

Georgia State University

ScholarWorks @ Georgia State University

---

English Dissertations

Department of English

---

Fall 12-12-2023

## Transatlantic Utopia: American Antebellum Novels and Their Reflexive Historicism

Andrew J. Lamb  
*Georgia State University*

Follow this and additional works at: [https://scholarworks.gsu.edu/english\\_diss](https://scholarworks.gsu.edu/english_diss)

---

### Recommended Citation

Lamb, Andrew J., "Transatlantic Utopia: American Antebellum Novels and Their Reflexive Historicism." Dissertation, Georgia State University, 2023.  
doi: <https://doi.org/10.57709/35965724>

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Department of English at ScholarWorks @ Georgia State University. It has been accepted for inclusion in English Dissertations by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks @ Georgia State University. For more information, please contact [scholarworks@gsu.edu](mailto:scholarworks@gsu.edu).

Transatlantic Utopia: American Antebellum Novels and Their Reflexive Historicism

by

Andrew James Lamb

Under the Direction of Dr. Mark Noble PhD

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctorate of Philosophy (PhD) in English

in the College of Arts and Sciences

Georgia State University

2023

## ABSTRACT

This dissertation argues that the utopian novel offers an invaluable lens for understanding the social fabric of the antebellum America. The project focuses mainly on four works: Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Blithedale Romance* (1852), a fantasy roman à clef of the Brook Farm utopian colony; William Gilmore Simms' *The Yemassee* (1835), a novel about the native American threat to the utopia of a slaveocracy; Martin Delany's *Blake; or the Huts of America* (1859), a call for pan-African revolt in North America; and Robert Henry Newell's *Avery Glibun; or, Between Two Fires* (1867), a fantasy bildungsroman about the antebellum period as a utopia in itself. My readings of these novels examine the different utopian aspects inherent in each text, drawing out the ways readership patterns illustrate that such works both amplify and complicate societal agitation for women's equality, abolition, attention to class inequities, religious renewal, and even political revolution. The common thread linking these topics is a question about the utility of the novel as a demonstrable instrument of social change. The porous political boundaries of the antebellum United States make for a literary environment ripe for the ideals and philosophy of European thinkers to take hold, and hence the term transatlantic. The dissertation approaches the developing field of 'transatlanticism' in literary studies, asking how American writers create a diaphanous geopolitical space redolent of an Elysian mythos. On the granular level, the literary analysis unearths evidence of the utopian reasoning of each novelist as he or she posits a counterpoint to the hegemonic structure of antebellum American society. I will argue that the Protestant ideals of social reform enables the novel to reach an emerging middle-class readership with a utopian idealism coupled with a pre-Marxist evangelical spirituality in the decades leading up to the Civil War.

INDEX WORDS: American Literature, antebellum, transatlantic, utopian novel

Copyright by  
Andrew James Lamb  
2023

Transatlantic Utopia: American Antebellum Novels and their Reflexive Historicism

By  
A. J. Lamb

Andrew J. Lamb

Committee Chair: Mark Noble

Committee: Reiner Smolinski

Robin Huff

Electronic Version Approved:

Office of Graduate Services

College of Arts and Sciences

Georgia State University

May 2023

## DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my father, Raymond Michael Lamb II (B.A. Economics, *The Ohio State University*, M.S. Business and Management, *Georgia State University*, and ed.D., *University of Georgia*), without whose support this project would not have been remotely possible. I credit my bibliophile mother Joanna with teaching the discipline of sitting in my chair and reading silently. My brother, Raymond Michael Lamb III, (B.A. Psychology, *Duke University*, MBA *The University of Pennsylvania, Wharton*) gave me the encouragement and focus to see it to completion.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Without the prayer support of my youth pastor, Samuel Augustine Lee and his wife Grace Sun, I wouldn't have even be able to start. Dr. Mark Noble, my dissertation chair, has provided the scientific smarts and lent me his capable 'red pen' to get this job done. Dr. Reiner Smolinski gave me intriguing ideas about the antebellum corpus and helped me sketch a rudimentary outline. Dr. Robin Huff gave me critical insights about future directions that the project could take. Dr. Joe Kelly, an alumnus of Georgia State University's doctoral program in English, provided the technical know-how that I needed to realize what it would take to get it finished. Joshua Privett was an essential encouraging voice throughout this whole process. Cory Schlotzhauer from Georgia State University's Pullen Library offered his expertise with microfiche. The English department's resident librarian, Leslie Madden, taught my composition students bibliographic methods which aided me with my student teaching requirements as a Graduate Teaching Assistant and gave me breathing room. Without the emotional support of my ex-girlfriend Melissa, I never would have completed my Comprehensive Exams to the doctoral committee's satisfaction. Marsha Durlin who taught at Pace Academy in Atlanta, Georgia for over 40 years was the beginning of my love for American literature. My son Gabriel's smile was instrumental in overcoming numerous 'brown studies.' There are many other silent voices that helped me along the way, too numerous to mention in brief.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</b> .....	<b>IV</b>
<b>LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS</b> .....	<b>VIII</b>
<b>PREFACE</b> .....	<b>IX</b>
<b>1. INTRODUCTION</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>1.1 Pre-1800 Diarists of Utopia</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>1.2 Recent Voices on American Utopian Fiction</b> .....	<b>9</b>
<b>1.3 Chapter Summaries</b> .....	<b>16</b>
<b>2. TRANSATLANTIC UTOPIA: HAWTHORNE’S THE BLITHEDALE ROMANCE</b> .....	<b>23</b>
<b>2.1 Fourier to Brook Farm</b> .....	<b>25</b>
<b>2.2 Literary Analysis of ‘Edenic Utopia’ in <i>The Blithedale Romance</i></b> .....	<b>40</b>
<b>2.3 The centrality of Eliot’s Pulpit</b> .....	<b>46</b>
<b>2.4 Zenobia’s Suicide</b> .....	<b>57</b>
<b>3. A NATIVE UTOPIA: SIMMS’ <i>THE YEMASSEE</i> AND APRESS’ <i>A SON OF THE FOREST</i></b> .....	<b>63</b>
<b>3.1 What is <i>The Yemassee</i>?</b> .....	<b>64</b>
<b>3.2 Simms Novel as Utopian ‘History’</b> .....	<b>68</b>
3.2.1 Simms vis à vis Apress .....	<b>84</b>
<b>3.3 Apress’ <i>A Son of the Forest</i> as a Utopian Memoir</b> .....	<b>86</b>
<b>3.4 Conclusion</b> .....	<b>103</b>

<b>4.</b>	<b>PAN-AFRICAN UTOPIA: DELANY’S <i>BLAKE</i></b> .....	<b>103</b>
<b>4.1</b>	<b>Martin Delany Bio</b> .....	<b>107</b>
<b>4.2</b>	<b>Liberation Theology</b> .....	<b>116</b>
<b>4.3</b>	<b>Pan-African Utopia</b> .....	<b>134</b>
<b>4.4</b>	<b>Conclusion...</b> .....	<b>140</b>
<b>5.</b>	<b>NOSTALGIC UTOPIA: NEWELL'S <i>AVERY GLIBUN</i> (Conclusion)</b> .....	<b>143</b>
	<b>APPENDICES</b> .....	<b>150</b>
	<b>Appendix A (“The Veiled Lady” TBR)</b> .....	<b>150</b>
	<i>Appendix A.1 (“Tecumseh” from E. West’s article in <i>American History</i>)</i> .....	<b>151</b>
	<i>Appendix A.2 (“William Apess” ASOTF)</i> .....	<b>152</b>
	<b>Appendix B (Frontispiece woodcut from TY)</b> .....	<b>153</b>
	<b>Appendix C (Constellation Map from Jerome McGann ed. of <i>BOTHOA</i>)</b> .....	<b>154</b>
	<b>Appendix D (Frontispiece from facsimile of AG)</b> .....	<b>155</b>
	<b>NOTES</b> .....	<b>156</b>
	<b>REFERENCES</b> .....	<b>179</b>

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

The Bible, (English Standard Version).....	ESV
The Bible, (New International Version) .....	NIV
Nathaniel Hawthorne, <i>The Blithedale Romance</i> .....	TBR
William Gilmore Simms, <i>The Yemassee</i> (1882).....	TY
William Apess, “A Son of the Forest” in <i>On Our Own Ground</i> .....	ASOTF
Martin R. Delany, <i>Blake, or the Huts of America</i> (ed. Jerome McGann) .....	BOTHOA
Robert Henry Newell (Orpheus C. Kerr), <i>Avery Glibun, or Between Two Fires</i> , (1867 edition) .....	AG

## PREFACE

From its genesis in Plato's *Republic* (~375 B.C.E.), utopian literature has a track record of diagnosing social ills and offering prescriptive social engineering. The history of utopian literature spans from antiquity to British pre-renaissance history, such as Plato's *Republic* and Thomas More's *Utopia* (1516). Indeed, western civilization furnishes a vast storehouse of social idealism written in the form of novels, social science, and history that traces itself back to the United Kingdom and even Ancient Greece. This project examines a specific interval of American antebellum literature through the Civil War (1800-1867) charting how utopian idealism helped form a literary genre that became essential to the cultural and social fabric of the burgeoning republic. In her *The Archaeology of Utopian Literature and Intentional Communities* (2017) Stacy C. Kozakavich claims that: "Writers later in the nineteenth century, when more of the globe had been charted by travelers over sea and rail, still found their perfect societies in faraway places just outside the realm of known geography."<sup>1</sup> Locating the notion of the ideal society abroad, according to Kozakavich, binds antebellum utopian literature to an 'orientalist' or 'amorphous' geography. Utopian novels rarely occurred in the latter nineteenth century, in other words, without some reference to a diaphanous geopolitical space. But earlier utopian fiction was only in a sense, trying to color in the lines of utopian literature that had come before: "[s]ubsequent utopian literature and experimentation echoed [Sir Thomas] More's aspirations to achieve a world free of political tyranny, poverty, and social ills."<sup>2</sup> Utopian literature, therefore, is imaginative literature that presciently seeks to solve social problems or address social ills.

Therefore, antebellum utopian literature remains focused on the present social ills, and hence, less orientalist than earlier efforts. Perhaps Jonathan Swift's ribald satire *A Modest Proposal* (1729) might logically fall in this category, but few of the examples from the antebellum era novels dedicated to utopian idealism are satire. The idealism in each of the novels which make up the corpus of the dissertation are each different, and certainly have moments of satire, but each uniquely tries to further a French philosopher Henri Saint-Simon's idealist worldview that "Eden is ahead of us, not before us."<sup>3</sup> The yoking of Christian spirituality and sentimentalism in such novels and socialism may seem unusual to casual observers of this fiction, particularly in utopian novels such as Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Blithedale Romance* (1852). But *The Blithedale Romance* remains a prominent feature of the theological liberalism that helped sustain American literature's avatars "as renewers of spiritual life," in what Barbara Packer calls its embryonic phase.<sup>4</sup>

I argue that changing attitudes towards the Puritan heritage of the inchoate United States opened the way not simply for utopian fiction, but "intentional communities [which] critique dominant society."<sup>5</sup> Some of these experiments are considered canonical like Hawthorne's novel and Thoreau's *Walden* (1854). But others are just starting to receive critical attention, such as William Gilmore Simms' *The Yemassee* (1835) and Martin Delany's *Blake, or, the Huts of America* (1859). Some have been entirely forgotten by literary history, even though they were immensely popular at the time that they were written, such as Newell's *Avery Glibun, or Between Two Fires* (1867). But each shares a deep concern for the novel as an instrument that could logically reform American life through imaginative reconstruction of a utopian society.

My goal in this dissertation was to use a New Historicist lens to chart the historical developments regarding the novel, a genre that Stephen Greenblatt claims "has been particularly

sensitive to the diverse ways in which individuals come to terms with the governing patterns of culture.”<sup>6</sup> This historicist approach might be described as the ‘granite’ on which the ‘loamy soil’ of literary analysis might rest, and so provide the right conditions for the ‘vegetation’ of an argument to grow. My methodology looks at each novel as a tree that grew in a certain environment, and my role as a scholar in this developing field to ‘drill down’ as far as necessary until I hit something historically solid, to provide a firm basis for the argument. But Kozakavich also remains essential in addressing historically verified associationist utopian colonies in America during the antebellum period, “[which] bring together members who collectively embrace a shared vision of a perfect (or at least improved) social order but also who reject certain prevailing cultural or economic norms.”<sup>7</sup> Carl Guarneri’s history *The Utopian Alternative: Fourierism in Nineteenth Century America* (1991) furnishes the ambitious reader with a redoubtable account of Brook Farm, a utopian community once located in West Roxbury, Massachusetts, which had an indelible Transcendentalist thumbprint. Other small socialist intentional communities are the subject of other studies, such as John Matteson’s *Eden’s Outcasts: the Story of Louisa May Alcott and Her Father* (2007), which details the history of the Fruitlands colony established by Bronson Alcott and her daughter Louisa May Alcott, or the Nashoba colony established by Fanny Wright, the author of *A Few Days in Athens* (1822).

This dissertation does not have in mind to detail how these colonies came about or whether they were successful or not. Instead, I argue that utopian fiction is the logical outcome of the birth of the novel as a repository for the mores and aspirations of the ‘Young America’ society of the time written in the “optative mood.”<sup>8</sup> I call this trend ‘novelism’ – a term that I

---

<sup>6</sup> Edward Widmer has historically verified the turn in literary nationalism that typified the ‘Young America’ authors. The original coterie of authors in New York City who were supported by editor Evert Duykinck included William Gilmore Simms, Cornelius Mathews, James Kirke Paulding, and Herman Melville helped to build a “nationwide Democratic canon, in place of the New England-Whig orthodoxy” (94). ‘Young America’ authors

use to describe the importance of historical fiction in an era deeply suspicious of the probity of novel reading, but also one in which the line between non-fiction and fiction was often intentionally blurred. Utopian novels of this period are by and large historical fiction, but they exist in an alterity of porous geopolitical space because of the historical lack of firm political boundaries during the period of settlement and westward expansion in this period. Thus, I aim to prove that American literature during this period is an amalgam of French socialism (Charles Fourier), European idealism (Thomas Carlyle), and a brief literary penchant for the historical fiction of Sir Walter Scott, the household name author of the antebellum era. I also endeavor to prove that the move towards Unitarianism and theological liberalism during this time, and a rejection of John Locke's ideas in *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1689) about sense memory and rote memorization, produced a ripe environment for these novels to appear, and paved the way for future utopian novels in the post-Civil War era of literary production.

---

railed against a lack of "international copyright," which allowed English novels to be imported cheaply in order to undersell the budding growth of homegrown authors (99).

## 1 INTRODUCTION

The modern university in the U.S. begins with the ideal of preparing ministers to spread a conservative evangelical message, as typified by the Biblical mottoes of its oldest universities, Harvard University (1636), *Veritas* (Truth); Columbia (1636) *In Lumine Tuo, Videbimus Lumen* (In your light, we find light); and Princeton (1746) *Dei Sub Numine Viget* (Under God's Power She Flourishes). In the antebellum era, however, the theological liberalism in the form of Unitarianism began to hold sway, and today the Ivy League chapels are largely museum pieces. How and why did this shift occur in the oldest American institutions of higher learning? I argue that during the antebellum period, the turn towards theological liberalism, also recounted in detail in Philip Gura's *American Transcendentalism* (2007), paved the way for socialism to be yoked with ecumenical Christianity in a way that would never be possible today. In today's political context, as Donald J. Trump prepares to run in 2024, 'socialism' has become a prime target for conservative culture warriors of the "Make America Great Again" (MAGA) persuasion. Even the mention of the 's' word today orients the invoker with a form of liberal orthodoxy hostile to Trump's political platform and social following. But it was not always so in the United States before the Civil War. Acolytes of Associationism often cited passages from the Bible in which members "...had all things in common," as evidence that communitarian living was not just orthodoxy, but the logical pattern of the early church.<sup>1</sup> In this dissertation, I argue that the utopian idealism of the 1830's, 40's and 50's, along with the rise of Unitarian heterodoxy, birthed novels sympathetic to the idea that Christianity and socialism could actually be bedfellows. But in each of these historical case studies linked to novels before the Civil War, that idealism did not just extend to historically based intentional communities, such as Brook Farm, where novelist Nathaniel Hawthorne resided for a brief period in the thirties before

penning his account of the commune, *The Blithedale Romance*. Four divergent visions of utopian thought were replete in four literary experiments of the antebellum era, novels which I bring into critical focus in the latter chapters of this dissertation.

Our conception of the utopian novel starts with our modern standards about the novel. Typically, we expect such a novel to propose a futuristic society in which ills of the current society are addressed and remedied. This idea has been the standard of the utopian novel in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, featuring such titles as William Morris' *News from Nowhere* (1890), and H. G. Wells' *A Modern Utopia* (1905), and William Dean Howells' *A Traveller from Altruria* (1894). But novels in the antebellum era complicate this idea, offering an unusual syncretism between the concept of utopia most plainly stated in Plato's *The Republic* and ideals of a perfect society found in theological liberalism of the period, a concept I will call 'elysium.' Scholars such as Lawrence Buell, Jane Tompkins, and Wai Chee Dimock have pointed out the way in which novels of the antebellum period have brought about societal reform by pointing to a foundational ethic, most notably Buell's "voluntary simplicity discourse" that runs through American literature of this period valorizing "downward mobility."<sup>2</sup> Dimock, in particular, has identified the "transnational" trend in 21<sup>st</sup> century American literary studies.<sup>3</sup> But few have mentioned how these concepts were tied to theological liberalism of the antebellum period, in such a way as to bring about ecumenical as well as societal reform. Because the secular utopian novel has such sway in the popular imagination, it is necessary to reconstruct the conditions that led to the popular American utopian novel, in order to answer the fundamental research question: "How does theological liberalism inform the creation of the American utopian novel in its gestational stage?" In looking closely at four main antebellum novels of the period (and one memoir), I hope to answer such a question and give nineteenth century literary scholars

a more transparent picture as to what brought about the American idiom utopian fiction in the first place.

Essential to the utopian landscape of fiction of the period is a mimesis of the political *sennsucht* of the antebellum era. Early historical accounts of slave revolts prefigure in many of the utopian strivings as represented in anti-slavery novels of the period. But the idea of antebellum elysium hinged on the supposition that socialism and christian liberalism could coexist. The abolition of private property then, was a salient feature of the utopian communities that would follow: George Ripley's Brook Farm, John Humphrey Noyes' Oneida community, and Fanny Wright's Nashoba community. Her axiomatic purpose for Nashoba was that: "[it be] founded on the principle of community of property, and of labor."<sup>4</sup>

This antebellum literary landscape shifts to include novels with revisionist histories as prominently featured in historical fiction of the period. Starting with John Neal's *Rachel Dyer* (1818), William Gilmore Simms' *The Yemassee* (1835) and extending to Robert M. Bird's *Sheppard Lee* (1836), the focus on historical fiction allowed for a unique blend of fictional forms of revisionist history. These works tend to tell us more about the political climate of the later antebellum period rather than portray historical moments with clinical accuracy. Special attention will be given to the nebulous alterity between historical nonfiction of the period and fictional diegesis. This principle is enshrined in Simms' *The Yemassee*, where he writes in indirect narrative discourse: "Our tale becomes history."<sup>5</sup>

What emerges from the 'embryonic moment' in American literature is a transatlantic focus. In some form or fashion, Franco-European notions of socialism, such as Charles Fourier's philosophical writings, percolated into U.S. literary production of a nation. This trend in American writing lends credence to Paul Giles' argument that literature of this period, though self-

consciously nationalistic, reflects a “deterritorialized” geopolitical space.<sup>6</sup> In any case, I wish to show how this “transatlantic” focus brought about a national corpus of American Literature which 20<sup>th</sup> century critical icons such as Perry Miller, F. O. Matthiessen, and Van Wyck Brooks termed the ‘American Renaissance’ – arguments which emphasize literary nationalism as a vital aspect of the literary production of the period which produced the literary avatars of the era: Poe, Whitman, Thoreau, Emerson, and Hawthorne.

Much has been written about the application of the novel towards social causes. Intentional communities began populating the unsettled American wilderness during the antebellum period, such colonies as Noyes ‘Oneida’ community founded in western New York state. Noyes’ project in western New York state was unique, albeit ephemeral: “For 30 years, the community maintained their whole group family structure, until mounting mainstream opposition and critique led Noyes to flee to Canada.”<sup>7</sup> But the Oneida community, as successful as it was, failed to produce a utopian novel critiquing the success or failure of the enterprise, even though it lasted much longer than the average longevity of such experiments. Thoreau’s experiment in *Walden* (1854) to create ‘a utopia of one’ lasted only a few years and was a daring social experiment after the poor sales of his earlier effort *A Week on the Merrimack and Concord Rivers* (1849). Etienne Cabet, a Frenchman with utopian aspirations as well as literary hubris, founded the Icarian settlement in Nauvoo, Illinois, an experiment which outlasted the antebellum era and ended after the Civil war in California after many resettlements. Cabet’s novel about this utopian colony *Travels in Icaria* (1842) is a fertile source about the social engineering that dominated utopian idealism at this time. Each of these kind of efforts that continued into the latter half of the Nineteenth century, and notably Edward Bellamy’s *Looking Backward* (1888) and William Dean Howells’ *A Traveller from Altruria* (1905) are each prescriptive models – they

lean towards social reform through instrumentalism. But the novels in this study are quite different: they are inextricably linked to a theological liberalism which is progressive in mindset but inextricably tied to Christian worldviews. This theological aspect, I will argue, has been overlooked in many studies of utopian literature from this period. I want to investigate this Christian ethos that motivated these colonies in hopes of shedding light on how it is possible that socialism and Christianity are inherently divided in 21<sup>st</sup> century culture wars. Before the onset of Karl Marx and his characterizations of the class warfare between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, how did utopian thinkers such as Fourier and Saint-Simon (both Frenchmen) see their project as inherently tied to newly developing liberation theology in a way that obviously contrasts with the historical materialism of Marx? Furthermore, how does theological liberalism inform the creation of the American utopian novel at its gestational stage? In looking closely at four main antebellum novels of the period, (and some non-fictional foils) I hope to bring to the field of nineteenth century American literature a unique perspective on how the early utopian novel was vitally connected to ecumenical reform movements. Using novelism as a lens with which to provide critical focus, and reviewing utopian trends from the antebellum era, I will argue that Elysian aspirations colored the approach of utopian fiction towards the decentralized intentional communities that they represented and allowed novels to remain a fertile ground for transformations of the “social imaginary.”<sup>8</sup>

For F. O. Matthiessen, the antebellum period constituted an *American Renaissance*, centered on work by several canonical avatars of the era: Whitman, Hawthorne, Melville, Thoreau, and Emerson. Although other authors are prominently featured in Matthiessen, this mindset led to a bias towards these authors who were heavily emphasized in classrooms covering this period of literary history. However, I argue that while it is important to retain the

“representation” inherent in these voices in the American renaissance and canon, there are some notable omissions from the era that deserve critical attention.<sup>9</sup> I begin with Nathaniel Hawthorne simply because he is a logical reference point for critical focus, a *point de repère* for the genesis of the American utopian novel. Other authors I visit in this dissertation have recently garnered critical focus but are not considered to be part of the American Renaissance. But I aim to include marginalized minority voices in the spirit Toni Morrison’s *cri de coeur* in her posthumous *What Moves at the Margin* (2008), by invoking a Native American utopian non-fictional piece by William Apess, an African-American author, Martin Delany, whose works have been recovered by recent scholars of the era. I then turn a critical eye to utopian fiction from the immediate years following the Civil War by an author who has merited scant critical focus – the author R. H. Newell, whose *Orpheus C. Kerr Papers* (1862) are routinely studied by historians of the Civil War period, but whose fiction has been largely ignored by recent scholars of the Gilded Age period in favor of Howells, James, and Twain. I look at one exemplar of his satirical fiction *Avery Glibun, or, Between Two Fires* (1867). Though the novel is clearly not of the literary merit of other Gilded Age authors, his focus on the antebellum period nostalgia as a utopia in itself is of immediate concern to this critical study.

### **1.1 Pre-1800 Diarists of Utopian Fiction**

Previous authors who have examined the colonial period in American literary history have had different labels for it. In his *A History of American Literature* (1896), eminent literary critic Moses Coit Tyler recounts the prosaic diaries and memoirs that might account for a colonial American’s perspective of utopia. Each of these diarists only labored as prospectors of their particularly colony, which were not united in any sense of the word. These accounts are too

numerous and detailed to exhaustively treat here. But, for the purposes of laying the groundwork for the American conception of utopia before the Revolutionary War, a few are catalogued here.

