of resignifying hate-speech, which would correspond to strategies that Judith Butler describes in *Excitable Speech*. In some cases, Butler argues, hateful utterances, such as "queer!" for gay people, were re-signified in affirmative ways through repetition. Aldo seems proud to be an "Injun" here, which could suggest an attempt to positively resignify an offensive, racist term by turning it into an affirmative term of self-definition.

Yet, following Butler's argument, the offensive connotations of the term are still "performed" through Aldo's repetition. It is not simply a matter of deciding to use an offensive term positively, because its offensive connotations still resonate and "haunt" its current uses. This makes the term's performativity in the film even more complex and confusing; it is used affirmatively but not quite, because its offensive connotations also resonate and are enhanced by Aldo's typical cowboy-look and Southern accent. Moreover, it is used to pin down an identity that is anything but stable and pure, because Aldo's persona and mode of self-address condense images of cowboys, mountain men, Native Americans, Indians, white people, Jews, and others. Thus, there is no way for viewers to draw clear-cut boundaries around the identities of these Basterds by following racial and ethnic stereotypes. They are, quite literally, *bastards*, in the sense of "bastardized" and "hybridized" figures. Even more, their identity is literally *misspelled* ("basterds" instead of "bastards") which underscores the inevitable inconsistencies and historical inaccuracies through which identities are produced; there is no "right" or "true" identity in the film.

Still, however, if Aldo's character condenses American soldier, cowboy, and Native American, affiliates with Jews, and is played by an actor mimicking another actor who stood up for the rights of Native Americans, this also draws attention to the absence of Native Americans themselves in the film. Throughout the film, we are constantly reminded of their absence. It is only in this sense that we can say that they become present in the film. Through the film, the screen is then, not only enriched with a repertoire of both familiar and ironic images, but it also becomes populated with figures that are only present in a negative sense, or as ghosts. In Shohat and Stam's study, the question how the mixing of sounds would pluralize history is an important one. Perhaps

one relevant question here is: how can one make the voices of ghosts heard? An even more pertinent question is: how real are the ghosts?

3.4 Repetition and Resignification of Stereotypes: The Ghost as Representation

In *Inglourious Basterds*, there are other voices than those of Native Americans to be amplified. For instance, after it is decided that the Nazi propaganda film will be screened in Shosanna's cinema, her black assistant, though competent at projecting, is asked not to work on that day, because as a black man he is thought to be inferior to Germans and incapable of working for Germans. As viewers, we know that this black assistant is much more competent than Shosanna, but he is regarded as incompetent and unqualified, to the point that he may spoil the German night. Here, the racial stereotype of the black person as backward and unqualified is explicitly called upon, and due to the assistant's marginalization by Nazis, emblematic villains, it appears to be countered almost immediately. Yet, the oppression of, and prejudices against, black people can also be detected in, again, the card game, in a dialogue that involves the cinematographic character of King Kong.

As I already explained, Hicox's odd German accent makes the German officer Hellstrom suspicious of his identity, but Hicox successfully convinces Hellstrom that he comes from the German mountains. They then start to play the card game together. Hellstrom, after having gone through several guesses and answers regarding the card on his forehead, has established that he is an "exotic" figure, which might mean that his origin is, as he states it, the "Orient" or "the jungle." It appears to be the latter. He proceeds as follows, in German, and he is being answered time and again by Hicox and Bridget simultaneously:

> **Hellstrom**: Also, Herrschaften, an dieser Stelle könnte man fragen, ob man real oder erfunden ist. Ich finde diese Frage aber zu einfach und frage noch nicht danach. Ich bin… ich bin also im Urwald geboren, ich habe Amerika besucht. Der Besuch war für mich nicht von Vorteil, aber die Schlussfolgerung liegt nahe, dass es für jemand anderen von Vorteil war. Als ich aus dem Urwald nach Amerika kam, fuhr ich dann mit dem Schiff?
> **Bridget/Hicox:** Ja.
> **Hellstrom**: Geschah die Reise gegen meinen Willen?
> **Bridget/Hicox:** Ja
> **Hellstrom**: Auf der Schiffsreise, lag ich da in Ketten?
> **Bridget/Hicox:** Ja!
> **Hellstrom**: Als ich in Amerika ankam, wurde ich da in Ketten zur Schau gestellt?
> **Bridget/Hicox:** Ja.
> **Hellstrom**: Bin ich die Geschichte des Negers in Amerika?
> **Hicox:** Nein.
> **Hellstrom**: Also, dann muss ich King Kong sein.

> **Hellstrom**: Then, ladies and gentlemen, one could ask at this point if

one is real or fictitious. But I think this question is too easy and will not ask about it yet. I was... was born, then, in the jungle, I have visited America. My visit wasn't to my advantage, but it is obvious to infer that it was to somebody else's advantage. When I came from the jungle to America, did I go by ship?

Bridget/Hicox: Yes!

Hellstrom: Did the voyage happen against my will?

Bridget/Hicox: Yes!

Hellstrom: On the sea voyage... was I held there in chains?

Hicox/Bridget: Yes!

Hellstrom: When I arrived in America, was I in chains made a spectacle of?

Hicox/Bridget: Yes!

Hicox/Bridget: Am I the story of the Negro in America?

Hicox: No.

Hellstrom: Well, then, I must be King Kong

In quoting the scene in the original in German, here, my aim is to emphasize first the way in which stereotypes can travel through cultures and languages, having their specific connotations in each, while remaining transculturally recognizable nevertheless. Secondl, there are telling differences in the translation. "Gescha die Reise" is not just "Did I go." The German emphasizes here that the journey happened; the journey does not concern an "I" who *did* or did not *do* something. In other words, the German is more precise in capturing the subjecting force of history. With respect to this, there is the telling difference between "Geschichte" and "story," a distinction that connotes the power of representation.

Yet, if we were to stick to language only, something specific would be missing from our analysis, something that is of relevance to my argument. It is especially the face of Hellstrom that needs analysis when he asks whether his character represents the "story of the negro" in America. His facial expression shows that this would be a boring option. It is as if he expresses "not again," or as if he wants to say that this would be too simple. After he immediately afterwards concludes he is King Kong, his face is rather triumphant, as if it was his superior intellect that turned this game into an easy one. Meanwhile, the viewer could almost forget how the history (*Geschichte*) of the transatlantic slave trade is associated deeply, here, with the *story* of King Kong, an association that also links the reality of chaining, "displaying," and trading people to a theatrical or cinematographic display of an animal to an audience, as if in a circus. This is to say, the "Negro" is not seen as so much different from but rather as equivalent to the fictive figure King Kong, who has great physical strength, but lacks intelligence, and who makes a fragile white woman his object of desire.

The racist connotations involved in this link have all been discussed at length in studies on Merian C. Cooper and Ernest B. Shoedsack's iconic film *King Kong* (1933). These Studies also address how King Kong has become one of the most iconic cinematographic figures of the twentieth century, with his appearance on top of the

Empire State Building, itself yet another icon. "In African American writing, King Kong is one of several racial personae … who serve as shorthand expressions for various forms of racist practice" (Erb 3). Characters in the film such as Carl Denham [Robert Armstrong] and Captain Englehorn [Frank Reicher] "make a clear separation between 'lower cultures' and 'higher cultures', and jump, for example, to the racist conclusion that the island's great wall could not possibly have been built by 'the [black] people who live there'" (Snead 60). The film further confirms and encourages "a strict separation and hierarchy of blacks and whites" (61). In studies on this film and its many representations since then, the link between King Kong and Black Americans has itself almost become a cliché.[10] As J. C. Morley puts it on his blog:

> Released 35 years before the end of segregation and the passing of the Civil Rights Act, the film offers up a disturbing portrait of the dominant white racial ideologies of the time, implying that the idea of America (as represented by Manhattan's iconic topography) would be destroyed if the black man were given total freedom.

As has been dealt with above, the look of others, and to look at others can very much mirror the desires and anxieties of the observers. King Kong is a paradigmatic case that showcases the fear of the destruction of the White man by the "savage" Black Americans. The question here, however, is whether King Kong's and the African-American's appearances in *Inglorious Basterds* only confirm this racial dynamic or whether their appearances multiply, or help us to amplify, hidden voices in order to multiply. The key element in addressing this question circles around something hinted at by the bored face of Hellstrom. There are not only stereotypes being used (and criticized) here; not only the very use of stereotypes, but also their criticism has become almost stereotypical. In other words, there may be a sort of meta-stereotypicality at stake. Let me discuss this by returning to the stereotype that is more central to the film: that of the Native American.

Through repetition, stereotypes are used to enhance or back up a dominant discourse. In the 1980s, Ruth Amossy and Therese Heidingsfield propose a functional approach to stereotypes and discuss the functions of stereotypes in an article entitled "Stereotypes and Representation in Fiction." In their analysis, repeated stereotypes "offer a secure point of identification for social groups, assisting them in defining themselves against reductive and degrading representations of others" (Amossy and Heidingsfeld in Boletsi 2010, 254). Yet, Amossy and Heidingsfeld also point out the fundamental enigma and paradoxical nature of stereotypes. On one hand, stereotypes must be fixed and reconfirmed through repetition. On the other hand, this repetition is "free and multiform," because "it welcomes all formulations and variants and puts up with totally dissimilar stylistic registers, decors, and details" (691). That is to say, stereotypes become stable and hardened through repetition, while at the same time possibilities of subversion and shifts in the way they function arise, if readers or viewers

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[10] In *White Screens, Black Images: Hollywood from the Dark Side*, James Snead depicts Kong as an exclusively black figure.

pay enough attention to the inconsistencies that go into their making. It is an argument that is very similar to Butler's ideas on repetition and resignification of utterances in *Excitable Speech*. Still, with preconstructed stereotypical forms in mind, readers and viewers tend to pick up things which correspond to preexisting patterns and tend to ignore "remnants," elements which "perversely disturb this harmony of fixed traits reunited in a stable pattern" as Amossy and Heidingsfield note (693). In order to break up the simplicity of a prefabricated pattern and establish multiple interactions between text and reader (or image and viewer) that break with stereotypical patterns, the reader or the viewer should not eradicate or oppose stereotypes, but should take into account "the unstable and complex networks of the text," and pay more attention to the "remnants," so that they can avoid the mechanical and reductive reading of stereotypes and recognize their potential, which may be revealed through repetition (696). It is an argument that can be considered paradigmatic of ideology criticism, and one that prefigures Butler's idea on repetition as the potential for difference, which in turn informs Shohat and Stam's notion of multiplication.

In *Excitable Speech*, Butler takes the performativity of language as a starting point and discusses how utterances are repeated in time. "The illocutionary speech act is performed *at the moment* of the utterance, and yet to the extent that the moment is ritualized, it is never merely a single moment" (Butler 3). The moment of the utterance is never isolated. It is "a condensed historicity: it exceeds itself in past and future directions, an effect of prior and future invocations that constitute and escape the instance of utterance" (3). That is to say, the moment of the utterance is closely related to both its present and its past and future. In the case of stereotypes, how they function will not only be determined by their presents, but is also related to their pasts and futures. Butler's assertion that language is citational and iterable opens up multiple functions of language, including ironic and parodic functions. Stereotypes, too, may function differently and get re-signified or reversed in every repetition. However, this kind of resignification or reversion is not something we can control or intend to bring about by repetition, because we ourselves are constructed by language and do not have full power over language. In a sense, Butler is implicitly calling upon a ghost-like element in the moment of utterance, the element of history that "exceeds itself in past and future directions" (3). I will come back more extensively to the concept of the ghost in the next chapter, but for now I want to conclude this chapter by considering the ghost's relation to the realm of representation, or Silverman's screen.

For Derrida, the specter, which he developed as a concept in *Specters of Marx* (1993), is "a deconstructive figure hovering between life and death, presence and absence, and making established certainties vacillate" (C. Davis 376). It mixes the past, present, and future together, or at least blurs the boundaries between history, present, and future. The figure of the specter is located in one sense in the past, but always has the potency to come back. Moreover, one can never predict its appearance and it may even appear to come from the future, thereby disrupting conventional, linear temporality. "Specters show us how the identity of the living present to itself is disjoined, and how the present is but a 'spectral moment,' a fleeting, transitory instant, which already contains the past as well as the future" (Derrida in Boletsi 2010, 219). As a "spectral moment," the present

is not predetermined, following a fixed historical pattern, but is shaped by the past as well as the future. As discussed above, the moment when stereotypes are repeated can also be addressed as a "spectral moment." As a ghost, the image of Native Americans returns regularly through the recurrence of stereotypes.[11] The moment the ghostly image of Native Americans comes back, it may function differently from a simple confirmation of the stereotype. Let us keep in mind, however, that in my dealing with this issue in the film, the recurrence of the stereotype, but also our critical approach to it, may also be stereotypical in itself. If we bring this to bear on the specter, its appearance might not be one of disruption but rather one that provokes a response of boredom, of a "not again!"

The ghostly image of the Native American can be seen in what I would want to term "the baseball bat scene". After having ambushed a squad of Nazis, the Basterds are left with only three Nazis alive: Sergeant Werner Rachtman [Richard Sammel] and two common German soldiers. Because Werner "respectfully refuses" to provide the Basterds with information they need, he is beaten to death by Staff Sergeant Donny Donowitz [Eli Roth] with a baseball bat. Then one of the living German soldiers is shot to death while the other soldier, Private Butz [Sönke Möhring] tells whatever he is asked for, and is set free by the Basterds. Yet, as always, he is marked with a swastika on his forehead. This mark connotes the well-known stereotype of scalping. Furthermore, although there is no direct visual representation of Native Americans at stake, the image of Native Americans is also evoked through Donnny's baseball bat and his nickname "the Bear Jew." This name connotes the Native American tradition of giving people the names of animals.

Baseball is a popular sport around the world, especially in America. There is debate over its origin, with some people arguing that it originates in Britain and others thinking that it is a Native American invention. No matter which is the case, baseball is regarded as a sport that entertains people. However, in the film, Donny uses the baseball bat is used to bash in the skulls of Nazis. The baseball bat becomes a wooden club, a weapon. The entertaining sport changes into something violent, although this does not mean it is not fun to watch. When Donny beats Werner to death, he seems to give a kind of performance that all the other Basterds enjoy watching; they even cheer for him. As Aldo says: "Frankly, watchin' Donny beat Nazis to death is the closest we ever get to goin' to the films." Here, killing with a bat is considered to be funnier than killing with guns, which not only reveals the brutality of the Basterds but also echoes the stereotypical image of Native Americans as savage: primitive, backward, brutal, and cruel. At the same time, at this spectral moment, the past and the present become blurred. Because of the double associations of Donny with Native Americans and Jews, as viewers, we can either associate the violence with the history of colonization or with the history of the holocaust. In the former case, the conventional binary opposition between the colonizer and Native Americans is reversed and Native Americans are ready to fight back, while in the latter case, Jews would appear to take revenge against Nazis. The figure of Donny does not make it easy to pin down what exactly the implication of this violence is. It is

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[11] Different from Derrida, I uses the term *ghost* to refer to Native Americans, and the reason for my choice can be seen in the Conclusion of the whole thesis.

the viewer's task to decide how the condensation of the past specters of the colonization of the Americas and the Holocaust functions here.

Killing with the baseball bat earns Donny the nickname "the Bear Jew." Hitler complains that the Basterds are "turning soldiers of the Third Reich into superstitious old women" and argues that "they seem to be able to elude capture like an apparition. They seem to be able to appear and disappear at will." In the published screenplay of the film (though not in its final cut), Hitler regards "the Bear Jew" as "An avenging Jew angel, conjured up by a vengeful rabbi, to smite the Aryans!" This is also why he orders that "the Bear Jew" should never be mentioned again. In this way, by means of synecdoche, the Basterds take on mysterious features and successfully conjure up stereotypical images of Native Americans as powerful, inexplicable, and to be feared. The practice of scalping is pivotal here, also because the film ends with an act of scalping, when Aldo has his final confrontation with Col. Hans Landa and the latter can no longer be saved by language. Tellingly, the confrontation takes place in the woods, which brings us back to the etymological root of my central theme of the savage. Still dressed in his smoking jacket, but with his bow untied, Landa surrenders himself to Aldo, since he has made a deal with the allies and is now on his way to a new future. Aldo first shoots the soldier accompanying Landa and gets his scalp. Since Aldo cannot scalp Landa, he gives him something that he cannot "take off"; with a knife he cuts a swastika into his forehead. The final scene thus becomes the most explicit one of Aldo's acting the savage.

Now, scalping was taught to Europeans by Native Americans after Columbus arrived in the New World, but this is not when the custom turned savage (Axtell and Sturtevant 451). After learning the art, Europeans further developed it and offered bounties to "encourage friendly Indians to kill Indians hostile to the interests of the European governments" (470). So, although scalping was first practiced by Native Americans, it was the European settlers who turned it into a savage practice that could be praised and defiled at the same time. By offering bounties as a reward for scalping, they subjected the practice of scalping to a European logic of exchange and of rule. Tellingly, in the opening scene, when Aldo declares himself to be an "Injun," he at the same time gives orders that follow this logic of exchange: "when you join my command, you take on debt. A debt you owe me, personally." His rule is not to be doubted, and although the Basterds will be sitting in a circle elsewhere in the film, this does not come close to, for instance, the Iroquois custom, "in which chiefs in council are implored to let at least one night intervene before making important decisions" (Johansen and Pritzker 321). Aldo is the one making decisions in the group. Furthermore, although Aldo claims to be closely related to Native Americans, his attire tells another story, because he dresses like a cowboy, the stereotypical enemy of Native Americans. Through the condensation of all these contradictory aspects in Aldo's figure, a complicated and paradoxical image of Native Americans emerges. Viewers may even laugh when they see Aldo trying to perform as a Native American, using an abundant set of stereotypes more cinematographic than anthropological.

This interlacing of stereotypes may highlight the inconsistencies and absurdities in popular representations of Native Americans and undercut the credibility of these representations. Or, in its rehashed repetition of the stereotypes of Native Americans,

the film may make use of the ambivalence within stereotypes. It does not just replace negative stereotypes of Native Americans with positive or more true-to-life representations of them. Instead, it interrogates the economy of the stereotype itself and reproduces stereotypical images of Native Americans with a twist. The "remnants," the strange, unfitting, deviant elements inserted through the repetition of these stereotypes in the film, unsettle the homogeneity of established stereotypical patterns and provoke resignifications. Just as I discussed in the first part of this chapter, as a postmodern work of art, the film reworks historical materials with not just one but several twists. Similarly, it does not only confirm the stereotypes of Native Americans, but endows them with different functions whenever they appear like ghosts. Thus, the stereotypes of Native Americans are repeated and re-signified through their repetition.

Conclusion

Still, there remains a problem that lies at the heart of Shohat and Stam's attempt to *multiply*. Let me repeat part of an earlier quote:

> It is not our purpose merely to reverse existing hierarchies—to replace the demagoguery of the visual with a new demagoguery of the auditory—but to suggest that voice (and sound) and image be considered together, dialectically and diacritically. A more nuanced discussion of race and ethnicity in the cinema would emphasize less a one-to-one mimetic adequacy to sociological or historical truth than the interplay of voices, discourses, perspectives, including those operative within the image itself. (1994a, 214)

One important point that Shohat and Stam address here is made in passing. It concerns the distinction between *Geschichte*—that is: history, or as it is said here: historical truth—and story, as a matter of representation. In this context it is at least remarkable how *Inglorious Basterds*, as a postmodern work of art, keeps circling within the domain of representation. To give just one more example: Aldo Raine alludes to "the actor and WWII veteran Aldo Ray and a character from *Rolling Thunder*, Charles Rane (played by William Devane)."[12] Remarkably, the latter film is also a revenge film, but this time in the context of yet another violent history: that of the Vietnam war. As a lieutenant in charge of an undercover operation with a select company, Aldo Raine alludes to famous action films such as *The Guns of Navarone* (1961), where the "Bear Jew" has a mirror image in "Butcher Brown" and where the "natives" of Navarone both do, and do not play a role. Furthermore, the actual history of the Holocaust is framed here by theatrical and cinematographic allusions to revenge plays. So, what does it mean when film critic Heidi Schlipphacke argues that in the film "history is being (creatively) recreated, but the spectator experiences this history viscerally and in the present" (114)? Clearly history is creatively reproduced, and played with, and made to be present. Yet, if the play of

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[12] See <http://ingloriousbasterds.wikia.com/wiki/Aldo_Raine>.

stereotypes being re-hashed stereotypically no longer affects "historical truth" in any sense of the word, what, then, remains the value of Shohat and Stam's amplifying tactic that is aimed at multiplication?

In the context of my dealing with the Native American as a ghost, what is principally at stake is this figure's connection to historical truth. The force of the ghost does not reside in its belonging to the realm of representation. If it were a matter of representation only, the ghost would not be very forceful. Derrida starts his discussion of the specter in relation to the beginning of the Communist Manifesto with Marx's famous line: "A spectre is haunting Europe—the spectre of communism." That specter was real, in a distinct sense, and the reality of it is confirmed by Derrida's subtitle: *The State of the Debt, the Work of Mourning, and the New International*. Translating this to the problem of the savage and Native Americans there is a lot to be mourned because of real and massive losses, losses that were inflicted in the name of battling savagery. How does multiplication relate to this loss, and how can it do away with the stereotypes that propelled and justified the acts leading to this loss?