In Virginia, Hugh Jones penned *The Present State of Virginia* (1724), perhaps a logical precursor to Thomas Jefferson's precolonial effort *Notes on the State of Virginia* (1780) which he wrote while he was governor of the colony. Tyler recounts that Jones' "eulogiums upon his adopted colony are not incapable of a sarcastic edge when turned to the other colonies."<sup>10</sup> In his memoir, Jones writes that "[i]f New England be called a receptacle of dissenters, and an Amsterdam of religion, Pennsylvania the nurse of Quakers, Maryland the retirement of Roman Catholics, North Caroline the refuge of runaways, and South Caroline the delight of buccaneers and pirates, Virginia may be justly esteemed the happy retreat of true Britons and true Churchmen."<sup>11</sup> The utopian idealism featured here not only shows some competitive resonance to diaries from this era, but also how fundamentally utopian idealism of this pre-antebellum period was tied to the church. One other prolific diarist from Virginia, William Byrd of Westover, "a man of princely fortunes and princely ways" authored a diary of his prospecting near the river Dan in North Carolina entitled *A Journey to the Land of Eden*.<sup>12</sup> The idea that an Empyrean reality underscored the methods of prospecting and land surveying was implicit in the detailed and often prosaic sketches in these ubiquitous volumes.

John Lawson, a native of North Carolina, was himself a martyr to the cause of settler utopian idealism, after being captured and executed in 1711 by Tuscarora Indians, who captured him on one of his nature walks and "burned him at the stake."<sup>13</sup> Yet, he wrote a magisterial account of his travels and surveys entitled *A Voyage to Carolina* (1709). He wrote of the natural geography of the region with utopian undertones. One journal from 1700 called his local region in the colony of North Carolina "a delicious country, being placed in that girdle of the world

which affords wine, oil, fruit, grain, and silk, with other commodities, besides a sweet air, moderate climate, and fertile soil. These blessings... crow our days with health and plenty, which, when joined with content, renders the possessors the happiest race of men upon earth.”<sup>14</sup> The contrast between Lawson’s marketing to his British financial supporters and his grisly end reveals how close conceptions of utopia were tied to the natural geography and fiduciary climate of this region. This account will set the stage for novelistic descriptions of natural wonders, which remains a potent and ontological motif in American literary history from the beginning.

Most of these diaries from the pre-colonial period, however, were not well written or endowed with the narrative flow of a typical novel of the antebellum years. Another diarist, Samuel Smith, tries even the patience of Tyler to decode and translate for his readers: “His book is a dry ponderous performance, a compilation of dull documents and dull facts.”<sup>15</sup> Smith’s account of New York, as well as his predecessors Daniel Denton in his *A Brief Description of New York* (1670) and Lewis Morris’ personal papers reveal the way in which novelism was roundly rejected in the pre-colonial period. Instead, only clinical accuracy was prized in the surveying of land, a skill that was honed by Thomas Jefferson, who perfected this subgenre of early American letters in his *Notes on the State of Virginia*.

Novels were perceived, as Thomas Koenigs has argued, as deleterious to the public morals and general conduct of the citizen of the British commonwealth: “Protestant theologians [in the colonial period] had long regarded the imagination as a source of delusion and associated it with either human fallibility or the deceptions of Satan.”<sup>16</sup> Novelistic production was thus suppressed, and only such documents with clinical accounts of the geographical domain of the colony were preserved. Koenigs calls this phenomenon “the specter of novelism.”<sup>17</sup> It is likely that the utopian novel had not really been invented at this time, although it is clearly visible in the diaries, letters,

and correspondence of the worthies of the era. So at least in one respect, colonial Americans would have completely rejected the idea that a novel could be used for nation building or political reform. Instead, they harbored “pervasive anxiety about the pernicious effects of fiction-reading on republican society.”<sup>18</sup>

## 1.2 Recent Voices in Contemporary Utopian Studies

Other studies have looked at utopian novels from the antebellum period with an eye towards a particular social ill or problem. Jane Tompkins, in her *Sensational Designs* (1985) contends that the antebellum period was an epoch “infused with Christian sentimentalism.”<sup>19</sup> She catalogues the career of Nathaniel Hawthorne as a “touchstone” of “literary excellence.”<sup>20</sup> In her view, Hawthorne authored his masterpieces without regard to historical context, as “literary classics do not withstand change; rather, they are always registering, or promoting, or retarding alterations in historical conditions.”<sup>21</sup> Therefore, Tompkins conservative approach avers that readers are affected by ‘historical conditions,’ while the literary classics essentially remain unchanged. This might vitiate the argument that novels could be used for social change, but more potent and contemporary counterarguments to Tompkins exist.

For Christian Haines, “the utopian impulse has lingered...in the form of a strange reversal of those practices that elevate the United States to the position of a model nation, immunizing it from critique through narratives of global salvation.”<sup>22</sup> Haines perceives American ‘exceptionalism’ shot through with ecumenism as a positive impediment to political change. Haines’ study of the antebellum literary corpus attempts to obviate Tompkins’ ‘christian sentimentalism’ which he argues insulates the nation from critique. He thus advocates a “biopolitical turn in American studies as a way of overcoming this impasse,” in order to subdue in turn the religious sentimentalism which elected president Trump.<sup>23</sup> By divesting literary

studies of this sentimentalism, he seeks a critique of utopian desire more sympathetic to “alternative forms of life” which emphasize the liberal ideals of ecology, social justice, and economic parity.<sup>24</sup>

Justine S. Murison’s *The Politics of Anxiety in Nineteenth Century American Literature* (2011) takes a unique spin on communal life at Brook Farm as visualized through Hawthorne’s novel. She avers an intriguing conditional that: “[i]f the threat of erotic mesmeric possession underscores Coverdale’s intimate relations, the pain involved in mesmeric demonstrations allows [him] to probe the corporeal dimensions of communal bonds.”<sup>25</sup> In Murison’s view, scientific materialism would unearth the chemical and biological basis of human community, undergirded by logical positivism and dialectical materialism. If this view holds, the key to understanding why Brook Farm went up in a mighty conflagration can be adequately discerned with empirical methods. But Murison discards any notion of the ethereal or numinous in her definition of what holds community together. Her analysis of utopian writing exemplifies how contemporary studies often ignore the liberal theology that underscored the genesis of intentional communities such as Brook Farm.

Thomas Koenigs’ notion of the ‘specter of novelism’ emerged from New Historicist studies of the novel developing in the late antebellum period of the thirties, forties, and fifties. Koenigs takes a page from Gerard Genette in the way that “[he] distinguished between the constitutive and conditional modes of literariness.”<sup>26</sup> Koenigs argues that the “pervasive anxiety about the pernicious effects of fiction-reading on republican society” of the antebellum period reveals that notions of literary merit in which fiction can be evaluated with its own set of criteria had not yet appeared.<sup>27</sup> Koenigs notes that antebellum literature “could encompass both the fictional ... and the non-fictional.”<sup>28</sup> He calls the process of delineating the boundaries of fiction

“the novelization of American fiction.”<sup>29</sup> I argue that utopian novels of this period amounted to a transatlantic negotiations of geopolitical space, such that these American novels largely reflect European religious utopian longings for political reform tied to the notion that “Eden is not behind us, but before us.”<sup>30</sup> Some of the utopian novels in question in this dissertation point directly to historical exemplars of socialist communes (such as Brook Farm), others to political ideologies that clashed up until the civil war (such as William Gilmore Simms apologia for slavery). Nearly all of them are connected in some way to theological liberalism that arose directly from Transcendentalism and Unitarian religious attitudes towards ancestral Puritanism of the colonial era. In this way, the development of the utopian novel could not have occurred without ecumenical reform movements that provided conditions propitious to their advent.

This study is not an exhaustive historical analysis of utopian intentional communities in the antebellum period. Critic Ronald G. Walters has offered that this enterprise is difficult because “[A]ntebellum communalism... ranged from highly structured to utterly unstructured, from theological to free thinking, from celibate, to “free love.”<sup>31</sup> Thus, there was no historical uniformity between different intentional communities in the antebellum period, and it is useless to generalize about them as a whole. I only wish to suggest how these communities, as varied as they were, and in different decades, might tell the reader something about the foundations of such utopian fiction as a genre that was inchoate and yet inextricably linked to theological liberalism. In this way, I hope to set the stage for arguments sympathetic to an emergent coupling of transatlantic theories of French socialism, with political movements that used theological liberalism as a springboard for social reform.

I don’t wish to suggest that a tacit premise of utopian idealism, such as eliminating poverty, can be a platform for analyzing literary artefacts of the antebellum period. Some

authors, like Michelle Neely, Christian Haines, and Gavin Jones have done that exhaustively. Jones, in particular, has applied the issue of gender parity, a vital development in intentional communities, such as Brook Farm, to the more obscure “panic fictions” of the thirties, forties, and fifties, works such as Hannah Farnham Sawyer Lee’s *Elinor Fulton* (1837) and Anna Bartlett Warner’s *Dollars and Cents* (1852).<sup>32</sup> They undergird his argument, borrowed from Frederic Jameson’s *The Political Unconscious*, that the mindset of poverty, far from a social ill, was a literary trope that animated non-canonical fiction from this era. “Sentimentalism,” argued Jones, “encoded the sweetness and simplicity of poverty as a utopian refuge from class, while melodrama represented fear of the *lumpenproletariat*, the terror and villainy of the mob.”<sup>33</sup> Jones tracks the motif of hunger through the developing “southern tradition” in novels such as Augustus Baldwin Longstreet’s *Georgia Scenes* (1835), which address “the root causes of poverty,” and the developing middle class of that time.<sup>34</sup> Jones’ approach tries to condense the novel into one particular social cause, such as the alleviation of poverty, and show how that thread was treated by novelists writing for the bourgeois middle class mostly unfamiliar with the despicable conditions that the urban working class was under before laws preventing child labor were enacted in the Progressive Era of the early 20th century. Jones valorizes a “poverty discourse” in which he treats “the reigning mechanisms by which a reading public understands...endemic social problems such as the persistence and widening of inequality.”<sup>35</sup> Jones’ study is so subtly undergirded by utopian social idealism that he can cherry pick from the more obscure novels of this period, and literary merit is subservient to social idealism. However, my study will start from the historical conditions that spurred decentralized communes and endeavor to show how utopian idealism is specifically tied to novelism – a condensing of a

socio-political worldview and mores into an imaginative work uniquely tied to theological reform movements from the antebellum era.

I also concur with modern critics have also sought to vitiate the argument of a sharp line between the canon and pulp from the antebellum era, as F. O. Matthiessen essayed in *American Renaissance*. David S. Reynolds, among others, writes skeptically about canonical authors, in favor of a more porous division between the avatars (Whitman, Poe, Hawthorne, Melville, and the Transcendentalists) of the antebellum era taught in classrooms: “The typical literary text of the American Renaissance is far from being a ‘self-sufficient’ text, sealed off from its environment. In is indeed what one might call an ‘open text,’ since it provides an especially democratic meeting place for numerous idioms and voices from other kinds of contemporary texts.”<sup>36</sup> While Reynolds rightly offers the avatars of the American Renaissance as a ‘democratic meeting place,’ he offers only a way of making the texts more relevant to modern readers. My approach offers a New Historical approach to develop an etiology of the novel, rather than a recourse to pre-conceived utopian idealism. I wish only to show how these utopian novels were connected to idealism from their period, not to link them to presentist ideals of social justice in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

What Reynolds further illuminates is how utopian social idealism and motifs percolated through non-canonical fiction such as William Ware’s *Zenobia* (1838) in which he suggests that “oriental fiction had become philosophically sophisticated and freely mixed with secular [ideals].”<sup>37</sup> In regards to *Brook Farm*, he is altogether skeptical of Hawthorne’s effort at novelism, for “we realize it is [only] about Brook Farm only insofar as Brook Farm was a symbol of larger moral problems posed by antebellum reform movements and pseudoscience.”<sup>38</sup> He offers a close reading of *The Blithedale Romance* quite unsympathetic with any sentimental

notions of utopia as instigating political reform. Of the character Hollingsworth, he acerbically asserts: “Hawthorne has drawn the consummate picture of the antebellum immoral reformer, so devoted to a noble cause that he sacrifices all morality in its pursuit.”<sup>39</sup>

Often, historians like Daniel Walker Howe offer a more clinical look at how actual antebellum audience received abolitionist and literary texts during the antebellum period. The same might well be true of advocates opposed to Native removal, like Catharine Beecher, sister of the well-known utopian novelist, Harriet Beecher Stowe. Beecher wrote, “[w]e are unwilling that the church, the schools, and the domestic altar should be thrown down before the avaricious god of power.”<sup>40</sup> But such women “wrapped their protest in the nineteenth-century doctrine of ‘separate spheres’ for men and women.”<sup>41</sup> Women who wrote utopian novels such as Stowe constantly had to use sentimentalism to sugarcoat their social activism, due to the lack of actual gender parity in their respective communities. Howe describes how *Metamora*, an anonymous utopian play about King Philip’s War, was “boycotted and forced to close in Augusta, Georgia.”<sup>42</sup> So in reality, these utopian literary texts do not adequately describe the actual jilted social conditions of their era, but pave the way for future literary utopias to be born. I also employ historical data from contemporary historians Joseph Kelly, Jill Lepore, and Howard Zinn to avoid presentist readings of the novels analyzed in the latter chapters of this dissertation.

Historian Philip F. Gura goes into more granular detail how Brook Farm founder George Ripley was connected to an “enchanted circle” of liberal theological reformers that included James Marsh, professor at the University of Vermont, Margaret Fuller, feminist author of *Woman in the Nineteenth Century* (1845), and clergyman William Henry Channing (nephew of Unitarian leader William Ellery Channing).<sup>43</sup> Gura details this ideological shift as follows:

With the Enlightenment’s emphasis on science and reason, however, and particularly after the seminal work of Locke in epistemology and Issac Newton in

physics, such poetic use of nature was subordinated to scientific understanding. [James] Marsh believed, however, that for Christianity to remain significant, imagination still had to inform religious sensibility.<sup>44</sup>

The coterie of individuals obliquely connected to the editors of the Transcendentalist journal *The Dial*, (whose contributors include Ralph Waldo Emerson, Margaret Fuller, and Henry David Thoreau) advocated for the imagination to replace the austere rationalism that had animated the minds of Kant, Locke, and Newton in order to weave conservatism and into Christian doctrine heretofore dominated by traditional Puritan conservatism, and make religious credence somewhat palatable to a new generation of utopian idealists.

Gura further recounts how liberal theologians, like William Batchelder Greene, connected the resurgent Transcendentalist movement of his day to a theological repudiation of “individualism.”<sup>45</sup> Greene was also a contributor to *The Dial*, yet remained committed to conservative ideals which modern readers might consider hostile to communalism: “Greene’s understanding of Man’s Fall was directly related to this notion of each person’s linkage to, and responsibility for, all others...But as soon as one made his own private enjoyment the main end of his life, both the harmony of the universe and the unity of the human race [were] shattered.”<sup>46</sup> This critique of the selfish individualism and pervasive commercialism of the antebellum period, I argue, was translated into many literary exponents of the antebellum era, including Hawthorne’s *The Blithedale Romance*, Delany’s *Blake*, and R. H. Newell’s *Avery Glibun*. Such notions of ‘Christian’ socialism may seem oxymoronic in the contemporary political climate and culture wars, but are a potent reminder of how vital preserving religious community was to artists, writers, and theologians of the early nineteenth century.

### 1.3 Chapter Summaries

Chapter Two begins with the most prominent example of utopian fiction in the American literary canon. I subject Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Blithedale Romance* (1852) to a New Historicist critical lens, beginning with a chronological account of the transatlantic dissemination of French socialist theorist Charles Fourier (widely popular in the time in world literature, featured prominently in Russian novelist Fyodor Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment* (1866)) into the American highbrow literary culture, which ultimately led to the founding of the utopian colony of Brook Farm in West Roxbury, Massachusetts. Its founder, George Ripley, was himself a close associate of noted essayist Ralph Waldo Emerson (who refused Ripley's offer to join the colony for personal reasons). But Fourierism was ultimately imported to the United States by Fourier's disciple and understudy, the American Albert Brisbane, who spoke fluent French and translated many the philosopher's works into English.<sup>47</sup> I aim to sketch the historical conditions that launched the Brook Farm socialist commune, from which the canonical author Nathaniel Hawthorne (himself a member briefly in order to win the heart of his future wife Sophia Peabody, niece of Brook Farm acolyte Elizabeth Peabody) invented the genre of American utopian fiction with his novel *The Blithedale Romance*. I chose this novel in order to provide a canonical reference point by which I chart the thread of utopian novels of the antebellum period. Hawthorne's technical mastery of literary style, recognized by conservative literary historians such as Harold Bloom, Van Wyck Brooks, and F. O. Matthiessen, sets the conservative bar of utopian fiction for the antebellum era, which I have set from 1820-1867.

Hawthorne's novel sets the stage for utopian fiction in the Gilded Age such as William Dean Howells *A Traveller from Altruria* (1905) and Edward Bellamy's *Looking Backward* (1888), novels that discard the eschatological framework that characterized earlier pre-Civil War

efforts. Before the advent of dialectical materialism commonly associated with the writings of Marx and the political development of Communism, I argue that soteriological concepts in the Biblical record linked socialism to religious faith in a way logically impossible after Marx and Engels published their writings. In *Blithedale*, one unearths an exemplar of Puritan theology, John Eliot, at least in part to make religious ideals accessible to the developing liberal Unitarianism of his heyday. In the novel, the pulpit of John Eliot is a “rock” that provides a link to a version of early America which was at least partially sympathetic to Native American spirituality. Eliot, featured in a biography *Life of John Eliot, Apostle to the Indians* (1836) by Hawthorne contemporary Convers Francis (and father of novelist Lydia Maria Child), was ultimately responsible for the translation of the entire Bible into Algonquian, before a spy sympathetic to Metacomet (also known as King Philip in the historical record) led a native revolt in 1675-1676 that effectively vanquished Eliot’s hopes of Christianizing what Francis and other historians label the “praying Indians.”<sup>48</sup> In a recent documentation of this war by Jill Lepore entitled *The Name of War* (1998), she chronicled how Christianized Natives discarded settler fashion, mores, and religion en masse due to Metacomet’s insurrection.<sup>49</sup>

I also critically examine the character of Zenobia in Hawthorne’s novel and draw comparisons to messianic ideology that may have animated the creation of the creation of the work’s central female protagonist. The close analysis of Zenobia allows for an insight into the soteriological underpinnings of the novel, and it suggests how Hawthorne may have been influenced more by the theological preoccupations of the antebellum era rather than the French philosophy that percolated across literary history at that time. Zenobia’s suicide offers a substantive counterpoint to New Historical readings of the text but gives us more of a sense of Hawthorne’s punctilious artistry in the crafting of the narrative. It might also logically set the

stage for artist colonies in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, such as the Yaddo colony in Saratoga Springs, New York.

As the critical eye turns towards the American South in Chapter Three, the work of slavery apologist and prolific novelist William Gilmore Simms comes into critical focus alongside the autochthonous memoir of William A. Peeples. I argue that Simms' 1835 novel, *The Yemassee*, uses historical fiction about a 1720s South Carolina racial conflict in order to enshrine racial caste systems as a utopian antidote to bloody conflict. The binary structure of *The Yemassee* shifts from episodic marriage drama in the settler military barracks "The Block House" to short scenes which concern the failed dynastic succession of power from Yemassee chieftain Sanutee to his son Oconestoga.<sup>50</sup> In cinematic interludes, we witness the rise of one European settler's (Gabriel Harrison's) to power and graphic depictions of racial violence in order to accent religious conflict between Christianity and the Native spirituality of the Yemassee tribe and their 'evil' god Opitchi-Manneyto.

As Simms blurs the channels of fiction with non-fiction (a common technique of antebellum historical fiction of this period replicated in Lydia Maria Child's *Hobomok* (1824), Catharine Sedgwick's *Hope Leslie* (1827) and the sketches of Washington Irving in *Salmagundi* (1808) he paints a portrait of colonial American history sympathetic to the perpetuation of white patriarchal hegemony and supportive of racial stereotypes suggestive of theological polygenesis. This work, however, according to Stephen Greenblatt's third "rule" of New Historicism,<sup>51</sup> illustrates the political rhetoric of the Southern cause as voiced in the 1830s, more than it informs about the actual history of the British Colony of Carolina in the 1720s.

Again, using novelism to isolate and codify the mores of antebellum fiction, I read Simms' novel as a historical artefact in order to suggest that the novel uses sanctimonious

rhetoric to establish a utopian view of racial caste as the only means of avoiding inexorable martial conflict in the slowly dissolving Union. The example of Hector, a negro slave who defends his master in combat, and opts not to be manumitted, provides context for Simms' version of a slaveholders' utopia and lends credence to his view that such racial castes must ultimately be preserved and defended in order to preserve the public order (see Appendix C).<sup>52</sup>

Although later novelists would excoriate this idea in later utopian novels such as the world-famous Stowe novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852), I offer William Apess' contemporaneous memoir *A Son of the Forest* (1829) as a counterpoint. Apess highlights the gulf between southern novelists' conceptions of Native Americans and the theological Christian liberalism that underpinned indigenous writing of this era. I argue that the Apess nonfictional memoir can be viewed as an example of a 'Native' utopia, which employs liberal theology in order to cut through the pasteboard stereotypes of Simms' fiction, yet uses the soteriological language of the Bible in order to "reflexively invoke [the white settler] patriarchy" and thereby support authentic Native American political engagement.<sup>53</sup>

Chapter Four examines Martin R. Delany's *Blake, or the Huts of America* (1859), an unfinished serialized novel that develops a version of African American utopian idealism that anticipates black nationalism of the 1960s. Delany's narrative follows the messianic figure Carolus Henrico Blacus (Blake) and his efforts to engineer a black republic in Cuba. Although it is possible that parts of the novel were a roman à clef, the political project to free and expatriate negro slaves in the United States, which Blake undertakes in the first part of the novel, not only excoriates cruel and officious slave drivers like Col. Franks, but also adumbrates a nation on the verge of war. Blake's dealings with Placido (a fictional representation of Gabriel Concepcion Valdez, a historical Cuban poet and revolutionary) give us a clear platonic picture about how the

new utopian government would be founded and maintained by people of color, with caste systems similar to Simms, but with the rule of a philosopher king similar to the regent portrayed in Plato's *The Republic* (~345B.C.E).<sup>54</sup>

The first part of this chapter includes a review of several biographical accounts of Delany, who shifted from political firebrand to citizen soldier during the Civil War, and finally assumed the bench as a trial judge in South Carolina after the war. The examination of his antebellum newspapers *The Mystery* (1843) and *The North Star* (1847), as well as his polemical *Condition, Elevation, & Emigration* (1952) builds a foundation to establish the utopian underpinnings of *Blake*, Delany's only novel. Though this unfinished novel was not collated and published until 1970, Delany's work, recently collated in Jerome McGann's authoritative edition (2017), advocates for insurrection and violent revolution to mitigate white hegemony in the Southern United States. That Delany also voyaged to the Liberian colony in West Africa during the period of *Blake's* serialization shows the novelism of Delany – more interested in polemic to win the hearts of affluent white readers to his emigrationist political platform more than garner broad literary appeal. Delany's lack of interest in the aesthetics of the novel is probably indicative of his refusal to return to the medium after his service in the Union army in the 54<sup>th</sup> Massachusetts regiment.<sup>55</sup>

This chapter argues that liberation theology supported many antebellum era novels, and this one is no exception. *Blake* invokes a similar pattern of utopian idealism and social engineering albeit to completely different ends – the separation of black people from a nation that had ordained their permanent subordination to white society and used polygenesis as a means to accomplish it. I argue that Delany's novel not only projects a secular political project suspicious of Southern theological orthodoxy, but that it also exemplifies liberation theology,

which reads epigraph from Harriet Beecher Stowe as a soteriological passage from slavery to freedom. In particular, while certain religious practitioners are roundly criticized by the novel's protagonist, they are redolent of a black religious "church [that was the] 'only acknowledged public body' among blacks' as recounted in Curtis J. Evans relatively recent monograph *The Burden of Black Religion* (2008).<sup>56</sup> In particular, the negro spiritual is codified into the American literary tapestry as evidence of spiritual liberation amongst the abject poverty of American negro slaves.

In chapter five, I turn to Orpheus C. Kerr, a pseudonym for author R. H. Newell who spans the transition from the antebellum period to the Gilded Age, a period critic Cody Marrs calls "transbellum."<sup>57</sup> Newell's work introduces a diageitic world absent the exhortations of religious ecumenism, founded merely on the familiar stories of children's literature. *Avery Glibun, or Between Two Fires* (1867) takes its title character on a picaresque journey through the antebellum era. The little-known novel supplements his reputation as an author of political satire of the Civil War in *The Orpheus C. Kerr Papers* (1862-1865). A favorite of president Abraham Lincoln, R. H. Newell was able to put the Civil War in the context of antebellum nostalgia. This post-war literary move, I argue, makes the political jockeying of the antebellum era into a sentimental utopia *mise en abime*.

Chapter Five suggests the importance of recognizing literary works of the post-bellum era before Johnson's dilatory Reconstruction politics take effect. This 'transbellum' moment might well be distinguished from the Gilded Age which followed in one necessary aspect: the changing of American literary tastes and readership patterns in response to the mass violence and death that decimated the nation's population. Newell's earlier satire, which fell out of public favor, animated his later novels which refuse to mention or engage with the war. Unfortunately,

Newell's literary popularity did not long endure after the assassination of Lincoln. Despite the president's glowing review – even unto calling men 'heathens' who had not read him – Newell's late fiction is byzantine and obtuse at best, with comic book style characterizations.<sup>58</sup> Still, the chapter outlines a few salient scenes and compare them to the vibrant religious pamphlet culture of the "burned out" district in New York.