According to Silverman, contrary to the look, the gaze can help us "to see the otherness of the desired self and the familiarity of the despised other" (1996, 170). In other words, through the gaze, we can see the inconsistency of ourselves and find that we share a lot, have a lot in common with, those we disdain or neglect. Ethically, through the gaze, as Silverman argues, it is easier for the viewers to accept the otherness of objects and thus "prejudice, oppression, and the anxiety induced by contact with perceived otherness" will become less (Jones 567). However, the gaze does not mean that the desire and lack of the observers will disappear once and for all or that we should look at objects in the opposite way; the gaze allows the orchestration of multiple perspectives and welcomes the dynamic interplay of cultural voices. This is also where the radical potential in multiculturalism lies. Radical multiculturalism does not focus on "correct" representations, but calls for multiple perspectives. Analogously, in the film, the stereotypical representations of Native Americans are not the "correct" representations, and they cannot be. Yet, through a productive look, what is hidden or veiled by these stereotypes can emerge.

This dynamic only works, obviously, when the gaze works on a higher level, or is more fundamental than the screen. In terms of the screen, *Inglorious Basterds* works as a postmodern work of art by reworking historical materials through parody rather than pastiche, so that we can see how these historical materials reveal multiple truths and challenge conventional accounts and understandings of Western history. Because the film projects many stereotypical representations of Native Americans as savages while questioning them through parody, it shows how the screen, as a cultural filter, is not stable at all, but is refreshed with new elements. At first, through repetition, the stereotypes of Native Americans seem to be reconfirmed. Instead of seeking out what the "reality" behind these stereotypes is, and instead of trying to answer the question "what to do with these stereotypes," I have found that their repetition does not guarantee their stability. In fact, through repetition, the stereotypes are almost forced to renew themselves frequently and sometimes unexpectedly. That is to say, the implicit or explicit evocations of the Native American figure in the film do not claim to truly

represent reality by trying to set "wrong" representations "right." Rather, the contamination of stereotypes of Native Americans in this film performs the impossibility of articulating a "true" or "authentic" representation of Native Americans, since these representations are limited to a Western perspective.

Still, this strategy, if it is that, comes at a price. The specter as defined by Derrida is in nobody's control, because it defies representation in the sense that it can never be entirely captured by it. There is some sort of materiality involved in Derrida's specter in that it is, in a historical sense, *real*. The real force that results from it, may be much weakened or destroyed if we get to the level of what I defined as the meta-stereotypical, which happens when the destabilization of stereotypes becomes stereotypical itself. The problem that I am hinting at has also been traced in studies of the Holocaust, as when the obligatory incorporation of the Holocaust in high school education did not lead to a deeper or broadened awareness but to "dull" and "bored" attitudes (van Alphen 2). The end result was, in this context, that the specter of the Holocaust became a purely representational one, as a result of which the historical force of the Holocaust as a specter was lost. Translated to my argument, and in the context of Shohat and Stam's amplification in the service of multiplication, the dichotomy of the civilized-savage opposition can be dismantled or at least destabilized by bringing in more and more "interplay of voices, discourses, perspectives." Yet, fairly quickly, this very interplay will become stereotypical. As a consequence, the historical horrors that were the result of the savage-civilization opposition are transposed to the level of the screen. The savage will still be much alive, but as a ghost to have fun with, much like Nearly Headless Nick in the Harry Potter books and films (in which he was played, not coincidentally, by the comedian John Cleese). The real specter will have disappeared or become inaudible.

To make up for such shortcoming, or to make historical voices that were nearly drowned heard again, many current critics propose to study Native Americans from the perspective *of* Native Americans. Such theoretical approaches situate themselves in the framework of what has been called the "decolonial turn." In the following chapter, I will work on how Native Americans might represent themselves and how they could renew the contents of the screen. In that context, I will also deal more deeply with the (haunting) powers residing in ghosts.

Chapter Four

Savages in Multiple Worlds and Histories: The Decolonial Attempt

Introduction

In the previously discussed works, the image of the Native American as savage mostly exists in the imagination of Westerners; there is little actual presence of Native American characters. The Native American "savage" either functions as a "mask" for white European characters or assumes a ghostly presence, evoked through other characters' statements, projections, or games. In *Lord of the Flies*, children paint themselves as Native Americans, using this "savage exterior" as a mask that eventually unleashes their savage, violent behavior. In *Inglourious Basterds*, the basterds assert a hybrid identity that includes multiple affiliations, such as cowboy, Jewish American, and Native American ("a little Injun," as Aldo Raine, played by Brad Pitt, puts it). *Brave New World* does involve several representations of Native Americans, but none of these representations is cast from the perspective of Native Americans themselves. John the Savage identifies himself as a Native American, but his in-between position makes him a grotesque figure both in the Savage Reservation and the civilized world. The work I will center on in this chapter sets itself apart from the previous ones regarding the presence and function of Native Americans in it: Alejandro González Iñárritu's most recent film, *The Revenant* (2015), revisits the history of America's colonization by European settlers through a narrative of revenge. Native American figures act in it as actual characters, and not just as masks for European characters, or as ghostly presences, projections, stereotypes, or faint traces of a bygone era.

As the only case study in this thesis in which actual Native American characters take center stage, *The Revenant* offers me the chance to scrutinize the mode of their representation, in order to see how it relates to, and tries to counter, Western conventions of representing Native Americans as "savages," particularly in Hollywood cinema and other popular Western media. The question of the film's relation to conventional Hollywood representations of Native American "savages" becomes even more compelling if we consider the ways in which both the film and its director, hold an in-between position in Hollywood today. As an independent Mexican director who has recently established himself in the American film industry, Iñárritu uses the resources that the American film industry offers him without, however, being fully integrated in, or appropriated by, the Hollywood industry. His complex, ambiguous position as a filmmaker, neither an insider nor an absolute outsider in the American film industry, allows him, as I will show, to evoke, and play with, Hollywood conventions and representational modes in ways that both subvert them from within but also, significantly, place them alongside other, different worldviews and representational

modes. In fact, this double move that I trace in *The Revenant*—subverting established representations of "savages" from within *and* unraveling other modes of seeing, being, and knowing—is precisely what motivates this chapter's main question as well as its theoretical and methodological rationale. In my analysis of the film, I am interested both in the ways *The Revenant* critically engages with Eurocentric discourses and Hollywood conventions through its casting of Native Americans, and in those moments where it seeks to disengage itself from a Eurocentric gaze altogether. This concern also gives shape to the theoretical premises of the chapter; my analysis will bring together a poststructuralist/deconstructivist and postcolonial perspective with an approach informed by the work of decolonial thinkers, such as Mignolo and Nelson Maldonado Torres. By tracing the ways in which this film casts Native Americans through and against the figure of the savage, I create a testing ground for these approaches, measuring them through and against each other, in order to explore their potential but also their limits and blind spots.

It should be noted here that a systematic comparison of these approaches and of the ways in which they relate to each other cannot be accomplished in any comprehensive way within the scope of this chapter. Each of these approaches represents a varied and internally differentiated body of theory that cannot be easily summarized, so I will necessarily limit myself to certain general principles in these approaches which are particularly relevant for the questions I pose. Decoloniality is delineated in most detail in this chapter, as this theoretical approach has not been introduced or used in the previous chapters.

Poststructuralism (dealt with in chapter two) acknowledges the dominance of a certain regime of representation that produces a (seemingly) coherent, unified narrative of history. At the same time, it asserts the "impossibility of describing a complete or coherent signifying system," and thus engages in critiques of "knowledge, totality, and the subject" (Culler 1997, 125). Concretizing this critical position into a strategy of (re)reading, deconstruction, in its most basic description, is a "critique of the hierarchical oppositions that have structured Western thought" (126). As such, it is committed not only to exposing the constructed nature of such oppositions, but also to dismantling them and reinscribing their terms by providing them with different contexts and constellations in which they can assume different operations (126). Central to the operations of deconstruction is the critical concept of difference; difference is not understood here as a "difference between" texts as "separate units," but concerns the ways a text differs from *itself*: a "difference within," as Johnson has called it (4). "Far from constituting the text's unique identity," Johnson writes, difference "is that which subverts the very idea of identity, infinitely deferring the possibility of adding up the sum of a text's parts of meanings and reaching a totalized, integrated whole" (4). Denying the possibility of a totalized whole by emphasizing the difference within, deconstruction aims at bringing to light what is repressed, silenced by the normalizing operations of a text: that which texts anxiously try to eliminate without ever fully being able to do so. As I argued in chapter two this emphasis on the difference within also shows how deconstruction, and poststructuralism more generally, operates within the confines of one history, one dominant discursive regime, which it tries to unsettle from

within by showing that it is never identical to itself.

Postcolonialism can hardly be said to represent one philosophical or theoretical approach. But insofar as a dominant strand in postcolonial criticism has been heavily influenced by poststructuralism, postcolonialism is also largely concerned with bringing to light histories of the oppressed which have been silenced by the dominant discourse of Western colonialism, (neo)imperialism, and the violent hierarchical oppositions on which they hinge. Among these oppositions, that of the savage and civilized holds a prominent place. This approach tries to overturn the dominant paradigm that has determined how "Western" and "non-Western" people are viewed and question the terms of the distinction between "West" and "the rest," which the enormous expansion of European Empires in the nineteenth century consolidated (R. Young 2). As I already showed in chapter three's discussion of Shohat and Stam's work, postcolonial approaches also aim at pluralizing history. This pluralization aims at working against the discourse of Western colonialism and its pervasive impact on the lives, identities, and self-perception of formerly colonized peoples. It is committed, in that sense, to charting differences within the one world that Eurocentric discourses have tried, and still try, to shape.

The so-called "decolonial turn" poses as a radical alternative to the former approaches. As a term, it gained ground around 2007, but decoloniality as a multiplicity of approaches has existed long before that. Decoloniality involves several heterogeneous approaches and emphasizes withdrawing from the discourse and logic of colonialism and Western modernity altogether, resisting its all-pervasive power to dominate "History" in the singular. The task of decoloniality, then, as I will explain in more detail in what follows, consists in the "very decolonization of knowledge, power, and being" (Maldonado Torres 2011, 1). It aims to de-link from the logic of Western modernity/coloniality in order to multiply epistemic paradigms, modes of thinking and knowing the world. In the words of Mignolo, this "delinking" as a "de-colonial epistemic shift" aims to brings "to the foreground other epistemologies, other principles of knowledge and understanding and, consequently, other economy, other politics, other ethics" (2007, 453). Within this framework, then, other modes of knowing and thinking are not (conceptually) dependent on the discourse of Western modernity/coloniality and need not be discussed only in relation to this discourse. Rather, they exist and function in their own rights. Spivak's famous question—"can the subaltern speak?"—which she poses in the homonymous article and answers negatively, would in fact be moot in the context of decoloniality, as no one is defined as subaltern beforehand; designating peoples as "subaltern" would presuppose the dominance of, and one's dependency on, a Eurocentric framework. All people speak in and from their respective worlds and need not be defined only through their dependency on, or even critique of, the matrix of Western modernity/coloniality. The project of "de-linking" that decolonial thinkers embark on, then, generates "both the analytics for a critique and the vision toward a world in which many worlds can co-exist" (Mignolo 2007, 463). Here, the idea is not to pluralize one world, but to pluralize worlds.

In this chapter, I will show how *The Revenant* turns this idea into cinematographic practice at certain key moments in the film, even as other aspects, moments, or scenes

remain in a close critical dialogue with Western coloniality, its power structures and key oppositions. By mobilizing the aforementioned theoretical frameworks in my analysis, I hope to unravel the ways in which the film relates to—or, indeed, tries to disengage from—the logic of coloniality and Eurocentrism through its engagement with Native Americans and its revisiting of the history of America's colonization.

I began this introduction by emphasizing the actual material presence of Native American characters in this film. Yet, as I will show, the film is also deeply preoccupied with the operations of ghosts. In fact, the figure of the ghost is in many ways central to this film's approach vis-a-vis the problematics that I laid out above. Native Americans function as ghosts in the film on different levels. Their presence, but also their violent murdering, in the film evoke the specter of a future in which their societies and ways of life will have been fully destroyed; their ghostlike quality, in this sense, lies in a material presence that prefigures, and carries the traces of, a future absence. This future, glimpses of which are already offered within the film, comes to haunt the viewer's perception of the film's present as well as their own.

The film's title, *The Revenant*, already invokes the figure of the ghost as a force that keeps returning. The title refers on one level to the protagonist Hugh Glass [Leonardo DiCaprio], who rises nearly from the dead to avenge his son's murder. However, on a more abstract level, the title also hints at the complex and unpredictable ways in which history as a revenant keeps coming back, haunting the present. The main story of the protagonist as a "ghost" rising from the dead could thus also be read as an allegory for the way the history of colonization returns in the film, claiming our present and reminding us that the dead (the exterminated Native Americans) are neither silent nor invisible, but can assume a form of agency over the present. The film comes to haunt the viewers' present by revisiting images of the history of America's colonization in a way that creates ruptures in established historical narratives. As it tells that history from different perspectives, through different voices, it recasts it as a narrative that, as I will argue, does not feel resolved when the viewer leaves the movie theater.

Next to the above uses of the ghost as a conceptual metaphor for the workings of history, the film also accommodates more "real" ghosts: recurrent images and flashes of people from the past in crucial moments of the protagonist's journey, which may seem like dreams or hallucinations but on closer inspection seem to mix with reality in a way that makes their ontological status hard to pinpoint. Through elements of magical realism, the film also plays with the ghost as a more material, tangible part of reality, which corresponds with beliefs shared by certain Native American societies. In the film, these ghosts, which for the sake of the argument I will refer to as "real ghosts," function as agents that confront a Western mindframe with other cosmologies and worldviews. They are *real*—or magically real—embodiments of the multiplicity of histories and worldviews that decoloniality brings to the foreground. As such, these "real ghosts" are significant in my analysis of how film anticipates and invites a decolonial approach alongside its critical, deconstructive engagement with Eurocentric narratives and oppositions, such as civilized and savage, body and spirit. Following the film's engagement with ghosts in the conclusion, will therefore help me bring the main threads and questions of this chapter together.

4.1 Iñárritu and *The Revenant:* Hollywood, Casting, Language, and the Native Perspective

In an interview with Celestino Deleyto and María del Mar Azcona in Barcelona on June 22, 2009, Iñárritu described his films as "independent": "I developed my projects with total freedom and have financed them in different ways" (Deleyto and Azcona 123). During the same interview, he said that he has the final say in all his films. Not a single word of the script can be changed when he signs the contract with financial supporters from different countries. In this interview, Iñárritu noted that in the present context the question of whether he is a Mexican or Latin-American filmmaker is a complex one, because for him "art should have no nationality"; "When a work of art is reduced to a geographical territory, often with a nationalistic sense, it's always diminished" (122). For him, nationality is not a productive category for labeling filmmakers, as films have far more complex affiliations than what nationality can convey. At the time of this interview, then, Iñárritu saw his films neither as a part of Hollywood cinema nor as a part of Mexican cinema, asserting his status as an independent filmmaker.

As an independent filmmaker, Iñárritu has been highly recognized by the American film industry, which has honored him for two consecutive years, 2015 and 2016, with an academy award for best director for his films *Birdman or (The Unexpected Virtue of Ignorance)* (2014) and *The Revenant* (2015). Even though, with his latest films, Iñárritu seems to have established himself in the American film industry, his position as a filmmaker in this industry remains complex and ambivalent. In 2015, for example, the American Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences might have rewarded Iñárritu with the highest award—his *Birdman* received 4 academy awards, including those for best picture and director—but the Academy's somewhat perplexed attitude towards Iñárritu's status as an insider/outsider in the American film industry registered in host Sean Penn's comment during the Oscar ceremony in 2015: "Who gave this son of a bitch his green card?"[1] The comment was said, of course, in jest, but its sarcasm aptly captured xenophobic attitudes in Hollywood (and in America) towards immigrants, particularly those from Mexico and the South. Following this logic, Iñárritu is an outside "invader" in the American film industry, a migrant-director who uses the system's resources without being fully integrated into it. Iñárritu himself placed emphasis on the issue of migration and the relations between Mexico and the US in his academy award acceptance speech in 2015, in which he called for a better Mexico and for better treatment of immigrants in the United States. "The ones who live in Mexico, I pray that we can find and build the government that we deserve," Iñárritu said. "The ones that live in this country, who are just part of the latest generation of immigrants in this county, I just pray they can be treated with the same dignity and respect as the ones who came before and built this incredible immigrant nation."[2] Subtly overturning his status as an outsider, in the latter statement Iñárritu presents those supposed outsiders (migrants)

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[1] See <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2015/02/23/sean-penn-green-card_n_6733238.html>.
[2] See <https://www.buzzfeed.com/adolfoflores/birdman-director-alejandro-gonzalez-inarritu-called-for-resp?utm_term=.sl7Z1VyKM#.cjJj9mya1>.

as the constitutive elements of the American nation, underscoring what Johnson might call the "difference within" the totalized whole that a nation is often perceived to be.

In 2016, *The Revenant* won Iñárritu the academy award for Best Director, making him the first Latino filmmaker to win the Oscar for Best Director two years in a row. However, this award was not accompanied by an appropriate response to his 2015 plea for "dignity and respect" for new immigrants. When Iñárritu accepted the award and delivered the award acceptance speech in 2016, he was not even allowed to use all his time and was interrupted by music. Later, when asked about the rude treatment of Iñárritu during the ceremony, producer Reginald Hudlin argued that "it was just one mistake in a three and a half hour show."[3] This explanation is not convincing enough and cannot excuse the inappropriate treatment of a four-time Oscar winner. Clearly realizing what was happening, Iñárritu just ignored the music, which tried to play him off, and kept talking. In his acceptance speech, he addressed the issue of skin color and racism, calling for equality and the elimination of prejudice against people of color: "So what a great opportunity to our generation to really liberate ourselves from all prejudice and, you know, this tribal thinking, and make sure for once and forever that the color of the skin becomes as irrelevant as the length of our hair."[4] Ironically, his being played off by music during the Oscar ceremony made Iñárritu's attack against "tribal thinking" or racism even more relevant and urgent. Although he was recognized as the Best Director two years in a row by the Academy, all the above instances hint at the fact that his reception in Hollywood, and in the American film industry more generally, has not been one of straightforward and unconditional acceptance. Iñárritu remains not quite "one of them."

Despite starting off as an outsider, since Iñárritu gained fame he has been making use of the means and the budget that Hollywood can offer, yet engages with Hollywood conventions in a critical way. The bill for *The Revenant* was paid by New Regency, a well-known company in the Hollywood film industry, along with Steve Golin's Anonymous Content, M Productions, and Leonardo DiCaprio's Appian Way. Although New Regency's leading role in the production makes the film part of the Hollywood industry, Iñárritu's film cannot be straightforwardly categorized as a Hollywood film, as in many ways it sets out to break with Hollywood aesthetics and conventions, especially regarding its representation of Native Americans and their contact with settlers. Since *The Revenant* is a film *representing* Native Americans, I will explore its mode of representations, how this representation relates to Hollywood conventions and popular representations of Native Americans in Western media. Specifically, I will trace the film's critical engagement with Eurocentric discourses that are inscribed in Hollywood conventions, but also its attempt to disengage itself from Eurocentric modes of representation.

For a long time in Hollywood cinema, Euro-American actors customarily played the roles of African-American, Native American, and Asian people, just as they always played the role of white people. "Within Hollywood cinema, Euro-Americans have historically enjoyed the unilateral prerogative of acting in 'blackface,' 'redface,' 'brownface,' and

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[3] See <https://www.editorsguild.com/industrynews.cfm?LaborNewsid=21458>.
[4] See <http://www.ew.com/article/2016/02/24/oscars-2016-alejandro-gonzalez-inarritu>.

'yellowface,' while the reverse has rarely been the case" (Shohat and Stam 1994a, 189). In the case of Native Americans, the situation was worse, because "Long after the powers of Hollywood decided that white actors could no longer play Black or Asian characters, they still chose them for Native Americans in westerns" (Hilger 11). This situation started to change slowly in the 1970s and recently Native American actors, such as Will Sampso, Graham Greene, and Rodney Grant have begun to play major characters in Hollywood films.

However, whether these revisions in casting also entail a more "realistic" portrayal of Native Americans remains doubtful. Shohat and Stam argue:

> In recent years Hollywood has made gestures toward "correct" casting; African-American, Native American, and Latino/a performers have been allowed to "represent" their communities. But this "realistic" casting is hardly sufficient if narrative structure and cinematic strategies remain Eurocentric. (Shohat and Stam 1994a, 190)

For them, despite developments towards more "'realistic' casting," community self-representation cannot really take place as long as filmmakers maintain the same Eurocentric narrative structures and cinematic strategies.