By the end of a prolific literary career, R. H. Newell found himself as an author whose time had eclipsed. New Yorkers had typecast Newell as a political satirist and scarcely a writer of utopian fiction. However, I offer a close analysis of Newell's 'transbellum' fiction in order to assert that the antebellum nostalgia constitutes utopian desire that is unrequited by its readership. I deploy this novel as a logical cap to the antebellum era in utopian fiction. As to the waning of Newell's popularity, critic Ellen Bremner offers that "[Newell's] political satire is dispassionate and non-partisan, and its tone less bitter and violent."<sup>59</sup> This lack of political orientation, distasteful to antebellum readers, "retains more satiric sting for the modern reader [of Newell]" (ibid). Bremner insightfully adds, "[Orpheus C. Kerr] is thus...almost entirely literary. [Kerr] is only a medium who allows Newell to employ the oily, insincere 'office-seeker's' rhetoric."<sup>60</sup>

## 2 TRANSATLANTIC UTOPIA : HAWTHORNE'S THE BLITHEDALE ROMANCE:

Conservative scholars Perry Miller, F. O. Matthessien, and Van Wyck Brooks have tended to look at Brook Farm as a litmus test for transcendental ideals. In a sense, Brook Farm was this kind of an experiment. The focus on gender parity, manual labor, and philanthropic idealism points to this truth. But as Carl Guarneri states in his book *The Utopian Alternative*, that its members struggled to “reconcile intense individual expression with strong communal values.”<sup>1</sup> In contrast, Brooks offers a counterpoint of a type of literary commune whose primary aim was to forge the bedrock of American literature, rather than a tool of social engineering. The Transcendentalist effort to remove the Calvinist strains from Puritan visions of the utopian ethos in antebellum American writing has been well documented in scholarship on the literary output of Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry David Thoreau, and Margaret Fuller. But a closer look at the literatures and pamphlets of the era provide insight into the details of an emerging *topos*, a diaphanous geopolitical space which may provide a transcultural awareness of utopian idealism. Scholars have accounted for the emergence of such utopian colonies at Brook Farm, Fruitlands, and the Oneida community as an answer to this counter-puritan mindset. In particular, Winfried Fluck has proposed that this effort to find spiritual harmony in nature and build a more idyllic version of community as “transatlantic” utopian ethos.<sup>2</sup> I propose to take *The Blithedale Romance* as a sample of this effort and look into how the transatlantic patterns of the novel arise in this manner to reform society. Ultimately, I employ the thesis of Mircea Eliade in *The Sacred and Profane*, of an emergent sacred space that generates the “axis mundi” as an explanation how the secularization of the puritan ethos led to socialist decentralized communities that would be petri dishes for nation building.<sup>3</sup> I suggest that by looking at the differences between George

Ripley's utopian colony and the Fourier writings that inspire it, we may get a better idea of how this transatlantic utopia evolved and may answer the question of why it dissolved, and how it is that small communities like Brook Farm, which ended in conflagration in March of 1846 could have avoided this fate.

Hawthorne's *The Blithedale Romance* is a work that both responds to the utopian ethos of its day, and advocates for the status of the novel as an instrument of reform. His reworking of the ideas of Fourier may give the reader insight into his process of refining the vagaries of the experience on the farm to a logical exposition of the Empyrean reality of it before him. This process involves the creation of a 'sibylline' goddess, a sort of Greek statue that suits the quasi-evangelical project ahead of him.<sup>4</sup> The notion that women could be men's equals, both in social status and legal standing, is one that Hawthorne's Greek goddess, Zenobia, dies to protect. And yet, this project is in some way yoked to an evangelical Christian's idea of utopia – the existence of an 'invisible' world not unlike the machinations of Cotton Mather. In Blithedale, the spheres of femininity and masculinity come into conflict, creating a series of mishaps that lead to Zenobia's death by drowning. In her death, it is possible to envision a socialism that is at one tied to the Messianic story which was for Hawthorne's readers a "sacred canopy," a sphere of incredible power that allowed for an accurate interpretation of death and renewal.<sup>5</sup> The citizens of Blithedale are "pilgrims" on a spiritual quest not unlike that of Bunyan in his magnum opus *Pilgrim's Progress*.<sup>6</sup> The translating of French socialism into this idiom reflects the transatlantic nature of Hawthorne's effort to link the work of Brook Farm to the liberal projects of social engineering prescribed by George Ripley, the leader of the colony, and as a corollary Charles Fourier.

## 2.1 Fourier to Brook Farm

Guarneri's *The Utopian Alternative*, tells the story of Charles Fourier, a bachelor academic, who had an abiding "hatred for economic competition."<sup>7</sup> Although the son of a clothing merchant in Besançon, Fourier bristled at carrying on the family business. He instead frugally organized his finances in order to have a few hours to write each day. What Fourier was able to achieve was a complete reworking of societal models in order to prove the necessity of societal reorganization. Fourier began a socialist approach to societal organization, which would assign work regimens to the leaders of a phalanx, a commune in which certain individuals would be tasked with food production, others with education and instruction, and still others with spiritual matters. Though it came out of a Saint-Simon cult that once searched for a "Female Messiah" in Middle East, the principle of subjecting the gospels to a socialist ethic was fully realized in Fourier.<sup>8</sup> As Americans imported the project, they "believed that Christianity and socialism were not inevitable antagonists...but indispensable allies."<sup>9</sup>

Fourier was "aghast" that an apple in the Parisian market cost four times what it did in Besançon, where he was from. In Marseilles, where he was from, rice was left "rotting on the docks" while people starved in the streets.<sup>10</sup> Fourier's project was to vastly reorganize society according to principles of 'passional attraction,' whereby people would do work that was not hopelessly repetitive and monotonous, according to their natural talents. Henri de Saint-Simon had previously organized a religion based on 'brotherly love' that endeavored to set up communities that reflected principles in the early church of Christianity. His maxim remained fixed in Fourier's acolytes in France and the United States: "Eden is before us, not behind us."<sup>11</sup> But Fourier's vision was more comprehensive – he linked his social doctrine with Newtonian

mechanics in a way that completely overturned the institutions of feudal hierarchy attacked by the primary agitators of the French Revolution. Fourier, rejected by Parisian journals of repute, did not see his models gain popular attention until the end of his life, bolstered by the student Victor Considerant from the École Polytechnique in Paris, and the primary convert to Fourierism.

Clearly, one of Fourier's main targets is institutional marriage. He takes aim at the "sacred knot" given by the Catholic church as producing misery for women on an unimaginable scale.<sup>12</sup> Part of this problem was the 'incoherent household' which relegated women to household tasks that they neither enjoyed nor did particularly well. Fourier lived in an age where young women who were married early could become an easy target for a man intent on receiving a dowry and then discarding them when they were no longer useful. Fourier's intent was to protect women from such scourges, and the vagaries of being a discarded object, as he endeavored to raise their status above a household servant. In Fourier's community, the marriage vow would be not entirely nullified, but decided upon by the consensus of the members of the community. This attempt to raise the status of women appealed to the American importers of Fourierism, and certainly characterizes the interchanges that Hawthorne's character Zenobia has with her male counterparts.

These phalanxes would be organized by scientific principles that governed interaction between the sexes. Gone would be the economic arrangements that gave the male undue authority over women he could discard at leisure.<sup>13</sup> In his recitation of Fourier, entitled *The Social Destiny of Man*, Albert Brisbane coined the use of "passional attraction" and avoided the logical outcome of polyamory that the dissolution of marriage was likely to have.<sup>14</sup> So for the members of Brook Farm, this became a central tenet of the phalanx, and the effort to put it into

practice is somewhat satirized by Hawthorne in his exposition of the ‘Veiled Lady.’ When all the members of the group of utopian colonists shared in the housework, it would become possible for a young woman to have the kind of leisure time that in Fourier’s day, only the extremely wealthy women who married rich husbands could imagine.<sup>15</sup> This hierarchical restructuring of society according to these principles meant of course, that Fourier had to take dead aim at the Catholic church and its institutions. This anti-Catholic rhetoric and the doubt about the coherence of the family unit pervade the text. However, Fourier did not abandon the concept of God; moreover, he enshrined theism in his writings by arguing that his plan was God’s design for mankind which would in some sense regain the Edenic status as described in the Bible.

France’s rigid religious hierarchy often kept people within the centralized government, and the Catholic church’s marriage sacrament meant that citizens kept their heads down and endured unpropitious marriages quietly. The new model of the ‘progressive household,’ or the opening up of marriage relationships to polyamory particularly suited the French culture that Fourier describes as “restless.”<sup>16</sup> This polyamory is suggested in Hawthorne’s *Blithedale Romance*, in which the ‘sacred knot’ is replaced with a “knot of dreamers.”<sup>17</sup> Fourier’s legacy continues in the form of Brisbane, who cut out the speculative nature of Fourier’s observations without compromising the essential nature of his cosmological worldview. The life of Brisbane, his popularization of Fourier through the editor Horace Greeley, and his campaigning for Fourierist principles, is the primary reason that this entirely French philosophy began to permeate American culture and can account for its absorption into the minds of educated middle class readers who longed for a new world order to replace the constraining gender roles that they were accustomed to.

Fourier's role in the genesis of Communism is indisputable. His unique socialist prescription addressed the evils of industrial capitalism a generation before Marx: repetitive labor, price gouging, and wage inequality. To put ourselves in the shoes of Fourier is to realize that on the heels of the French revolution, many were hungry for a new way of life that would answer the needs of life without requiring repetitive and time-consuming labor. Though he was impugned by French society, Fourier was welcomed by his acolytes as the reformer and practical heir of Saint-Simon. In fact, Fourier proposed a cosmological theory that encompassed the motion of the heavenly bodies in a way that seemed applicable to society. Fourier editor Gareth Jones avers that he offered "a more resolutely anti-patriarchal vision of the social and sexual order."<sup>18</sup> This order extended to a reinterpretation of human history, albeit an anti-semitic and often fanciful version of it. His sharpest student, Considerant, made it his goal to broadcast this way of thinking through the French periodical *Le Phalanstère*. In regards to social organization, Fourier organized society into 'alveolar' units of 1650 people, units that he called Phalanxes. Through this method of decentralized cell-like governments, he proposed a way to obviate the selling of labor on the market at a high price. This included the deconstruction of gender roles, the redistribution of wealth in the community, and sexual libertinism on a level that had heretofore been unimaginable.

Added to this was Fourier's emphasis on the 'theory of passionate attraction,' whereby he believed that certain individuals naturally were attracted to one another due to the laws of physics that governed the universe. Interestingly enough, Fourier put the emphasis on God's presence in the political enterprise. The passions could be divided up into twelve discrete units, all hinging on the presence of God's creative power: "The 'composite' was particularly associated with love and was the passion nearest to God."<sup>19</sup> The idea was that the passions could

only be logically expressed within the confines of collectivity, or community. The community was what mattered, not the philosophy of social science behind it. This paved the way for French experimentation with implementing these social units, years before it was imported by Albert Brisbane, the American sociologist, and redistributed to American popular culture. Fourier described the discrete function of the passions within his nascent utopian community as a question: “Will they have changed their passions, just because they scorn the customs and tastes which they like today? No, but their passions will have changed course, without having changed their nature or their ultimate aim.”<sup>20</sup> In a sense, Fourier wanted to create the right environment for the passions to grow and develop in a natural way, one that was consistently destroyed by capitalistic economic concerns.

He saw the after-effects of the Industrial Revolution, and called it as the betrayal of religious principles. It is impossible to understate how linked Fourier’s socialist agenda was with his understanding of God’s purpose: “It is therefore in vain, philosophers, that you have amassed libraries in order to search for happiness if you have not also completely uprooted all social evils, by which I mean *industrial incoherence* which is the antithesis of God’s intended designs.”<sup>21</sup> Inherent in Fourier’s assessment was the view that a utopian project connected by a bee line all the way to Eden seemed to propel the author’s virulent criticism of the widespread unhappiness and difficulty that accompanied urban living in major cities in France. Fourier claimed predictive power: that if implemented, his social project would unveil a new era of human happiness and productivity for tens of thousands of years. He claimed that scholars in privation and want would experience a new recrudescence of abundance: “On our planet this original creation, which exercises a major influence on the fate of every globe, was so impoverished that it was unable to provide the progressive Series with the good necessary for their work for more than a short

time.”<sup>22</sup> A project not unlike that of Brook Farm begins to emerge in the writings of Fourier – a place in which God’s original Edenic plan could come to fruition on earth, and in doing so, satisfy the material wants of all levels of society. This idealism infused all of Fourier’s writings, and fashioned, with the work of Brisbane, the possibility of decentralized socio-political units that could be the building blocks of a new society.

Beginning with centrality of “passional attraction,” Fourier developed theories of social relations that incorporated cosmological constraints of the theory of gravitation by Sir Isaac Newton.<sup>23</sup> Though he dismissed the writings of the Catholic church as “moribund,” he critiqued society from a particularly Christian point of view.<sup>24</sup> His hope remained that the “Newtonian mechanics could be reduplicated in the social sphere.”<sup>25</sup> This societal reengineering involved discarding the traditional institution of monogamy so that the laws of passion would operate according to these scientific principles. He christened the members of his social and spiritual project ‘Harmonians,’ and they would be dedicated to this societal reform by instituting these small, decentralized colonies within the social matrix.

Fourier’s predecessor, the count Henri Saint-Simon, had been able to organize a theory in his leisure that emphasized Christian brotherhood, but without the trappings of socialist inquiry and societal reorganization. He published the *Nouveau Christianisme* in 1825, which Keith Taylor claims touted “the moral virtues of industrialism, seem (sic) primarily in terms of its capacity to improve the standard of living of the poor.”<sup>26</sup> Inherent in this newfound philosophy of science was the idea that a “terrestrial morality” had to replace the feudal hierarchical system set up by the Catholic church, such that “happiness on earth must now be man’s first priority.”<sup>27</sup> His was a model of Christian ethic which advocated for the rising liberal bourgeoisie, and that organized “writers, scientists, and workers into an organic society” for the coming of what he

called “New Christianity.”<sup>28</sup> Saint-Simon is an important precursor to Fourier, in that he advocated for ecumenical reform more than socialist rhetoric. His contribution to Fourier’s mindset shows the way in which all reform movements in France at this period advocated Christian methods of social organization alongside a concern for “the condition of the poorest.”<sup>29</sup>

Fourier often competed with the Saint-Simonian religion and castigated the elements of it which compromised his political project for societal reorganization. In particular, the lack of sociological constraints and the abolishing of private property were notable lacunae in this religious credence. Fourier himself was often subject to flights of fancy and would often argue for such biological developments as “planetary copulation,” humans “growing tails,” and the turning of the ocean into a “lemonade” beverage.<sup>30</sup> Fourier’s disciples, and particularly Victor Considerant, simplified the project and eschewed some of these vain prophecies in an attempt to create a political propaganda machine that worked. This occurrence came about in the founding of the journal *Le Phalanstère*, which published articles loyal to the idea of socialist redistribution of capital.

Brisbane was primarily responsible for popularizing Fourier in the United States. Essentially, Fourierism was not exported by France but imported by the United States. His work *The Social Destiny of Man*, touches on subjects that would have been of immediate interest to the urban underclass generated by the early stages of capitalism. Brisbane grew up in Batavia, New York, and excelled at his studies. He eventually went abroad to Paris to study with Fourier, whom he paid to teach him its basics. As a youth, he was enamored of the writings of Henri de Saint-Simon, the French socialist, but became convinced of the validity of the Fourier phalanx model of social organization. His *Social Destiny of Man* is a cosmology and philosophy all in

one, for he believed that the courses of the planets could predict human interactions. Brisbane removed in large part the Biblical references of Fourier in order to distill its socialist elements.<sup>31</sup>

Brisbane adapted the ‘passional attraction’ to the ideal of associationism. Key in Brisbane’s approach was a fundamental belief in God and his Providence in providing newer and better ways for association. In this way, he believed that the passions could be commodified and redistributed as a public good for the benefit of the phalanx.<sup>32</sup> He remarked that the commercial capitalist model of society generated an enormous amount of waste. In particular, poetry and the fine arts were “neglected” and within the reach of only the leisure class.<sup>33</sup> In Brisbane’s writing, a particular artistic resonance was felt that made this element of his project dovetail with the artistic culling of talent in Fourier’s hypothetical colony. The prevention of “accidental waste” of food, supplies, and talent made Brisbane’s model fit squarely within the Protestant work ethic that dominated the minds of nineteenth century bourgeois and urban industrialists.<sup>34</sup> Fourier’s rants against free masons or special interest monopolies were carefully excised. In Brisbane, we have a pragmatism that pervades his proposal. Although some of Brisbane’s claims are outlandish (the idea that zebras could be tamed to be a better type of horse), by and large Brisbane cuts away the speculative eschatological framework of Fourier in hopes of adapting the model to the American social fabric.

One primary concern of Brisbane in *The Social Destiny of Man* is the condition of the urban poor. He railed against institutions that left many in abject poverty, claiming that the redistribution of wealth within the phalanx would ameliorate social conditions for the average worker: “It is from poverty of the mass in our large cities, that the greatest abuses take place. If a capitalist builds damp cellars, garrets without ventilation, small and confined rooms, close courtyards without light and circulation, and with hardly the conveniencies necessary to the wants of

its inmates, he is sure to find droves of indigent families.”<sup>35</sup> Brisbane’s crusade against urban poverty is evangelical – he hopes to eradicate the causes of poverty and insalubrious living conditions by a full scale attack on the mercantilist practices that he believes is their root cause: “The root of evil is in our incoherent system of industry, carried on by isolated individuals with hostile and conflicting interests; replace it by a system of agricultural Association, productive of unity and combination, and the problem is solved.”<sup>36</sup> Much of the Transcendentalists ire for the corruptions of civilized life in urban centers can likely be traced to Brisbane’s polemic here. This crusade, coupled with liberal theology, becomes the crux of his anti-commercial point of view. The project would be taken up by George Ripley at the founding of Brook Farm in West Roxbury, Massachusetts.

Brisbane was not an easy convert to Fourierism. His travels in Europe had taken him across the continent to Germany, where he had absorbed Hegelianism. But upon his arrival in Paris in 1830, he was looking for a secular religion that would replace an “outworn Christianity.”<sup>37</sup> Having encountered a new social system in Saint-Simon, he became an evangelical purveyor of Fourierism. But encountering Fourier himself, Brisbane reported that he was a ‘dry man’ and ‘never smiled.’ Nonetheless, Brisbane paid him five francs an hour for two-hour sessions per week to learn the basics of Fourierism. This would become the basic groundwork of his *The Social Destiny of Man* when he returned to the United States. By 1837, his old tutor Jean Manesca, had created a Fourierist society of New York with two converted Franco-Americans. By 1839, Brisbane had returned to the United States for good and started his propaganda campaign.

Most importantly, his petitioning of the editor Horace Greeley to convert to Fourierism had paid dividends. Greeley had reviewed his book for the weekly *New Yorker*, and now became

a firm proponent of Fourierist ideas. He began a new Fourierist periodical called 'The Future.' Fourierism, through the press, was becoming an American pop-culture icon. In addition, Brisbane's new religion began to gain converts in the United States for many who were looking for something new to answer the problem of the industrial urban underclass. After several abortive attempts to begin a Fourierist journal, Brisbane's big break came through. In 1842, Brisbane purchased a front-page column in the New York Tribune for \$500.<sup>38</sup> Brisbane seized the opportunity to reach an audience of reform-minded readers outside of his narrow circle of Franco-Americans. In 1843, he started a journal, *The Phalanx*, and thus began his campaign to spread the ideas of Fourierism to the general public. Greeley began publishing Fourierist meetings and social experiments and disseminating them to a wider American audience. But Greeley's form of Fourierism was "Whiggery in a new bottle," as he always envisioned this societal model as an addendum to capitalism, and not a replacement for it.<sup>39</sup>

Through Brisbane's unique brand of utopian socialism, he began to assemble apostles of the new "gospel." Among others, converts to his way of thinking included liberal theologian William Ellery Channing, firebrand Parke Godwin, and Brook Farm organizer Ripley. Brisbane was not talented as a community organizer, and it is likely that without the aid of Ripley, Brook Farm would never have come to fruition. Brisbane's religion of Fourierism began to evolve with the American philosophy of Transcendentalism with a few core tenets: "belief in human perfectibility, romantic faith in brotherhood, and confidence that a natural order of society could reconcile intense individual expression with strong communal values."<sup>40</sup> Brisbane disciple Parke Godwin took a more radical democratic outlook on Fourierism and sought to implement a more radical repudiation of capitalism.

Meanwhile, Ripley, Channing, and Orestes Brownson, who later converted to Catholicism, began to envision a form of Fourierism that ran counter to Ralph Waldo Emerson's vision of self-reliance, in implementing a Transcendentalist model for a phalanx that would later become Brook Farm. Ripley's vision of Brook Farm would eschew the "doctrine and ritual" of the traditional pulpit in favor of divine "intuition" to cater their model of socialism to "the common man."<sup>41</sup> Ripley read Brisbane's *Social Destiny of Man* in 1840 but was at first opposed to its cerebral focus on the mathematical formulas of Fourier, and longed to transform it into a model that would emphasize ideals of fraternity. The Panic of 1837 was still in the minds of liberal theologians such as Brownson and Channing, and the steady decline in church attendance due to the fluctuations of the market was their recurrent bugaboo.

Channing, as Brooks mentions, was a retiring fellow who was more adept at sermonizing Brook Farm than running it. Writing the occasional poem and doing an occasional translation, he preferred the bourgeois lifestyle offered by Brook Farm. His relationship with the religious doctrine that he preached was often complicated by antinomian tendencies in Transcendental groups. He once wrote: "Christ did not understand his own religion."<sup>42</sup> But nonetheless, he still considered himself a "mystical enthusiast" of the Christian religion, and his sermons punctuated the farm with a liberal theology that undergirded its socialist stance. In fact, John Dwight writes of Brook Farm that "socialism... in New England did not take its first impulse from France or Fourier, as much as the ... liberal movement in theology."<sup>43</sup> The pulpit of the Unitarian church was still very evangelically conservative, and Brook Farm was unique in that it served as an open book for new liberal ideas regarding theological practice.

Though Brisbane's *Social Destiny of Man* is replete with wild assertions derived from his master Fourier, the document is a leaner explication of how decentralized phalanxes could

transform industrial capitalism. He begins with a scathing critique of mercantilism, offering that poetry and the fine arts were “neglected,” and that “accidental waste” was a commonplace occurrence in the current system.<sup>44</sup> With the spirit of an evangelical crusade, Brisbane’s goal was to evaluate the “root of evil” by deconstructing the “cabalist” formations of American society.<sup>45</sup> In a direct reference to the tenements that were quickly cropping up in the urban polis, he averred: “we must drag man out of his cramped sphere.”<sup>46</sup> His “sidereal” cosmology also appealed to the emerging transcendentalist movement in the ways that profoundly affected the Transcendental Club, and as a corollary, George Ripley.<sup>47</sup> It convinced the newly emerging transcendentalists like Ripley of the existence of “higher spheres” of Newtonian mechanics that could also be applied to social engineering.<sup>48</sup>

Harvard educated George Ripley was a quiet defender of the gospel, but as he began to see the urban slums around him on Boston’s Purchase Street, he formulated the social gospel that would become Brook Farm.<sup>49</sup> He was intimate friends with Ralph Waldo Emerson, and would hold meetings of the Transcendental club at his residence. It was his ingenuity, along with that of Margaret Fuller, Bronson Alcott, and a young Henry Thoreau that was responsible for the establishment of the transcendentalist journal *The Dial*. A congregationalist most of his entire life, he reverted to liberal theology as a response to French idealism that he had encountered in the writings of his friend and mentor Victor Cousin, and equally to German higher criticism in the form of Immanuel Kant. This transatlantic response to philosophy from the European continent, along with an admiration for the writings of Thomas Carlyle, forged the new transcendentalist approach to Christianity in which “the goal of human existence...was not the greater glory of God but the progress of humanity and the development of the individual – not

the city of God, but the city of man – and Americans needed only to strive cooperatively for the goal in order to achieve it.”<sup>50</sup>

The early stages of Brook Farm involved creating a sort of asylum for social non-conformists. Young neophytes to the transcendentalist mindset appeared, eager to voice their ideas. “Young iconoclasts formed the first generation of Bohemian reformers who were, among other things, abolitionist, dietary reformers, and temperance advocates.”<sup>51</sup> Although there were no regular church services, the Christian orientation of Brook Farm was a priority for Ripley from the beginning of the colony in West Roxbury in 1841 until its fiery end in a conflagration in 1847. Ripley himself averred that “Christ himself had been a reformer” and as a result had not intended to impose rigid orthodoxies, but to allow a multitude of religious opinions.<sup>52</sup> William Ellery Channing, who often gave sermons at the colony, advocated with Ripley to preserve a “Christian Utopia.”<sup>53</sup> Among the farm labor that the colony entailed, such as milking the cows and producing hay for the market, the colony was also dedicated to educational goals that made it a magnet for speakers like Margaret Fuller and Ralph Waldo Emerson to give speeches. Not only these luminaries, but other lesser-known speakers would line up to give talks, but many of these strange sermons (one on the uselessness of sleep, another on veganism) would be eviscerated by Brook Farmers who had been fed a steady diet of Kant and Spinoza by Ripley’s devotion to scholastic inquiry.