In *The Revenant*, Native Americans play the parts of Native Americans. For example, Forrest Goodluck (Hawk) is a member of the Dine, Mandan, Hidatsa, and Tsimshian tribes; Duane Howard (Elk Dog) is a First Nation born in the Nuu-chah-nulth (meaning "along the mountains and sea") territory on the west coast of Vancouver Island in British Columbia, Canada; Melaw Nakehk'o (Powaqa) is born in Canada's north, raised in the community of Liidlii Kue, and comes from a long line of tribal leaders of the Dehcho Dene & Denesuline people; Arthur RedCloud (Hikuc) is a Navajo actor. Although a film's realistic casting does not guarantee a more accurate representation of Native Americans, as has just been discussed above, this choice nevertheless speaks counter to Hollywood conventions that suggest Native Americans are unable to represent, or to speak for, themselves.

English is Hollywood's dominant language. No matter whose stories Hollywood tells, it always tells them in English. Hollywood's promotion of English as a *lingua franca* all over the world can be viewed within a neocolonial framework. "The neocolonial situation, in which the Hollywood language becomes the model of 'real' cinema, has as its linguistic corollary the view of European languages as inherently more 'cinematic' than others" (Shohat and Stam 1994a, 193). European languages, and particularly English, are thought to be model languages of cinema—more "cinematic." In fact, the idea that European languages are naturally superior and more fit for artistic expression or philosophical thinking has a long history. Following this idea, "the colonized peoples including the Amerindians, Irish, Scots, Bretons, Basques and Corsicans were savage and inferior because their idioms were unfit for high culture and elaborate thought" (Acheraïou 7). In Hollywood films particularly, "The 'Indians' of classic Hollywood westerns, denuded of their own idiom, mouth pidgin English, a mark of their inability to master the 'civilized' language" (Shohat and Stam 1994a, 192). In classic Hollywood

Westerns, Native Americans did not only refrain from speaking their own language but they were often regarded as incapable of speaking English well. However, in relatively more recent Hollywood films, such as *The Last of the Mohicans* (1992) by Michael Mann and or *Dances with Wolves* (1990) by Kevin Costner, Native American languages began to be heard. Shohat and Stam argue that *Dances with Wolves* "constitutes a relatively progressive step for Hollywood in its adoption of a pro-indigenous perspective, and ... in respecting the linguistic integrity of the Native Americans" (194) However, they also point out that "this progressive step is in part undermined by the traditional split portrayal of bad Pawnees/good Sioux" (194). *Dances with Wolves* thus deviates from certain Hollywood conventions in its representation of Native Americans, in adopting a pro-indigenous perspective and having Native Americans speak their native languages. Yet, the film reiterates other stereotypes about Native Americans, such as the binary of the "good" versus "bad" Indian—which, as we saw in chapter one, is intimately related to the tropes of the "noble" and "ingoble" savage—exemplified in the clash between the peaceful Sioux and the violent Pawnee.

In *The Revenant*, languages of Native Americans are heard frequently and in large portions of the film. The film begins with a scene spoken in a Native American language, which non-Native viewers cannot understand. Both Glass (a white fur-trapper) and his son Hawk (whose mother is Native American) can speak English, but they still communicate in the Pawnee language. After Glass is mauled by a grizzly bear, Hawk keeps speaking to his father in Pawnee. The use of the Pawnee language as the primary language of communication between father and son, even though both of them speak English, makes the viewer feel that the Pawnee language is like a secret, a private language between father and son that we have no access to: i.e. the viewer can read the subtitles but has no full access to their code. As a result, the sense of mastery and control over the "other"—the Native American—which the Western viewer is prompted to assume in most Hollywood films, is here destabilized. Hawk and Glass do not *have* to speak Pawnee in order for the plot to be more realistic or convincing; it would be equally realistic to have them speak English, since they are both masters of this language too, and Glass is, after all, a white American character. The filmmaker's choice here signals an attempt to break with Eurocentric conventions that project English as the *preferred* (i.e. more civilized or sophisticated) language of communication when characters are competent both in English and a Native American language.

In *The Revenant*, Native Americans not only speak their own languages, but are often able to speak European languages, such as English and French, as well. Hawk can speak English quite well and Elk Dog speaks some French. It is not surprising that Hawk can speak English since he has an English-speaking father, but Elk Dog's ability to speak French comes as a surprise to the French traders, who hold the prejudice that Native Americans are incapable of speaking a civilized language like French. As a matter of fact, Toussaint, the leader of the French traders, is so surprised to find out that Elk Dog can speak French that he agrees to give him five horses for the pelts despite his initial refusal to do so. Thus, the dominant position of European languages in Hollywood is shaken and the stereotype that Native Americans are incapable of speaking European languages (well) is broken too.

Hollywood portrayals of Native Americans often tend to ignore differences among them and turn them into a single flat figure. The cultural differences among different tribes are often flattened into "a stereotypical figure, the 'instant Indian' with 'wig, war bonnet, breechclout, moccasins, phony beadwork'" (Shohat and Stam 1994a, 180). Native Americans are reduced to a homogenized and unified stereotype. Sometimes this stereotypical figure is split into two types, with one being the negative mirror image of the other: the bad Indian and the good Indian. Here as well, deviating from these stereotypical portrayals of Native Americans in Hollywood, *The Revenant*, as I will argue in the following, foregrounds Native American societies as internally differentiated, making it difficult to place them under a single type or classify them based on the binary of the good versus bad Indian.

4.2 Theoretical Framework: The Decolonial Approach

As discussed in the previous section, as both an insider and outsider in the Hollywood film industry, Iñárritu unsettles Hollywood conventions through his casting and language choices in *The Revenant.* Nevertheless, these choices alone are certainly not enough to guarantee an undoing of the Eurocentric bias that is often imbricated in the narrative structures, aesthetics, and cinematic strategies of films that involve representations of Native Americans, as Shohat and Stam also argue (190). My goal is not to test whether *The Revenant* succeeds in producing a "realistic" representation of Native Americans—the measure for assessing what is "realistic" cannot be determined objectively and it is not my intention to pose such a measure here. What I do want to explore further, however, are the strategies, narrative structures, plot elements, aesthetic choices, and particular scenes through which the film converses with Eurocentric narratives of the history of colonization and representations of Native Americans. I am interested in investigating to what extent *The Revenant* reiterates these representations (differently or not) or offers alternative narratives to the ones developed within a Eurocentric framework. In order to probe this question, I will use theoretical insights and concepts derived from poststructuralist, postcolonial, and, primarily, decolonial theory, putting these theoretical approaches into dialogue with each other as well. Thus, before I delve into my analysis, a delineation of the decolonial approach is called for.

Coined by Nelson Maldonado-Torres, the phrase "the decolonial turn" emerged around 2007 and has been taken up by many theorists, including Mignolo, Aníbal Quijano, Freya Schiwy, Ramón Grosfoguel, Catherine Walsh, Javier Sanjinés, José David Saldívar, Arturo Escobar, Santiago Castro-Gómez, and others. This is how Maldonado-Torres describes the decolonial turn:

> The decolonial turn does not refer to a single theoretical school, but rather points to a family of diverse positions that share a view of coloniality as a fundamental problem in the modern (as well as postmodern and information) age, and of decolonization or decoloniality as a necessary task that remains unfinished. (2011, 2)

Although, as Maldonado-Torres notes here, the decolonial turn does not refer to a homogeneous body of theory but includes multiple approaches. These approaches share the belief that European modernity cannot be disentangled from its "darker side," coloniality, which it constantly reproduces (Mignolo 2007, 450). By viewing modernity/coloniality as "two sides of the same coin," decolonial theorists see the rhetoric of modernity as concomitant with the logic of coloniality; in other words, "there cannot be modernity without coloniality," as the latter is constitutive of the former (464). The close relationship between modernity and coloniality is also emphasized by Maldonado-Torres, who thinks that "Modernity as a discourse and as a practice would not be possible without coloniality, and coloniality continues to be an inevitable outcome of modern discourses" (2007, 244). "Colonialism was by no means the only, but arguably the principal form in which western modernity spread through the world" (2014, 695). This preposition overturns optimistic conceptions of modernity as "a universal global process" associated with newness, advancement, progress, reason, civilization and development, conceptions which have circulated in European intellectual thought since the Enlightenment (Mignolo 2007, 463). If "the rhetoric of modernity works through the imposition of 'salvation', whether as Christianity, civilization, modernization and development after WWII or market democracy after the fall of the Soviet Union," decoloniality underscores "the political and economic structure of imperialism/colonialism" not as unfortunate accidents in this "package trip to the promised land of happiness" but as essential to modernity's "perverse logic" (463)(450). It is therefore rather futile to try to salvage the idea of Western modernity by trying to extricate the colonial logic from it. Instead, decolonial thinkers expose the logic of (neo)colonial relations and engage in an "epistemic delinking" which involves a radical decolonization of "the 'mind' (Thiongo) and the 'imaginary' (Gruzinski) that is, knowledge and being" (450).

The conquest of America by Europeans is a crucial moment for Mignolo and other decolonial thinkers, as it marks the emergence of a new world order that Mignolo calls the "modern/colonial world" (2009, xiii). Hence, for Mignolo, America's "discovery" and "the genocide of Indians and African slaves" constitute "the very foundation of 'modernity,' more so than the French or Industrial Revolutions" (xiii). The diptych of modernity/coloniality thus first took shape in the sixteenth century, turning "the discovery/invention of America" into "the colonial component of modernity whose visible face is the European Renaissance" (xiii). Essential for the formation of this matrix of modernity/coloniality are the forces of capitalism, which helped Europe achieve world hegemony, up until a "second historical moment of transformation" which Mignolo locates "after World War II, when the US took the imperial leadership" over from European powers, such as England and Spain (xiii).

It should be noted here that decolonial thinkers distinguish coloniality from colonialism, which "denotes a political and economic relation in which the sovereignty of a nation or a people rests on the power of another nation" (Maldonado-Torres 2007, 243). Coloniality "refers to long-standing patterns of power that emerged as a result of colonialism, but that define culture, labor, intersubjective relations, and knowledge production well beyond the strict limits of colonial administrations" (243). That is to say,

colonialism denotes a form of political and economic domination maintained by colonial administrations, while coloniality represents an enduring pattern of power that persists after the collapse of colonial empires. Colonialism, then, may have various historical forms and can be destroyed if the political and economic relations that sustain it cease to exist but, as a kind of power that structures knowledge and being, coloniality is hard to eradicate. As "we breathe coloniality all the time and everyday," coloniality still dominates our world today (243).

It should be noted here that a critical perspective on modernity is certainly not the prerogative of decolonial thinkers, nor were they the first to advance such a critique. Critical views on modernity (as it was cast by Enlightenment thinking) had been formulated in the late nineteenth century, for example, when the climate of cultural pessimism that had overtaken European thought provided fertile ground for such critiques. Nietzsche's outspoken critique of the Enlightenment ideals of progress and reason and his outlook on European civilization as corrupt and declining is a case in point, although his perspective remained largely Eurocentric. The project of modernity as a straight progressive line towards a better future lost more of its optimism and credibility after the ravages of the two World Wars and the Holocaust in the first half of the twentieth century, which revealed the destructive face of technological progress and the darker underside of European civilization—the supposed beacon and final destination of progress. A more radical critique of Western modernity and the legacy of the Enlightenment was issued by thinkers of the Frankfurt School of critical theory. As Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno note in their "Introduction" to the *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, their aim was to explain why "humankind, instead of entering a truly human condition, is sinking into a new kind of barbarism" (xiv). Adorno and Horkheimer saw this kind of barbarism in the totalitarian state as manifested in German Nazism and the Communism of the Soviet Union, which marked the bankruptcy of European reason. Yet, this barbarism was not, for them, an exception to European modernity, but a structural feature of Western history. For them, "Enlightenment, understood in the widest sense as the advance of thought, has always aimed at liberating human beings from fear and installing them as masters. Yet the wholly enlightened earth is radiant with triumphant calamity" (1). Despite modernity's association with advancement, rationality, liberation and progress, these thinkers showed that the disasters of the early twentieth century—and most notably the Nazi death camps during the Second World War—were not exceptions, but intrinsic products of modernity.

Despite the critique of modernity and the legacy of European Enlightenment in critical theory, dominant Western historical narratives still tend to construct an event like the Holocaust less as a failure of modernity itself, and more as a tragic exception and aberration that betrayed the "benign face" of civilization and modernity (Spanos 86). This view was further challenged by anti-colonial thinkers at the height of, and shortly after, the anticolonial struggles in the 1950s, which sought to put an end to the European colonial domination of the rest of the world. In Aimé Césaire's passionate manifesto against colonialism, *Discourse on Colonialism* (1950), the perverse logic of European colonialism is inextricably linked with the barbarism of the Holocaust; they are both logical consequences of European modernity.

Modernity was also criticized—and pluralized—in the last quarter of the twentieth century in the context of postcolonial, postmodern, and poststructuralist theory. The term postmodernity was introduced as a continuation of, but also a break with, modernity, and therefore involves a critique of the project of modernity and its universalizing aspirations. According to the Argentine-Mexican philosopher Enrique Dussel, "In principle, postmodernity also articulates a respect for other cultures in terms of their incommensurability, difference, and autonomy" (233). This critical moment in postmodern thought is also acknowledged by decolonial thinkers. Quijano, for example, recognizes the postmodern critique of "the modern concept of Totality" (Quijano in Mignolo 2007, 451). However, decolonial thinkers find this critique to remain Eurocentric or at least Eurocentered: "limited and internal to European history and the history of European ideas" (451). They therefore stress the need to issue this critique of Totality not only from the perspective of postmodernity but also "from the perspective of coloniality" (451). Mignolo extends this argument to poststructuralist and postcolonial thought in order to distinguish decoloniality from these approaches. Decoloniality, for him:

> introduces a fracture with both the Eurocentered project of post-modernity and a project of post-coloniality heavily dependent on post-structuralism as far as Michel Foucault, Jacques Lacan and Jacques Derrida have been acknowledged as the grounding of the post-colonial canon: Edward Saïd, Gayatri Spivak and Hommi Bhabha. De-coloniality starts from other sources. (452)

For him, the critique of modernity's hegemonic, universalizing project, its "notion of Totality," does not necessarily take us to "post-coloniality, but to de-coloniality" (452). Similarly, Dussel also argues that postmodern and postcolonial theory (as heavily indebted to poststructuralism) "does not question the centrality of Eurocentrism," and remains a Eurocentric critique of Eurocentrism (233). "Postmodernism and poststructuralism as epistemological projects," Ramón Grosfoguel writes, "are caught within the Western canon reproducing within its domains of thought and practice a coloniality of power/knowledge" (212). (This persistent being-caught-in the very world it tries to dismantle, was key in chapter two.) According to decolonial thinkers, instead of challenging the concept of coloniality, postmodernism and poststructuralism reproduce and reorganize the coloniality of power/knowledge. Michael Ennis and Mignolo, for example, argue that "Postmodernism, self-conceived in the unilateral line of the history of the modern world, continues to obscure coloniality and maintains a universal and monotopical logic—from the left as well as the right—from Europe (or the North Atlantic) toward the outside" (24). From a decolonial perspective, postmodern, poststructuralist, and postcolonial theory do not radically question the colonial logic of modernity. This holds for critical theory too (as also practiced in the above approaches). Hence, "the de-colonial shift (decolonization of knowledge and of being) marks the Eurocentered limits of critical theory as we know it today, from the early version of the Frankfurt School, to later poststructuralists (e.g. Derrida) and post-modernists (e.g.

Jameson)" (Mignolo 2007, 485).

Here is where the importance of the notion of "delinking" manifests itself. Postcoloniality has pluralized history, unearthing the suppressed voices of formerly colonized peoples, but in the eyes of decolonial thinkers remains an approach that criticizes Western modernity and coloniality from within. Poststructuralism and deconstruction are marked by the very same limitation. Adopting a poststructuralist framework entails using the categories of the dominant discursive regime, including the terms of binary oppositions, in order to reverse and breach hierarchies; it is a form of critique within the system, that denies the possibility of a position of exteriority to the discourse one is criticizing. Let me repeat a quote by Culler, here, that I also used in chapter two: "to deconstruct a discourse is to show how it undermines the philosophy it asserts, or the hierarchical oppositions on which it relies, by identifying in the text the rhetorical operations that produce the supposed ground of argument, the key concept or premise" (1982, 86). The practitioners of deconstruction remain within the system they criticize, putting its oppositions into question and revealing the rhetorical mechanisms through which these oppositions are produced; they are, in other words, committed to exposing the "difference within" (Johnson 3). In contrast, decoloniality's "delinking," in Mignolo's words, aims at an "epistemic shift" that:

> brings to the foreground other epistemologies, other principles of knowledge and understanding and, consequently, other economy, other politics, other ethics. ... Furthermore, de-linking presupposes to move toward a geo- and body politics of knowledge that on the one hand denounces the pretended universality of a particular ethnicity (body politics), located in a specific part of the planet (geo-politics), that is, Europe where capitalism accumulated as a consequence of colonialism. De-linking then shall be understood as a de-colonial epistemic shift leading to other-universality, that is, to pluri-versality as a universal project. (2007, 453).

If the "growing dominance of Western epistemology" since the sixteenth century and European modernity's exclusionary "imperial concept of Totality" suppressed or denied "the possibilities of other totalities" outside the West—Mignolo mentions, for example, the Ottomans, Incas, Russians, and Chinese—decoloniality is committed to reintroducing other epistemologies and worldviews as "equal players in the game" (451). Delinking from Eurocentrism—the objective of the decolonial "epistemic shift"—aim to reveal the hidden complicity of the rhetoric of modernity with the logic of coloniality and articulate other modes of knowing, understanding, and relating to the world.

For decolonial thinkers, this delinking leads us towards a transmodern world. The category of "transmodernity" has been proposed by Dussel "as an alternative to the Eurocentric pretension that Europe is the original producer of modernity" (Dussel in Quijano 546). Decoloniality imagines a transmodern, polycentric world, which calls for egalitarian dialogue among equal players. Different from "post," "This 'beyond' ('trans-') indicates the take-off point ... from what modernity excluded, denied, ignored as

'insignificant,' 'senseless,' 'barbarous,' as a 'nonculture,' an unknown opaque alterity" (Dussel 234). "Transmodernity," as Maldonado-Torres writes about Dussel's version of this category, "is one way of expressing a decolonial attitude with regards to modernity, opening philosophy to multiple languages and stripping modernity of its colonizing elements and biases" (2011, 7). Transmodernity contributes to opening up different conceptions of knowledge, different languages and voices, so that the hierarchical relations among them can be broken down. Dussel imagines the future of transmodernity as "multicultural, versatile, hybrid, postcolonial, pluralist, tolerant, and democratic," differentiating the latter from the "modern liberal democracy of the European state" (236). As the orientation of decoloniality, he hopes that transmodernity may lead us to a world in the plural, as when different worlds co-exist.

Although the differences between decoloniality and poststructuralist and postcolonial approaches are certainly significant, in this chapter I start from the premise that a poststructuralist or postcolonial framework and a decolonial approach are not necessarily mutually exclusive, but could also in some cases be complementary or possible to combine in the analysis of cultural objects. I will put this premise to the test by mobilizing these approaches in analyzing the complex operations of *The Revenant* vis-a-vis Eurocentric narratives and coloniality. In my analysis, a poststructuralist approach will be useful in showing how the film questions the metaphysical foundations of a series of deep-rooted binary oppositions in Western thought, primarily those of the civilized (White, male, European) versus the savage (Native American) and the related oppositions of nature/culture, male/female, subject/object, and spirit/matter. However, as discussed above, I will also show how a poststructuralist "reading" of the film informed by postcolonial concerns, productive as it may be, is not enough to account for certain moments in which Eurocentric narratives confront alternative frames of reference and modes of knowing. *The Revenant* itself, as I will show, integrates these perspectives in its structures, as it attempts to not only deconstruct the logic of Eurocentrism from within, in line with poststructuralist and postcolonial perspectives, but also juxtaposes it with an alternative logic that harbors alternative narratives, in line with the decolonial aim of "delinking."

4.3 *The Revenant* from the Perspective of Decoloniality: Coloniality of Power, of Being, of Knowledge, and of Nature

In order to look at the ways in which the logic of coloniality pervades different domains, decolonial thinkers often distinguish between the coloniality of power, of being, of knowledge, and of nature (Mignolo 2007, 451). Coloniality of power mainly refers to how the colonizer imposes economic and political regulations upon the colonized, while coloniality of knowledge specifies the epistemic domination of the colonized by the colonizer. Coloniality of being pertains to racial, sexual, and other hierarchies established between the colonizer and the colonized, while coloniality of nature emphasizes the subordinate position of nature to the notion of European *culture*. These domains are largely interrelated and should not be seen as autonomous. If the coloniality of power

refers to the "political and economic spheres," decolonial thinkers explore how this coloniality is extended to the "coloniality of knowledge and of being (gender, sexuality, subjectivity and knowledge)" (451). Although these domains overlap, in what follows I will use these forms of coloniality—of power, being, knowledge and nature—as structuring categories in order to analyze *The Revenant*'s engagement with coloniality. My aim is to explore how Eurocentric narratives—especially those foregrounding Native Americans as savages—are appropriated and critically recast in the film and whether (and if so, how) the film tries to "delink" itself from coloniality through the staging of what I will call "decolonial moments." To those "decolonial moments" in the film I will devote a large part of my analysis.