The original Brook Farm had a central location, called “the Hive,” where talks would be administered.<sup>54</sup> As Brook Farm gained notoriety nationally and internationally, many came from as far as the Philippines and Cuba to hear lectures and participate in the commune. Nathaniel Hawthorne, one of the original members of Brook Farm, bought shares in Brook Farm, but mainly joined to court Sophia Peabody, who later became his wife. Hawthorne, in 1845, later

sued to regain his shares back in the commune, a sleight that Ripley never quite forgot, and strained relations between the two.<sup>55</sup> *The Blithedale Romance* is in one sense a romantic portrayal of the farm, but in a sense is a pure fictionalization of the farm. A “literal comparison,” writes Charles Crowe “reveals few close parallels.”<sup>56</sup> What Hawthorne’s novel does manage to portray is the sense of elation that characterized the early farm, when the possibilities of the socialist experiment seemed endless.

But as Crowe points out, “[t]he community was many things to many people: an enterprise of communitarians vaguely connected to a Christian socialist past, a society of nineteenth century “Utopian” socialists who drew inspiration from Charles Fourier and other European writers; a Transcendentalist venture, and finally, a community of sentimental memories.”<sup>57</sup> As time wore on, the farm encountered serious financial difficulties, and poor soil limited the production of vegetables in such a way that made the diet of Brook Farm’s denizens more austere (some resorted to eating only bread and water). The commune made most of its income from the school that was the centerpiece of the Association, which even conservative critics of the farm had to admit passed muster. Orestes Brownson often visited to inculcate Latin in a belabored manner (his command of Latin was suspect) and educated Brook Farm citizens on the Latin Vulgate. Margaret Fuller lectured on the principles of feminism, and the commune even boasted a primitive kindergarten class for young people. The music of Beethoven was performed with such acclaim that many journeyed from as far as Boston just to hear the symphonies.

In 1844, George Ripley tried in earnest to associate the farm with Fourierist principles, and to organize a communitarian identity which jettisoned transcendentalist individualism. In January of that year, he moved to change the name to “The Brook Farm Phalanx” and draft a

preliminary constitution.<sup>58</sup> In an effort to reduce “isolation” Ripley argued even more forcefully in the Brook Farm journal *The Harbinger* that Calvinist Christians had been blind to the fundamental passions of men that tied them together in harmony. A tension began to break out between the individualist leanings of Brook Farm’s residents such as the author Charles A. Dana, the future editor of the *New York Sun*, who had attended to some of the more menial tasks in the kitchen, and Ripley’s increasing ideological and theoretical focus on Fourier. In the end, the implementation of Brisbane’s translation of Fourier’s principles seemed to jar against the hard reality of economically sustaining the farm daily. After a conflagration of the “Hive” in 1846, Charles Dana was one of the first residents to leave. Ripley was forced to sell the capacious library of Brook Farm, and the disbanding of the colony was imminent. The utopian colony had started as going “to heaven on a swing” in the beginning was forced to grapple with the hard realities of financial solvency and long term participation.<sup>59</sup> The loss of public interest in the colony and focus on other phalanxes caused a rift in Ripley’s efforts as associationism, and in the end spelled the end of the effort.

A common thread throughout the experiment was George Ripley’s devotion to reform Christianity. He often contradicted transcendentalists’ focus on the ‘city of man’ and wrote that the commune was supposed to prepare residents for the “city of God.”<sup>60</sup> To celebrate Fourier’s birthday, a sign was posted of “Fourier, 1772,” and next to his bust, a Bible verse in evergreen letters: “But the Comforter, who is the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name – He shall teach you all things and bring all things to your remembrance whatsoever I have said unto you.”<sup>61</sup> This conflict between the austere Calvinist upbringing of George Ripley and his evolving socialist convictions ended up creating cognitive dissonance in the colony. With Ripley, who was restrained and formal even with his own wife Sophia, he could never fully embrace the

requirements of social engineering in a way that was deleterious to his evangelical convictions. For a brief moment in time, it seemed that Fourier's ideas could be implemented abroad in the United States, but the evangelical soil of the country proved ultimately hostile to this experiment.

As Philip Gura points out, the role of Ripley's Brook Farm in establishing a locus of intellectual activity was central to the telos of the project. At Brook Farm, "talks by community members as well as frequent and curious visitors were staple intellectual fare."<sup>62</sup> Oratory from Transcendentalists like Theodore Parker or Elizabeth Peabody was punctuated by lectures given by Fourierists Albert Brisbane and Parke Godwin. In a sense, the real Brook Farm inaugurated a veritable temple of ideas, whereby the luminaries of social reform movements and liberal theology could find root. Margaret Fuller spoke on gender equity and Bronson Alcott on the gospels. So, there was not a particular ideological bent to the community, but it still had all the prominent features of a Lyceum circuit. The conflagration that burned a major part of the colony in 1846 and its decomposition due to financial woes in 1847 reveal how tenuous the experiment was, and how it was subject, despite its utopian aims, to the same vicissitudes of fortune that any major farm of that era.

## **2.2 Literary Analysis of 'Edenic Utopia' in *The Blithedale Romance***

The crux of Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Blithedale Romance* is a literary thought experiment, about whether a French socialist idealism can be transplanted into the barren wilderness and become a thriving community. But the issue that becomes central to the success or failure of Blithedale is distinct from the real Brook Farm. The religious awakenings of the earlier era become central to the functioning of the community. Hawthorne's protagonist Miles Coverdale, due to his poetic nature, and aversion to manual labor, is quite incapable of becoming

the ballast for Blithedale. Hollingsworth, the rough-hewn blacksmith, is yet too skeptical of the Fourierist leanings of the colony. The success or failure of the colony falls to the woman with a hothouse flower in her hair, Zenobia. The centrality of the religious traditions that have informed the creation of the colony makes it a somewhat hostile climate for the flourishing of Blithedale. In particular, Eliot's pulpit is a central metaphor for the religious underpinnings of the utopian sentiment. In evaluating the religious language of the novel, relative to this centerpiece of the colony, we get a unique American soil that cannot yet wholly embrace the project as a reformulation of the city of man.

The Edenic root of the pastoral scene that Hawthorne portrays is inevitable from the first scene, where Coverdale arrives with high expectations of how the Blithedale colony will reproduce the conditions of Paradise. His tone is guarded, because he does not expect such a result from "the bleak little world of New England."<sup>63</sup> But the connection to the Garden of Eden from the Biblical record is clear: "Nor, with such materials as were at hand, could the most skilful (sic) architect have constructed any better imitation of Eve's bower."<sup>64</sup> The air of Protestant Christianity is heavy in the air, and the interpretations of the colony have the utopian implication of bringing heaven down to earth. In discussing the employment of the women in the colony, Coverdale is comparing the Blithedale project to the original paradise. As Zenobia complains about the relative surplus of household chores, she is clear to reference the story in Genesis 2, lamenting "Eve had no dinner-pot, and no clothes to mend, and no washing-day."<sup>65</sup>

Some of the religious imagery of the novel leads the reader to wonder how in earnest Hawthorne employs religious connotations for dramatic effect. Critic Nina Baym has observed that, though there is a "snake in Eden" the underlying fallacy lies in the false assertion that Coverdale thinks he will abandon his apartment and sherry in order to "become a strong free

man.”<sup>66</sup> The equation of manual labor with ennobling work is perhaps a false idol that Hawthorne wishes to satirize. Other critics of the novel have pointed this out, as D. H. Lawrence observed “farcical fools, trying to idealize labor.”<sup>67</sup> In any case, we are able to see how the original Blithedale wanted to carve an idealized society out of the wilderness by manual labor. But in the background is the unavoidable problem of the historical roots of religious life as it was practiced during the time of John Eliot. Hawthorne repeatedly uses Eliot’s “rock,” for instance, as an extended metaphor of the religious tapestry of the American continent during a period when the conversion of the Native Americans was paramount.

The influence of Providence in the affairs of Blithedale is repeated on several occasions throughout the novel. In the pursuit of the “spiritualization of labor” as was necessary for the morale of the colony, the Christian matrix by which characters perceive the events that transpire is transparent.<sup>68</sup> Silas Foster, upon arriving for his toast and tea, is described “less like a civilized Christian than the worst kind of ogre.”<sup>69</sup> Hollingsworth’s orthodox views on original sin jar against the transcendentalist aims of the colony. He begins his Blithedale sojourn with “Apostolic” fervor, he was “the only one who began his enterprise with prayer.”<sup>70</sup> There is a sense in which, although mainstream Puritan views on sin, death, and original sin are obviated by most of the denizens of the colony, the history of Puritanism is always largely in the background, and the Blithedale colony a justifiable iteration of antique devotion to the God of nature.

Coverdale is at once afflicted with a benign illness and must be nursed to health by his colleagues. Silas Foster brought firewood to warm the chamber; Zenobia brings moral support; and Hollingsworth’s prayers for healing are audible from the adjacent room. In this brief illness, he is often motivated to recite his prayers “as bitterly as patient Job himself.”<sup>71</sup> The comparison with the Biblical patriarch gives us a sense of the divine afflatus that is supposed to attend the

affairs of the commune. On more than one occasion in the novel, the Biblical curse of “Adam’s sweat” is used to spiritualize Coverdale’s labors of milking the cows and hoeing the potatoes in the commune.<sup>72</sup> Fourier’s ideas are certainly present in Blithedale but are always jockeying for position with the evangelicalism that is woven throughout the novel. Coverdale’s convalescence is superintended by Hollingsworth’s “word – a prayer” for divine healing.<sup>73</sup> Coverdale believes himself to have a “sickness unto death” which is a Kierkegaardian metaphor for “despair.”<sup>74</sup> The colony is in this way similar to Ripley’s ideal of the “city of God” in his missive to Ralph Waldo Emerson.<sup>75</sup>

Moreover, the character of Hollingsworth injects this strain of Puritan orthodoxy into the Blithedale experiment. Hollingsworth roundly rejects the philosophy of Fourier in favor of traditional arguments for the doctrine of original sin. Hollingsworth vituperates: “I never will forgive [Fourier]! He has committed the Unpardonable Sin! For what more monstrous iniquity could the Devil himself contrive, than to choose the selfish principle – the principle of all human wrong, the very blackness of man’s heart.”<sup>76</sup> We might be taken aback by this misappropriation of Fourier, but it is evidence of Hollingsworth’s sin itself, when Zenobia later accuses him: “Nothing else; nothing but self, self, self!”<sup>77</sup> The reality of selfish individualism cohabitating with the communitarian ideals of Fourier is striking. Not even Hollingsworth’s religious proclamations are able to absolve him from the accusation of selfism. His hypocrisy here is palpable and will illustrate the constant ideological struggle to reconcile the Puritanical heritage with the new socialist ideals.

Still, there are early moments in Blithedale where it appears to be like one Brook Farm resident claimed to be ‘going to heaven on a swing.’ During the May Day celebration, when Priscilla and Zenobia are celebrating by “rifl[ing] a cherry tree of one of its blossomed boughs”

there is an extended conversation between Coverdale and Zenobia about Priscilla and her intimations about life on the commune.<sup>78</sup> Priscilla, in her innocence, suggested as she is often compared to a symbolic ‘dove,’ has unspoiled notions about the goings-on of the farm. “[S]he thinks it such a Paradise here, and all of us, particularly Mr. Hollingsworth and myself, such angels!”<sup>79</sup> This Arcadian moment gives us an extended reflection on the application of Fourier, that his thought had been able to effect “an enlightened culture of the soil.”<sup>80</sup> The May Day celebration, with its harmony with the rhythms of nature, seems to be a likely dovetailing of the ideals of socialism in its agrarian form, and Nature becomes a kind of benevolent goddess, who bestows her favor like a mother on the child she disciplines.<sup>81</sup> Priscilla will become evidence of some unvarnished and untainted goodness that captivates the attentions of Coverdale.

We have, in some primitive form, a delicate portrayal of the Romantic ideal of young love. Hawthorne’s letters to Sophia Peabody, whom he was courting at the time, include a description of the “seventh heaven.”<sup>82</sup> His letters are often frank and verbally adorned with exclamatory phrases of his feats at Brook Farm “Ownest wife, thy husband has milked a cow!!!”<sup>83</sup> It is not unusual to find this kind of phrase amid descriptions of the youthful exuberant love of Priscilla: “[her] vague and seemingly causeless flow of felicitous feeling was that with which love blesses inexperienced hearts, before they begin to suspect what is going on within them. It transports them to the seventh heaven.”<sup>84</sup> This moment in Priscilla’s development is yet another example of a utopian ethos that employs theological imagery of a Jewish nature: this ‘seventh heaven’ was the condition of supreme happiness. But this may well be a projection of Hawthorne’s own conviction about the ephemerality of such a condition: we the readers, as well as Hawthorne’s implied narrator, know that Priscilla’s extasy cannot long endure.

Still, there are moments when the humble Blithedale utopian project seemed within reach. Utopian visions percolate the parabolic statements which *The Blithedale Romance* declaims about Brook Farm. At a point where Zenobia is talking to Coverdale about his poetic aspirations after her complimenting Priscilla, we have a succinct account of the utopian paradox:

You are a poet – at least, as poets go, now-a-days – and must be allowed to make an opera-glass of your imagination, when you look at women. I wonder, in such Arcadian freedom of falling in love as we have lately enjoyed, it never occurred to you to fall in love with Priscilla! In society, indeed, a genuine American never dreams of stepping across the inappreciable air-line which separates one class from another. But what was rank to the colonists of Blithedale?<sup>85</sup>

Blithedale was able to offer the utopian promise of falling in love without the restraints of class boundaries. This distinction of class dominates the thinking of nineteenth century realist novels after the Civil War, particularly later in Henry James. These distinctions remain an inevitable barrier to marriage in most novels of this antebellum era. But for a brief moment, it seems possible to jettison class as a consideration in marriage. But Zenobia reminds Coverdale the limits of this proposition, saying that this ‘air-line’ still very much existed in Coverdale’s mind. The world of Coverdale’s imagination is yet another instance of the divine ‘sphere’ theory that dominated the thinking about the cosmos at the time, particularly in respect to Craig White’s “spheres and sympathies” argument.<sup>86</sup> These invisible spheres, due to Brisbane’s cosmology, remained a potent feature of the thinking about social relationships in Transcendentalist circles.

In one encounter with the inebriated Old Moodie, Coverdale argues for a religious utopia, but finds that he is unable to deliver. Coverdale trying to prove that Moodie is the “wretchedest old ghost” challenges him to a wine bibbing contest.<sup>87</sup> We are introduced to a Coverdale who is at once full of utopian aspiration, and sure of his own innate depravity (and tendency towards smoking and drinking wine). Coverdale avers that Moodie “be inspired to say his prayers” while also invoking the Puritan ethic: “For there are states of our spiritual system, when the throb of

the soul's life is too faint and weak to render us capable of religious aspiration."<sup>88</sup> Coverdale is tasked with reckoning with his own religious shortcomings. We see in various forms how this feeling of inadequacy might have animated the weird aspects of occult religion in the "Masqueraders" chapter, with "a Bavarian broom-girl, a negro of the Jim crow order, ... a Kentucky woodsman" and all the litany of carnivalesque characters that fill the strange religious aspirations of the citizens of Blithedale.<sup>89</sup> In short, they know that they fall demonstrably short of the abstemious and teetotaling habits of the Puritan fathers. This may hamper even the noblest aspiration to the bucolic utopia that they were supposed to build.

### **2.3 The centrality of Eliot's Pulpit**

The conflict between the Fourierist aspirations of communitarian living and the individualist ethos of Transcendentalism converges upon "history's burial" in the rock of Eliot's pulpit.<sup>90</sup> As Lauren Berlant observes, Eliot's pulpit is the "place of sexual, juridical, and theological confrontation."<sup>91</sup> She connects the pulpit to a Puritan eschatology connected to the figure of Eliot, who was known for his translation of the Bible into Native American dialects. She further argues that like the 'silvery veil' in Blithedale, it "hides what we do not want to uncover."<sup>92</sup> The legacy of John Eliot, a lone voice for Indian assimilation in a chorus of voices for extermination, seems to hearken back to a Christianity more sympathetic to the Natives. In numerous passages in *The Blithedale Romance*, the pulpit of Eliot is the rock which provides the central geographic core of the colony, and what makes the abstract goals of Fourier quite insoluble with the history of genocide and removal of Native Americans that lurks beneath the surface.

The reference to the Puritans in the gathering of Hollingsworth, Coverdale, and Zenobia at Eliot's pulpit immediately points the reader to this 'buried history.' The trope of the "praying

Indian” that Eliot worked so hard to establish was snuffed out by King Phillip’s War (1673-1675), as was the Indian religion, which was outlawed to practice on pain of death in 1646. But the individual who might “redeem our national treatment of the Indians, John Eliot, is valorized and apotheosized.”<sup>93</sup> The history of John Eliot has been represented by a hagiography by Cotton Mather, another by transcendentalist Convers Francis, and other more contemporary looks at his life. For Mather, Eliot represented a kind of Moses figure who “brought the Algonquin Indians from their spiritual exile into a new regenerate community.”<sup>94</sup> For Coverdale and the inhabitants of Blithedale, it suffices to say that the Puritan eschatology remained a vital source for the interpretation of the socialist experiment. Coverdale opines in the opening pages that: “a family of the old Pilgrims might have swung their kettle over precisely such a fire as this.”<sup>95</sup> This form of religious credence includes Coverdale’s relationship with Zenobia – whom he credits with being a fortune-telling “Cassandra.”<sup>96</sup> Nevertheless, Hollingsworth is a community moral ballast, such that Coverdale flings his “pilgrim staff – and a dusty shoon” either in Blithedale or elsewhere in frustration of his inability to assume the mantle of responsibility of the community.<sup>97</sup> The blot of Indian genocide upon the ‘praying Indians’ is a shameful page of American history always couched in terms of a Puritan eschatology that inhabits the soil.

The shape of Eliot’s pulpit is such as to suggest its long-term permanence in the soil, and as a corollary, the ‘buried history.’ It represents a logical outcropping of the Puritan mindset amongst this cauldron of utopian idealism. Hollingsworth, Zenobia, Priscilla, and Coverdale come there for the Sabbath rest, but what they encounter is the vestiges of the Puritan sensibility in the rock itself. Aside from the exploits of John Eliot as a preacher to the Indians at the time, a particular sacred space is hewn from the rock, one that will make it a fixture of the Blithedale colony. From this place, the “Apostle’s voice was wont to sound,” and so it becomes clear that

this place has historical and spiritual resonance that perhaps the other parts of the farm do not have.<sup>98</sup>

The descendancy of the generations having their origin from Eliot's Indians, there is a way in which history becomes a living document through the Blithedale experiment. The plot of land, existing betwixt the natural world and Blithedale itself, represents the nature religion of the newly converted Indians of Eliot's time. The Puritan sensibility becomes sutured to the romantic Transcendentalist preoccupation with Nature's rhythms. The weight of history can be felt at Eliot's rock: "it was still as wild a tract of woodland as the great-great-great-great grandson of one of Eliot's Indians (had any such posterity been in existence), could have desired, for the site and shelter of his wigwam."<sup>99</sup> Eliot's pulpit is the place in which the "silvery veil" of history is drawn back to reveal the way in which the utopian experiment at Blithedale is a reimagining of American history without its blots and stains. The dark history of genocide that Eliot labored to counteract in his Algonquian translation of the Bible, and the subsequent murder of Indians during King Phillip's War, reveal a hidden history apparent to the observant reader of Hawthorne's dark 'veil' that populates not only this story but countless other works of his short fiction.

Even the description of the rock, shows itself as a prominent feature of the terrain of the natural landscape. The rock "rose some twenty or thirty feet" and had soil "out of which sprang shrubs, bushes, and even trees; as if the scanty soil, within those crevices, were sweeter to their roots."<sup>100</sup> The description of the natural surroundings amounts to what Coverdale later calls a "innermost sanctuary of this green Cathedral," a sacred space in the natural wilderness that is set apart from the pews and edifices of institutional religion.<sup>101</sup> Ultimately, the readers of Hawthorne are still very close to a Puritan eschatology, in the expectation of eventual union with the

celestial city: “The gates of the Blessed City will be thronged with the multitude that enter in,” and as such, the argument over women’s roles in society that has been developing between Zenobia and Hollingsworth will be included in the utopian idealism of ages past.<sup>102</sup>

This nature religion of the Apostle Eliot is imagined in an idealized form. The actual translation of the Bible into the Algonquian language belies this instrumentalism in Apostle Eliot’s literary labors. But the newfound focus on the religion of nature comes from transcendental thought of the period, which critic Barry M. Andrews refers to as a “radical shift” wherein “God came to be viewed as a force or power immanent in nature, including human nature, and not as a supernatural being entirely separate from it.”<sup>103</sup> In Hawthorne’s appraisal of this shift, the image of the leaf is introduced, in one scene where Priscilla describes herself as “blown about like a leaf”<sup>104</sup> on the winds of chance, quite independent of free-will. In a riverboat trip with Silas Foster, Coverdale describes himself in judging this shift towards nature as “shiver[ing] like a leaf.”<sup>105</sup> The association of spirit with nature, as Emerson boldly relates in his essay *Nature*, brings about a sense of listlessness and aimlessness in the circadian and sometimes chaotic movements of nature. The innate question of this religion is its embrace of the chaotic – often causing a troubling realization of the randomness of nature and its relationship to Brownian motion. If god is in nature rather than outside of it, how is it possible to remain convinced of the overarching presence of Providence in human affairs? Even Hawthorne’s narrator Coverdale cannot resist using classical metaphors of the wilderness, such as “Dante’s ghostly forest” in order to lend a familiar literary context of Christian symbolism as Virgil and the narrator wander through the ghosts of the suicides in *The Inferno* (~1300).<sup>106</sup> In addition, this dark ‘forest’ might be a prescient reminder of Zenobia’s death.

To some extent, the ‘rock’ of Eliot is supposed to give the reader a sense of the historical context of utopian thought in terms of the religious sedimentation that gives rise to an experiment like Blithedale. Eliot labored in obscurity to present the bible in a readable format to natives, as he departed from his pulpit in Roxbury he was constantly aware of the fear of excommunication with a slight misstep in doctrine. He writes of one parishioner, Goodwife Webb, who was subjected to this indignity “her ways have bene long a grief of heart to her godly neighbors.”<sup>107</sup> It was for this reason of the political aspects of pastoral ministry, that Eliot penned *The Christian Commonwealth* in 1651, an attempt to use the “method of Jethro” as Moses consented to in organizing the children of Israel after the journeys in the wilderness according to the Exodus account.<sup>108</sup> This utopian societal organization constitutes the sediment beneath Eliot’s rock in Hawthorne, such that the American utopian ethos had a wider and more socially significant arc, and which challenged the view that Fourierism was entirely new and different from this original purpose.

Eliot’s rock tends to resurface at points in the narrative of dramatic intensity. During the Lyceum Hall moment in which the Veiled Lady exposition which professor Westervelt decodes as Priscilla’s “communion with the spiritual world,” the use of the occult becomes a viable method of determining a spiritual reality.<sup>109</sup> In a climactic moment, Priscilla flings herself into Hollingsworth’s arms after having unveiled herself. The veil itself is in question: a prescient reminder of Hawthorne’s familiar trope for a hidden reality. In this scene, Priscilla is “in the shadow of Eliot’s pulpit” as if the rock had a talismanic effect. Westervelt, who Coverdale declaims is a “wizard” of devilish power, is able to set up a rival religion based on the pseudoscience of Mesmerism and offer a different spiritual system than any that would have been imagined by Eliot himself, several decades before the Salem Witch trials.<sup>110</sup> Coverdale is

able to identify charlatans like Westervelt with their casuistry and nostrums but is still unable to be wholly separate from the new age religion that takes the place of Christianity at the gatherings in Blithedale.

The permanence of the ‘rock’ stands in contrast to the wayward and often histrionic flow of events at Blithedale. Upon Coverdale’s decision to leave the colony, Zenobia is apt to consider her dealings with the colony a “voyage through Chaos.”<sup>111</sup> Certainly, in regards to the ‘tableaux vivants,’ and other innocuous pastimes in the Blithedale colony, the different strains of antebellum culture that are sifting through its halls is directly contrasted with “the birch trees that overshadowed Eliot’s pulpit” in Coverdale’s taking up residence at a nearby hotel.<sup>112</sup> Eliot’s pulpit resurfaces at certain plot points in the novel to remind the reader of a sacred space that remains the same even as the world of Blithedale is a matter of shifting sands.