As we saw in the previous section, decolonial thinkers consider America's "discovery" and colonization as the foundational moment in the "foundation of modernity." In this light, *The Revenant*'s revisiting of a moment in this history of colonization of America is of particular significance. In doing so, it re-examines the conditions that led to the hegemony of the colonial/modern world while also staging moments that point to other epistemic paradigms, other worldviews. Set in 1823 Montana and South Dakota, *The Revenant* is a story of revenge. Led by Captain Andrew Henry [Domhnall Gleeson], American fur trappers move towards Fort Kiowa with their guide Glass. After a surprise attack by the Arikara tribe, led by Elk Dog who is in search of his kidnapped daughter Powaqa, the fur trappers lose 33 men and many pelts. Later during their journey, Glass is terribly mauled by a grizzly bear, and comes close to death. To speed up their journey, Henry offers 100 dollars to any person willing to stay behind with the seriously injured Glass. John Fitzgerald [Tom Hardy], Glass' half-native son Hawk, and Jim Bridger [Will Poulter] volunteer to stay with Glass. Eager to get back, however, Fitzgerald tries to smother Glass, but is seen by Hawk. After a fierce fight, Fitzgerald kills Hawk and moves away his dead body. Then, Fitzgerald tricks Bridger into leaving Glass alive in a shallow grave. After many struggles, Glass manages to survive and make his way to the Fort. In the meantime, the Arikara tribe exchanges the pelts they have stolen for rifles and horses. They do this with French traders, who are the ones that have kidnapped Powaqa and used her as a sex-slave, though Elk Dog does not know this at this stage. With the help of Glass, Powaqa successfully castrates and kills Toussaint [Fabrice Adde], the leader of the French traders, and returns to her tribe. To take revenge for his son's murder, Glass is determined to kill Fitzgerald. After a fierce fight, he leaves Fitzgerald in the hands of the Arikara tribe, who kill Fitzgerald in the end but let Glass live.

Coloniality, as previously mentioned, does not disappear with the end of colonialism, but continues its workings as long as capitalism is still dominant. "Coloniality of power unpacks coloniality as that broad but specific and constitutive element of global model of capitalist order that continues to underpin global coloniality after the end of direct colonialism" (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 392). "As a matter of fact," Mignolo writes on the topic, "the modern/colonial world cannot be conceived except as *simultaneously capitalist. The logic of coloniality is, indeed, the implementation of capitalist appropriation of land, exploitation of labor and accumulation of wealth in fewer and fewer hands*" (emphasis in the original) (2007, 477). The logic of coloniality corresponds with capitalist

exploitation and oppression by means of seizing land, labor and wealth from (formerly) colonized subjects. Among the resources taken from the colonized, land is perhaps the most important. Mignolo further specifies the importance of land to capitalism. "Capital was necessary to organize labor, production and distribution; and, the appropriation of land enormously increased the size and power of capital. It was land, rather than money, that made possible the qualitative jump of mercantile economy into mercantile capitalist economy" (481). The "discovery" and conquest of the Americas made "The New World" an ideal place to develop and boost mercantile capitalist economies. Therefore, Quijano and Wallerstein argue that "a capitalist economy, as we know it today, couldn't have existed without the 'discovery and conquest of Americas' (qtd. in Mignolo 2007, 477). In the following section, I will consider how the coloniality of power—those aspects of coloniality that are intertwined with capitalism and relate to the exploitation of Native Americans and their land—is thematized in the film.

Coloniality of Power

Set in wilderness of North America, *The Revenant* shows how the logic of the capitalist market determines the practices of the colonizers and their relations with Native Americans. The film starts with a group of fur trappers from the Rocky Mountain Fur Company marching towards Fort Kiowa. Although we do not see how the wild animals are killed and skinned, in one of Glass' dreams we see a mountain of buffalo bones, which may hint at the massive annihilation of animals (whole herds of buffalos) in the service of pre-capitalist exchange. The Arikara tribe seem to be interested in the fur trade too, as the fur trappers on their way to the fort are attacked by the Arikara, who steal most of their pelts. Later, we learn more about the motives of the Arikara. Their chief's daughter has been kidnapped, and to find her they need horses and rifles. To get those horses and rifles, they have to steal pelts from the fur trappers and exchange them with French traders. Thus, they steal pelts not to use them themselves, but to exchange them for horses and rifles, so that they can protect themselves from the violence of the American settlers. In this sense, the Arikara are also dragged into a capitalist logic by the European colonizers, forced to treat goods not as means of subsistence but as a form of currency that they need in order to survive in the new (capitalist) order of things.

As Canadian geographer Cole Harris notes, it was a commonly accepted fact among European colonizers in the Americas that they, as civilized, "knew how to use land properly and that savages did not" (170).[5] They thus assumed that up until the arrival of Europeans "most of the land was waste, or, when native people were obviously using it, that their uses were inadequate" (170). This logic served to justify the massive dispossession of natives from their lands. "From the perspective of capital, therefore, native people had to be dispossessed of their land. Otherwise, nature could hardly be developed. An industrial primary resource economy could hardly function" (173).

In the film, Native Americans are not just silent witnesses of this process. They are aware of the fact they are gradually losing their land and openly confront European settlers about their violent practices of exploitation and dispossession by labeling these practices as theft. This unravels in the scene in which the Arikara approach the French

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[5] Harris's study focuses on the dispossession of native lands in British Columbia.

traders in order to exchange the pelts they have stolen for horses and rifles. Elk Dog starts speaking to Toussaint, the French leader, in his own native language and asking the translator to translate for him. As a good capitalist, Toussaint negotiates the exchange, trying to maximize his profit; he appears unwilling to give Elk Dog horses by arguing that it is not a part of their agreement and that the pelts are only worth half price. Provoked by Toussaint, Elk Dog starts speaking French to him. Although the French Elk Dog speaks is quite elementary, his ability to speak it shocks the traders, who firmly hold the belief that Native Americans are savages, and thus inferior in their linguistic capacity, French a noble language they are unable to master. Elk Dog's ability to speak French shakes the basis of their prejudice against Native Americans. More importantly, however, during their conversation, Toussaint tries to shame Elk Dog by accusing him of stealing the pelts from the American fur trappers. This theft—which, as shown previously, was motivated by the capitalist logic that the Arikara were forced to adopt—is nevertheless put in perspective by Elk Dog's response to Toussaint. Elk Dog juxtaposes this minor theft with the larger theft, the colonizers' violent seizure of native lands: "you all have stolen everything from us. Everything! The land. The animals."

A telling reversal takes place in this scene. The viewers' first encounter with Native Americans in the opening scene of the film—in which the Arikara attack the American fur traders, killing most of them and stealing their pelts—may have served to cast the natives as savage thieves; it may have seemed to perpetuate their negative stereotyping in Western media. Native Americans in the film are not noble savages, pure and untouched by the logic of capitalism, but have been forced to accept this logic in order to survive; their theft of the pelts is a sign of their implication in this logic, as we realize later in the film. Elk Dog's above-mentioned statement to Toussaint, however, unveils the systemic dispossession of land by colonialism as the ultimate act of theft. Theft (including the Arikara's minor theft) is thereby projected as a byproduct of the capitalist logic of coloniality. European settlers are cast as intruders and thieves, unsettling the initial association of the Arikara with stealing. In this way, the film starts by staging a negative stereotypical image of Native Americans as savage thieves—playing with the viewers' own possible biases—only in order to ironically cast this image back at the viewer, overshadowed by the larger theft that colonialism perpetrated. Elk Dog's speech leaves Toussaint speechless, and eventually makes him agree to give them five horses: a meagre compensation indeed for the incomparably graver theft that the colonizers have committed.

Coloniality of Being
Coloniality of being refers to the establishment of rigid hierarchies among different groups of people, whereby non-Europeans are often deprived of their humanity (their status as human beings) and cast as savages. The binary opposition between civilization and savagery and the identification of the former with Europeans and the latter with Native Americans was commonly assumed by white people in the nineteenth century, as Harris also notes. Under a Eurocentric gaze, Native Americans were cast as inferior human beings or non-humans, justifying their inhumane treatment, the plundering of their lands, the exploitation of their labor, or raping of their women. "Blacks or Indians"

were historically denied "human interests," Mignolo notes, as they "have not been considered humans and, therefore, could not have interests" (2007, 465). They could therefore be exploited by Europeans without need for moral justification. "In the New World, then, racism was an epistemic operation that institutionalized the inferiority of the Indians and, subsequently, justified genocidal violence, as Dussel pointed out, and exploitation of labor, as Quijano underlined" (479). In what follows, I will explore how *The Revenant* deals with hierarchical distinctions relating to race and gender, paying specific attention to the ways in which the opposition between settlers and Native Americans, savages and civilized, good and bad Indians, man and woman, are played out.

The film stages powerful confrontations between characters, in which the binary opposition between "savage" and "civilized" is thematized and repeated—with a twist. The binary was naturalized in Western minds and systematically applied to Native Americans and European colonizers respectively at the time the film's narrative takes place. The racial hierarchy this binary consolidated is already staged in one of the first scenes, in which Fitzgerald accuses Glass of forgetting his identity as a white man. After the surprise attack of the Arikara, Fitzgerald questions Glass' plan to get off the boat and walk to the Fort and vents his resentment towards Glass and his son Hawk. At first he blames Glass' Pawnee "buddies" and only stops complaining when one of the men in the group tells him that Pawnees are also against the Arikara. He then calls Hawk (whose mother was a native) a "half-breed" and calls Glass' wife "savage"—"what kind of savage you think his momma was?" he remarks. His absolute identification of Native Americans with the signifier "savage" confirms an essentialist vision about the nature of Native Americans, which even becomes tautological in his following statement: "Savage is savage." For Fitzgerald, the savagery of Native Americans requires no explanation. As it appears to be a fact of nature, there is no need to rationalize the savage/civilized distinction. They are born as savages and their savage nature cannot be changed. Later, he confronts Glass about his past, when Glass lived with Native Americans before his village was decimated by colonizers and his wife murdered: "Is it true what they say? That you shootin' a lieutenant while you was living with them savages?" Receiving no answer from Glass, he continues: "21 dead soldiers, more than 40 dead feather necks. But you and your boy are the only ones to get walk out alive. It was kind of a miracle, don't you think?" As there is still no response from Glass, he continues: "Is that what you did? Shot one of your own to save this little dog right here?" Fitzgerald accuses Glass of forgetting his place as a white man, because he is rumored to have shot a lieutenant in order to save his son's life. Clearly, for Fitzgerald racial affiliation trumps the father-son relationship: a white man has a commitment to his fellow white men rather than his (hybrid) son. This logic is based on his regard of natives as non-subjects, deprived of any human interests; Fitzgerald's use of an animal metaphor to refer to Glass' son ("little dog") typifies this logic that deprives natives of their humanity and thus frees the colonizers of any obligation to respect or defend their lives. Glass counters Fitzgerald's claim by rejecting the natural basis of the racial affiliation: "As far as I can tell my place is right here, on the smart end of this rifle."

The "savage" trope is commonly applied by the settlers to Native Americans in the film, and another popular distinction in Eurocentric discourses, that of the good versus

bad Indian, also seems to be evoked. There are Native Americans who work for the settlers and follow their orders, doing all kinds of chores at the Fort. Submissive and accepting of their masters, these Native Americans are regarded as good Indians, while others, who refuse to work for the settlers and try to lead independent lives, are considered as a threat and cast as bad Indians. However, the boundaries between settlers and "good Indians" are also drawn stringently. The Fort where the settlers are based draws clear borders; the Fort is first of all walled, so that the settlers can protect and barricade themselves against their "bad Indian" enemies. Only the "good Indians" are allowed to enter the Fort, because they work for the settlers as manual labourers or prostitutes. An American flag figures inside the settlers' Fort. As a nationalist symbol, the flag is used to set up borders and include subjects as legitimate citizens while excluding others as illegitimate. The flag suggests the settlers' self-identification as American citizens. The presence, however, of the silent Native American servants in their tents just outside the Fort, neither legitimate subjects that reside inside nor fully expelled to the outside as their services are needed, problematizes the processes of constructing an American national identity. Those Native Americans just outside the Fort, invited inside when needed but rejected as illegitimate subjects from the national "we," reveal the other's constitutive role in the construction of the American nation—literally, through their labor. The film thereby shows the narrative of the construction of the American subject as haunted not only by violence against the "bad Indians" (who "deserved" to be exterminated) but also against the "good Indians" who are exploited. The natives that hover hauntingly between the inside and the outside of the Fort remind us of Walter Benjamin's famous dictum: "There is no document of civilization that is not at the same time a document of barbarism" (248).

Nations are built upon the manual labor of the others they exploit: slaves, servants, precarious subjects that function as ghosts, haunting each great civilization's or nation's originary narrative. Renée Bergland writes about the role of such Indian ghostliness in the process of constructing the American subject:

> The American subject … is obsessed with an originary sin against Native people that both engenders that subject and irrevocably stains it. Native American ghosts haunt American literature because the American nation is compelled to return again and again to an encounter that makes it both sorry and happy, a defiled grave upon which it must continually rebuild the American subject. (22)

Read in this light, the gate of the Fort is not just meant to keep "bad" Indians away and to open for the white settlers, but is also an icon for the place where an encounter takes place, recurrently, with the very entity the Fort tried to chase away or exterminate. After all other French fur traders are killed by wolves, one of them successfully makes his way to the Fort and is allowed to enter, because, the guard shouts: "white man at the gate." This ontological boundary set by American settlers functions on the basis of race; French settlers are also white, and part of the European civilization, which sets them apart from the savagery of Native Americans. The film underscores this essentialist ontological

boundary by literalizing it visually (the flag, the Fort, the gate, its borders). Yet, at the same time, it deconstructs it in several ways; the settlers' brutal violence against Native Americans and the internal differentiation of both Native Americans and the settlers, as I will argue in what follows, often work to blur the natural basis of the civilized/savage distinction and ironize its application by characters in the film. In *The Revenant*, the violence of European settlers against Native Americans is abundant. The viewer sees flashes of the destruction of the native village in which Glass and his family used to live and the killing of Glass' wife. These flashes belong to the film's past but come alive in Glass' memory. In the film's present, images of the destroyed village which Fitzgerald and Bridger come across on their way to the Fort are also highly confrontational. The settlers in the film keep contradicting the rhetoric of civilization through their destructive actions, which in contemporary viewers' eyes cannot be justified. The fate of another Native American character in the film, Hikuc, exemplifies this point. After "rising" from his shallow grave and successfully escaping from the Arikara attack, Glass comes across Hikuc, who is alone but willing to share his food, heal Glass' wounds, and help Glass survive by building a tent that protects him from the severe weather conditions. Compared with Glass' former fellows, Hikuc is more human. When Hikuc has left and Glass wakes up in morning to continue his journey, he finds the Native American hanging dead from a tree. A wooden board hangs from his neck with the inscription: "on est tous des sauvages" (we are all savages). The French words imply that Hikuc has been killed by the French traders. The inscription allows for a double reading; at first sight, it seems meant as a description for all Native Americans, a verdict imposed upon them by their European executioners (here: French traders, for whom all natives are "savages," and therefore deserve to be killed without any distinction between "good" or "bad" ones). But, in the viewer's eyes, the inscription reads more as a description of the executioners themselves, as a statement that underscores the savagery of the colonizers. It is, after all, written in French—a colonial language—and not in a Native American language; it therefore reads less as a (staged) confession or self-description of Hikuc and his people and more as an (inadvertent) admission of the colonizers' savagery. Following this reading, Hikuc's killing reveals the violence of the so-called European civilization, thereby disrupting the essentialist, ontological basis of the distinction between civilized Europeans and Native American savages.

The film plays with the trope of the good and bad Indian in other ways too. The binary trope is evoked, for example, by the aggressive, violent Arikara who seem to form a contrast with the more peaceful Pawnee. Hikuc, the Pawnee man, is indeed friendly and hospitable to Glass. As he tells Glass, however, his family and entire tribe were killed by the Sioux, which suggests the Sioux as a more aggressive tribe of Native Americans who are keen on killing the Pawnee. This seems to confirm the Eurocentric distinction between naturally good Indians (close to the "noble savage" trope) and bad, "ignoble" ones who engage in extreme and senseless violence. However, things are more complicated than they may seem. The Arikara's violent attacks against the white settlers, as we find out in the course of the film, are motivated by the kidnapping of the chief's daughter, whom the whole tribe is in search of. When the daughter—who has fallen into the hands of the French and is used as a sex-slave—is retrieved and reunited with her

people in the very end, the violence of the Arikara seems to halt. In the final scene of the film, they pass by Glass, defiant, neither harming him nor fully acknowledging him. Their violence is therefore revealed not to be a result of their "naturally" aggressive instincts and irrational character as "savages," but rather a re-action to the greater violence done to them by the settlers: the unlawful removal of the chief's daughter from her people and, of course, the settlers' seizure of their land.

The hierarchy between European settlers and Native Americans is also challenged through the film's underscoring of the internal differences among white settlers. Not all of the European settlers hold a hostile or contemptuous attitude towards Native Americans. Glass used to live within the Pawnee tribe and made a family with a Pawnee woman. Although terrified by the Arikara, Bridger is friendly towards other Native Americans. After leaving Glass alive in the grave, Fitzgerald and Bridger come across a destroyed native village, where corpses of Native Americans, including a dead pregnant woman, lie everywhere. Bridger notices that there is still a woman alive in the destroyed village. To prevent Fitzgerald from killing her, he keeps silent and leaves her some food that might help her survive. In a conversation during this scene, Bridger asks Fitzgerald: "who did this?" Fitzgerald answers: "I don't know. Could be Captain Leavenworth boys." Fitzgerald then picks up a European pocket watch from the ground, which seems to confirm his guess that the settlers have committed this crime. The annihilation of the whole village prefigures the genocide and nearly total extermination of Native Americans. As noted, this violent excess was often supported by a civilizational rhetoric that identified European civilization with rationality, civility, cleanness, progress, and improvement, and cast Native Americans as irrational, underdeveloped, and primitive. This rhetoric is evoked and subverted through one of Fitzgerald's comments about the corpses: "Look at them. They're always stinking of shit." Hygiene and smell are conventionally evoked as standards that distinguish civilization from savagery. "Indeed, we are not surprised by the idea of setting up the use of soap as an actual yardstick of civilization," Freud writes in his *Civilization and Its Discontents* (Freud 40). Fitzgerald's iteration of the colonial rhetoric of "clean" Europeans versus "dirty" Indians in a scene ridden with corpses of natives has the effect of metonymically transferring the "dirt" that Fitzgerald associates here with the "savage" natives to the deeds of the colonizers themselves. An ironic contrast is implicitly created between literal and metaphorical (moral) "dirt." Even though Fitzgerald's comment is not meant ironically at all, the viewer cannot possibly miss the irony of his statement in the context of this scene.

Another conversation, this time between captain Henry and Fitzgerald after both of them have arrived at Fort Kiowa safely, again iterates and simultaneously subverts colonial civilizational rhetoric. Captain Henry expects the arrival of Captain Leavenworth and his army so that there will be enough settlers to, in his words, "shoot some civilization into those fucking Arikara, get back our pelts." In his statement, civilization is practically identified with the violence of colonialism—the bullets that, ironically, will not "civilize" the Arikara but will lead to their annihilation. The European "civilizing mission" therefore betrays its darker side; here, this violent side is not suggested as an exception to an otherwise civilized endeavour, but as an inherent part of civilization, thus also affirming the inextricability of modernity/coloniality, as decolonial thinkers

see it. In this scene, civilizational rhetoric is repeated and simultaneously overturned in the captain's statement. It is noteworthy that captain Henry is otherwise projected as one of the "good" or nobler white characters in the film (he is the one that hesitates to leave Glass behind, for example). His statement about "shooting civilization" into the Arikara is made when he is drunk and his rational faculties or civilizational restraints recede to make room for the his darker side. The violent side of colonialism, the film suggests here, is not an exception to be found in the behavior of only the "corrupt" or bad white characters, like Fitzgerald. Even "good" white characters, like captain Henry, are not innocent or free from the violent logic of coloniality, but carry this logic in their everyday practices and language. The pervasive *systemic* violence of capitalism, therefore, makes it impossible to talk about "good colonizers" and "bad colonizers."

The rigid boundaries between "savage" natives and civilized white men are also tested through the figure of Glass' son, Hawk, of mixed-blood, with a white father and a native mother. To survive among European settlers, Native Americans often had to remain invisible. Such invisibility "originates in Europe's earliest encounter with the Indian" (H. Brown 3). During their first encounter, for the European settlers, "great numbers of people [we]re less fortuitous than resources of gold or spices" and, thus, Native Americans were greatly ignored from their very first contact with Europeans (4). Although Hawk, being half white, should be visible, he is still ignored, but for different reasons. In a lesson Glass teaches his son on how to survive among the settlers, he puts emphasizes invisibility and silence. "I told you to be invisible, son… if you want to survive, keep your mouth shut." For Glass, the key is to "be invisible" which implies a lack of voice and of agency. As Hawk is unhappy with his father's advice, Glass feels the need to explain to Hawk the way white settlers see him: "They don't hear your voice! They just see the color of your face. You understand? Do you understand?… You have to listen to me, son. You have to listen." Glass knows well that it will be very difficult for Hawk to survive among the white settlers. Hawk is neither recognized as one of the white men nor seen as completely Native American. If in Western eyes the distinction between savage and civilized is ontologized and racialized, a character like Hawk, who does not fully belong to either race, threatens the rigidity of this binary as, in the binaries terms, he is illegible. As such, Hawk holds an in-between position that deprives him of agency and *demands* invisibility. He functions like a ghost, whom the settlers treat as invisible but whose existence is also a reminder of the impossibility of establishing any pure opposition. Hawk's ghostly presence is a projection of the settlers' fear that the absolute binary they have established to legitimize their conquest of America and its natives is untenable; is always haunted by the threat of racial hybridity.