At times, the strange occult practices of Blithedale take centerstage. At one bacchanalian interlude, when Coverdale is accused of “danc[ing] to the devil’s tune,” the pulpit looms in the distance.<sup>113</sup> Previously the wax figurines of the Pope and references to the occult practice of “spirit rapping” have created a sort of cult of the Veiled Lady.<sup>114</sup> But amongst these wild and colorful images of cultural expression of the antebellum era, the “chimaeras” haunting Coverdale’s head suggest translatable images of the ‘invisible’ world of the Puritan progenitors.<sup>115</sup> Admittedly, Blithedale remains a wanton social and cultural expression that would have violated Puritan ethics, but after the ‘masqueraders’ scene of utter novelty and weirdness, Coverdale ultimately finds himself “nigh Eliot’s pulpit” along with Hollingsworth, Priscilla, and Zenobia.<sup>116</sup>

During King Phillip’s War, the ‘praying Indian’ converts that Apostle Eliot had made were lost. This dark history of Indian conversion and attrition during the war is part of the story

of Eliot that valorizes his cross-cultural brand of Puritanism. The murder of Sassamon, the praying Indian of Natick, was considered the catalyst for the war, but this internecine conflict remained a blight on English settler and Native American relations for over a century. Sassamon had attended Harvard, was bilingual, and had aided Eliot in his translations.<sup>117</sup> But he was wise to Metacom's (King Phillip) intentions towards the English and was a marked man. Three men were convicted of Sassamon's murder and sentenced to hang. But ire against Indians was increasing, and many were sold into slavery, despite the objections of Eliot. As the war continued, the 'praying Indians' switched their allegiance: "[they] removed their clothing, painted their bodies and became savage Indians again."<sup>118</sup> Eliot's conversions of Native Americans were therefore a kind of lost cause, which accentuates his status as the repository for a 'buried history' in *The Blithedale Romance*.

Eliot's pulpit is also the juridical site of a mock-trial of Zenobia as a witch, hearkening back to an age in which witches were prosecuted and hanged. Although Eliot was an aged man when Cotton Mather was a youth, the pulpit is nevertheless the residue of an era in which strict religious orthodoxy ruled the day. Hollingsworth is compared to "the grim portrait of a Puritan magistrate, holding inquest of life and death in a case of witchcraft."<sup>119</sup> In fact, many of Hawthorne's writings are haunted with the history of the Salem Witch trials. But in this case, Zenobia is compared to a "sorceress," and Priscilla, a "victim."<sup>120</sup> The legacy of the Salem witch trials is to place the deviancy from orthodoxy in the Blithedale experiment in historical context with other occult movements, and to undermine the humanist philosophy that pervaded much of the transcendentalist and Fourierist rhetoric around the commune. We see the history of religious persecution under the cloak of Puritan orthodoxy, and it projects a history of colonial settlement

that is quite flawed and riddled with religious hypocrisy. This scene also conveys the tainted Puritan history that surrounds the foundation of the commune.

The ‘rock’ is therefore prominent in this mock-trial to cross examine Hollingsworth’s true feelings for Priscilla, with “Judge Coverdale” sitting above the pulpit.<sup>121</sup> Zenobia is able to draw out Hollingsworth’s true feelings for Priscilla, in which he confesses his love for her. In the end, Zenobia’s accusation points out the true hamartia of Hollingsworth – his narcissism: “Nothing else; nothing but self, self, self!”<sup>122</sup> This common thread of the self-obsession, which afflicted many of the converts to transcendentalism in its focus on self-expression, becomes the preoccupation that undermines the socialist aims of the commune. Ultimately, Hawthorne’s narrator Coverdale is able to identify the limitations of social engineering in the way that it collides with the ‘celestial sphere’ of imminent hierarchies found in nature. The mock-trial is just other evidence of the inescapable weight of the past on current events. No matter how utopian the acolytes of Fourierism claim to be, it cannot ignore the Puritan strain of religious community that has dominated the last two centuries of utopian thought.

There are definitive parallels between Eliot as described in *The Blithedale Romance*, and Hawthorne’s work for children *Grandfather’s Chair*. The idealized portrait of John Eliot in Hawthorne’s fable is close to hagiography, as Grandfather credits him with realizing that “an Indian possesses a mind, and a heart, and an immortal soul.”<sup>123</sup> Eliot’s role in converting Indians and making them ‘praying Indians’ is a critical element of a varnished image of Eliot as a saint. Also, inherent in this view was the unpopular view that he “believed that the red men were the descendants of those lost tribes of Israel,” a view that also permeates the writings of William Apess.<sup>124</sup> Francis Convers’ biography of Eliot is also obliquely referenced here. But perhaps most important is the image of the chair of grandfather, the seat of reverence for families across

the United States who would have read Hawthorne to their children. Hawthorne's role of the chair as the suitable place where children can bring questions gives us a sense of the reverence for oral storytelling that was unique to the antebellum period. Hawthorne gives us "a family chair [which] must have a deeper history than a chair of state."<sup>125</sup> The allusions to the Puritan patriarchy that gives us the chair is inherent, but the importance of fireside chats give us a prominent image of how it would have dominated the dissemination of historical views about the Natives in a way sympathetic to that hegemonic structure. In the chapter on 'The Indian Bible,' the children marvel at the dedication of Eliot to his translation of the visible sacred text, but only a paper-thin image of Metacom remains – with the stereotypical Indian savage as his representative.

Particularly in one emotionally charged scene where Coverdale probes Zenobia's heartstrings with her attachment to Hollingsworth, this 'knot' of dreamers is steadfastly coming apart. Zenobia says that she is "sick of playing at philanthropy and progress," that had marked the earlier chapters at Blithedale are slowly fading to reveal Zenobia's helplessness before the twist of fate that will lead to her death.<sup>126</sup> In this interchange shortly before her suicide, Eliot's pulpit again resurfaces as an image of the Puritan past that keeps imposing itself upon the present, a subterranean rock that goes deeper than the citizens of Blithedale would like to admit. Zenobia reveals her intention to convert to Catholicism, and go to a nunnery, and Coverdale, having lost all opportunity to uncover his true intentions towards Zenobia, flings himself at "the base of Eliot's pulpit."<sup>127</sup> The way that the natural topography is described gives us insight as to the way that Puritan morals have given way to transcendental notions of God in nature. We get Eliot's pulpit in view of the natural topography, but also in light of the "risen moon shining upon the rugged face of the rock," such that a ghostly image of the Puritan past is still written upon the

pulpit itself.<sup>128</sup> The hope of philanthropy and progress has yielded to the burden on the backs of Coverdale and the former members of the commune, who were yet too bourgeois to be able to carry the weight of the charter of Blithedale.

In regards to Zenobia's final suicide by drowning, this also leads Coverdale to the rock, as a "nameless presentiment" leads him away from this hallowed place to the riverbed where Zenobia's body is discovered.<sup>129</sup> In some sense, the reader is thrust into a redux of the issues which plagued the original founding of Brook Farm – the narcissistic tendencies of the individual leaders versus the assortment of idealistic notions that are supposed to sustain the farm in its ethos. Here, Zenobia pays the penalty for the lack of cohesion amongst the members, and her suicide is a tragic instance of the failure of Fourierist idealism to sate the needs of its most dedicated members. Eliot's rock continues to have dramatic resonance as a place in which the juridical decisions of the commune have gravitas and emotional weight. The soteriology of the Judeo-Christian idea of the "Last Judgment" is superimposed over the lugubrious funereal rites of Zenobia.<sup>130</sup> In this way, the Puritan Calvinist notions of 'original sin' weigh heavily in a kind of Greek tragedy brought about by hamartia.

Zenobia's funeral rites tend to emphasize the importance of such dramatic differences between Fourier and earlier utopian movements in the American sphere. After her suicide, she is destined to "sleep at the base of Eliot's pulpit" with her initials etched in the stone.<sup>131</sup> In the end, Westervelt is proved to be a "materialist" incapable of uttering a spiritual sentiment and might be a tangible representative of the Marxian ethos that would follow Fourier.<sup>132</sup> David Diamond lends the suicide a psychoanalytic perspective, such that Zenobia's psychic power is due to "reform from theory into practice in organizing the Blithedale work schema."<sup>133</sup> This fact seems to belie the inherent grounding in nineteenth century spirituality which was at work in the

aesthetics of the suicide. Thus, Zenobia's death is an ominous monument to the curtailment of Puritan values, a sort of "axis mundi" for the Blithedale commune, where a sacred space may be carved out of the entirely profane result of the suicide itself.<sup>134</sup>

The narrative aspects of *The Blithedale Romance* which emphasize the conversion of natives show the implicit design of the historical framework within the narrative scope of the novel. Laura Mielke shows how these texts "saw the flourishing of a US literary nationalism that, in the interest of establishing American distinctiveness, drew on Native American text, oral traditions and oratory, sacred ritual, and performances."<sup>135</sup> The use of Eliot's pulpit in this context, is to remind the reader of an autochthonous spiritual tradition inherent in the nature religion that cohabits with Transcendentalist romanticism in the novel. The "ritual of playing Indian" has a connotation of "resistance to repressive authority" that would have otherwise characterized the liberal religious outlook of Unitarian ministers who shaped the spiritual outlook of Blithedale.<sup>136</sup> Mielke points out how the portrayal of Native American 'praying Indians' shows a utopian aspect of Puritan culture which sought to convert instead of politically dominate and subdue Native American practices and cultures.

#### **2.4 Zenobia's Suicide**

Zenobia remains the moral ballast to the wild and exaggerated claims of Fourierists on the opposite side of the Atlantic. Unlike Priscilla, she is willing to buck the sociological trends in order to make a (Margaret) Fullerist feminist statement against the heteronormative antebellum society. One might assume that she is a pseudonym for an actual member of Brook Farm; however, Hawthorne wrote Brook Farm member Ora Gannett Sedgwick that the character

“represented no one person there.”\* Zenobia, a woman warrior in an anti-Roman revolt, is the one who is qualified to break the feminine sphere, even though it eventually spells her death. At some moments in the narrative, after Coverdale is denied entry to Blithedale, Zenobia shuts him out by drawing the curtain after Coverdale is caught spying on them. Take this passage, in which Coverdale relates his sentiments about her:

She should have been able to appreciate the quality of the intellect and the heart, which impelled me (often against my own will, and to the detriment of my comfort) to live in other lives, and to endeavor – by generous sympathies, by delicate intuitions, by taking note of things too slight for record, and by bringing my human spirit into manifold accord with the companions whom God assigned me – to learn the secret which was hidden from even themselves.<sup>137</sup>

Zenobia is known for her reticence in revealing her own thoughts, and yet audacious posturing. She makes the male counterparts of the community uncomfortable. She is not likely to bow to the expectations of the males in the phalanstery. She alone cuts through Coverdale’s ‘delicate intuitions.’ What she brings to the table with her ‘hothouse flower’ in her hair is a dark sexual energy that cannot be reckoned with in the other characters in the novel. Mesmerism and ‘animal magnetism’ becomes a byword for the sexual energy of Zenobia, who is at once a threat to the males and the femme fatale that a community devoted to egalitarianism would produce.

Zenobia is clearly the most messianic of the figures in this tragic cautionary tale. She represents the kind and attractive elements of religious thought from the Transcendental era, but she is unwilling to bow her head to the authority of the religious patriarchy, represented by Hollingsworth. In her final moments with Coverdale, when he is trying to get her to open up about her experiences in the community, Zenobia adroitly resigns herself to a “nunnery,” a common trope in novels of this period with strong female characters.<sup>138</sup> She pays the hefty price for the insouciance of the men, who are too focused on their sexual peccadilloes to be able to

---

\* Sedgwick, “A Girl of Sixteen at Brook Farm,” 394, cf. TBR 199.

understand what she is doing. Each of the personages in the ‘knot of characters’ remains focused on the elusive goal of unity, a unity which only Zenobia can bring: “It takes down the solitary pride of man, beyond other things, to find flinging aside the affections that have grown irksome.”<sup>139</sup> The continual problem of hubris continues to threaten the integrity of the camp. Only Zenobia, with Cato-like intensity, can solve the problem of loneliness in the ‘knot’ by choosing death.

Zenobia’s untimely end has spilt much ink over the course of a century of critical context on the novel. Of it, Michael J. Colacurrio says “Coverdale's story is that he has dreamed Zenobia's final catastrophe.”<sup>140</sup> This frankly conveys the sense that a fundamental spiritual aspect has been betrayed by the Blithedale experiment, and a barrier has been transgressed that will never be reestablished. Banismalah and Mizher have keenly pointed out the “mother archetype” that is characteristic of Zenobia prior to her demise.<sup>141</sup> Owen Holland has described the “entanglement” of the “erotic romantic guise” of Coverdale for all of the characters, but especially Zenobia.<sup>142</sup> Jason Haslam points out that Hollingsworth’s “failure to build his penitentiary” presages “Zenobia’s death” and so underscores how Fourierist aims of reform were not achieved.<sup>143</sup> In each of these instances, the critical debate turns the screw of Zenobia’s death a little bit tighter, in order to project upon it a new utopian or dystopian ideology. But critics agree that Zenobia’s death is the lynchpin to understanding the novel’s main message – the inherent cost of a failed Fourierist experiment.

One particular feature of Zenobia’s death that stands out is the way in which she is martyred or sacrificed for a higher cause. The major characters in the drama, Hollingsworth, Coverdale, Priscilla, and Westervelt, are gathered for her funeral, which is at the site of the rock of Eliot’s pulpit. They are all persuaded of the centrality of Zenobia’s presence in the colony and

are moved to carve her initials into the rock. Hollingsworth requested that her grave “might be dug on the gently sloping hill-side, in the wide pasture, where, as we once supposed, Zenobia and he had planned to build their cottage.”<sup>144</sup> There is a potent awareness of the centrality of Eliot’s rock as the looming presence that makes sense of the death of the innocent. Furthermore, the pulpit connotes the way in which utopian ideals failed to serve the purpose for which they were created in the Fourierist phalanx. With Zenobia’s death, a significant ideal remains – that the lessons of Blithedale could be reproduced elsewhere. Thus, for this colony, its failure also plants the seed of its success in the minds of the readers. Without the martyrdom of Zenobia, it may not have had such a significant effect in the antebellum readership of the novel.

During this funeral, we have a reproduction of what Bridget Bennett calls the “Indian spectrality” of occult spirituality in the nineteenth century novel.<sup>145</sup> As Zenobia’s coffin is lowered into the ground Coverdale expresses a “vain hope of bringing an echo from the spiritual world.”<sup>146</sup> In this way, the occult spirituality which had characterized the commune – its Mesmerism, animal magnetism, and Indian ghosts – starts to take the shape of a legitimate form of spiritual expression which may well have its roots in Eliot’s evangelization project. We see something of the Puritan ‘invisible world’ of Cotton Mather. The allure of this invisible world is a common thread throughout the novel which reaches its logical climax at this point.

Hawthorne’s gothic sensibility comes to fruition in the “haunting” of Zenobia’s ghost of the members of Blithedale during the funeral scene. Hollingsworth remembers the final words of Zenobia in her aside “[t]ell him that I’ll haunt him,” revealing his true motive. As Coverdale theorizes in the closing pages, Hollingsworth is too late to discover that “[p]hilanthropy, when adopted as a profession, to be often useful by its energetic impulse to society at large, it is perilous to the individual.”<sup>147</sup> As they are gathered around the remains of Zenobia, each is

reminded of her entrapment in the process of societal engineering. Here is one instance where a woman was willing to die for what she believed in, and thus, cementing her status within the community as a messianic figure. The ghost of Zenobia is the logical result of the hamartia of selfish individualism within the community.

Eliot's project is reinterpreted in light of spiritual autobiography in the form of John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* (1678) at the conclusion of the novel. As Coverdale intimates, "from the very gate of Heaven, there is a by-way to the pit!"<sup>148</sup> This quote gives us a spiritual reference point which links the Blithedale project to some of the earlier efforts to create religious communities. Bunyan's effort to demonstrate this Christian fallacy of the ideal community is evident in this particular section. This is redolent of the conclusion of part one in which Christian, in a hallucinatory moment, claims: "Then I saw that there was a way to hell, even from the Gates of Heaven, as well as from the city of Destruction. So I awoke, and behold it was a dream."<sup>149</sup> The dreamscape quality of this concluding scene makes us wonder whether community in such a socialist enterprise, as Coverdale envisions it, is possible or whether it remains a kind of illusory dream.

Likewise, Hawthorne projects an optimism onto the failure of the Fourierist effort at Blithedale. When he has left the community after Zenobia's death, he lapses into a sustained effort to get at the meaning behind her suicide. He concludes that "[t]he experiment, so far as its original projectors were concerned, proved long ago a failure, first lapsing into Fourierism, and dying, as it well deserved, for this infidelity to its own higher spirit."<sup>150</sup> There is a sense in which the experiment is redeemed from its own failure to produce a vibrant community, simply by virtue of the public record of its events. So even in failure, Blithedale's fictionalization of the pastoral utopia has been preserved in the art form just as its history has to be retold through

recent efforts to catalogue the Brook Farm project. The hard reality of participating in the local economy, avers Avery Blankenship, may lead inherently to its downfall: “[t]he imagination of Blithedale is unable to exist outside of a reality in which it must consider...the economy of the market-gardeners serving Boston.”<sup>151</sup>

Coverdale’s elusive aim, in the remainder of the confession that concludes the novel, involves finding a cause “worth a sane man’s dying for.”<sup>152</sup> He imagines himself in the place of the Hungarian revolutionary Louis Kossuth, who became a symbol of the struggle for Hungarian independence. Coverdale, as a failed poet, tries to reconcile his own shortcomings with a bolder and more expansive view of human freedom, and the desire to offer himself up to a cause greater than himself. In this respect, he is able to learn the lessons from the suicide of Zenobia, and dedicate himself to utopian political ideals that are at once transatlantic and the zeitgeist of the antebellum era. The reader is asked to consider Zenobia’s sacrifice and egalitarian political ideals within the same sociological framework.

In an account of the Fourierist aims of the Blithedale experiment that has gone awry, it is necessary to see the ‘success’ of the overall novel in distributing these socialist aims. For if the history of Brook Farm is one marked by the failure of bourgeois intelligentsia to create and sustain a socialist colony, the novel succeeds in preserving the experiment for posterity for all generations to read. In fact, the sheer volume of critical literature on *The Blithedale Romance* has shown that the fictionalized experiment is able to garner attention in each generation with renewed interest. Despite the unique problem of the soil, which counteracted the transatlantic aspirations of Blithedale, it is possible to situate the experiment within the tradition of socialist colonies such as Fanny Wright’s Nashoba, and John Humphrey Noyes’ Oneida colony. Colacurrio dubbed Noyes the “prophet of sexual liberation.”<sup>153</sup> If that is the case, Blithedale

shows a more sexually unaffiliated version of socialist thought. Moreover, the evangelical traditions that sustained Brook Farm through many of its personal and financial woes still speaks through the written record of utopian communities such as Bronson Alcott's Fruitlands as recently catalogued in John Matteson's *Eden's Outcasts: the Story of Louisa May Alcott and Her Father* (2007). The antebellum era utopian novel continues to attract modern attention as an odd period where socialism and Christianity were yoked with a common vision of communal property and gender equity.

### 3 A NATIVE UTOPIA: SIMMS' *THE YEMASSEE* & APESS' *A SON OF THE FOREST*

One might take issue with the use of 'utopian' to describe the genre of historical fiction from the antebellum era. Certainly, neither Simms nor the 'Young America' coterie of novels underwritten by the Duykinck brothers would have thought of their fictional portrayals as 'utopian.' Quite the opposite was true at that time: in antebellum novels were impugned by critics of the era, as a "genre widely associated with privacy, idleness, and licentiousness."<sup>1</sup> The use of novelism, in such a context, tended to set apart a series of literary works from the opprobrium that was heaped on fictionality during the early antebellum era. But in specific works of historical fiction, a concern towards social and systemic change in the form of utopian idealism becomes apparent in the literature of the thirties. I use the term novelism in order to show how particular works during this era, preserves certain cultural attitudes of the time. My work tracks divergent utopian experiments grounded in two competing syncretic versions of Christianity – one fraught with a racist ideal of white superiority, and another calque of Native American spirituality in the form of Christian ideals. In the latter case, William Apess' *A Son of the Forest* (1835) portrays a vast conspiracy of white indifference to his plight, and all in the name of a Christianity that was supposed to exalt the lowly. In the former, William Gilmore Simms' *The Yemassee*, (1835) reflects an effort to shore up racial hierarchies by connecting the religion of the 1720s to royalism. While Apess exposes the tension between the utopian ideals and lived realities of the early American, Simms' novel promotes a form of Christianity which only a racial hierarchy and caste system can stem the tide of violent conflict. At the time of its composition, Apess was considered to be more utopian literature than history, the exact inverse of William Gilmore Simms' *The Yemassee*. Yet, in most contemporary readings of these two texts, the reverse is the case. Modern readers of Simms such as Robert Koenigs, Edward

Widmer, and Jeffrey Johnson are meant to see this as a confirmation of the systematic dehumanization of Indian populations in the colonial era, but of course Simms' wider aims include a tacit argument for the necessity of chattel slavery in the nineteenth century. In order to avoid presentism, a delicate balance must be struck between Simms' novel, and the racist hierarchy that supports it, and the work of Apess which offers a contextual counterpoint of the possibility of reconciliation among natives and settler populations. Simms' novel offers a fictional account of a conflict from the 1720s as evidence for his vision of a utopian slaveocracy; Apess' autobiography envisions a decolonized utopia grounded in a syncretic vision of Christianity and gives us a portrayal of indigenous voices divergent from a pasteboard stereotype of the Native American widely found in the antebellum literature of the thirties.

### **3.1 What is the Yemassee?**

*The Yemassee*, a work by William Gilmore Simms, has been sidelined from the literary canon because of Simms' increasing involvement with sectional politics and his support for the Southern Confederacy. Originally, Simms was "affiliated with a nationalistic and Democratic group, self-styled Young America."<sup>2</sup> The Young America movement in letters was a literary circle that promoted a nationalistic bent in literary production and was largely credited by the imprimatur of editor Evert Duykinck. But as Simms became critically involved in South Carolina politics in the 1840s, and increasingly "aghast" as the rise of abolitionism during this period, he distanced himself from the 'Young America' circle and focused his public and private writings on his conviction that "the South needed to become an independent nation."<sup>3</sup> *The Yemassee*, published in 1835, thus represents a Simms affiliated with writing historical romances that catered to the 'Young America' literary taste for nationalism in fiction also represented in novelists James Fenimore Cooper, Cornelius Mathews, and James Kirke Paulding.

Scholars have long documented the demand for historical novels that mimicked the style of Sir Walter Scott was increasing throughout the first decades of the nineteenth century.<sup>4</sup> In this period, writes James Hart, “the romantic temper wanted heroic action, rich color, and exciting pageantry.”<sup>5</sup> William Gilmore Simms wrote for a literary market in which American books were often priced lower than European novelists. He therefore had to create a novel to appeal to the American taste for novels about antiquity, with a particular “fad” in which American novels treated the “local history.”<sup>6</sup> *The Yemassee* was considered as part of a series of books on the regional history which also included Daniel Peirce Thompson’s *Green Mountain Boys* and James Kirke Paulding’s *The Dutchman’s Fireside*. In his preface to the 1835 edition of *The Yemassee*, Simms took issue with the idea that historical fiction must be true to every detail. Rather, like Scott, Simms set out to write “a portrait of his people in the context of a larger nation.”<sup>7</sup>

Simms critic Anthony Dyer Hoefer has suggested a “binary” structure of *The Yemassee*.<sup>8</sup> The narrative alternates through descriptive accounts of the settler population of South Carolina in the 1720s, followed by a window into the native enclaves of the Yemassee tribe and its chief Sanutee. Simms’s affinity for familial ties in the dramatic arch of the Yemassee pages and the hegemony of white male patriarchy in the Carolinian English settler portions, are the twin foci of the elliptical novel. Sanutee’s son, Oconestoga, and his role in collaborating with whites, makes him a central figure in the agon of the dynastic succession tale that Simms weaves. The novel orchestrates the hegemonic role of the plantation owner Gabriel Harrison, but often overlooks “[the slaveholders] dependence on the labor of their slaves and the tenuous nature of the hold on this absolutist form of liberty.”<sup>9</sup> Thus, the novel itself has a plot line that is fraught with contradiction: the showcasing and preservation of native cultures (through the pages devoted to Sanutee) juxtaposed with avatars of culturally white ‘Christian’ civilization (Gabriel

Harrison, Reverend John Matthews, and Hugh Grayson) that is at once myopic to the suffering and genocide perpetrated during the Jackson era of the antebellum United States and yet proclaiming a certain form of liberty for those who are privileged white citizens of the republic.