Most female Native American characters in *The Revenant* also remain voiceless, but not fully devoid of agency. Some native women live near the Fort, keeping the white settlers company while the latter drink and revel at the bar. These women are either presented as sex-objects, who are there to satisfy the settlers' sexual desires, or as servants, who help settlers mend clothes and fetch water. Both roles underscore their disempowerment and objectification by the settlers. Other native women—just like men—are shown to have fallen victim to the settlers' violence; Glass' wife, who is killed by European settlers, is a prime example. Yet, even though she is no longer alive in the

film's present, she keeps coming back as a ghost at crucial moments in Glass' adventure. She keeps returning in his dreams or hallucinations, giving Glass strength to go on. In her appearances, she does not look angry or sad—which would be justified by her violent murder at the hands of the colonizers—but retains a rather calm countenance. This appears to fit the stereotypical image of stoic and unsmiling Native American women depicted by, for example, Edward Curtis (1868-1952), an American ethnologist and photographer of Native American peoples. Yet, the graceful smile on her face that we can discern in some of these appearances forms a contrast with the above depictions. If Native American women in American films are often "admiring witnesses who regard White men as gods," here, most native women are witnesses to (or victims of) white men's violence, betrayal, lies, and crimes (Shohat and Stam 1994a, 64).

There are moments in the film, however, when female characters step out of their witness or victim positions and assume agency. A striking example is Elk Dog's daughter, who is kidnapped and used as a sex-slave by the French fur traders. As daughter of her tribe's chief, she may be regarded as a symbol of the tribe's future, carrying the hope of continuing the tribe's lineage. Her subjection to repeated rape may be taken as a metaphor for the illegitimate seizure of Native American land by colonizers. The rape brutally literalizes the white colonizers' penetration into, and destruction of, the Native Americans' ways of life, but also their "theft" of these tribes' futures. Later, with Glass' help, Elk Dog's daughter castrates and kills Toussaint, one of her rapists. Kidnapped, sexually abused, objectified, and treated as a sex slave, in the end she nevertheless assumes agency. Glass helps her escape but he leaves Toussaint's treatment to her; he does not kill him on her behalf. If he had done so, the Eurocentric narrative of women of color being saved by good white men would have been repeated and the assumption of women as powerless victims would have been confirmed too. Glass here refuses to fully occupy the position of the girl's savior, leaving Toussaint in her hands.

Coloniality of Nature
In *Territories of Difference: Place, Movements, Life, Redes* (2008), Arturo Escobar, a Colombian-American anthropologist, writes: "The concept of coloniality that has been applied to knowledge and power … also applies to nature" (120). Escobar offers the following outline of the coloniality of nature:

> Very schematically, the main features of the coloniality of nature … include classification into hierarchies ("ethnological reason"), with nonmoderns, primitives, and nature at the bottom of the scale; essentialized views of nature as outside the human domain; the subordination of the body and nature to mind (Judeo-Christian traditions; mechanistic science; modern phallogocentrism); seeing the products of the earth as the products of labor only, hence subordinating nature to human-driven markets; locating certain natures (colonial and third world natures, women's bodies, dark bodies) outside of the totality of the male Eurocentric world; the subalternization of all other articulations of biology and history to modern regimes, particularly those that enact a continuity between the natural,

human, and supernatural worlds – or between being, knowing, and doing. (121)

For Escobar, the coloniality of nature manifests itself in various areas, including gender and race, and is thus intertwined with colonialities of power and of being. Since gender and race have already been discussed in the previous paragraphs, I will now examine how the coloniality of nature works in the film by contrasting the relationship of European settlers with nature to the attitude of Native Americans towards their natural environment. Colonial attitudes towards nature are typified by a perception of nature as undeveloped, outside the human domain, and subordinate to the human intellect—an object to be exploited. Under the matrix of the coloniality of nature, the idea that natural, human, and supernatural worlds are interdependent is negated and alternative biologies and histories—which may emphasize the continuity between nature, human beings, and the supernatural—are not recognized either.

The coloniality of nature is not only a central point of concern for decolonial thinkers but also within ecocritical studies (in fact, the two approaches often overlap). Ecocritic William Rueckert, for example, argues that "man's tragic flaw is his anthropocentric (as opposed to biocentric) vision, and his compulsion to conquer, humanize, domesticate, violate, and exploit every natural thing" (113). The anthropocentric vision that typifies the Western rhetoric of modernity/coloniality justifies the conquest, domestication, violation and exploitation of nature. Western colonial logic "assumes the primacy of humans, who either sentimentalize or dominate the environment" (Martin 217-218). From an anthropocentric perspective, the natural environment is secondary while humans occupy the primary position as centers of a world that they (wish to) control.

In the film, the settlers' exploitative relationship with nature forms a sharp contrast with Native Americans' more reciprocal relationship. The aim of the fur trappers is to transport furs to the Fort in order to sell them. Their attempt to exploit natural resources places them in an antagonistic relation to nature; nature is an object they need to master and turn into a source of profit. The film, however, exposes the limitations of their anthropocentric vision and relation to nature by projecting a different vision of the human subject's place in nature; extensive shots of the landscape—a grand valley, huge snowy mountains, gigantic rivers and waterfalls, the falling of bright stars, a large-scale buffalo migration, blizzards and storms—present us with a nature that resists the colonizers' attempts to appropriate and master it. On their way to the Fort, for example, Glass and Hikuc have to go through a blizzard. After discovering that Henry has been killed and scalped by Fitzgerald, Glass witnesses an avalanche. This contrast between the power of man and that of nature also takes a concrete form in the scene where Glass is terribly mauled by a grizzly bear, eventually succumbing to the wild animal's power. The film's aesthetics thus go against the anthropocentrism of European coloniality and towards a more eco-critical perspective of the world. Nature here does not only function "as the stage upon which the human story is acted out, but as an actor in the drama" (Glotfelty xxi). As a force with its own agency, nature is certainly not always compatible with, or reducible to, a human project. The film presents humans in extremely adverse

weather conditions and often casts them as small, vulnerable parts of the landscape. In these ways, *The Revenant* could be said to assume what certain critics have called a "biocentric" perspective, which "decenters humanity's importance" and "explores the complex interrelationships between the human and the nonhuman" (Martin 218).

The film's aesthetics thus undermine the coloniality of nature that typifies the settlers' attitude. Its mode of representing nature and humans in nature seems more aligned with a Native American understanding of humans' relation to nature, as it is cast in the film. Native Americans in Hollywood are customarily represented as seen from the perspective of Western characters. From this perspective, "Native Americans appear intruders on their own land" (Shohat and Stam 1994a, 119). Their murder is justified through their portrayal as aggressors or invaders. They are the obstacles in the way of white American settlers, who have, or are on their way to gaining, mastery over the new lands. What stands out in *The Revenant*, however, is the white settlers' unfamiliarity with the landscape; they desperately need a guide (Glass) to find their way in a hostile environment. When captain Henry has to lead his men on his own after Glass is injured, he seems uncertain about the route to be followed and frightened by the vast and unfamiliar landscape that stretches before them. The settlers seem to be at the mercy of harsh weather conditions, unable to master nature or defend themselves against the attacks of the Arikara. The foggy, gloomy atmosphere that surrounds them on their journey to the Fort, the tall, straight trees that seem to hold a mysterious force, hiding perhaps the Arikara who, like ghosts, can appear suddenly and attack: all this conveys the impression that the land is haunted. The fur trappers seem to know that "the land is haunted because it is stolen" (Bergland 9). They are thus cast as the "intruders," unable to assert the kind of control over the land and its peoples that defines Eurocentric narratives of colonization (and their reproduction in Hollywood cinema).

The settlers appear in a certain sense more vulnerable and foreign to their surroundings than Native Americans; as outsiders in this world, they are terrified of "the Ree" (the Arikara), whose bows and arrows can be more effective than their guns. As the Native Americans appear much better equipped to function in the natural environment than the settlers, the European one-directional evolutionary narrative according to which humans progress from a state of nature to modern European society is challenged. In this reversal of the hierarchy between settlers and natives, the settlers are cast as the (unwanted) guests, while the Native Americans know the land quite well and follow a way of life that allows them to adjust to the harsh natural environment. After escaping from the Arikara, Glass, who has adopted Native American ways, builds a small wall with stones, catches a fish with his own hands, and eats it raw. Hikuc knows how to retrieve buffalo meat from the mouths of wolves. The Native Americans make fire by sparking flints. Sometimes nature poses a danger to their lives and sometimes it turns out to be a protective force, as when Glass hides within the carcass of a horse to keep warm and survive a blizzard. Native Americans know how to use nature to their benefit, without exhausting its resources or radically modifying it. They even make use of nature to heal illnesses. Hikuc, realizing that Glass is in danger of dying from his infected wounds, builds a hut for him and places maggots on his wounds to clean them. After a night in this hut, Glass seems to recover completely. The maggots eat the swollen part of his body.

This kind of bio-surgery is a unique way of healing among Native Americans. Once they start to travel again, Hikuc also shows Glass how to taste snow, a gesture that suggests an intimate relationship between humans and nature. This relation poses as an alternative to the settlers' exploitative attitudes.

The relation of man to nature as a central motif in the film was also foregrounded by DiCaprio in his 2016 Oscar speech: "Making 'The Revenant,'" he said, "was about man's relationship to the natural world."[6] In his speech, DiCaprio called for more attention to climate change—"the most urgent threat facing our entire species." He added: "We need to support leaders around the world who do not speak for the big polluters, but who speak for all of humanity, for the indigenous people of the world, for the billions and billions of underprivileged people out there who would be most affected by this." DiCaprio's call for an ethics of care and respect for nature was issued in direct opposition to the coloniality of nature, so typical of the colonialist conquest of foreign lands but also of current neoliberal practices of natural exploitation and destruction.

Coloniality of Knowledge

Compared with the coloniality of power—as it materialized in colonial conquest, oppression, appropriation of land, and exploitation of labor—the imposition of Eurocentric modes of knowing works in more indirect but perhaps more persistent ways. The category of coloniality of knowledge involves the imposition of Euro-American epistemology, its patterns of expression, and its beliefs and images. In this section, I will focus particularly on the role of religion, as Western Christianity played a pivotal role in determining the epistemological paradigm that accompanied colonial domination. Referring to the convergence of knowledge and capital in the sixteenth century (and afterwards), Mignolo writes: "*The control of knowledge in Western Christendom belonged to Western Christian men, which meant the world would be conceived only from the perspective of Western Christian Men*" (emphasis in the original) (2007, 478). "Whatever did not fit the religious and moral standards set by Christianity, in terms of faith and physique," Mignolo continues, "was cast out of the standard of humanity" (479). Indeed, as Christianity was believed to encompass humanity as a whole, non-Christians were often excluded from the sphere of the human, as Anthony Pagden also notes, "And since for early-modern Christians the *communitas christianae* was the heir to the Greek *oikumene*, the community of man, exclusion from that community implies a species of non-existence" (Pagden 7). Native Americans, of course, had their own religious systems, which included beliefs about the afterlife, ghosts, and the soul. Their religious belief systems and epistemologies, however, could be dismissed by European epistemology and the imperatives of Euro-Christian modernity, because, again, Native Americans were regarded as savages or (often) as non-human.

Mignolo writes on the epistemological problem that the existence and diversity of Native Americans posed to their colonizers:

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[6] See <http://oscar.go.com/news/winners/watch-leonardo-dicaprios-acceptance-speech-for-best-actor-2016>.

> ... in the sixteenth century a concept of *race* emerged at the intersection of faith, knowledge and skin color. ... In the New World, the surfacing of the "Indians" (people speaking myriad languages among them Aymara, Quechua, Guaraní, Nahuatl, various dialects of Maya roots, as dissected and classified since the nineteenth century by Western linguists), created a crisis in Christian knowledge as to what kind of "being" the "Indians" would have in the Christian chain of beings? Since Indians did not fit the standard model set by White Christian Men and did not themselves have the legitimacy to classify people around the world, they were declared inferior by those who had the authority to determine who was who. (2007, 479)

The exclusion of "Indians" from humanity, Mignolo argues, was often justified by the conviction that "the Indians did not have 'religions' and whatever they believed was considered to be the work of the Devil. Also, they did not have alphabetic writing and so were considered people without history"—so they were both savage (here, history-less) and evil (479). In the following, I will discuss how the coloniality of knowledge, mainly as it takes form through the imperatives of Christianity, takes effect in the lives of both the American setters and Native Americans in *The Revenant*.

Fitzgerald's seemingly paradoxical attitude towards Christianity exposes some of the problematics of the selective application of this belief system in the context of the colonial project. While he regularly evokes Christianity for his own benefit, in some instances he outright mocks it. He uses Christianity as an excuse to cover his guilt and justify his crime. When Bridger wonders whether they did the right thing leaving Glass alive in the grave, Fitzgerald answers affirmatively that "Good Lord's got us on the road, whether we chose or not." His evocation of God helps him renounce his personal responsibility in tricking Bridger into leaving Glass behind to die (by convincing him that they had been spotted by the Arikara and their lives were in danger). Paradoxically, Christian rhetoric is here used to justify a crime that could not have been justified by Christianity's moral code. This hypocritical use of religious rhetoric hints at the problematic ways Christianity was mobilized in the colonial project. Its moral imperatives were selectively applied and variously interpreted in order to serve the ideological demands of colonialism—coloniality of knowledge in the service of coloniality of power. Later on, in a conversation with Bridger, this hypocritical use of religion is underlined even more emphatically, as Fitzgerald deflates and ridicules Christianity altogether. He starts telling a story about how his father found God when faced with difficult circumstances: robbed of his horses by Native Americans, starving and delirious. At the anti-climactic end of the story Fitzgerald reveals that the God his father found was just "a squirrel."

While Christian rhetoric is largely deflated in the film, even by white characters like Fitzgerald, viewers are often presented with images that take them towards other epistemologies and belief systems. The film is replete with magical images and visions that cannot be appropriated and explained by European epistemology and its rationalist structures. Instead, they seem to belong to a mode of understanding the world akin to

magical realism: a genre and mode of expression that has been particularly popular in Latin American literature.

An oxymoronic phrase, "magical realism" describes a combination of reality and fantasy. In *Ordinary Enchantments: Magical Realism and the Remystification of Narrative* (2004), Wendy Faris investigates magical realism as a prominent trend in contemporary international fiction, charting its characteristics and narrative techniques. "Magical realism combines realism and the fantastic so that the marvelous seems to grow organically within the ordinary, blurring the distinction between them" (Faris 1). By combining realistic representation with fantastic elements, magical realism destabilizes a dominant form of realism based on empirical definitions of reality. Magical realism does not entail an absolute rejection or overturning of the conventions of realism, but plays with and challenges them through fantasy. As such, magical realism can be mobilized in literary texts or films as a challenge to Eurocentric perspectives, which are often marked by strict distinctions between reality and fantasy, the natural and supernatural. Faris argues:

> … to adopt magical realism, with its irreducible elements that question that dominant discourse [of realism], constitutes a kind of liberating poetics… Because magical realism often gives voice in the thematic domain to indigenous or ancient myths, legends, and cultural practices, and in the domain of narrative technique to the literary traditions that express them with the use of non-realistic events images, it can be seen as a form of narrative primitivism. (103)

The "irreducible elements" of magical realist literature—or, in our case, film—transgress the boundaries of Western discourse, whether these boundaries are ontological, political, or epistemic. This kind of art has the political potential to disrupt the status quo, re-imagine history, destabilize established structures of power, and move towards an alternative understanding of reality.

This is why magical realism has also been explored for its contribution to postcolonial critiques of Western imperialism. As Stephen Slemon argues, magical realist texts or films "comprise a positive and liberating engagement with the codes of imperial history and its legacy of fragmentation and discontinuity" (422). Magical realism can problematize Eurocentric discourses by providing an alternative framework, which may either explain what remains unexplainable by European/Christian epistemologies or re-explains what has been explained by Eurocentric discourses differently. Because of its capacity to provide alternative visions and "realities," magical realism has served as an effective decolonizing agent, offering alternative means of expression to those oppressed by coloniality, the dispossessed, the silenced, and the marginalized.

Magic images in the film that do not comply with Western realistic conventions can be associated with Native American mythologies and belief systems. In one of Glass' flashbacks, taking us back to a moment before the colonizers' attack that destroyed the native community he was part of, we see his son Hawk play with a bird, which rests on his hand. In the same flashback, which is focalized by Glass, we move to an image of

Glass' dead wife after the attack has taken place and watch a small bird crawl out of the bullet wound on her chest. Later, after Hawk has been stabbed to death by Fitzgerald, we can discern the feathers and head of a small dead bird lying beside the heavily injured Glass. These images of the little bird could be understood in relation to a bird ritual of the Pawnee people, a peace and friendship ritual known as the "Hako or calumet of peace." In this ritual, "The birds represent the gods and the people; one sees the flocks afar off, flying and calling; they come sweeping across the sky, circling, alighting; and at the center of the great ceremony are the calumet stems, adorned from end to end with feathers and bird heads" (Hyde 24). We know that birds had a symbolic meaning for many Native American tribes and often functioned as omens (24). The appearance of the bird from Glass' wife's bosom is a magic realist element that also seems invested with symbolism—a sign, perhaps of the wife's rebirth or the attachment of her soul to the bird, which signals her afterlife. The little bird seems to suggest that death is not an end. This does not conform with a Christian understanding of the afterlife, however; the rebirth of the bird, which is suggested as part of Glass' memory, indicates a form of afterlife that is not located in a separate, invisible, supernatural realm (paradise or hell) but in the same world, the world of the living. This suggests a living-with-the-dead in our world—a living *with* ghosts—which echoes Native American beliefs.

Whereas the idea of reincarnation is usually associated with Hindu and Buddhist philosophy, it is also prevalent among Native Americans, although it is impossible to make valid generalizations about the complexity of Native American beliefs. In *Amerindian Rebirth: Reincarnation Belief among North American Indians and Inuit*, a collection of essays by anthropologists and one psychiatrist, we can see how the concept of reincarnation varies among different Native American societies during different periods. In the book's introduction, Antonia Mills admits the complexity of beliefs around reincarnation and argues that many scholars who work on Native Americans find it difficult to generalize on this topic. Different from reincarnation in Hindu and Buddhist philosophy, which emphasizes salvation and transcendence, the concept of reincarnation among Native Americans emphasizes a "returning to terrestrial life" (Mills 17). Its ethics is "based on the premise of the equality of human consciousness with that of other species of animals, fish, and fowl" (17).

The image of the dead bird later on in the film, which is a symbol for Hawk's death, not only suggests the violent destruction of Native Americans by the settlers, but also the attempted destruction of Native American epistemologies and systems of belief. The coloniality of knowledge enters the film in this image of the dead bird, a forceful visualization of such coloniality's consequences: the annihilation of Native American communities (the bird's corpse) and of the "afterlives" of their belief systems (the bird is not reborn in this scene). Going against the finality of this destruction, however, the film also counterprojects images of the bird's rebirth in the previously discussed scene with Glass' wife. These magical realist images, which suggest an alternative reality, signal the continued presence of Native American epistemologies, which haunt their executioners even after the destruction of native communities.

4.4 Decolonial Moments: The Disenchantment of Eurocentrism

By probing *The Revenant*'s engagement with the above four aspects of coloniality—power, being, nature, and knowledge—I have tried to show how the logic of coloniality and the rhetoric of "civilization" are addressed in the film. The film shows the logic of coloniality at work in different practices and attitudes, including the oppositional hierarchies within Euro-American epistemology that determine the settlers' relationship to Native Americans (in terms of civilized/savage) and to the natural environment (in terms subject/object). However, it also disrupts and deconstructs these binaries; the brutality of the settlers' practices, for example, weakens the credibility of the signifier "savage" when applied to the Native Americans. "Savage," furthermore, is used in contradictory ways, causing confusion and destabilizing the certainty with which it is mobilized in colonialist rhetoric. Although the settlers keep using the term exclusively for the Native Americans, an ironic twist is created when the signifier "civilization" is tainted by connotations of violence (as when Henry tells Fitzgerald that he plans to "shoot some civilization into those fucking Arikara"). Apart from this ironic destabilization of the dynamic between the two concepts, the inscription "we are all savages" on the board that hangs from the dead Hikuc's neck delinks the term from particular groups of people and attaches it to a certain kind of violent behavior that (potentially) typifies all human beings (and particularly Hikuc's executioners).

The film, however, does not limit itself to a critical, deconstructive restaging of colonial oppositions and practices: it also confronts the logic of coloniality and its oppositions with alternative ways of looking at others and the world, many of which are inspired by Native American worldviews. In the last section, on coloniality of knowledge, I discussed some of the ways in which the film challenges Eurocentric epistemology with alternative visions. In this part, I continue along the same lines, close reading certain pivotal moment in the film which I designate "decolonial moments": moments in which an alternative logic and knowledge is enacted that signals a delinking from colonial logic, and moments in which Native Americans seem to assert their own subject-status, delinking their vision from the gaze of the colonized. These moments, I argue, can be considered involved in the project of decolonizing knowledge—the "delinking" that Mignolo and other decolonial thinkers envisage. As Mignolo puts it:

> Decolonization of knowledge shall be understood in the constant double movement of unveiling the geo-political location of theology, secular philosophy and scientific reason and simultaneously *affirming the modes and principles of knowledge that have been denied by the rhetoric of Christianization, civilization, progress, development, market democracy*. (emphasis added, 2007, 463)

Decolonization (which in the above quote does not refer to the *historical* process but to "decoloniality" as an attitude in an ongoing process) exposes the cultural and geopolitical specificity of European theology, philosophy, and reason, thereby undoing their universalist aspirations. At the same time, it acknowledges and promotes

alternative modes of knowing suppressed by the rhetoric of modernity.

The film's title, *The Revenant*, projects the theme of returning from the dead to take revenge as the focal point of the narrative. Revenge narratives are popular in Hollywood. They offer a rather conventional narrative structure centered around the correction of an injustice that leads to the restoration of justice and (moral) order, offering catharsis and resolution. Such a narrative structure was also employed recently by Tarantino (after *Inglorious Basterds*, which is also a revenge film of sorts), in *Django Unchained* (2012), as a way of restaging the history of slavery, but in a way that aims to "restore" this historical trauma through the cathartic effect of revenge; the black slave comes back to reclaim his family and kill his masters. *The Revenant* is, on one level, also a narrative of revenge. Nevertheless, its treatment of this theme complicates and problematizes the conventional (Hollywood) structures of the revenge-narrative. The film in fact questions the revenge-narrative as an effective means of restoring justice for past crimes (here, the crime of colonialism against the Native Americans) by juxtaposing the European idea of revenge with other modes of dealing with a traumatic past. For example, while Glass thirsts for revenge, Hikuc, the Pawnee man, has another attitude towards those who have killed all his loved ones and destroyed his world (the Sioux). Instead of seeking revenge, he chooses to leave revenge in the creator's hands, as he tells Glass, and decides to go south in order to find more Pawnees and start a new life. Hikuc's attitude creates a sharp contrast with that of Glass, for whom killing Fitzgerald for the murder of his son has become a singular goal. Revenge as the restoring of a past violence with more violence is therefore questioned through this alternative vision, which does have a deep impact on Glass, as we find out at the very end of the film. After his final violent fight with Fitzgerald, Glass refuses to finish him off, remembering Hikuc's words: "revenge is in the creator's hands." For Glass, this means leaving Fitzgerald in the hands of the Arikara, who have suffered even greater injustice at the hands of the colonizers. The Arikara killing Fitzgerald can still be seen as a form of revenge, of course. Nevertheless, Glass' decision to forgo his own right to revenge shifts our initial interpretation of the title. Rather than a story of personal revenge, this becomes a story about a haunting historical and systemic injustice that has to be restored—that of colonialism. Glass' words—"revenge is in the creator's hands"—notably cast the subsequent killing of Fitzgerald by the Arikara as an act of higher justice. Not only does Hikuc embody an alternative attitude to revenge but, more generally, an ethics of hospitality, responsibility, and care for the other, even if this other does not belong to one's own family or group. Hikuc helps Glass, willing to share his meat and travel with him. They both carry the burden of loss, as this Pawnee man has lost all his family members. Because he has a horse, he could travel much faster than if he walks with the wounded man, but he nevertheless chooses to stay with Glass and take care of him. When Glass becomes weaker, Hikuc chooses to walk and lets Glass ride the horse. Travelling with Glass slows down his mission (to find other Pawnees), which may be what leads to his demise at the hands of the French traders. His ethics of hospitality and responsibility for others, however, compels him to stay with Glass rather than leave him behind, as the other fur trappers did.

In her study of the Mandan, Hidatsa, and Arikara tribes in *Women of the Earth Lodges:*

Tribal Life on the Plains (1995), Virginia Bergman Peters stresses this attitude of responsibility for others as typifying these tribes: their "*responsibility* for – rather than authority over – others, … *linkage*, not dominance, seems to be the system by which the village agricultural tribes… lived, and that … has helped them survive to this day" (167). That this responsibility "helped them survive to his day" acquires, of course, a bitterly ironic undertone in the context of the film, as it is likely this very attitude that gets Hikuc killed. However, his alternative ethics does manage to shake the perverse logic of violence as a means of restoring injustice, so dominant in Eurocentric discourse.

Hikuc's death, then, does not undo the power of his alternative ethics. The idea of physical death as an end is more generally challenged in the film. Glass' wife, as already discussed, appears as a ghostly apparition at key moments in his journey, contradicting the idea that the dead disappear from this world. Once, the fleeting image of Glass' wife seems to warn him about the approaching Arikara, making him wake up on time to escape. At the beginning of the film, we witness a mourning ritual of the Arikara, who also lose many of their people in their brutal fight with the fur trappers. An old Arikara man, a shaman perhaps, murmurs something while wandering around the field of the dead. There are no subtitles available, but he seems to be talking to the souls of the dead. Such images suggest another understanding of death in Native American societies. Indeed, for the Pawnee, death does not mean the end, but is regarded as transportation to another state, "a transition to a portal beyond space and time" (Hemingway 57-58). Native Americans in general believe that the soul remains after the body is dead. Dead people are not devoid of agency, as they are still among us like ghosts, able to affect the living. In the film, dead natives such as Glass' wife, Hawk, and others killed by settlers, keep haunting the living. The settlers sense their haunting presence, which is perhaps why Fitzgerald once warns Bridger: "You put some eyes on the back of your head. These Indians ain't never as dead as you'll think they are."

The continued presence of dead Native Americans is also underscored in the film through echoes of their voices. At the very beginning of *The Revenant*, the camera moves over the faces of a series of dead Native Americans (later, we understand this to be a scene from the destruction of Glass' village). Their peaceful faces suggest that they may be asleep rather than dead. We then hear the following in the Pawnee language: "It's okay, son… I know you want this to be over. I will be right here… But, you don't give up. You hear me? As long as you can still grab a breath, you fight. You breath… keep breathing." We have no idea who the speaker is or where "here" is. The fleeting images from Glass' past, showing the destruction of the native village, allow us to infer that "this" refers to the violent crimes committed by the settlers against the Pawnee. The "here" may refer to the destroyed village or the inner mind of the "son" to which the voice is speaking. This prophetic-sounding voice already prepares us for the resilience of the voices of the dead, who will keep accompanying the living. We hear the same voice again after Glass is mauled by the bear. This time, his son Hawk keeps talking to him in the Pawnee language: "Can you hear that wind, father? Remember what mother used to say about the wind? The wind cannot defeat a tree with strong roots. You are still breathing… I miss her so much." Hawk encourages his father to be like "a tree with strong roots," which cannot be defeated by the wind. Glass hears his wife's voice again

when he is in a coma, lying in the hut Hikuc builds: "I will be right here... I'm right here. As long as you can still grab a breath, you fight. You breathe. Keep breathing. When there is a storm... And you stand in front of a tree... if you look at its branches, you swear it will fall. But you watch the trunk, you will see its stability. It's okay, son..." Later, after Hawk is stabbed to death, Glass talks to him using the same words: "I'm not leaving you, son. I'm right here." The repetition of these—not identical, always in different variations—confirms the logic of haunting, which is based on a perpetual coming back. But contrary to ghost-stories of revenge, the kind of haunting suggested in the above examples is a welcome one; it is a haunting that reassures those in danger that what they have lost still lives and is able to give them strength.

The metaphor of the tree, which is central in the above Pawnee saying, is also motivated by Native American epistemologies, which attribute personhood to animals and other cosmic elements. "All animals and cosmic constituents are intensively and virtually persons, because all of them, no matter which, can reveal themselves to be (transform into) a person. This is not a simple logical possibility but an ontological potentiality" (de Castro 57). Ontologically, everything in the universe is a person or can be transformed into a person. Here, we may take the tree not only as an abstract metaphor; the vividness of the evoked image seems to transform the tree into a person with a message for Glass and other Pawnees. The Pawnee saying certainly suggests a strong connection between humans and their natural environment in that it imagines a person as a tree with strong roots that persists in the face of danger and does not easily give up or lose stability; yet, it also seems to construct a contrast between vulnerability—the branches seem vulnerable to the wind—and strength—the trunk of the tree is stable. The tension between the vulnerable branches and the strong trunk implies that, although the Pawnee are vulnerable (defeated in battle, decimated by colonizers), their traditions and cosmology will survive, just like the trunk.

If sayings like the one discussed above, which can be ascribed to a Pawnee worldview, seem inspired by, or in tune with, the natural environment in which the action takes place, the doctrines of Christianity seem out of place in this territory. This implicit contrast between Christian and Native American cosmologies becomes manifest in a particular scene, in which Glass, after falling asleep in Hikuc's hut, dreams of an abandoned church full of faded icons depicting Christian saints, and images from hell and paradise involving demons and angels. Unlike the grandiose churches of Europe, this church is deserted and its walls severely damaged. The church is a relic, and this relic seems to suggest that Christianity is out of place in this wild territory; the European civilizing mission, based on transmitting Christian doctrines to the natives in order to save them, acquires an ironic undertone through this image. The ruined church cannot belong to the narrative's past; it can be seen as a future ghost, prefiguring the bankruptcy of the European civilizing project in the Americas. The church stands alone and deserted, unconvincing as a symbol of faith, without promise of salvation: an object that—unlike the strong tree in the Native American saying—has not proven able to find fertile ground and grow strong in this land.

This dream-image also involves more elements that set up a complex dialogue between European and Native American worldviews. On one of the church walls, we see

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an image of a crucifix. As the camera moves, we discern a lamb standing right in front of the crucifix. In the Bible, the lamb is a symbol of Jesus Christ, who sacrificed himself to redeem humanity. This biblical symbolism, however, does not work seamlessly or unambiguously in this scene; contrary, perhaps, to (Western Christian) viewers' expectations, this sacrificial lamb is black, suggesting, perhaps, Native Americans and other people of color as the victims sacrificed at the "altar" of Euro-Christian modernity. This allusion introduces racial discrimination into the heart of a Western Christian narrative that poses as inclusive of all humanity. The contradictions in the way colonialism used Western Christian epistemology as a means of dominating others are thereby brought to the foreground.

As this scene proceeds, we see that the black lamb has changed into Glass' son Hawk, who is coming to embrace Glass. This may allude to the Biblical narrative of Abraham and Isaac. In Genesis 22: 1-19, Abraham is commanded by God to sacrifice his son Isaac. Abraham is willing to obey God's order and to sacrifice his son, but is interrupted in the end by an angel that replaces his son with a sacrificial ram (*New International Version*). In the film's scene, a reverse transformation seems to have taken place. The black lamb changes into Hawk, whose in-between position as neither white nor Pawnee also puts the holiness and purity of the burnt offering into question. Hawk, the excluded and illegible other of colonialism's racial hierarchies, poses here as the actual sacrificial victim of the Christian narrative. In this way, the biblical narrative becomes violently tainted through its association with the "sacrifice" and eradication of Native Americans in the name of Christianity and religion. In the end, we see Hawk changing into a towering tree and Glass kneeling down, looking at the trunk of the tree—a direct allusion to the aforementioned Pawnee saying.

In a series of transformations or allegorical equivalences, this scene changes Christ on the cross into the black lamb, which then changes into Hawk, who then changes into a tree. In these transformations, Christian epistemology is being gradually replaced by a Native American perspective on the world. Thus, even though the scene confronts us with the sacrifice of Native Americans in the name of Christianity (a sacrifice that ends differently than Abraham's story, as God does not intervene to save them), the transformations in this scene allegorically contradict this death, showing Native American epistemologies outliving the Christian narrative.

Equivalences are constructed between Biblical narratives and Native American beliefs as well as between characters in the film and Biblical characters, such as the crucifix and the lamb, Isaac and Hawk, but these equivalences are never complete; Christian narratives are "contaminated" by Native American epistemologies as well as by their own darker, exclusionary sides, and do not emerge unscathed from the juxtapositions this scene performs. Just as the church in this scene is severely damaged, so are the modes of understanding the world associated with (modern Europe's appropriation of) Christianity, deprived of their coherence and universalism. They succumb to the weight of their internal contradictions, exposed through this encounter with alterity (epitomized in Hawk, the black lamb, the outsider who is also an insider); inclusion in Christianity is concomitant with exclusion, peace concomitant with violence, self-sacrifice and altruism concomitant with the sacrifice of (savage, inferior) others. At

the same time, this scene which witnesses the transformation from a lamb to Hawk to a tree, also reflects the idea of reincarnation by Native Americans that I discussed earlier.

The dream-scene in the church can, finally, be viewed as an attempted translation, in which a series of elements from Euro-Christian and Native American epistemologies "translate" each other and transform in the process. The question of translation in the encounter between European and Native American cosmologies is a central one among cultural anthropologists. Brazilian anthropologist Eduardo Viveiros de Castro admits that the main task of cultural anthropology is translation, while he points out that "The real problem is to know precisely what translation can or should be, and how to undertake it" (87). For him, "Good translation succeeds at allowing foreign concepts to deform and subvert the conceptual apparatus of the translator such that the *intentio* of the original language can be expressed through and thus transform that of the destination. *Translation, betrayal ... transformation*" (87).

If colonialism proceeds by a logic of translation, translating the other's language or culture as a means of appropriation and control—deciphering the other's language as a means of eradicating its alterity and subordinating it to the "language" of the self—the translation that takes place in *The Revenant* proceeds by a different logic. The translation that takes place in the church scene is never complete, since the resulting "equivalences" never yield coherent, unequivocal narratives. Furthermore, this translation draws attention to the internal alterity—the difference within—the "original" language: those elements or subjects that the Euro-Christian framework includes by excluding, its repressed others. It is also remarkable that this "translation" does not aim at translating the indigenous perspective into a Eurocentric framework, but follows a reverse process; Euro-Christian narratives are eventually "translated" into Native American frameworks, with the tree as the final element in the scene's series of transformations. Through this process, these Euro-Christian narratives are radically transformed. It is also significant to note that this scene's "translation" foregrounds both the proximity, intertwinement, and intimate encounter of these frameworks and their incommensurability, their ineradicable difference.

Conclusion

Like a ghost, the figure of the savage takes different forms—such as the noble savage, animal-like savage, and ignoble savage—and keeps renewing itself through every appearance. This is perhaps one of the reasons why, in Western discourse, the ghost-like savage, being uncontrollable and sometimes even unpredictable and incomprehensible, is a frequently used term to describe Native Americans.

Native Americans were often described as ghosts in colonial rhetoric; they were reduced to ghost-figures, as their subjectivity was frequently questioned and denied. "When European Americans speak of Native Americans," Bergland writes, "they always use the language of ghostliness" (1). The reduction of Native Americans to ghosts justifies (and confirms) their dispossession by Europeans (4). Yet, the ghost is an ambiguous figure in the context of coloniality, signifying not only disempowerment and loss of subjectivity, but also an alternative form of empowerment and agency. Thus, the

figure of the Native American ghost also has the power to challenge the logic of coloniality. As Marx declares in *The Communist Manifesto* in 1848, "A specter is haunting Europe" (203). "This European ghost, the specter of Communism, is clearly a political entity, a disembodied figure that represents political and economic power relations within a context of emergent nationalism" (Bergland 7). Different from this European ghost, American ghosts include "ghosts of African American slaves and Indians as well as disfranchised women and struggling workers" (7). All these "described and imagined" ghosts "were those whose existence challenged developing structures of political and economic power" (7). "Europeans take possession of Native American lands," but at the same time Native Americans "take supernatural possession of their dispossessors" (3). Making sure that the history of "murders, looted graves, illegal land transfers, and disruptions of sovereignty" is never forgotten or settled, they keep haunting the Europeans settlers, taking possession of their minds and imagination (8). Both "guilt over the dispossession of Indians and fear of their departed spirits" keep haunting the European settlers (19).

Indeed, as my analysis of *The Revenant* has hopefully shown, the figure of the Native American ghost functions as a force that resists coloniality's annihilation and suppression of the voices of others, signaling the continued active presence of the past in the present. As (magically) real presences in the film, Native American ghosts also embody a different conception of the relation between life and death that defies the rigidity of this opposition in Western thought. That is, in the alternative vision that the film projects, the ghosts of the dead are not just metaphorical or immaterial, but *real* presences among the living, invested with agency; they extend warnings, provide consolation, give strength, or project an alternative ethical stance. In this context it is notable that in Dutch "revenant" does not have one equivalent term but is translated as "zichtbare geest," which is: *visible ghost*.[7] As part of another world but also an integral part of "this" world, ghosts confront Eurocentric epistemology with an alternative way of being and knowing, another way of relating to the past and to loss and trauma. As such, they can be seen as agents of the kind of delinking from coloniality that Mignolo and other decolonial thinkers envision.

This delinking takes a more concrete and powerful form in the final scene of Iñárritu's film, in which the gaze of Native Americans is prominently staged. In this scene, the Arikara pass by Glass on their horses without harming him (as the viewer might have expected, given their previous violent attacks). As they ride by, they seem indifferent to Glass' existence. They ignore him. We see Powaqa, the Arikara chief's daughter who has been retrieved, riding on a horse with them. Of course, the chief's withdrawal from a conflict with Glass can be easily motivated from a plot-perspective; Glass has contributed to saving the chief's daughter. We may assume that since the motivation for their attacks is removed—the daughter is back—they have less reason to engage with Glass through violence.

Yet, the powerful aesthetics of this scene function on a different level. If this is taken as a narrative of revenge, as the title connotes, the viewer might expect the final conflict between Glass and Fitzgerald to represent the film's climax and restore our sense of

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[7] The title of the film in Chinese is *HuangYe LieRen*, which means "the hunter in the wildness."

justice. The *denouement*, however, does not involve catharsis, a sense of satisfaction, or restoration of a moral order (in the way that a film like *Django Unchained* does); there is, in my view, no sense that history is somehow made right through this conflict. This may also be why some critics considered the film's ending to be "curiously unmoving" (von Tunzelmann).[8] Glass seems desolate, indeed empty, in this final scene. Fitzgerald's death has failed to alleviate the pain of the loss of his son, and has now also deprived him of a sense of purpose, since his enemy is gone. By betraying our expectations, the final scene redirects us to the indifferent gaze of the Arikara, which becomes the crux of the scene. Their refusal to validate or reciprocate the protagonist's gaze as they turn away from him decenters Glass as the film's protagonist. Their disregard for Glass (a white character, let us not forget) signals a break with Western literary and filmic narratives in which Native Americans commonly gain their identity—whether good, bad, or ambiguous—only through their juxtaposition and contrast with white characters. What we see in the end is an attempted representation of Native Americans as subjects in their own right, no longer defined only in relation to the Western gaze. The last scene, I argue, constitutes an attempt to break away from the Settler/Native Americans opposition by rejecting the opposition itself as constitutive of their respective subjectivities. Their procession signals a turning away from *revenge*—which involves an inability to *de-link* from the logic of the enemy and oppressor—towards an ethics of withdrawal from the colonizer's logic and gaze, echoing the decolonial project of delinking from the matrix of modernity and coloniality.

However, this scene also confirms the logic of haunting as a force that never rests and keeps coming back without offering a sense of resolution, as revenge narratives commonly do. The Native Americans who walk by, we realize, are real and yet they are also ghosts; the film has offered us a glimpse of the future of their annihilation (the destroyed villages) and therefore we may also see their final procession as a procession of ghosts—a march of the walking dead. Yet, if these real presences also function as ghosts from the future, their affective force on the viewer is all the more powerful. There is neither catharsis for Glass, nor for the viewer, who has to face the fact that, although history can and should be revisited, this revisiting cannot erase the violence of the past by creating a coherent narrative that moves along the lines of revenge, catharsis, and resolution. This operation of the ghost as a force that always lingers in historical narratives—a trace of what is silenced or absent, never allowing history to "rest"—speaks to the operations of deconstruction, as well as to postcolonial approaches to history: attempts to break up dominant historical narratives by listening to the voices of the dead, the oppressed, the (formerly) colonized. These ghosts are also, perhaps, a reminder that the *delinking* decolonial thinkers envisage cannot be a complete project; those other epistemologies, narratives, and worldviews that the film projects as alternatives to Eurocentric frameworks are also haunted by the logic of coloniality, which still needs to be staged in order for it to be deconstructed, opposed, ironized. With this in mind, the film's final scene can be understood to perform a delinking from coloniality without, however, letting go of the critical project of a poststructuralist, deconstructive critique of colonial logic, the logic that ontologizes and essentializes savages and

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[8] See <https://www.theguardian.com/film/2016/jan/20/reel-history-the-revenant-leonardo-dicaprio>.

civilized. This haunting balancing act, I believe, is an essential part of Iñárritu's film.