*The Yemassee*'s plot tends towards this binary narrative model of narrative concerning the military barracks called the Block House, and subsequently the Yemassee tribe in a native territory of Pocotaligo. Simms' reader gets an insider, anthropological look at this South Carolinian tribe and its strange customs, always sandwiched in between sentimental dialogue in the settler territory. The nineteenth century marriage drama transposed in an idyllic eighteenth century silver platter, concerns Reverend John Matthews' daughter Bess Matthews, and her subsequent engagement to the hero Gabriel Harrison. The Simms' maudlin dialogue may seem antiquated and ham-fisted by modern criteria of literary analysis. But in between racist comparisons of military opponents as 'apes' and 'dogs,' we do get an interesting historical preservation of some prominent features of the Yemassee tribe, and their reverence for the Indian mounds that were replete in the southern regions of the United States at that time.

According to Simms critic Stephen Frye, *The Yemassee* "is a romance narrative manifesting the primary characteristics of a "dialogical" novel in Bakhtinian terms."<sup>10</sup> In these terms, we can see evidence of a 'heteroglossia' with the back and forth between indigenous and settler populations of Carolina. Moments of insurrection and violence between rival factions of indigenous groups conflict with the patriarchal episodes couched in a sentimental defense of sacramental institutions of the church. There are precious few moments in which indigenous groups are not portrayed as a threat, such as Sanutee's deer hunt, and the trade practices of the Yemassee in the form of the "belt of wampum."<sup>11</sup> Rather, the most fundamental stake of the novel fundamentally addresses the very right for the Yemassee nation to exist. In terms of Bakhtin, readers are tasked

with valorizing either the Yemassee clan or the white denizens of the Block House, and modern readers must grapple with Simms subtext of the fight for “Christian” civilization with a necessary critical distance, while nonetheless trying to avoid presentism in literary judgments.

There is evidence that Simms believed that historical fiction like *The Yemassee* also served a historical and quasi-evangelical purpose: “These are the offices of art for which she employs history, and it is these which make her not only the most lovely but the most legitimate daughter of heaven.”<sup>12</sup> Evidence from *The Yemassee* gives us a potent sense of Simms’ historical and societal aims of the novel, when in free indirect discourse typical of the nineteenth century novel idiom, he writes: “Our tale becomes history.”<sup>13</sup> The implied author of this novel did not consider the novel merely an isolated curio with strictly aesthetic value, but as a valuable analog to history, and a potential way of revising its coarser details. For this reason, *The Yemassee*’s bifurcated narrative is meant to provide the reader not just a historical novel of the genesis of the Carolinian colony of the 1720’s, but a reflection of a particular white hegemonic agenda for reading American history in the 1830’s during the Jacksonian policy of Indian removal.

Some critics have argued that aesthetic standards, rather than didactic ones, were more appropriate to the novel. As Thomas Koenigs avers, “*The Yemassee*’s metageneric argument crystalizes both the increasing opposition between fictional conjecture and history as genre and the emergent sense that fiction had its own unique standards by which it should be judged.”<sup>14</sup> It is clear from Koenigs’ perspective that the rise of the novel is a logical result from the unyoking of the novel from didactic purposes. But the emerging form of the utopian novel presents a form of novelism that allows for this ‘metageneric’ crossover between truth and fiction to happen. The very idea that a novel could influence the standards of society is evident in the construction of the binary narrative of *The Yemassee*, and its extended metaphor of the colonial hero of Lord

Craven in the form of a commoner Gabriel Harrison gives us an unsettling utopia of racial hegemony of white settlers and caste system while also ironically preserving the cultural aspects of the Yemassee tribe by mapping patriarchal dynastic values over indigenous populations.

### 3.2 Simms' Novel as Utopian 'History'

Simms' "sectionalist anthem," according to critic Glenn Reed, exists alongside his utopian posturing.<sup>15</sup> For Reed, it is clear that Simms' fundamental allegiance was to the local Carolinian repudiation of Northern reformers, abolitionists and Puritans alike, and to establish a "proper and feasible relationship between the white and colored races."<sup>16</sup> This racist societal construct uses a social caste as a way of moderating the violence between races inherent in the antebellum period. Reed points out that the slave insurrection of Nat Turner was only a few years prior to the publishing of *The Yemassee*, and so the novel is simply a petri dish of the cultural consensus of southerners in the thirties who remained skeptical of Northern intervention into local politics.

These concerns to uphold the caste system is utopian insofar as it connects with the idiom of Christian expansion and evangelical thought. Though it is likely to be negatively viewed by modern readers of Simms, its postulation of the "holy family" as the artistic centerpiece of civilized discourse may well make the novel relevant to socially conservative literary tastes.<sup>17</sup> We get this trope as a prominent feature of utopian novels throughout this period which treat the subject of marriage banns and the jockeying of potential suitors. These literary moves, dear to the bourgeois readers of that time, inhabit the pages of sentimental dialogue devoted to the betrothal of Bess Matthews to Gabriel Harrison despite the dilatory pleadings of Hugh Grayson.

The 'green jackets' as the white oppressors are called, are meant to keep down insurrections of Indians from Pocoto-ligo.<sup>18</sup> We see that Simms' ideal society is one of a caste

system meant to keep people in their places. As Molly Boyd observes, we must view Simms' characterization of Gabriel Harrison as a post-fall Adam as an "alternative myth" of white colonists' establishing a "New Jerusalem."<sup>19</sup> Simms wants the reader to see the 'Block House' as a "refuge" from the constant toll of violence in the colony of Carolina, a last outpost defending civilization from barbarism. Boyd gives us a tool for interpreting Simms' racism, as a larger reflection of utopian desire to establish essentialist ideals of white supremacy in light of the policy of Indian Removal consummated in the Treaty of New Echota in 1836.

The character of Bess Matthews is equally assigned a sentimental role of preserving antebellum notions of religious conformity and propriety that jars against modern feminist notions:

Bessy did not, it is true, incline the ear after the manner of Desdemona to her Black moor; but in the anecdote of adventure, which every now and then enriched the rambling speech of their guest, either in the tale of his own, or of the achievements of others, it must be acknowledged that the simple girl found much, in spite of herself, to enlist her curiosity and command her attention.<sup>20</sup>

The comparison of Bess to Desdemona of Shakespeare gives us a classical allusion that helps underscore the way in which sentimental notions of love and marriage governed the antebellum literary taste. Novelism of this antebellum period preserves the positive virtues of a generation in its cultural forms, and as such, no agon as is usually found between the sexes, and the result is a sentimental picture of the relationship between Gabriel Harrison and Bess Matthews. The airbrushed quality of the novel is undeniable, as any acknowledgment of Victorian standards must inherently make the reader evaluate his or her own prejudices about the sexes. But, for Simms, any acknowledgement about the equality of women would necessarily be thought of as insurrection and abolition.

Insulted Southern honor plays a part in the caste system, which shows how military virtues commanded respect in the culture of the day. The doctor, Constantine Nichols, has his honor lambasted by Harrison on account the weak military discipline of the regiment that goes to fight the ‘Coosaw’ war: “Of God’s surety, if you dare, Nichols, I shall tumble you headlong from the bluff,” sternly responded Harrison.”<sup>21</sup> This inflated sense of Southern honor is part and parcel of the caste system that was dismantled by the Civil War and Reconstruction era in large part. But if there is a utopia for Simms, it lies in this inherent superiority of the white man and the masculine struggle for supremacy as the precondition of a ‘superior’ civilization, in which high ideals of nobility and honor are grafted on to a superficial ideal of ‘Christian’ civilization.

This southern honor is complicated by Oconestoga, the son of Sanutee, who flees to the city of refuge, the Block House. By the time of Indian removal, many of the Indians had acculturated to Christian civilization, and had lands, gold, and livestock. Oconestoga rescues Bess Matthews from being a victim to a snakebite, and thus plays the role of the Good Samaritan. The serpent was used as a prodigious trope of the influence of the devil. One looks at the appearance of the serpent here as “a complexion of spotted green.”<sup>22</sup> Simms’s implied narrator comments further of this event: “Providence in this way has seemingly found it necessary to clothe even with a moral power the evanescent and merely animal nature of its creation; and, with a due wisdom, for, as the rattlesnake is singularly slow in its general movements, it might suffer frequently from a want of food unless some power had been assigned it.”<sup>23</sup> The conceit of the snake is Simms’ artifice which connects the heroic action of Oconestoga to a wider narrative regarding the Puritan role of Providence in characters’ lives. The ‘snake’ is a metonym of the influence of demoniac forces yoked with the Native religion of ‘Manneyto,’ but it is also a crucial part of the representation of the agency of the belief in

sublime supernatural power within the narrative, manifested in the ‘providence’ trope widely referenced in literature of this period.

The goal of Simms to situate himself ‘reflexively’ in the potentiante of white male patriarchy is inherent in his transatlantic historical aims. He extends his slaveocracy to other nations: “In the civil commotions of Hayti (sic), the most formidable enemies known to the insurrections were the fierce dogs which had been so educated by the French.”<sup>24</sup> The stalling of national pride in the form of patriarchal hegemony is clear enough here. White male writers saw the advocates of the Natives as rebels, who had received the educational prospects of literacy and power and chose to use them against their instructors and superiors. But in a modern sense, Simms was aware of the transatlantic nature of the insurrectionist movement against human chattel, and he sought to counter global abolitionism with the use of utopian idealism, and often with the religious infrastructure which supported Biblical ideas about polygenesis as a rationale for the caste systems of South Carolinian politics.

The anthropomorphic association of Ococonestoga with the wolf, reinforces this trope of white male hegemony: “The Yemassee is like the wolf – he smells blood on the track of the hunter, when the young cub is carried away. He is blind, like the rattlesnake, with the poison of the long sleep, when he first come out in the time of the green corn.”<sup>25</sup> These animalistic images tend to show the identification of Native population with bestial qualities. But it is also notable that they play a part in the fertility religious celebrations – like the green corn festival – that enrich, regenerate, and renew the cultural capital of the white patriarchy. The parable of Squanto who helped the original Pilgrims tend and harvest their corn is not lost on the nineteenth century readership of *The Yemassee*. The wolf, unlike the snake, is a fierce guardian of its young, and helps to cement the important eschatological framework of the holy family. Critic David Moltke-

Hansen proposed that chivalric values informed the literary culture of the antebellum South to such an extent that “[they] had become the responsibility of men in families and of social betters over social inferiors, as measured by character and accomplishment, not rank.”<sup>26</sup> Such familial ideals appealed to the Southern readership of Simms day, who absorbed these sentimental visions of feudal hierarchies, and helped underscore the family as an idealized building block of civilized discourse against the xenophobic encroachment of barbarism.

The generational conflict begins with hopes of a dynastic succession. The birth of Oconestoga is a spiritual awakening for the family: “Matiwan was glad. Sanutee lifted thee to the sun, boy, and begged for thee his beams from the good Manneyto.”<sup>27</sup> Only through Sanutee’s wife Matiwan do we get a replica of the holy family in the Yemassee tribe. But the utter sense of conflict courses through the veins of the structure of the narrative. It is not long before the pressures of Indian conflict with settler populations cause this relationship to be broken. The utopian thinking remains focused on the inner workings of the family here as we see in the reference to the Edenic natural *topos*: “Matiwan would not lose thee, Oconestoga, from the happy valley.”<sup>28</sup>

Oconestoga wishes to take over the clan, and hence the “contemplated parricide.”<sup>29</sup> He calls his own father a “black dog.”<sup>30</sup> Thus, it is the lack of familial respect, and his turncoat dealings with white Carolinians, that proves his own undoing. This generational conflict against the patriarchal values remains a focal point of the textual framework. The historical context of this literary work makes it clear that Simms deemphasizes the fracturing of the family bonds in the 1720s in order to highlight the dissolution of Native American community in the 1830s. The war against Native Americans began with these early conflicts, culminated in the rioting and

insurrection of Tecumseh, and formalized with the extirpation of the Cherokee from Georgia in *The Treaty of New Echota* (1836).

The use of fantasy imagery may highlight the link between this white male hegemony and with antiquity: “The ancient oak, a bearded Druid, was thee to continue to the due solemnity of all associations – the green but gloomy cedar, the ghostly cypress, and here and there the overgrown pine, - all rose up in their primitive strength, and with an undergrowth around them of shrub and flower.”<sup>31</sup> Clearly, the associations with the natural world gives us a sense of the Transcendental nature of the natives connection with the natural world. Simms also highlights how this nature religion is core to their set of values that prop up their version of nationhood. Simms yokes together popular notions of Native Americans as noble savages with primitive cultures from antiquity such as Celts and Romans. These noble pagan, or non-Christian, cultures serve to enshrine the myth of indigenous ancestry and totem, or tribal identification based on animist religion. In tying Native American totem to the religions of antiquity, Simms imbues them with the chivalric utopian codes that made them acceptable to the readership of that time.

This caste system comes forth as a basic underlying structural component of *The Yemassee*: “the perpetual loss of human caste and national consideration, but the eternal doom, the degradation, the denial of, and the exile from, their simple forest heaven.”<sup>32</sup> The Edenic quality of the wilderness and natural world brings the Natives into a version of the bucolic and pastoral that would be portrayed in Nathaniel Hawthorne’s *The Blithedale Romance*. The novel records an antithesis to white hegemony that Simms himself does not altogether discard, but attempts to preserve, like an anthropologist amongst the culture. The caste that exists within the culture, however, is his main focus – he wants to preserve only those elements that reinforce the guidelines of the Southern plantation economy founded on racism and slavery.

When it comes to the portrayal of Native American in popular novels of the day, one comes upon a fracturing of the American utopian sphere. In works such as Lydia Maria Child's *Hobomok*, William Gilmore Simms' *The Yemassee*, and James Fenimore Cooper's *Deerslayer*, we are introduced to the ideal of the noble savage, who lives in the sphere of nature quite contentedly without problem. But as Claudio Saunt has revealed in cataloguing the process of Indian removal during the 1830's, the average dystopian experience of the Native population is clear: "Troops stole much of the Cherokee's property, and 'work hands' followed soon after to collect what remained for auction by the Federal government."<sup>33</sup>

The white male patriarchy that is the cynosure of William Gilmore Simms' portrayal, and its answer for resolving the internecine conflict that populates the latter pages of *The Yemassee* continually presents a problem to modern readers. But a more assiduous look at Simms' novel allows us to see the lacuna between idealized portraits of Natives in the pages of the novel and the slaughter and forced removal of an indigenous race detailed by historians. Claudio Saunt describes the Cherokee who in the state of Georgia were hunted "like Wild Hogs" in the wilderness and slaughtered by whites.<sup>34</sup> *The Yemassee* puts all of the moral authority on the 'Block House' plantation that protects civilization from barbarism. In the novel's assertions to moral clarity in regard to skirmishes with Native populations, the modern reader of Simms' must labor to avoid presentism. We, as readers, are unable to embrace the white male patriarchy of the South Carolinian plantation economy, and yet Simms endeavors at every turn to persuade us that it represents the vestige of civilization in the South holding the frail social fabric together. In evaluating Simms' defense of the racist hegemony that set up the plantation economy, his view of South Carolinian history informs his utopian vision of the caste system designed to neutralize internecine conflict in the region.

Laura Mielke correctly identifies Simms' reputation in Southern American letters as follows: "Simms contributed to national literature a depiction of Indian-white moving encounters in the neglected setting of the Southern frontiers and asserted that American Indians performed a defining role in the nation's past and present."<sup>35</sup> Mielke then relates *The Yemassee's* revival of the history of conflict between 'Indian-white moving encounters' to the policies of Indian removal that propelled past the judgments of the Supreme Court in *Worcester v. Georgia*, which ruled the Cherokee nation a separate entity, and which Jackson and his allies mocked in using the U.S. military to enforce the Trail of Tears. Historically, then, it is what Simms fails to show us in his prose that prompts the New Historicist literary interpretation: every formalist reading of Simms must always lead us back to a judgment of its historical context.

The racist identification of Native Americans with 'dogs' shows the dehumanization that happens as a result of the patriarchal culture. Beyond Simms' racist aims in establishing a caste system, a system that he views as utopian in its aims to abolish the consistent conflict between Natives and white settlers, his project is essentially anthropological. He establishes the vibrancy and spiritual resonance of the Native American religious creed. The cult of Manneyto tends to view the imposition of the whites as a stain on the 'Happy Valley'-- a place of ultimate union with nature and serene spiritual calm. I would argue that the 'totem' of the Indian burial mounds is an element of Native spirituality that is idiosyncratically unique to the tribal nature religion of the Natives. During many discourses on the Natives, Simms proves that the naturalistic concept of utopia is fraught with divisiveness due to the constant skirmishing of settlers and natives. In contrast, the concept of the 'Holy Family' animates the settler religious conviction and prepares the way for the evangelization techniques that was part of the civilizing process during the antebellum period.

In the novel's opening pages, the conflict centers on the 'green corn festival,' a mutual celebration of both settler and Native abundance. But this sours because of the warlike ways of Sanutee and his wife Matiwan, who are zealous that the Yemassee ancestor Opitchi-Manneyto, an evil eidolon as Simms paints him, would not return them evil for the lack of devotion. At every instance, some overlap exists between the interests of the English and the Natives, the incompatibility of these cultural specimens in Simms' diegesis creates unavoidable conflict. The green corn festival offers a promising vision of irenic community, but it is already bound for dissolution due to the divergent religious views of the South Carolinians of the 1720s with their native counterparts. The ancestral worship patterns of the ideal chief 'Manneyto' proves insoluble with the staunch Puritanism of the white settler populations in the Block House.

Simms uses the idea of the totem in *The Yemassee* to uphold his ideal of the hereditary cast. The *Oxford English Dictionary's* 1841 definition of 'totem' suggests a representation of Native American identity, as G. Caitlin in his *Letter to North American Indians*: "we left our totems or marks on the rocks."<sup>36</sup> Thus, the totem is not only a representation of an animal or sign of nationality, but an emblem of a social unit. The formation of the community is found in the Indian mound in this particular context, a form that Simms corroborates: "the hill was their totem."<sup>37</sup> The burial ground was supposed to give symbolic social glue to the Yemassee tribe according to patriarchal notions of master and slave. Simms preserves elements of Native totems sympathetic to his idealized caste system.

That the totem is the mockingbird reflects the sense that 'Animal Spirits' or Animism ruled the native American cosmology and nature religion. We see this trope repeatedly in Simms, who might as well be the progenitor of the trope in Southern literature writ large in the years that followed. The Indian term 'coonee-latee' is a racist term for the Indian but is totemic to their

culture which celebrates the mockingbird. But it is also the subject of an interpolated poem in the novel's opening pages:

As the Coonee-Latee looked forth from his leaf  
 He saw below him a Yemassee chief,  
 In his war-paint, all so grim-  
 Sung boldly, then, the Coonee-Latee,  
 I, too, will seek for mine enemy;  
 And when the young moon grows dim,  
 I'll slip through the leaves, nor shake them –  
 I'll come on my foes, nor wake them,  
 And I'll take off their scalps like him.<sup>38</sup>

'Scalp removal' and its damage to the Indian image conforms to popular images of Natives at the time, but is now understood to be a racial stereotype. Still, the image of the mockingbird as a totemic representation of the Yemassee goes beyond the native culture to tell the reader something about a bird emblematic of literary culture in the Southeastern United States. The idea of an animal hierarchy in the Native religion makes this poem an escutcheon of the Native culture, and while providing the reader an avian metonym of indigenous culture not altogether hostile to Carolinian settler populations in the novel.

The generational conflict between Sanutee and his son Occonestoga gives us a prime example of Native familial relations strained by white settlement. The Yemassee are originally compared to the Romans in their conquering of native settlement tribes, but the lack of some means of dynastic succession is another reason why Bridget Bennett described the community as "spectral."<sup>39</sup> The relationship of the Indian Spirit guides in nineteenth century spirituality would have been firmly established. But their incorporation into the Christian social fabric of the nineteenth century has not been emphasized. A version of the 'ghost' Indian religion would be portrayed in this and other contemporaneous novels of this decade, including Lydia Maria Child's *Hobomok* (1824) and James Fenimore Cooper's *Last of the Mohicans* (1826). This

presented a ‘vanishing Indian’ that was acceptable to Christian readers of the era, many of whom longed for a more conciliatory stance towards Natives.

I would argue that Simms offers an autochthonous account of Native history remaining in the manifestations of Yemassee religion in the form of the Indian mounds. In particular, the “huge tumulus upon the edge of the river,” in other words, the Indian mounds, continue to be a “melancholy attestation of [Native’s] sacred history.”<sup>40</sup> The burial mounds show a native American heritage that cannot be expressed by their language, a remembrance of the original inhabitants of the nation, who bring a sense of sacredness to the idea of community in the novel’s metaphorical reach to the nineteenth century reader, and as a corollary, ourselves. Simms’s novel connects our own conceptions of the indigenous history of the ‘Yemassee’ tribe of history to the Native American cultural features preserved in the novel’s episodic structure.

In chronicling the generational conflict that proved the undoing of the Yemassee tribe, Simms spares no comparison to the Romans of antiquity: “It forms no part of the Indian’s philosophy to die by his own hand, and the Roman might have won a lesson from the Yemassee, in this respect, which would have enobled his Catos.”<sup>41</sup> The comparison to Cato the Younger, a Roman who committed suicide rather than submit to the will of the Roman Emperor Julius Caesar shows in some sense the immutability of the Native American spirit. Simms, in his belief that the Indian must be enslaved to carry on his legacy, shows that the aspects of Stoic philosophy of antiquity still apply to him. The existence and perpetuation of slavery is a main tenet of the writings of his father Cato the Elder in his *On Agriculture*, which perhaps attracted Simms to their writings.

The Biblical imagery still places *The Yemassee* within the tradition of the Christian eschatological framework. For example, the ethic of love is connected to biblical images of the

golden bowl at the end of history: “Love is the life of nature – all is unnatural without it. The golden bowl has no wine, if love be not at its bottom.”<sup>42</sup> This gives us the underlying message of Simms: socio-political orders are not the source of utopian ideology, but rather, a form of nature religion – albeit purloined from the natives – that can rectify and inform religious orthodoxy. The problem becomes the way in which Natives are portrayed in the narrative, which is not anthropologically discerned – but rather a straw man for the nature religion that Apess had outlined in his narrative. As I suggest later, Apess’ Christian profession problematizes this relationship, as the natural religion ‘of the forest’ becomes an inadequate metaphor for the problem of nation building.

In *The Yemassee*, the character of Dick Chorley comes as an antitype to the patriarchal culture. A shipwrecked sailor, considered to be a pirate, he defies the standards of Carolinian settler civilization as it is outlined by the text. Yet, this does not abate Bess Matthews love for him:

He was a wild, ill-bred profligate, so my father said, in his youth; unmanageable, irregular – left his parents, and without their leave went into a ship and became a sailor. For many years nothing was seen of him – by my father at least – until the other day, when, by some means or other, he heard of us, and made himself known.<sup>43</sup>

The idea of the prodigal son, shot through with Biblical allusions, continues to show that the ‘civilizing’ rhetoric of the native American is complicated with the inability to prevent pirating along the American shores. These antitypes reveal that Simms himself is at odds with his own ‘civilizing’ idea, and the idea of rowdy, undisciplined whites are still beyond the pale of his white slave-owning utopia.

The ethic of slavery is complicated by its use in Christian dogma to justify its presence. Simms makes the argument that even the ‘holy family’ is a type of slave-owning practice, since per Simms children are the ‘slaves’ of their parents:

Even here in these woods, with a poor neighborhood, and surrounded by those who are unhonoured and unknown in society, they – the slaves that they are! - they seek for artificial forms, and bind themselves with constraints that can only have a sanction in the degradation of many. They yield up the noble and true attributes of a generous nature and make themselves subservient to a name and a mark- thus it is that father enslave their children.<sup>44</sup>

The preservation of “Holy Family” seems to be of first importance to Hugh Grayson, a Christian scholar, in a manner that preserves order in society.<sup>45</sup> This primacy of order, whatever blight slavery has on Southern society at the time, does constitute a kind of utopia where everyone ‘knows their place’ in the unwritten caste system. As a corollary, Simms suggests that *all* societies have a sort of hierarchy that is imposed for orderly functioning. Hegemony and caste can never be escaped in Simms, which lends a kind of dubious credence to the institution of slavery.