Conclusion

In Western colonial discourses since the sixteenth and especially the eighteenth century, Westerners and non-Westerners, such as Native Americans, Africans, Australians, and Asians, have been distinguished and hierarchized through binary oppositions, in which Westerners were regarded as civilized, progressive, rational, emancipatory beings, while most non-Westerners came to be idealized or demonized as savages. In its different guises, the figure of the savage propelled Western fantasies, desires, and anxieties. Native Americans, particularly, were the people to which the tag "savage" was most systematically applied—whether they were constructed as "noble" or "ignoble" savages. When demonized or considered less civilized, savage peoples were ideologically framed in such a way that they "deserved" to be oppressed, exploited, Christianized, or simply removed. In this thesis I have dealt with four paradigmatic ways in which people in the West, in the last seven decades, have tried to dismantle the very opposition between savage and civilized in an attempt not only to show that the opposition is false, but to counter or avoid the negative consequences of the oppositional dynamic. As I have delineated them, these four attempts to move beyond the oppositional concept of the savage were (1) the structuralist attempt, (2) the post-structuralist attempt, (3) the post-colonial or multicultural attempt, and (4) the decolonial attempt.

I can now also briefly define these approaches which scholars tried to propose or *state* in order to dismantle the oppositional relation between the civilized and the savage. They did so by means of what I want to call: (1) the equality option; (2) the inclusion option; (3) the multiplicity option; and (4) the autonomy option. Lévi-Strauss, for (1), proposed that there is a distinction to be made between civilized and savage, but that they should be considered as of equal value. White, for (2), proposed that there is a distinction to be made between civilized and savage but the two should be seen as internal to each other, or included in one another. Shohat and Stam, for (3), proposed that there is a distinction to be made between civilized and savage but the two should be considered as multiple in themselves, providing us with a pallet of possibilities instead of a binary opposition. Mignolo, for (4), proposed that there is a distinction to be made between civilized and savage, but the savage part should be seen as independent from the so-called civilized, with a sovereign and autonomous position. Although these four options have all been fruitful in different ways, my conclusion is that all four attempts have failed in dismantling the concept of the savage as an oppositional one. My contention is that they fail, not only because of the strength of their opposition, and certainly not because of the ontological validity of this opposition, but because enormous numbers of ideologically colored representations, produced throughout centuries, have helped create a figure that is unreal (i.e. discursively constructed) and yet very real at the same time: the savage as a ghost. As a figure that has acquired a reality of its own, the ghost of the savage cannot simply be controlled, discarded, dismantled, or conjured away at will: and most certainly it cannot be reasoned away. Its comings and goings remain unpredictable and to a certain extent uncontrollable.

The ghostly nature of the savage became especially evident in my analyses of works of art. In my four "rubbing" exercises—i.e. rubbing works of art (two novels and two films) with the theoretical attempts that I spoke of above—the common thread was my focus on the Native American as a paradigm of the savage. As was explained in the Introduction, Native Americans have a unique relationship with Europeans since the European conquest of America in 1492. Because of this unique relation, my thesis focused on implicit evocations or descriptions of Native Americans in particular works of art as paradigmatic examples of how cultural representations in general have managed to make Native Americans appear as savages in Western discourse. The resulting images of the savage were framed predominantly by the traditional tropes of "good" versus "bad Indians" or, more specifically, tropes such as the noble savage, ignoble savage, or animal-like savage. Beginning with Lévi-Strauss's *The Savage Mind* and the metaphor of the "shadow: in chapter one, it became more and more clear that the image of the savage, as embodied in representations of Native Americans, is ghost-like. This ghostly presence is haunting not only Western scholarship and science but also literature and films.[1]

In *The Spectral Metaphor: Living Ghosts and the Agency of Invisibility*, Esther Peeren gives us a detailed history of, and distinction between, comparable terms such as *specter*, *phantom,* and *spook.* She justifies her choice to use *living ghosts* to refer to her objects—undocumented migrants, servants, or domestic workers, mediums, and missing persons—as such:

> 'Specter', for example, strongly invokes something visible, even spectacular, through its etymology (from Latin *specere*, 'to look, see') and tends, in everyday speech, to refer to something terrifying and horrific, while 'phantom' is primarily associated with the illusionary and ineffectual, and 'spook' seems archaic and rather innocuous when used as a noun to describe literal ghosts, but, as an adjective, conjures discomfort and fear. ... However, with 'ghost' being both the most common and most figuratively fruitful term, I have chosen to designate the subjects of my research, in general, as *living ghosts*. (4-5)

Peeren's distinction is of relevance to this thesis. Following her reasoning, the savage is not so much alive as spectral. That is to say: the savage is not only the visual appearance of something terrifying or horrific, as the savage also has the potential of being noble and good, and, instead of being a visual phenomenon only, the savage appeals to all the senses. As all my examples show, the savage is not a phantom either. It is not an illusion, and surely not an ineffectual one. As for the last option, *spook*, this is not adequate either. Savages surely appear in *spook* stories or *spooky* circumstances (as, for instance, in the so-called haunted houses in fun fairs), yet the presence of the savage extends far beyond the fun fair or the horror story. The savage appears as a *living ghost* throughout Western cultures and theories.

The savage as a living ghost can be clearly detected in the four cases studied in this thesis. In *Lord of the Flies*, there is no actual presence of Native Americans, but the image

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[1] Here "science" is used in the same sense as Lévi-Strauss did in *The Savage Mind*.

of savage Native Americans is intrinsically related to English school children, who paint themselves as Native Americans and play the savage. The fiction of savage children carrying the mask of Native Americans is just one example of how the figure of savage Native Americans is prevailing in the Western world and, like a ghost, keeps haunting the European imagination. Similarly, in *Inglourious Basterds*, Native Americans are not actually present, but their image is prominent and can be easily traced in characters' conversations, practices (such as scalping), or games, such as the card game which made a participant guess he was *Winnetou*. Through the film, in this case, the history of the colonization and extermination of Native Americans comes to be fused with the history of the Holocaust and of Nazism. This, as well, can be read as an example of how the ghosts of Native Americans as 'savages' have a live force that allows them to travel beyond the domain to which they seem to belong.

Unlike the two previously mentioned cases, *Brave New World* does present Native Americans explicitly. These representations are cast, from a Eurocentric perspective, as exotic and inferior. Even John the Savage, a grotesque figure first living in and then taken out of the Savage Reservation to the so-called civilized world, keeps connoting the wild world where he is from in his inability to adapt to the civilized world. Native Americans are most explicitly present in *The Revenant*. Here, they even appear explicitly as ghosts, as when Glass' wife, after having been killed by European settlers, comes back to the living world through Glass' dream and hallucinations. As a ghost, she keeps reminding him of certain Pawnee sayings and encourages him to live on. Still, here, different from the representation in the previous three cases, Native Americans are no longer confined within the Eurocentric gaze as objects to be *looked at*, but have their own agency and begin to *look at* Europeans. This is shown in the final scene through Powaqa's indifferent gaze upon Glass. As these examples make clear, the savage does not appear as one type of ghost. Peeren's idea of the living ghost, applied to the savage, implies that the savage can appear in many different situations and in many different guises. This thesis does not wish to construct a typology of all the different forms that the ghosts of Native Americans take, but rather to register some of the unpredictable workings of this ghost in Western culture, workings which escape such attempts at classification and control.

In the context of my topic, one irony is that considering Native Americans as living ghosts that connote the savage may seem closely related to belief systems of Native Americans themselves. As there are so many different Native American cultures, it is impossible to generalize their beliefs about ghosts, but one thing that stands out clearly is that most Native Americans do not follow the binary opposition between life and death, materiality and immateriality, body and soul, death and life, as most Europeans do. For them, ghosts are not restricted to a different and unknown world, but can be parts of the living world. At the same time, the ghostly image of Native Americans is the ultimate result of continuous violent practices and ideological construction by European settlers. "When European Americans speak of Native Americans," Bergland writes, "they always use the language of ghostliness" (1). In order to occupy their land and justify the oppression of Native Americans, European settlers demonized Native Americans as ghosts, who had no right over the land where they lived. Yet, this very strategy came with a price. The ghostly image of Native Americans proves to be a persistent figure in

Western discourse that, as such, cannot be simply framed, demonized, and dispelled but has its own force.

As ghostly figures, Native Americans provoke both fear and fascination among Europeans and European Americans. On the one hand, haunted Europeans and European Americans carry the guilt of possessing Native American land and of the massive violence and the genocide towards Native Americans. In a sense, they, and those coming after them, are still afraid that Native Americans might come back to take revenge. Here, the ghostly image of Native Americans is a threat and a nightmare. On the other hand, Europeans and European Americans were, and *remain,* fascinated by or curious to learn more about these ghostly Native Americans, who come from a different and unknown world. They seek to understand them and find out what they want. At the same time, ghostly Native Americans allow them to discuss the aporia of civilization, in the sense that Native Americans "unfortunately" had to become ghostly to allow for the progress of civilization.

Approaching the savage as a living ghost may explain why it is so difficult to eradicate the oppositional concept of the savage. As the example of Native Americans shows, and despite the fact that their appearance is changeable, unpredictable, and unsettled, they keep haunting Western discourse. Why is this haunting force of living ghosts so effective? Peeren writes that the living ghost's "haunting force is effective precisely because of its undecidable nature and origin, its blurring of the active-passive dichotomy. It promises an agency separate from acting out ('*without doing anything'*) that still has a profound impact" (emphasis in the original, 20). That is to say, a ghost's uncertain and ambiguous nature and origin endow it with the potential to exert a profound impact "without doing anything." And, indeed, one could claim that the ghostly savage, as defined in colonial discourse, is the promise of an action that will not be acted out, and cannot be acted out. Still, it is very much alive, or rather "living," with ambiguous agency *as a ghost*.

As Peeren notes, the ghost and the haunted may transform and exchange roles. It is possible that one is the ghost at one moment and changes into the haunted at the next moment, or one is both the ghost and the haunted at the same time (27). In fact, this very description may serve to illustrate what poststructuralists define as a "difference within." In Western discourse, Peeren contends, the "haunted self tends to be western and privileged, the ghostly other non-western or otherwise marginalized" (29). As non-Western and marginalized, Native Americans tend to be the ghostly other, haunting the Western subject. Yet, they can also become the haunted, since they are under continuous construction from Eurocentric perspectives. Their capacity to be haunting and at the same time haunted makes the ghostly image of Native Americans as 'savages' more disturbing, impossible to ignore or eradicate.

Finally, the effective haunting force of living ghosts involves their transcendence in terms of time. For Derrida, ghosts keep hovering over the past, the present, and the future. For Spivak, the Derridian ghost is "not only a *revenant* (a returner, the French for 'ghost'), but also an *arrivant*, one who arrives" (1995, 71). As a *revenant,* the ghost provokes and reintroduces historical memory, while as an *arrivant* the ghost suggests an unanticipated future. As for the savage as a living ghost, on one hand, it comes from the

past and its ghostly image calls upon the history of colonization and oppression by European settlers. On the other hand, it keeps arriving, as if from a future that entails an alternative history and an open future-to-come. Much like the Derridian ghost, the ghostly image of Native Americans contains both the past and the future and is thus impossible to eliminate.

Transcending the boundary between life and death, presence and absence, body and soul, the ghostly image of the savage exerts a conceptual force. As scholars of spectrality (such as Antonio Negri and Derrida) suggest, "exploiting one's ghostly status might be more productive than trying to deny or overcome it" (Peeren 23).[2] This is why Derrida suggests that we *learn to live* with ghosts, which is further explained by Peeren; instead of "assimilating otherness or exorcizing it, the idea is to live *with* it … to allow it to persist as an enigma and, crucially, a potential threat" (26).[3] Her reasoning here is that removing the ghost might be precisely the ultimate colonial desire: to exorcize the colonial fear in destroying the last living, if ghostly, part of the subjects mistreated under colonialism. Derrida's and Peeren's suggestion is that we should, rather, try to find out what the living ghost is and does. To that order, we need to learn to *live with* the ghost, regardless of whether it seems to be an enigma or even a threat. As Peeren wants it: "A true being *with* would surely entail a certain reciprocity, an attempt to acknowledge the ghost's own vision, a willingness to look at the word, and at oneself, through its eyes" (26-27). That is to say, to *live with* ghosts requires not only looking at them in a new way, but also learning to look through their eyes. In this context, to *live with* the ghost does not mean that the ghost is all-powerful and authoritative. It "may appear as a dominant, even sovereign being," Peeren writes, "but can also manifest as a figure of compromised agency" (3). With regards to this, the savage can indeed be seen as a "figure of compromised agency."

In the specific case of Native Americans, it is more productive to learn to explore their ghostly status and to *live with* them, rather than denying or trying to overcome them. As a ghostly figure, the Native American can function both as an independent being with its own agency and as a compromised figure within Eurocentric discourse. Here, the ambiguous relationship of the ghostly Native Americans to *power* hints at the main conflict between decolonial thinkers and poststructuralists. The former thinkers focus on the sovereignty, or autonomy, of indigenous peoples, such as Native Americans. The latter emphasize the co-existence of Native Americans and Europeans *in* one another. The idea of *living with* the ghosts of Native Americans suggests that neither the attempt to assimilate and exorcize them, nor the attempt to give them complete sovereignty and freedom, is perfect. In this sense, I want to conclude that the failure of the four attempts to dismantle the notion of the savage can, paradoxically, be seen as a success.[4]

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[2] For the study of ghost by Negri, see his article "The Specter's Smile."

[3] Derrida specifies the notion of *learning to live* as "to learn to live *with* ghosts, in the upkeep, the conversation, the company, or the companionship, the commence without commence of ghosts. To live otherwise, and better. No, not better, but more justly. But *with* them. No *being-with* the other, no *socius* without this *with* that makes *being-with* in general more enigmatic than ever for us" (emphasis in the original, 1994, xvii-xviii).

[4] Here I situates the failure within the performative. More discussion about the paradoxical relation between success and failure can be found in Shoshana Felman's *The Scandal of the Speaking Body: Don Juan with J. L. Austin, or Seduction in Two languages* (2003).

The savage is a living ghost. As a living thing, it asks us how we want to live with it, both artistically and in a scholarly sense. In consideration of this "living together," my conclusion is shifting into a suggestion; I come to an end by saying that the critical potential embodied in the four approaches I discussed should not be forgotten but could be revitalized in terms of critical intimacy. The notion of critical intimacy, as opposed to critical distance, is coined by Spivak in *A Critique of Postcolonial Reason* (1999).[5] As a postcolonial feminist, Spivak calls for a rereading of imperialism's foundational texts in terms of critical intimacy, which is "not to excuse, but to suspend accusation to examine … if the protocols of [a] text can produce something that will generate a new and useful reading" (1999, 98). For her, to read a text with critical intimacy invites a reading which may be "a 'mistake,' inappropriate to the text" and "in a certain way, falls prey to its own critique, perhaps" (153). Critical intimacy may be better understood if we look at how she explains *deconstruction* in a recent interview:

> It's not just destruction. It's also construction. It's critical intimacy, not critical distance. So you actually speak from inside. That's deconstruction. My teacher Paul de Man once said to another very great critic, Fredric Jameson, "Fred, you can only deconstruct what you love." Because you are doing it from the inside, with real intimacy. You're kind of turning it around. It's that kind of critique.[6]

Here, we can see that intimacy for Spivak is a deconstructive practice that tries to settle the discourse from inside, not so much from a critical and distanced perspective but with a close, loving, intimate connection. This does not mean that all will be fine. One scholar has argued that intimacy, for Spivak, "produces upheaval, if not deliberate error; we might say that reading with critical intimacy produces a reading estranged from itself" (Steigman 110). That is to say, to read with critical intimacy is a disfiguring and estranging practice, which reframes and retakes earlier texts from within. Our being intimate with the living ghost of savages suggests refigurations and reconstructions of them. And this might be of as much relevance as critical distance, if only for the reason that the Western relation with these figures is "a job never quite done."[7]

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[5] Taking up Spivak's idea of critical intimacy, Mieke Bal further discusses it in her book *Travelling Concepts in the Humanities: A Rough Guide*. She argues: "Through my critical intimacy with it, I hope to … persuade my readers that critical intimacy is a productive – perhaps the most productive – mode or attitude for reading scholarly texts" (2002, 292).

[6] See <https://lareviewofbooks.org/article/critical-intimacy-interview-gayatri-chakravorty-spivak/>.

[7] Here, I use the phrase "a job never quite done" in the same sense as Spivak, when she discusses Derrida's attention to detail. "Derrida's attention to detail does not mean giving up. It means persistence, repetition, circling back, for the job is never quite done" (Spivak 2005, 16).

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Summary

The Savage as Living Ghost is a study about four scholarly failures to dismantle the notion of the savage in Western discourse. These scholarly attempts are, broadly, structuralist, poststructuralist, postcolonial or multiculturalist, and decolonial. This study examines these four scholarly attempts by confronting them with close-readings of literary works or films in which the notion of the savage is attached to or associated with Native Americans.

As Native Americans constitute the paradigmatic figuration of the savage since the European conquest of America, I focus particularly on the ways the West has constructed Native Americans as savages in this study. In Western discourse, the terms "savage" and "civilized" appear quite frequently in political speeches, the media, academic works, and daily conversation. This study looks critically at the rhetoric of civilization which designates Native Americans as savages and Europeans as civilized, and traces how the notion of the savage serves as a moral and cultural term to establish a hierarchy between Native Americans and the Europeans. Studying this process of othering reveals the dark side of European modernity.

As the counterparts of civilization, terms such as "savages" and "barbarians" are often used interchangeably. Their meanings are equally often taken for granted and understandings of them as two earlier stages of societal development in humanity's evolutionary course towards civilization still persist in both Western and Chinese contexts. Instead of strengthening the hierarchical relationship between savage, barbarian and civilized, I argue that the scholarly efforts to dislodge them from their conventional contexts can contribute to revealing the critical potential of these traditional concepts and guide us to rethink the concept of the savage in other than oppositional terms.

As a changeable, unsettled and unpredictable figure in the Western imagination, the savage can be both frightening and fascinating. It can be either violent, brutal, and fierce, as the trope of the ignoble savage suggests, or humane, gentle, and innocent, following the trope of the noble savage. Its ambiguous uses make it both an enigma and a threat and have propelled intense explorations of its force and potential in Western literature and theory. In this study, I argue that it is impossible to eradicate the notion of the savage, which keeps coming back and imposes itself whenever it appears.

In this study, I contend that the notion of the savage can both enhance and disturb dominant civilizational discourse in its various guises. Taking as an initial hypothesis that it might be impossible to eradicate the notion of the savage in Western discourse, the central question of this study is how four very influential philosophical and methodological approaches have tried to dismantle the Eurocentric notion of the savage, how these efforts lead to one another, and why they are still unsuccessful today. Specifically, my research questions are: what constitutes the structuralist, the poststructuralist, the postcolonial or multiculturalist, and, most recently, the decolonial attempts to question and unsettle the hierarchical opposition between the civilized and

savage and do away with the Eurocentric connotations and implications of the notion of the savage? How do these attempts lead to one another and where do they differ? Why is the oppositional concept of savage so persistent in Western discourse? Does it only function in rigid oppositional schemes, or can it also help us imagine other ways of getting along with Native Americans, opening up to their different worldviews and dealing with the violent past of their colonization without erasing it?

In order to answer these questions, I turn to literature and film, making them my testing grounds for the above approaches; novels and films help me tease out the implications, interrelation, and, ultimately, failures of the above scholarly attempts to dismantle the "savage." My argument takes shape through close readings that unravel in the form of a dialogue between theoretical texts that exemplify the above scholarly approaches and literary and cinematographic texts—four cultural objects in which Native Americans as "savages" appear both implicitly and explicitly. These novels and films, situated in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, are *Lord of the Flies* (1954) by William Golding, *Brave New World* (1932) by Aldous Huxley, *Inglourious Basterds* (2009) directed by Quentin Tarantino and *The Revenant* (2015) directed by Alejandro G. Iñárritu. This study brings literature and film, the textual and the visual, together. What these cases have in common is a critical representation of Native Americans as savages. Although Native Americans as actual characters only appear in *Brave New World* and *The Revenant*, in *Lord of the Flies* and *Inglourious Basterds* we can also see how Native Americans as savages function in the Western imagination.

Each chapter introduces a different attempt to dislodge the figure of the savage from its conventional contexts. In other words, each chapter deals with (1) an artistic work which thematizes different aspects of Native Americans as savages and (2) a theoretical work which seeks to move beyond the conventional notion of the savage. By rubbing theory and art, we can see the limits of the theoretical works and the critical potential of artistic works.

In **Chapter one**, I discuss the structural attempt to eradicate the oppositional notion of the savage by bringing Golding's *Lord of the Flies* and Claude Lévi-Strauss's *The Savage Mind* together. In *The Savage Mind*, Lévi-Strauss argues that savage thinking is not inferior to modern thinking, but forms the substrate to it. Although the way Lévi-Strauss deals with mythical knowledge and modern science can be regarded as part of a structuralist attempt to break the hierarchical opposition between civilization and savagery, I relate the failure of this attempt to structuralist effects—specifically *vraisemblance*—as discussed by Jonathan Culler. We can see how different levels of vraisemblance work in *Lord of the Flies*. In this chapter I also discuss how conventional tropes that involve the savage, such as the noble savage, the ignoble savage and the animal-like savage, are represented in the novel. In my exploration of these tropes, I focus particularly on the role of the older boys in the novel, who seem to play a double role both as ignoble savages and colonizers. The simultaneity of savagery and civilization, as it takes place in the novel, dislodges the savage from its conventional positioning as a figure that belongs to a faraway place and time (in the past). However, I argue that the structuralist attempt to cast the savage as simultaneous with and equal to the civilized can reframe the opposition between the civilized and the savage, but cannot do away

with it: both the theorist, Lévi-Strauss, and the novelist, Golding, work as "bricoleurs" and cannot move beyond the conventional contexts they try to unsettle. This dialogue between theoretical texts and the novel leads to the idea of "difference within" which brings me to the poststructuralist attempt to move beyond the oppositional concept of the savage.

In **Chapter two**, I introduce the poststructuralist attempt to eliminate the oppositional notion of the savage by delving into Huxley's *Brave New World*, which can be read both as a satire in the literary sense and a Satire in the sense Hayden White defines it when he argues that Satire offers a history in which people remain captured and confined in the world. Although poststructuralists try to move away from the binary opposition of savagery a civilization by foregrounding the notion of the "difference within," they cannot escape from it, because the poststructuralist critique depends on the very opposition it seeks to break apart. It remains within the same world that is. By arguing that deconstruction is also generically satirical in nature, I trace how this approach, just like the protagonist John the Savage in the novel, is still trapped in Eurocentric discourse. This is also the reason why it is impossible to eradicate the notion of the savage through deconstruction. This failure leads me to the postcolonial or the multiculturalist attempt to move beyond the notion of the savage through an amplification of twisted and hidden voices.

In **Chapter three**, I introduce another attempt to eliminate the notion of the savage, which consists in dismantling the opposition to which the savage belongs by pluralizing the "savage." Here, I center on the work of postcolonial thinkers Ella Shohat and Robert Stam. In their work, they propose the idea of amplifying the hidden and distorted voices of others, so that plural voices can be heard rather than simply one dominant voice. Unlike the previous two chapters which study literary texts, this chapter focuses on the representation of Native Americans as savages through an analysis of the film *Inglourious Basterds*. As a postmodern work of art, the film brings different histories together through parody. By amplifying these different histories, stereotypical representations of Native Americans become visible as well. However, these stereotypical representations, even when they are parodied and criticized, keep renewing themselves through repetition, which may be one reason for the impossibility of eradicating the notion of the savage through pluralism.

In the previous chapters, the figures of Native Americans as savages are mainly depicted from a Eurocentric perspective. **Chapter four** turns to the actual presence and visual representations of Native Americans, taking the film *The Revenant* as a case study. I here introduce the ideas of decolonial thinkers who argue that coloniality and modernity are two sides of the same coin. Instead of pluralizing voices, the decolonial attempt consists in multiplying voices and seeking to break away from Eurocentric perspectives through the establishment of alternative ways of understanding and knowing. The representations of Native Americans in the film question the binary opposition between Native American "savages" and "civilized" European settlers, between "good" and "bad" Indians, and simultaneously suggest alternative ways of knowing and understanding. Testing decolonial perspectives in my analysis of the film, I show that the film's critique of colonial reason does not stop at undoing the

savage/civilized opposition. The film projects Eurocentric modes of knowing alongside alternative worldviews and conceptualizations of the relation of self and other. Specifically, I focus on what I call "decolonial moments" that showcase the film's delinking from Eurocentric perspectives and from the function of the savage therein. Nevertheless, this "delinking" is never complete, as the figure of the savage persists in haunting way. Ghosts of savages in the film are not only conceptual metaphors for the unfinished workings of colonialism in the present, but also parts of reality—in accordance with beliefs shared by Native American societies—that embody multiple histories and perspectives.

In my **Conclusion**, I argue that as a living ghost, the savage keeps haunting Western discourse. As living ghost, the haunting effect of the savage is so powerful that it becomes impossible to do away with it. Nevertheless, I propose to explore the ghostly status of Native Americans, the haunting presence of their past, but also their material presence today in our world, and the different worldviews they introduce. This amounts to a practice of learning to live with ghosts rather than denying or trying to overcome them.

Samenvatting

The Savage as Living Ghost gaat over vier gevallen van academisch niet geslaagde pogingen om het begrip van de wilde [savage] in het westerse discours te ontmantelen. Deze academische pogingen zijn, grofweg, de structuralistische, de poststructuralistische, de postkoloniale of multiculturalistische, en de dekoloniale. Dit onderzoek beschouwt deze vier academische benaderingen door ze tegenover close-readings van literaire werken of films te stellen waarin het begrip van de wilde wordt gekoppeld aan, of geassocieerd met de Noord-Amerikaanse 'native Americans', in de Nederland traditie beter bekend als 'indianen'.

Aangezien Indianen al sinds de Europese verovering van Amerika de paradigmatische figuur van de wilde zijn, richt dit onderzoek zich vooral op de wijze waarop het Westen Indianen heeft geconstrueerd als wilden. In het westerse discours komen de termen 'wilde' en 'beschaafde' vrij vaak voor in politieke speeches, de media, academische werken, en dagelijkse gesprekken. Dit onderzoek kijkt kritisch naar de retoriek van de beschaving die Indianen als wilden en Europeanen als beschaafden aanduidt, en traceert hoe het begrip van de wilde dient als een morele en culturele term om een hiërarchie te vestigen tussen Indianen en Europeanen. Het bestuderen van dit proces van 'othering' onthult de donkere zijde van de Europese moderniteit.

Als tegenhangers van beschaving worden termen als 'wilde' en 'barbaar' vaak door elkaar gebruikt. De betekenissen van deze termen worden even zo vaak voor lief genomen en de opvatting bestaat nog altijd dat ze twee eerdere fases in de maatschappelijke ontwikkeling van de menselijke evolutionaire koers richting beschaving aanduiden, in zowel de Westerse als, bijvoorbeeld, de Chinese context. In plaats van het versterken van de hiërarchische relatie tussen de wilde, de barbaar, en de beschaafde, betoog ik dat de academische pogingen om ze uit hun gebruikelijke context los te weken bij kunnen dragen aan het onthullen van het kritisch potentieel van deze traditionele concepten en ons als gids kunnen dienen om het concept van de wilde anders te denken en in andere termen dan die waarin ze wordt gevangen in een tegenstelling.

Als een veranderlijke, onbestendige, en onvoorspelbare figuur in de Westerse verbeelding kan de wilde zowel beangstigen als fascineren. Ze kan ofwel gewelddadig, bruut, en woest zijn, zoals de troop van de niet-nobele wilde suggereert, of humaan, zachtaardig, en onschuldig, volgens de troop van de nobele wilde. Dubbelzinnigheden in het gebruik van de term maken het tot zowel een enigma als een bedreiging, en hebben intense verkenningen voortgebracht van haar kracht en potentieel in Westerse literatuur en theorie. In dit onderzoek betoog ik dat het onmogelijk is gebleken om de notie van de wilde uit te roeien, daar deze steeds terugkeert en zichzelf opdringt waar ze verschijnt.

In dit onderzoek beweer ik dat de notie van de wilde het dominante beschavingsdiscours, in zijn vele verschijningsvormen, zowel kan versterken als verstoren. Uitgaande van de aanvankelijke hypothese dat het onmogelijk kan zijn om de notie van de wilde in het Westerse discours uit te roeien stelt dit onderzoek als centrale

vraag hoe vier zeer invloedrijke filosofische en methodologische benaderingen gepoogd hebben de Eurocentrische notie van de wilde te ontmantelen, hoe deze pogingen achtereenvolgens tot elkaar hebben geleid, en waarom ze ook nu nog altijd onsuccesvol blijken. Meer specifiek zijn mijn onderzoeksvragen: wat onderbouwt de structuralistische, de poststructuralistische, de postkoloniale of multiculturalistische, en, meer recentelijk, de dekoloniale poging de hiërarchische tegenstelling tussen de beschaafde en de wilde te bevragen en te ontwrichten en de Eurocentrische connotaties en implicaties van de notie van de wilde af te schaffen? Hoe leidden deze pogingen tot elkaar en waarin verschillen ze? Waarom is dit door een tegenstelling bestaande concept van de wilde zo volhardend in het westerse discours? Functioneert het begrip alleen in rigide schematische tegenstellingen, of kan het ons ook helpen andere manieren van omgaan met Indianen te verbeelden, ons open te stellen voor hun andere wereldbeelden en om te gaan met de gewelddadige geschiedenis van hun kolonisatie, zonder deze uit te wissen?

Om deze vragen te kunnen beantwoorden wend ik me tot literatuur en film, die als lakmoesproef fungeren voor de bovenstaande benaderingen. Romans en films helpen me in het ontfutselen van de implicaties, onderlinge verbanden, en, uiteindelijk, het falen van de bovengenoemde academische pogingen de 'wilde' te ontmantelen. Mijn argument krijgt gestalte door close readings die de vorm aannemen van een dialoog tussen theoretische teksten die een voorbeeld zijn van de bovenstaande academische benaderingen en literaire en cinematografische teksten—vier culturele objecten waarin Indianen als 'wilden' verschijnen zowel impliciet als expliciet. Deze romans en films, die zich plaatsen in de twintigste en eenentwintigste eeuw, zijn *Lord of the Flies* (1954) van William Golding, *Brave New World* (1932) van Aldous Huxley, *Inglourious Basterds* (2009) van regisseur Quentin Tarantino, en *The Revenant* (2015), geregisseerd door Alejandro G. Iñárritu. Dit onderzoek brengt literatuur en film, het tekstuele en het visuele, bijeen. Wat alle objecten verenigt is een kritische representatie van Indianen als wilden. Alhoewel Indianen alleen als personages verschijnen in *Brave New World* en *The Revenant*, kunnen we ook in *Lord of the Flies* en in *Inglourious Basterds* zien hoe Indianen als wilden functioneren in de Westerse verbeelding.

Elk hoofdstuk introduceert een andere benadering voor het los wrikken van de figuur van de wilde uit zijn gebruikelijke context. Met andere woorden, elk hoofdstuk behandelt (1) een kunstwerk dat een ander aspect van de Indiaan als wilde thematiseert, en (2) een theoretisch werk dat poogt voorbij te gaan aan de gebruikelijke notie van de wilde. Door de wrijving tussen theorie en kunst kunnen we inzicht krijgen in de grenzen van de theoretische werken en het kritische potentieel van de kunstwerken.

In **hoofdstuk één** bespreek ik de structuralistische poging de tegenstelling in het begrip van de wilde uit te roeien door Goldings *Lord of the Flies* en Claude Lévi-Strauss' *The Savage Mind* samen te nemen. In *The Savage Mind* betoogt Lévi-Strauss dat het wilde denken niet inferieur is aan het moderne denken, maar wel het substraat ervan vormt. Alhoewel de wijze waarop Lévi-Strauss mythische kennis en moderne wetenschap behandelt gezien kan worden als onderdeel van de structuralistische poging te breken met de hiërarchische tegenstelling tussen beschaving en het wilde, relateer ik het falen van deze poging aan structuralistische effecten – in het bijzonder de *vraisemblance* –

zoals besproken door Jonathan Culler. We kunnen zien hoe verschillende niveaus van vraisemblance doorwerken in *Lord of the Flies*. In dit hoofdstuk bespreek ik ook hoe de gebruikelijke tropen die betrekking hebben op de wilde, zoals de nobele wilde, de verachtelijke wilde, en de dierlijke wilde, in de roman worden gerepresenteerd. In mijn verkenning van deze tropen focus ik vooral op de rol van de oudere jongens in de roman, die de dubbelrol lijken te spelen van zowel verachtelijke wilden als kolonisten. De gelijktijdigheid van het wilde en de beschaving, zoals die in de roman plaatsvindt, verdrijft de wilde van haar gebruikelijke positionering als een figuur die van ver komt, zowel van een ver oord als uit een ver verleden. Ik betoog, echter, dat de structuralistische poging de wilde als gelijktijdig en gelijkwaardig aan de beschaafde te positioneren de tegenstelling tussen de beschaafde en de wilde weliswaar kan herkaderen, maar deze niet ongedaan kan maken: zowel de theoreticus, Lévi-Strauss, als de romancier, Golding, werken als 'bricoleurs' en kunnen niet voorbijgaan aan de gebruikelijke context die ze proberen te ontregelen. Deze dialoog tussen theoretische teksten en de roman leidt tot de idee van een 'verschil van binnen' die me tot de poststructuralistische poging brengt voorbij te gaan aan de in een tegenstelling bestaande concept van de wilde.

In **hoofdstuk twee** introduceer ik de poststructuralistische poging de tegenstelling in het concept van de wilde weg te werken door Huxley's *Brave New World* in te duiken, die gelezen kan worden als satirisch in de literaire zin, en als Satire in de betekenis die Hayden White daaraan toeschrijft wanneer hij betoogt dat Satire een vorm van geschiedschrijving biedt waarin mensen opgesloten blijven in en begrensd worden door de wereld. Alhoewel de poststructuralisten trachten weg te bewegen van de binaire tegenstelling van het wilde en de beschaving door de notie van 'verschil van binnen' te benadrukken, kunnen zij er niet aan ontsnappen, daar de poststructuralistische kritiek juist hangt op de tegenstelling die het probeert te doorbreken. Zij blijft in de wereld die al bestaat. Door te beargumenteren dat deconstructie ook generiek satirisch is van aard traceer ik hoe deze benadering, net als de hoofdpersonage John the Savage in de roman, gevangen blijft in het Eurocentrische discours. Dit is ook de reden dat het onmogelijk is om de notie van de wilde uit te roeien door middel van deconstructie. Dit falen brengt mij tot de postkoloniale of multiculturalistische poging voorbij te gaan aan de notie van de wilde door een versterking van verwrongen en verborgen stemmen.

In **hoofdstuk drie** introduceer ik de volgende poging de notie van de wilde uit te roeien, namelijk het ontmantelen van de tegenstelling waarin de wilde bestaat door het pluraliseren van deze notie. In dit hoofdstuk ligt de focus op het werk van de postkoloniale denkers Ella Shohat en Robert Stam. In hun werk stellen de auteurs het idee voor de verborgen en verdraaide stemmen van andere te versterken, zodat een veelvoud aan stemmen gehoord kan worden in plaats van slechts één dominante stem. Anders dan in de twee voorgaande hoofdstukken, waarin literaire teksten bestudeerd worden, richt dit hoofdstuk zich op de representatie van Indianen als wilden door de analyse van de film *Inglourious Basterds*. Als postmodern kunstwerk brengt de film verschillende geschiedenissen samen door middel van de parodie. Door deze verschillende geschiedenissen te versterken worden ook stereotypische representaties van Indianen zichtbaar. Echter, al worden deze stereotypische representaties

geparodieerd en bekritiseerd, ze vernieuwen zich ook steeds door herhaling. Dit zou een reden kunnen zijn voor de onmogelijkheid de notie van de wilde uit te roeien door middel van het pluralisme.

In voorgaande hoofdstukken werd de Indiaan als wilde steeds verbeeld uit een Eurocentrisch perspectief. **Hoofdstuk vier** richt zich tot het heden en tot visuele representaties van Indianen, met als casus de film *The Revenant*. Hier introduceer ik ideeën van dekoloniale denkers die betogen dat kolonialiteit en moderniteit twee kanten zijn van dezelfde medaille. De dekoloniale benadering bestaat in het verveelvoudigen van stemmen in plaats van het pluraliseren van stemmen, en zoekt een manier van wegbreken van Eurocentrische perspectieven door het vestigen van alternatieve wijzen van begrijpen en kennen. De representaties van Indianen in de film bevragen de binaire tegenstelling tussen 'wilde' Indianen en 'beschaafde' Europese kolonisten, tussen 'goede' en 'slechte' Indianen, en suggereren tegelijkertijd alternatieve manieren van kennen en begrijpen. Door de dekoloniale perspectieven te testen in mijn analyse van de film laat ik zien dat de kritiek die de film uit op de koloniale redeneerwijze niet stop bij het ongedaan maken van de tegenstelling wild/beschaafd. De film projecteert Eurocentrische wijze van kennen naast alternatieve wereldbeelden en conceptualiseringen van de relatie van zelf en ander. In het bijzonder focus ik op wat ik 'dekoloniale momenten' noem, die tonen hoe de film zich ontkoppelt van Eurocentrische perspectieven en van de rol van de wilde daarin. Toch is dit proces van 'ontkoppelen' nooit voltooid, daar de figuur van de wilde volhardt op spookachtige wijze, volgens de logica van Derrida's 'hauntology'. Geesten van wilden zijn in de film niet alleen conceptuele metaforen voor de onvoltooide doorwerking van het kolonialisme in het heden, maar ze zijn ook delen van de werkelijkheid – in overeenstemming met de overtuigingen die gedeeld worden door Indiaanse maatschappijen – die een veelvoud aan geschiedenissen en perspectieven belichamen.

In mijn **conclusie** betoog ik dat de wilde, als levende geest, het Westerse discours op spookachtige wijze blijft achtervolgen. Als levende geest is het spookachtige effect van de wilde die blijft achtervolgen zo sterk dat het onmogelijk is geworden deze uit te roeien. Toch stel ik voor de geestachtige status van Indianen, de dwalende aanwezigheid van hun verleden, als ook hun materiële werkelijkheid in de wereld van vandaag, en de verschillende wereldbeelden die ze introduceren, te onderzoeken. Dit komt neer op een praktijk van leren met geesten te leven in plaats van ze te ontkennen of te proberen ze te overwinnen.

Acknowledgements

Writing a PhD thesis is a process full of ups and downs. Sometimes it felt like climbing a precipitous mountain, where I could hardly see the direction, and sometimes it felt like taking a lift, where I just enjoyed the speed. In the process of writing my dissertation, circumstances rolled in and out like the ocean's tide. A successful sailing depended heavily on the constant support, encouragement and help from so many people.

Big applauds first go to my two excellent supervisors Frans-Willem Korsten and Maria Boletsi, who worked like my academic father and mother. They have, each in their own way, raised me up from a naïve student to a grown-up and more independent scholar. I particularly want to thank Frans-Willem for his guidance, suggestions and humor, as well as for his trust in me and my work and for his constant back-up and a source of inspiration and motivation. I am also very grateful for Maria, whose efficiency and critical thinking impressed me enormously. Thank you also, Maria, for your trust and willingness to give me a valuable chance to publish the article.

My colleagues in LUCAS, particularly those in the Modern and Contemporary Studies, have helped me to develop a critical vision. I would like to thank Yasco Horsman and Pepita Hesselberth for the permission to attend their wonderful classes, which had a decisive influence on my initial stage of PhD study. Thanks go to Ernst van Alphen for holding many interesting seminars in Leiden University, where I could join in the heated discussions and exchange ideas with other participants. I also owe thanks to my fellow PhD candidates, Gerlov van Engelenhoven, Tessa de Zeeuw, Sara Polak, Looi van Kessel, Inge 't Hart, Marijn van Dijk, Mark O'Donnell, Thomas Bragdon, Nike van Helden, Tine Nederveen, and Emma de Vries. Thank you for coming together in various seminars and exchanging ideas. Our acquaintance during these meetings turned into a valuable friendship. A special place in this group belongs to Thomas: thanks for translating German scripts into English.

I also owe many thanks to Blair Marie Williams and Tyler Sage, my editors, for brushing up the text and insightful comments. Thanks go to Tessa for her valuable help with the Dutch version of this dissertation's summary.

I also want to thank all the participants and organizers of the seminars and workshops I attended organized by NICA (Netherlands Institute for Cultural Analysis Seminar) and OLS (The Netherlands Research School for Literary Studies). Through engagements with these activities, I had the chance to exchange ideas with other PhD students, which helped to broad my vision and cultivate my interdisciplinary interest.

For the financial support of my project, I am grateful to The China Scholarship Council (CSC) for offering the funding for my stay in the Netherlands. Also to LUCAS and LUF, whose support made a conference trip to the States possible. I was always helped by Korrie Korevaart, Lia ten Brink and Viola Stoop, and Alyssa Westhoek from the secretary's office of LUCAS. I thank them for always being efficient, helpful and, warm-hearted. I am equally grateful for the chance provided by LUCAS, so that I could be one of the organizer of the International Graduate Conference "Breaking the Rules"

Curriculum Vitae

Cui Chen was born on March 13, 1989 in Heze, Shandong Province, China. After finishing her high school in 2005, she studies English Language and Literature in Shandong University of Finance and Economics (Jinan, China). During her studies in Jinan, she spent two semesters as an exchange-student at the Department of Foreign languages and Literature of Shandong University (2007-2008). Upon receiving her Bachelor degree in 2009, she continued her studies as a master student in Shandong University and graduated in 2012. In October, 2012 she came to the Netherlands and started her PhD research in LUCAS, Leiden University under the supervision of Prof. Frans-Willem Korsten and Dr. Maria Boletsi. During her doctoral research, she had the opportunity to co-organize a graduate international conference in Leiden and present her work at international conferences and symposia in Leiden and Amherst.