“The guardian conscience,” which characterizes the Indian attacker who tries to murder Bess Matthews in a savage fury, delineates the difference between the civilized Indian and what Simms attempts to show is bestial.<sup>46</sup> The pure image of Bess Matthews might be stained with the racist imagery which was part of the ‘virgin’ culture that saw women as a cult of domesticity. The attempts of Hugh Grayson and Gabriel Harrison (Lord Craven) to rescue her, although tinged with sentimentality, may reveal the indignities of a native culture that was an existential threat to settler populations in the 1720s. But I would argue that Simms novel tells us more about the white paternalism towards African-Americans and Native-Americans of the 1830s than it offers any clinical historical account of the ‘Yamassee war’ in colonial South Carolina

The novel's focus on the threat of Native 'insurrection,' which loomed constantly in the minds of antebellum Americans, reflects a genre of literature of this period. This historical motif, though roundly refuted by Rebecca Weaver-Hightower, ends up being the central agon of the epic story of the Yemassee war: "The psychological dissonance – the guilt – plaguing settlers is captured in these complicated stories and contradictory voices."<sup>47</sup> Such readings often emphasize the 'guilt' complex of white settlement. However, in *The Yemassee*, the existential military threat of this Indian nation to fragile colonies is not ignored:

At dark, Sanutee, Ishigaska, Enoree-Matee, the prophet and a few others of the Yemassee chiefs and leaders, all entertaining the same decided hostilities to the Carolinians, and all more or less committed to the meditated enterprise against them, met at the lodge of Ishiagaska, in the town of Pocotaligo, and discussed their further preparations at some length. The insurrection had ripened rapidly, and had nearly reached a head.<sup>48</sup>

The historical propinquity of Tecumseh's last stand would have been fresh in the minds of antebellum readers. Thus, the revolt against mercantilism, for Simms, was a complete rejection of the imposition of civilized ethics for Simms. He imagined a roiling chaos that was poised to overtake the order of civilization, especially in the Carolinian colony in 1720. However, the existential threat of pirates such as Chorley to the modicum of peace of the Carolinian settler colony is congruent with the racial hierarchical values that dominated the 1830s. In this way, for Simms, preparing for race war was not just a moment, but a way of life.

On the other hand, Simms also envisions a utopian alternative: a wilderness haven that escaped the corruptions of commercial life. One such utopian concession occurs in the midst of the Indians planning for insurrection: "They occupied one of the islands which still bear their name – they only relics of a nation which had its god and its glories, and believing in the Manneyto and the happy valley, can have no complaint that their old dwellings shall know them no more."<sup>49</sup> The 'happy valley' is a direct reference to Samuel Johnson's *Rasselas*, the place

where Imlac advises the eponymous protagonist to long for in all of his peregrinations. Ironically, in that novel, it is Rasselas' discontent with the happy valley that urges him on to listless wanderings in Abyssinia and elsewhere. But the term is a by-word in literature of this era (and to writers who were familiar with Johnson), to a utopian desire. But unlike utopian literature in this era that claimed to reconstruct 'elysium,' Simms' protagonists only offer us a Manichean understanding of the 'evil-idol' Manneyto, and the white settler guardians of Christian social ethics, a notion which may likely be repugnant to modern readers of Simms.

The widespread racism and attack on religious pluralism in Simms is an unavoidable eyesore of this fiction. The fact remains that Simms never believed that native and settler populations could ever coexist, and so Carolina would have to rule over the Indian nations tarnished by the eidolon Opitchi-Manneyto:

We differ, Mr. Matthews, about the propriety of the measure, for it is utterly impossible that the whites and Indians should ever live together and agree. The nature of things is against it, and the very difference between the tow, that of colour, perceptible to our most ready sentinel, the sight, must always constitute them an inferior caste in our minds.<sup>50</sup>

This overtly racist passage shows how ingrained skin color was for antebellum minds. No literature in the antebellum era could be entirely free of it, with the exception of Melville's playful handling of minorities such as Queequeg in Herman Melville's *Moby Dick* (1851). Admittedly, racial strife was a fact of antebellum life, and slavery is offered to establish a hierarchy that would make civilized life possible.

July, the negro slave of Gabriel Harrison, shows how the Indian population comes to be recognized as the other. He comes to the rescue of Reverend Matthews, when Ishiagaska and his allies attack his daughter Bess in their home. But martial ardor often requires obedience in situations where civilization and property are under duress. The example of this "courageous

negro” gives us a sense of how Simms tried to prop up exemplars of the enslaved race when they performed acts of heroism to defend the plantation economy.<sup>51</sup> Although his racist aims are clear, we see in this a hint of racial harmony, though it is quickly eclipsed by the violence of the scene. Antebellum literature features so many instances of conflict and captivity narratives that even a casual modern observer of this period in American literature can logically see a connection between racial conflict and the racist way that heroes are portrayed *The Yemassee*. Nonetheless, critic Stephen Frye relates Simms’ view that such romances possess truth not found by a ‘historian-scientist’: “the romance is the most appropriate conduit for history.”<sup>52</sup> The version of history Simms cleaves to the romance may well be an antiquated notion of historical record that has been superannuated. Yet, it too is utopian in its search for an ideal caste system in the explicit racial conflict that dominates a majority of the narrative.

This particular novel’s claim to historical accuracy is of course ludicrous to contemporary readers. But the idea that history could be created in novelistic form is a prominent feature of historical fiction in contemporary literature, such as James McBride’s *The Good Lord Bird* (2013). Yet while no one dare assert that contemporary historical fiction on the antebellum period replaces the historical record of the era, the lack of clear borders between truth and fiction is a distinctive feature of American literature in this “embryonic period.”<sup>53</sup> The geography of the United States nebulous political boundaries in the 1830s, coupled with an anxiety for national distinctiveness in letters, amounted to a plethora of historical fiction manuscripts. The desire for a national arch to the American historical narrative found largely in the ‘Young America’ authors produced this taste in readership patterns. I argue that *The Yemassee*, a record of Simms’ wrestling with the constant racial conflict of settler populations with the natives in 1720, is a utopian novel adheres to racist idealism so prevalent at the time. Although this novel does not

substantially yet represent the widespread secular utopian novel, with its focus on labor movements and time travelling such as H. G. Wells *The Time Machine*, or Edward Bellamy's *Looking Backward*, its use of novelism preserves utopian aspirations largely insoluble with modern standards of utopian thought.

### 3.2.1 *Simms vis à vis Apess*

In this section, I position *The Yemassee* amongst and in opposition to the *A Son of the Forest* in Apess in order to provide a contemporary example of a utopian text that offers both a syncretic version of Christianity and a counterpoint to Simms' caste system. As I posit these two texts alongside of each other, I outline a kind of indigenous 'ghost' religion, that emerges alongside of the Christianity of Simms and gives us a sense of the fissure between the fictional portrayal of the Native American and the gross mistreatment that Natives, as represented by Apess. The same subject has been treated in the "ghosting" of Indian populations in nineteenth century spiritualism.<sup>54</sup> Sanutee the warrior, as he is portrayed in *The Yemassee*, is tied to the natural world in a way that the settler never was, but the religions of the Native cultures continue to ironically exert their sway through the pages of a text designed to impugn them.

It is critical to point out that two texts separated by a decade represent a yawning gulf between Native American spirituality as preserved in an idealized form by antebellum novels of the era, and the primary source documents that recount first-person autobiographical material by indigenous writers themselves. Such a gap highlights the vast indifference in canonical texts regarding primary source representations of Native Americans. Modern historians of the antebellum period, such as Juliana Barr have pointed out that clinical history of this period must include some notion of the sovereignty of indigenous peoples in contrast to the "borderlands" of Anglo-European peoples who settled the region.<sup>55</sup> Barr argues that our conception of Native

American sovereignty begins with the reservation era, “as if the United States gave them their first borders when it confined and imprisoned them.”<sup>56</sup> If such notions are true, one wonders why more written forms of the historical sovereignty of such indigenous populations are not more widely available or well-known to students of the antebellum period.

Stark differences between Simms’ apology for slave owning plantation owners and Apess’ first-hand account raises important questions about the issue of literary genre. Whereas Simms claims that his novel is historically verifiable, Apess’ account has been under scrutiny for its lack of historical verifiability. Yet, few scholars would contest that Apess’ record has less credibility as a primary source of Native history than Simms’ secondary account in the form of a historical novel. In the following section, I explore Apess’ credibility as a historian of the antebellum era and explain what makes his account relevant for studying utopian fiction of the period even while it is no exemplar of novelism.

### **3.3 Apess’ History as a Utopian Memoir**

William Apess, in his collected works entitled *On Our Own Ground*, anticipates the slave narratives of Frederick Douglass, especially in its depictions of corporal punishment and blithe indifference to Native American sufferings. I propose that the fracturing of indigenous populations’ homeland causes a rift in the fictional universe of the time – a rift so vast that fiction itself cannot begin to describe the reality. The genocide and removal of Indians undermines the utopian memoir and requires that one look at the first-hand accounts imbued with novelism – a cultural preservation of indigenous morays. *A Son of the Forest* (1829) provides an account of the evangelical roots of those who were forcibly converted to Christianity in part by the dictates of literacy at the time. While Simms offers slavery as the antidote to sectional conflict in Carolina, Apess offers a collective soteriology of individual salvation as a way for

people on opposite sides of a violent conflict to have some sense of resolution. In his memoir, the tone is irenic if not understated, but clearly asserts the validity of Native spirituality as a facet of antebellum Christian orthodoxy. The autobiography of Apess imbues the genre of the personal confessional with an authenticity about the Native American orientation towards Christianity absent in the novelistic utopian enterprise of Simms.

Apess' connection to Anglo-European civilization is always in a sense, fraught with cognitive dissonance. His term for himself: 'a son of the forest' is a mainstay of this dissonance – an attempt to rid himself of the epithet of 'Indian,' which he considered an insult. For Apess, civilization is an apology for indentured servitude and slavery, and so true utopian topography is always in the wilderness:

A son of the forest would never stoop so low as to offer such an insult to a stranger who happened to be among them. I was much mortified, and believing that they ought to be corrected for so flagrant a breach of good manners and "civilization," I thought seriously, in one or two instances, of inflicting summary punishment; but this feeling gave way to that of pity.<sup>57</sup>

This form of civilization would be appropriated by James Fenimore Cooper in his *Leatherstocking Tales*, in the form of natural hegemony over the corrupting influence of 'civilization.' Apess is drawing on Rousseauvian notions of the 'noble savage,' and suggesting that 'the forest,' Apess' tribal totem linked to the Biblical idea of the tribes of Israel, provides a countercultural perspective that is useful in critiquing the flaws of Anglo-European civilized discourse.

The appendix of *A Son of the Forest* has this similar refrain to the rejecting of white civilization in favor of a less barbaric civilization of antiquity, which Apess believed was fundamentally linked to the lost Tribe of Israel – Pequot and Mashpee heritage. This turn away

from the vagaries of white civilization is evident in the syntax of his utopian mindset in his quote from Dewitt Clinton, Governor of New York:

The very ancient men who have witnessed the former glory and prosperity of their country, or who have heard from the mouths of their ancestors, and particularly from their beloved men..., the former state of their country with the great prowess and success of their warriors from old times, they weep like infants when they speak of the fallen condition of their nations.<sup>58</sup>

As a Christianized Indian, Apess clearly believed the Biblical precept that the will of man is ‘fallen.’ But what is interesting is his connection of the best elements of civilized discourse in the *polis* of antiquity. He connects the strivings of the Mashpee for nationhood as a panacea for the imperial aspects of Euro-American settler colonialism. The rhetoric which links the Mashpee Indian with the tribes of Israel, may well use the language of the colonizer to critique the campaign of brutality and subjection of the Jacksonian policy of Indian removal.

This religious sentiment swiftly turns utopian: “They derive however some consolation from a prophecy of ancient origin and universal currency among them, that the men of America will, at some future period, regain their ancient ascendancy and expel the man of Europe from the western hemisphere.”<sup>59</sup> Apess goes on to link the genesis of the Shawnee nation with the revolutionary spirit of the Founding Fathers. The American sentiment to throw off the shackles of feudal hierarchies plays an important role in establishing the culture of Mashantucket, a culture that he sought to preserve in his *Indian Nullification*. Apess’ writings recommend a similar attention to the free exercise of rights of indigenous peoples, a call that unfortunately fell on deaf ears during his lifetime. This strain of anti-European sentiment is also common among the ‘Young America’ writers who made up the novelistic enterprise of the United States of the time: Lydia Maria Child, James Kirke Paulding, William Gilmore Simms, and Cornelius Mathews among others.

When we turn to Apess, we find a true antidote to the tribal violence and the scourge of Indian removal. Apess, writing as a Christianized Indian, provides an authentic voice of support for those literate and economically prosperous Indians who were dispossessed by *The Treaty of New Echota* (see Appendix A.2). Apess claims to have been descended from King Philip, otherwise known as Metacomet, and gives us a sense of a totally different orientation from which the issue could be resolved:

My grandmother was, if I am not misinformed, the king's granddaughter and a fair and beautiful woman. This statement is given not with a view of appearing great in the estimation of others – what, I would ask, is royal blood? – the blood of a king is no better than that of a subject.<sup>60</sup>

Apess is connecting himself to the spiritual heritage of Metacomet, in King Philip's war that cost thousands of New England English settlers their lives in 1675-1676, as one uniquely qualified to be the avatar of Native American nationhood. This claim to bloodline has been disputed by clinical historians of the period, but I argue that Apess' influence here doesn't depend on biological descendancy. The idea of 'royal blood' is a Biblical concept that connects the nation of Israel to messianic ideals in the New Testament. This messianic stance allows Apess to assume the mantle of spokesman and defender of Native American heritage in religious terms familiar to white Anglo-Americans of the antebellum period.

For almost a century after Simms wrote *The Yemassee*, the history of Native Americans was considered as 'inauthentic.' Historian Jill Lepore indicates that literacy itself was considered a threat to Native Americans, who in the time of King Philip, had no written record of their culture. Lepore tells the tale of John Sausamon, a native who learned how to read and write, who was challenged to a duel by an Indian who proclaimed: "Are you an Indian or an Englishman?" before murdering him."<sup>61</sup> Sausamon was educated by the man universally known as the 'apostle to the Indians,' John Eliot, who wrote a dozen primers of the Algonquian language. Lepore asks

of literate Indians, which was itself a misnomer of the time “Can literacy destroy?”<sup>62</sup> In the time of King Philip (1675), this was certainly the case, but Lepore avers: “It was not until the Pequot (sic) William Apess in 1836 that a New England Indian writer would emerge to write the history of King Philip’s war.”<sup>63</sup> Lepore suggests that Indians before Apess would have been quite incapable of representing their history, and she credits Apess with being the first among many Indians who were ‘capable of history.’

Nonetheless, contemporary historians give us a credible revisionist history which confirm Apess’ argument in his memoir. Claudio Saunt’s account of Jackson’s policy of Indian removal occurring contemporaneously with Apess’ writing suggests that the idea Cherokee nationhood implicit in Apess’ writings was repugnant to Georgians living alongside civilized Indians across the Chattahoochee river. Georgia Governor Wilson Lumpkin wrote of the Treaty of New Echota that it “will be executed, or it will be recorded ‘that Georgia was.’”<sup>64</sup> As Apess was writing, Georgia was a place of such territorial conflict such that white Georgians thought that their state was inherently threatened by the sheer existence of a Cherokee nation.

Critic Mark Rifkin has mentioned that Apess’ tribal affiliation is less important than his status as an avatar of ‘Euro-American’ indigenous nationhood. His conscription into the war of 1812 offers a prescient reminder that many Natives had tried to assimilate to Euro-American nationality, only to be socially exiled later. (Apess was exiled from the Methodist Episcopal church for writing *A Son of the Forest*, and a highly edited version was published by the Protestant Methodists.) After a childhood of utter penury, Apess decides to join the United States military as a drum major: “It appeared that I had been enlisted for a musician, as I was instructed while on the island in beating a drum. In this I took much delight. While on the island I witnessed the execution of a soldier who was shot according to the decision of a court martial.”<sup>65</sup>

Apess experiences much anxiety at the iniquity of the soldiers, but as much for his own salvation. In the style of an Augustinian confessional he relates: “I became almost as bad as any of them, could drink rum, play cards, and act as wickedly as any.”<sup>66</sup> Thus, in this way, Apess testifies his unworthiness as a narrator, but also humanizes himself to the reader in making way for mistakes and errors, which is a mark of an authentic confessional of the antebellum period.

Rifkin writes of a territorial version of Indian nationhood: “[Natives] need to be understood as a sovereign and self-determining politics, rather than objects of ethnographic interest.”<sup>67</sup> The colloquy of critical material seems to have consensus on this point – that indigenous investment of the territory of Native possession identifies them as a particular nation, and not as a contrived mock-up of American political essentializing. This obsession with the nationhood of Native American infuses Apess’ text with a utopian aspect that otherwise undermines the autocratic version of nationhood offered by Simms.

The ghost of Tecumseh and his skirmish with U. S. forces under William Henry Harrison, continues the tradition of Native American revolt against white encroachment (See Appendix A.1). Tecumseh’s insurrection is catalogued in Howard Zinn’s *A People’s History of the United States*: “Tecumseh organized in 1811 an Indian gathering of five thousand, on the bank of the Tallapoosa River in Alabama, and told them: “Let the white race perish. They seize your land; they corrupt your women, they trample on the ashes of your dead!”<sup>68</sup> Thus, the relative incongruity of white settlement with the aims of utopian Indian nationhood remains a fertile reminder of the complete war and state of combat between the two, of which Apess’ text remains an outlier. Such intermittent racial strife is also redolent of the ‘praying Indians’ that John Eliot endeavored to assimilate to English colonial culture who later discarded their European clothing and joined the revolt of Metacomet in the late seventeenth century.

Other accounts of Tecumseh, of which Apess would have been aware, intuit Tecumseh's gravitas: the "Shawnee warrior," writes Elliott West, "was just under 6 feet tall, broad chested, and well muscled."<sup>69</sup> He had no tattoos or markings, other than a nose ring. Tecumseh's last stand would have been transfixed in the minds of nineteenth century Americans – the battle of Tippecanoe.<sup>3†</sup> But this last effort at Indian nationhood was only possible because Tecumseh proved an able administrator of getting together the various tribes together: "Cherokees, Choctaws, Chicasaws, Creeks, and Seminoles."<sup>70</sup> Tecumseh's influence, fresh in the minds of antebellum Americans, would have made whites extremely hostile towards any manifestation of Native spirituality which did not include Christian doctrine.

In this vein, Apess' text can be viewed somewhat as a slave narrative, especially with the concept of the "runaway," which is replete throughout the text.<sup>71</sup> He experiences corporal punishment from the Furman household, and is compelled by an early version of the familiar Horatio Alger myth to "do business for myself and become rich."<sup>72</sup> This illusory aspect of the slave narrative which highlights revolt and the promise of worldly success, runs completely counter to the soteriological bent of the narrative. Apess winds up attending church services with the "noisy Methodists" and is struck with terror that he will "wake up in hell."<sup>73</sup> It seems that Apess is most preoccupied, not with worldly success, but by a metaphysical wrestling with his own soul's destiny. The Christological aspects of the narrative are impossible to ignore, and it can be asserted definitively that Apess' only utopia is after death; he does not necessarily hold

---

<sup>3†</sup> Oddly enough, the Battle of Tippecanoe was lost on account of his brother Tenskwatawa, who claimed that "the Master of Life assured a victory – by some accounts he said they would be invulnerable to bullets" ( West 40). The 700 or so warriors were forced to withdraw and the surrounding villages were burned by the American commander, William Henry Harrison, who is posthumously remembered as its 9<sup>th</sup> president, who remained in office a mere month before succumbing to a fatal illness.

out a hope in Indian nationhood. He maintains that the gospel is a “panacea” and that it offers “perfect freedom.”<sup>74</sup>

When Apess has near death experiences, it seems to heighten his sense that his sufferings are separating him from any vision of an Indian nationhood. He is “pushed down the stairs” by a chambermaid of Mr. William Williams, in such a way that makes it clear that he sustained permanent and lasting injuries to his body and mental stability.<sup>75</sup> He was whipped repeatedly for insubordination on Mr. Furman’s farm, and as a drum major. Apess’ narrative goes beyond narrativity, because his body is a type of parchment that records pain inflicted. This historical narrative, then, must be taken simply as a confessional format, and then processed not as a novelistic narrative, but as a historical record. In other words, the rhetorical spin of the romantic image of the Native is undermined by the first-person confessional which demonstrates a soteriological framework, central to Apess’ narrative, that counters Simms’ eschatological framework.

William Apess was a key proponent of Methodist reform, and he was active in the “oratorical aspect of Methodist preaching.”<sup>76</sup> He rubbed elbows with Frances Wright, John Noyes, and other founders of utopian colonies. The “Methodist resistance to Cherokee removal” was central in this particular ideological aim.<sup>77</sup> *A Son of the Forest* exhibits many of these key aspects: 1) an abolitionist mindset 2) the liberation and perpetuation of the Native American race 3) the imposition of Christian Methodism as an antidote to slave holding theological supporters. All of these aspects make Apess’ text inherently political. The corporal punishment that he suffered was part and parcel of a wider divide in the antebellum sound. The failure of the Supreme Court to enforce *Worcester v. Georgia*, and President Jackson’s indifference to it meant

that there was a fundamental divide between the United States' formal policy and the mass genocidal campaign that it supported.

This historical act goes along with a theory of history, argued by Pierre Nora, in which memory and history are fundamentally divided. He calls this the "lieux de mémoire" (sites of memory) in which how we remember historical events is fundamentally different than how they actually happened. Jackson intended to secure his authority and that of his protégé Martin Van Buren by a pugnacious posture towards the Indian nation, but we remember this campaign for the fundamental hypocrisy of American government towards its native population. The sites of memory involves, according to Nora, a "dilation of our very mode of historical perception."<sup>78</sup> This inherently connects the historical reader to an intellectual "gesture" that "would be experienced as the ritual repetition of a timeless practice in a primordial identification or act and meaning."<sup>79</sup> We, as passive observers of history, cannot help but impose our own biases on how history is remembered. Nora's version of history places Apess on a spectrum of colonial indifference towards native plight on one hand, and the reimagining of Mashpee nationhood on the other.

Apess's "religious anxieties" played a part in the crafting of a cultural narrative that made indigenous voices acceptable to whites.<sup>80</sup> One of these manifestations was his penchant for "reformist Methodist" tendencies, which led to the publication of numerous religious tracts, on which Apess made his living.<sup>81</sup> These documents, "have often been understood as accommodating radical utopianism to capitalist ideology."<sup>82</sup> *Son of the Forest* was highly edited for this reason, into a bowdlerized version of 1831. He excluded much of the utopianist tract passages about the equivalency of labor and intellectual activity as was showcased in Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Blithedale Romance*. Formerly, he had "linked bodily pain to labor in a manner

reminiscent of the era's female conversion narratives."<sup>83</sup> But although he might as well have subscribed to these reform movements, his main goal remained to make an invisible population of natives visible to the nineteenth century reading public.

Drew Lopenzina gives us a sense of this indigenous voice "under a veil of erasure and neglect."<sup>84</sup> We get the sense in the temperance writings of Apess, that his anxiety about liquor tends to revolve around this focal point: "I now got to drinking too much of the accursed liquor again."<sup>85</sup> Apess's imbibing rum in copious quantities, and his eventual rejection of the beverage, manifests in an embracing of the elements of the temperance movement that suit his Indian nationhood aim in his writings. The fact that he could be 'erased' by alcoholism is part of the Indian narrative of acculturation vis à vis the dependency on white economy in a way that was irreproducible in Native communities. The Indian hymn replaces the liquored beverage as the acceptable way to preserve community, as Lopenzina argues, it was "a means of spiritual intentions that might also ease the unrelenting strains of civilization."<sup>86</sup> There were precious few strains of Native spirituality that would have been acceptable to white readers, but the temperance movement of the nineteenth century continued to prick the conscience of white literati throughout the antebellum era.

Apess declares he has chosen the romantic label "a son of the forest" to emphasize his explicit rejection of "Indian" as "a slur upon an oppressed and scattered nation" he believes was "imported for the special purpose of degrading us."<sup>87</sup> Apess turns the slur on its head, and embraces the implications of it. As an itinerant pastor, Apess is unable to belong to any particular geographical location. He is forced to belong to an unsurveyed stretch of land, which is Mashantucket, the home of the Mashpees. The designation of 'forest dweller' might well be translated into another language as 'wilderness dweller.' This diaspora of the Indian population

continues to spell tragedy for the Mashpee, as they are forcibly exiled from their homes, as might be characterized by Apess' sermons in New York and on "Arbor Hill."<sup>88</sup>

Apess finds himself in the patriarchy of Christian evangelism, in his characterizations of "Bartholomew Otheman" and "brother John Foster," whom he considers much more able administrators of the gospel than himself."<sup>89</sup> Their Calvinist rhetoric makes no provision for a halfway Christianity: brothers must submit themselves to the hierarchy, or be defrocked.

Lopezina's account of this process bears mention:

"Natives had been pressured into professing Western forms of spirituality and in the wake of violence, disease, and economic hardship, Christianity, for better or worse, became a path of least resistance, a means of expressing one's spiritual intentions that might also ease the unrelenting strains of colonization."<sup>90</sup>

In other words, Apess was pigeonholed into a particular Calvinist brand of Christianity that emphasized the total depravity of the sinner, and the election of the saints, but also refutes the idea that Native spirituality and Christianity could not be syncretical. Thus, while Apess envisioned a utopian geopolitical space for the Mashpee tribe, mere survival dictated the adoption of ethnically white cultural norms.

The problem of racism haunted Apess' writings, as did the specter of Indian dispossession. According to Claudio Saunt, natives were not mere savages in the wilderness as they were being hunted and relocated. The process of Indian removal was the seizure of assets, and the forcible dispossession of quite civilized and literate citizens:

Throughout [Georgia], houses stood empty of residents and the objects of everyday life rested in place: a fiddle, chairs, a bed, a spinning wheel, a cooking pot, a bag of dried fruit, a playing horn. But this eerie absence of people was only temporary. Troops stole much of the Cherokee's property, and "work hands" followed soon after to collect what remained for auction by the federal government.<sup>91</sup>

It was illegal for these people of color to 'own' what the government had heretofore allowed them to accumulate. This lack of material abundance, in an era of extreme want before the

advent of capitalism, still resonates as a deep root of racism that undergirded the Federal policy towards natives. Apess would have exerted on himself extreme pressure to conform to the standards of white civilization, and he is both literally and metaphorically ‘lost’ in the forest – unable to be acculturated to the onslaught of the white speculative economy.

The origin of this racism goes back to the forging of American identity during the King Philip’s War. According to Jill Lepore, the murder of John Sassamon by Narragansett Indians was the cause of this prolonged war. Cotton Mather, a contemporary of Sassamon, wrote of it: “no doubt but one reason why the Indians murdered John Sausaman (sic), was out of hatred against him for his Religion.”<sup>92</sup> This protracted conflict separated the English colonists irrevocably from any distal acceptance of the Native American tribal religion or any of its elements. The nearness of religious conflict in the Spanish Inquisition, Lepore argues, was fresh in the minds of the colonists, and they were loathe to depart from any article of faith of their religion.<sup>93</sup> For this reason, Apess claims that he is descended from “the royal family of Phillip” in the prologue of *A Son of the Forest*.<sup>94</sup> The Indian ‘separateness’ and ‘royal nationhood’ would only have been possible several generations back, before the vanquishing of Tecumseh and his Native confederacy.

The rhetorical ideals of separateness from corruptions in Euro-American civilized discourse and union with sublimity of nature constitutes the telos of Apess’ narrative. He responds to the slighting of the Native American in the characterization of them as “beasts of the forest.”<sup>95</sup> Apess is quick to offer a counterpoint to this, placing the opprobrium on the “vices of civilization.”<sup>96</sup> In truth, the Natives are subservient to the goals of mercantilism, and even Apess admits this adaptation, while projecting that they are the “undisputed lord of the soil.”<sup>97</sup> Yet, he inserts them into the aspects of Lyceum culture that suit his humanistic purposes: “The orator

awakens all their martial ardor, and they are wrought up to a kind of religious desperation.”<sup>98</sup>

Again, the religious anxieties of Apess come to the forefront of his humanism, in order to combat the widespread racism and dehumanization. In contrast to Simms’s two dimensional embrace of the idealized Native, Apess gives us a round character of himself as the narrator and sets all of the flat characters as the Euro-American oppressors. This includes of course, the Lyceum culture that has excluded people of Native American descent – the only acceptable forum for Apess’ expression of indigenous thought was the Methodist church.

However, Apess realizes the limitations of his narrative in his own time. Although his attempt is to recite the historical legitimacy of the Indian nations in his literary work, he looks to the novel to accomplish much of this:

It has been the theme of many a spirit-stirring song, and chivalric story. The minstrel has sung of it in the loftiest strain of his lyre – the poet has delighted to shed around it all the splendors of fiction – and even the historian has forgotten the sober gravity of narration, and burst forth into enthusiasm and rhapsody in its praise.<sup>99</sup>

This encomium to the arts and humanities is the most prevalent evidence for novelism in this memoir – a vision of white civilization that has yet to oppress Natives. Like Simms, Apess seems content to occupy the liminal space between history and literary output. Clearly, here the role of the arts is to instill the chivalric code, a trope familiar to Simms’ work and target audience as well, in order to create a utopian hierarchy based on merit. The role of the arts seems especially prominent in fashioning the Apess memoir, even if his confessional format doesn’t leave much room for aesthetic interpretation.

Apess’ embrace of the chivalric code in his autobiography is a key aspect of an enlightened Christianity that he believed, somewhat counter to logic and historical precedent, would not be used to oppress indigenous people: “By many persons great objection have been raised against efforts to civilize the natives... and why did they fail? We may with perfect safety

say that these persons were prompted to the efforts they made by sinister motives.”<sup>100</sup> *A Son of the Forest* is replete with these bridges to white culture, where literacy is made to be a civilizing force. But Apess rightly points out the lacuna which exists between the individual ‘motives’ of the heart and the wider socio-political pressures. For Apess, the memoir in the confessional genre alone allows for a transformation of bellicose savagery into civilized discourse.

Furthermore, Apess cites the legacy of Thomas Jefferson in cementing an irenic discursive stance towards natives. Historian Steven Ambrose relates that in 1785 Jefferson wrote that he “believed the Indian ... to be in body and mind equal to the whiteman.”<sup>101</sup> In all Jefferson’s preparations for the Lewis and Clark expedition, he “ordered Lewis to learn what he could about Indian religion.”<sup>102</sup> This interest in native religion, its practices, rituals, and sacred objects, would be unique to Jefferson as a president. No president afterwards would take such an anthropological interest in the natives. Maybe for this reason, Apess quotes Jefferson’s *Notes on the State of Virginia* in his appendix:

Speaking of the Indian confederacy of the warriors, or rather nations, in that state and its neighborhood, called ‘the Powhatan confederacy,’ says, it contained in territory, as he supposes of their patrimonial country ‘... [t]hat there was one inhabitant for every square mile...making the number of souls about thirty thousand.’<sup>103</sup>

The fact of Jefferson’s use of ‘souls’ to describe the native is a counterexample to the bestial language that saturated the descriptions of the natives from Apess’ era. It is potent evidence that Apess remains hopeful to give his readers an etiology of a Native utopian nation in which he would offer a solution to racial conflict vastly different than Simms’ artifice.

Apess also gives us snippets of the Native religion in his appendix to *A Son of the Forest*. His research gives an account of an earlier expedition west in 1764 which attempted to understand the religious practices of natives, he quotes from an anonymous source that:

[O]ne of their ancient traditions was, that a great while ago, they had a common father, who lived toward the rising of the sun, and governed the whole world. That all the white people's heads were under his feet. That he had twelve sons, by whom he administered his government. That his authority was derived from the Great Spirit, by virtue of some special gift from him.<sup>104</sup>

This divine authoritarianism would have appealed to patriarchal cultures, of which the Mashpee tribal culture would have been an exemplar. This rhetoric is also used to support Apess' belief that the Native tribes were once a lost tribe of Israel. This belief accounts for Apess' description of the journey of native across the "narrow passage" in Alaska.<sup>105</sup>

Moreover, Apess makes a comparison between Hebrew and Indian languages, in an effort to link the tribes to the patriarchal culture:

A writer ...who has had the best opportunities to know the true idiom of their language, by a residence among them for forty years, has taken great pains to show the similarity of the Hebrew with the Indian languages, both in their roots and general construction.<sup>106</sup>

One might see this belief as part of the acculturation method, but in fact, it is evidence that the anthropological efforts of whites to categorize the natives may be flawed. It was common in the early American settlements, at Jamestown for example, for whites to leave and join Indians, as in the example of the Spanish Jesuit Don Luis who "took off his clothes and went naked."<sup>107</sup> But the reverse is an anomalous occurrence, which fortifies the interest of whites to continue their acculturation methods.

For Apess, the racial epithet of 'Indian' was one that slighted his people more than complexion. But we do have evidence that he thought 'dark' complexion to be a central characteristic tying him to the progenitor Adam in the biblical record:

I thought it disgraceful to be called an Indian; it was considered as a slur upon an oppressed and scattered nation... I humbly conceive that the natives of this country are the only people under heaven who have a just title to the name, inasmuch as we are the only people who retain the original complexion of our father Adam.<sup>108</sup>

For Apess, and many natives since, the term Indian remained a crucial reminder of the ethnic hatred that they endured. But this was also clearly tied to skin tone, as is evidenced from Apess' claim to have the 'complexion of our father Adam.' The identification of skin color as a source of shame for Native Americans comes from the origin of the word 'maroon,' a racist term denoting skin color, which perpetuated the institution of slavery in North America and the West Indies:

*Maroon* first appeared in English in 1666 when John Davies, translating a history of Barbados, wrote that slaves, like those animals, would 'run away and get into the Mountains and Forests, where they live like so many Beasts'...[E]ventually the ... word, *maroon*, carried a heavy metaphoric or perhaps even literal sense that these fugitives devolved to an animal ferocity, wildness, and savagery.<sup>109</sup>

So in a literal sense, the word continued to have barbaric connotations up until the twentieth century. Apess' memoir retains some of the essential characteristics of slave narratives of the period, in that skin color was always a kind of opprobrium that had to be endured. Apess' record of unjust corporal chastisements under Mr. Furman due to lies told by an anonymous household servant links Apess' narrative with other slave narratives from this period such as *The Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*. The scourging of 'dark' complexioned people as 'beasts' would be a burden that Apess would have shared with enslaved people, regardless of the actual hue or color of Apess' skin.

Phillip Round points out that Natives of the 1830s were surrounded by a literature of caricature and racism used to justify dispossession. During this period, a number of printing presses and daily journals, most notably *The Cherokee Phoenix*, was founded to create a historical record from authentic indigenous voices. Round cites Apess "Eulogy of King Philip" to suggest the "[m]onuments of cruelty" that surrounded Natives who were contemporaries of Apess."<sup>110</sup> Moreover, Round suggests that Natives like Apess had "grown up surrounded by

images of their own inhumanity.”<sup>111</sup> In this way, the modern reader of Apess must be aware of the hostile environment in which Native writers must have lived and worked. This fact lends credence to the notion that Apess, limited by antebellum prejudices, could only use Christian religious metaphors to write an authentic memoir of his spiritual journeys.

Clearly, not all Christian denominations supported Indian removal policies of the Jackson era. Mark Miller avers that while all Methodist reform movements were ‘paternalistic,’ many local congregations in the North objected to pejorative and warped characterizations of Natives. Miller cites a particular favorable review of Apess’ sermons in *The New York Evangelist*: “Committed to Finneyite revivalism and the promotion of a paternalistic Christian and republican ideal of disinterested benevolence... publications like *The Evangelist* have often been understood as accommodating radical utopianism to capitalist ideology.”<sup>112</sup> Scrutiny of obscure journals of the antebellum era like *The New York Evangelist* necessitates the idea that Christianity, even in the antebellum era, was not a monolithic institution, but that a certain amount of religious pluralism applied to denominational approaches. Apess used these ulterior forms of religious expression to make his utopian appeals, not in the form of authentic monographs, but in his itinerant preaching.

### **3.4 Conclusion**

In regards to *The Yemassee*, the insider look at South Carolinian politics advocated by Hagstette and Moltke-Hansen contrasts with readings of Simms racism represented in King and Dyer Hoefler. Reading Apess and Simms in tandem helps clarify the fictional rift that occurs in portrayals of Native Americans in popular fiction of the time. This method of analysis could logically be extended to other fictional portrayals of Native Americans in the period, including Catharine Maria Sedgwick’s *Hope Leslie, or, Early Times in the Massachusetts* (1827),

Cornelius Mathews *Behemoth: The Legend of the Mound Builders* (1839), James Fenimore Cooper's *Last of the Mohicans* (1826), and Lydia Maria Child's *Hobomok* (1824). Although the archetype of the noble savage has been offered as a representative of the native culture, this stereotype is undermined by indigenous writing of the time. I argue that Simms' novel amounts to a utopian call to end systemic conflict between white settlers and natives, but one that grossly misrepresents the Christianized Indian, and furthers a cultural rift that is present in the fiction of the antebellum thirties. This emphasis on Christian visions of utopia, and the bringing of heaven down to earth through the utopian novel, would remain a salient characteristic of utopian novels of this period. In these several antebellum authors, we have a rewriting of utopian history in a way that contrasts the stark realism of Apess in contrast with the sentimental fantasy of Simms. Nevertheless, provided that the indigenous writings of antebellum America could be decoded and catalogued, many voices of antebellum American writing could credibly sustain the historical authority of indigenous memoir and inform revisionist histories of the period. In each of these works of creative nonfiction, the eidolon of the Native American ghost religion comes crashing against the martial reality of Indian removal policies.

#### 4. PAN-AFRICAN UTOPIA: DELANY'S *BLAKE*

As we approach the vast and injurious sea of upstart African-American literature, struggling to free itself from the chains of human chattel, the serialized novel of Martin R. Delany's *Blake, or, the Huts of America* comes into critical focus. Until fairly recently, this unfinished utopian novel is extremely unique because Delany himself never thought of himself as a novelist, but an agitator for black emigration. This strange fact oddly might well characterize future African American novelists, for Ralph Ellison, who is noted for his benchmark novel *Invisible Man*, dabbled in the technical aspects of ham radio and other scientific pursuits before landing on his career as a novelist. But Delany was quite separate from Ellison, for after *Blake*, he would never return to the form. I would argue that this might well be because of Elysium – he saw himself as a synthesizer of evangelical threads of a culture that breathed the air of Protestant Christianity with his political convictions, which were clearly at the antipodes of slavery apologues like William Gilmore Simms:

When, wailing feebly on, he turned into the first by-way, lest, ere he reached his humble abode he might meet with other summary corporeal abuse, and the majesty of heaven again be compelled to yield before the mandate of hell.<sup>1</sup>

Such a passage gives us a sense of how Puritan concepts of the afterlife were so deeply ingrained in the antebellum cultural fabric, that even a relatively obscure novelist could not afford to ignore them. In fact, Delany's concept of utopia is quite inextricably yoked with elysian concepts associated with the Edenic mythos.

The odyssey of Carolus Henrico Blacus in Martin Delany's sole novel *Blake, or the Huts of America* is one that leads to a utopian awakening. Countermanding the religious enclaves in the south and expanding west that justified human chattel, the novel's project includes jockeying for black empowerment in the American south, and raising awareness and support for a slave

insurrection. It is notable that Delany himself backed John Brown's raid on Harper's Ferry, Virginia in organizing "a secret convention held in Chatham [Canada West] to plan a black insurrection."<sup>2</sup> His literary avatar Blake in the novel embarks on a picaresque journey to motivate the slaves of numerous plantations around the South to foment revolution. Here we have the polar opposite of William Gilmore Simms' version of peace within a racist hierarchy. According to Jerome McGann, *Blake* envisions an explicitly African elysium: "Simplistic as we might judge such racial historicism, it functions very well as a path through white racist appropriations of the monotheist Bible. There is a 'a world elsewhere,' and in *Blake* it is called 'Afraka.'"<sup>3</sup> This imaginary 'Afraka,' as the introduction by Jerome McGann points out, is a place that no longer resembles the actual continent. Its *topos*, so I would argue, remains utopian, and it hopes to use novelism to reform the status quo.

In 'Afraka,' an interpolated poem, Delany gives us insight into his emigration policy. He believed that whites would "come to realize their dependence on black labor once blacks began to leave the country."<sup>4</sup> But there was amongst Delany's peers a bit of disagreement about where blacks were to emigrate, since Delany's efforts predate the term 'black nationalism.' Delany limited his efforts to expatriating fellow blacks to Liberia, but this proved to be no panacea either. The poem highlights these incendiary differences between leaders such as Fredrick Douglass who was accommodationist towards the U. S., and Delany himself, who was uniquely and assiduously committed to the repatriation of African Americans:

I'm a goin to Afraka,  
 Where white man dare not stay;  
 I ketch 'im by de collar,  
 Den de white man holler;  
 I hit 'im on de pate,  
 Den I make him blate!  
 I seize 'im by de throat ---  
 Laud! -he beller like a goat.<sup>5</sup>

One must immediately reckon with the congruency of this poem with the negro spiritual. In many ways, the fears of William Gilmore Simms' literary efforts have been confirmed by an opposing scurrilous invective of black nationalism whereby violent revolution and race war seems the only path forward. The poem, using pidgin English and masculine rhyme patterns, reminds the reader that literary convention is subservient to political message. Delany's novel may have been lost for over a hundred years because of its strident support for insurrection and his backing of violent overthrow of the slave power, and as a corollary, the United States.

Delany's novel draws on many historical reports of slave insurrection. Yet, according to Robert S. Levine, these are shrouded in his literary conceit: "His romantic conception (or fantasy) of heroic black leadership is expressed most powerfully in his novel."<sup>6</sup> The romantic aspects of this novel testifies to its ironic shifting authorial voice to accomplish Delany's utopian project. The story itself seems episodic, with few round characters except Blake and the Cuban revolutionary Placido, who is an anachronistic portrayal of the historical Cuban emancipator Gabriel Concepcion Valdes.

Henry Blake's odyssey is the natural result of the history of slave insurrections in the United States. These scattered incidents before the Civil War were never successful, and usually ended in the execution of the individuals responsible. In 1738, Benjamin Lay, a glove maker, preceded Henry David Thoreau as a literati who "denounced slavery before governors, ministers, and merchants."<sup>7</sup> He was said to fill a pig's bladder with blood and put it in a Bible, which he pierced with a dagger, saying "Thus, shall God shed the blood of those persons who enslave their fellow creatures."<sup>8</sup> One blacksmith Gabriel Prosser led an unsuccessful revolt in the summer of 1800 in Virginia and became known as the "American Toussaint."<sup>9</sup> In 1822, Denmark Vesey from Charleston staged a failed revolt to seize the city, yet Vesey was caught and hanged.<sup>10</sup>

Slave revolts were all violently suppressed, and exacerbated political divisions in the United States. Thus, it is likely that a successful revolt would have been suppressed even in abolitionist literature in the antebellum period. But Delany's character Blake defies these expectations, and he leads a successful slave revolt that hoped to establish a black nation under the Christian God.

What makes *Blake* a historical anomaly is not just that it is the only novel that Delany wrote, for he did not return to the novel format after his enlistment as an officer in the Civil War. It is that the work cannot exclusively be called 'American' literature, so focused is it on geopolitical spaces not attributed to the United States. Delany was not in any sense of the word an integrationist, as might be ascribed to his famous peer, Frederick Douglass. Rather, he argued indefatigably that blacks should repatriate from the United States. Countless passages of *Blake* argue against the American republic, often siding with the British during this embryonic stage of U.S. nationhood:

“It is indeed a sad reflection,” said Blake, “to contrast the difference between British and American jurisprudence. How sublime the spectacle of the colossal statue (compared with the puppet figure of the judge of the American Supreme Court), of the Lord Chief Justice when standing up declaring to the effect... the genius...of universal emancipation.”<sup>11</sup>

By and large, Delany's avatar Henry Blake prefers the British system of government, and often lauded it in his writings. Thus, while the first half of this work occurs on American soil, Blake's repugnance towards the United States government is strident and fierce.

Many scholars have envisioned *Blake* as a retelling of the revolution of Haiti. In particular, Grégory Pierrot has established the likelihood of the story's hero as a “black avenger.”<sup>12</sup> The rhetorical stance of the novel is then “the founding document of the Haitian nation, the Constitution of 1805, [which] forbade whites from owning property in the island and made all Haitians...officially black. Haiti was a black country by law.”<sup>13</sup> As such, Delany would

have had the nation and its origins in the back of his mind as he was composing *Blake*. Though scant few references to the nation exist in the novel, it was a model government akin to the utopian pan-African hegemonic power that Delany wished to establish. This amounted to a utopian colony that would be the model for future African-centered governments. Alex Zamalin compares the utopian vision of *Blake* to “nineteenth-century utopian communitarian energy being spread throughout the United States.”<sup>14</sup> Delany’s seminal work on utopian thought, *The Condition, Elevation, Emigration, and Destiny of the Colored People of the United States* (1852), is here compared to Charles Fourier and his brand of utopian-socialism discussed earlier.

Delany’s utopian community differed in texture from Robert Dale Owen, and his utopian colony in New Harmony, Indiana. It never claimed to “liberate society from exploitative working conditions.”<sup>15</sup> In this way, it parted from earlier socialist thought and only wished to prepare an industrious people for “usefulness and business.”<sup>16</sup> The reason for this difference is inherent in the complex personality of Delany. Late in life, Delany abandoned liberal Republicans who claimed to be able to redistribute land to former slaves. He essentially adopted the Democratic platform of black subservience in the goal of bettering life for ordinary blacks during the United States’ policy of Reconstruction after the war. This idea amounts to what Zamalin argues is Delany’s “Aristoteleanism” – a central concern with pragmatism over idealism.<sup>17</sup> But the elemental parts of *The Condition* remain highly idealistic with a teleological assumption that blacks would be better served by emigration to the Caribbean and Latin America.

#### **4.1 Delany’s biography**

Delany’s status as a forgotten piece of American history is perhaps eclipsed by his role as a black nationalist. Delany is hardly learned about in American schools, probably because of his virulent anti-American views. One editorial proclaims that, “[t]he life of Dr. Martin R. Delany

should be a required student for all African in [sic] American youth.”<sup>18</sup> Delany was admitted and then expelled from Harvard Medical School because of his race. The discrimination that he faced has recently been an area of scholarly interest, and especially because *Blake, or the Huts of America* was never published as a whole novel in his lifetime. Thanks to McGann 2017 publication of a scholarly edition, *Blake* is starting to get the critical attention that it deserves.

Delany’s peregrinations began in Pittsburgh. In 1833, he was the pupil of Molliston Madison Clark, probably the only black university educated student in the city.<sup>19</sup> He was able to finish his schooling which had been interrupted by the fact that he couldn’t afford tuition to most schools. In those days, the teaching of the Bible was the main primary text whereby one could learn to read, write, and think. Delany was swift to join associations like the Young Men’s Literary and Moral Reform Society, an organization whose purpose was to combat illiteracy. He was apprenticed by Dr. Andrew McDowell, a black medical doctor, who was impressed that Delany was reading Dr. Benjamin Rush’s writings at a young age. At that time, the belief in miasmas, impure air, and purging, the practice of blood-letting, were widespread. Still, Delany’s education made him dream of going to Africa, to find out if there could be some modicum of experience to add to his literary education.

Delany set off by steamboat to visit New Orleans, where he observed the cultural tradition of Mardi Gras, which prefigured his creative work *Blake*’s observation of the holiday. The status of the *gens de couleur libre* or ‘free blacks,’ was abominable. Blacks could not vote or own landed property.<sup>20</sup> Delany’s experience led him back to Pennsylvania, where he was intent on founding a newspaper for free blacks, entitled *The Mystery* in 1843. The paper did not sell well at first and had to be sustained by Delany himself until he enlisted the help of a Publishing Committee headed by John Peck and John Templeton in 1844.<sup>21</sup> But in time, *The Mystery*

became one of the most widely read anti-slavery newspapers in Pennsylvania. But the lionshare of Delany's fame came from a newspaper that Delany founded himself named by Frederick Douglass *The North Star* for the constellation that allowed slaves to pursue their freedom on foot despite the danger of pro-slavery mobs.

Delany became swamped with speaking engagements, as *The North Star* catapulted his name on to the national stage. The problem became a lack of finances, since the paper was given out to black people – only whites had to pay for it. Despite donations, it was clear that the high level of illiteracy in the black community was to blame for the paper's sagging fortunes. Of 60,000 African-Americans in Pennsylvania, Delany remarked in the paper, "two-thirds cannot read."<sup>22</sup> The lack of adequate schooling would become an issue in *Blake*, where he wrote that "heaven's blessings" could not be secured without the adequate schooling of children.<sup>23</sup> The combatting of illiteracy would not be a war that could be won in the antebellum period, so strident were the racists threats to its growth. Delany's speaking engagements were often mobbed by racist whites who threw "a volley rotten eggs" at Douglass and his coterie and shouted "Kill the n-!"<sup>24</sup> Thus, Delany's campaign against black illiteracy often caused him to risk his health and well-being, especially when he made public appearances.

This educational utopia was one that Delany fought for vociferously. So deleterious was illiteracy in African American enclaves, that the message of black emigration could not be properly distributed and comprehended. With John Vashon as his coadjutor, Delany decided to found the African Education Society of Pittsburgh, which solidified his utopian goal in black literacy: "When [Delany] outgrew [the Cellar] school, Delany concentrated on independent efforts with other youths."<sup>25</sup> Delany believed that with proper schooling, blacks would begin to make strides to establish their own independent communities from whites. These many

societies, founded by Delany and his associates, hoped to use “moral suasion” to deter them from a kind of “standing still” theology, which refused this material world in hopes of a better world in the afterlife.<sup>26</sup> A better educated black populace would then be able to emigrate to Africa, or at least create segregated communities that would replace the dirt floor of their huts with carpeting.

The possibility of enabling people of color to teach was a subject that Delany often took up in his letters. In a letter to Douglass from April of 1853, Delany writes: “I have observed carefully, in all of my travels in our country – in all the schools that I visited – colored schools I mean – that in those taught in whole or part by colored persons, the pupils were always the most respectful towards me, and the less menial in their general bearing.”<sup>27</sup> Thus, the quality of black education was always at stake, and Delany felt an onus of burden for his people to take up positions of authority in education, as well as government. He noticed that black education by people of color must always remain the goal of any kind of pan-African government. He blamed whites for the imposition of self-abnegating ideas into the curriculum of black schools and wished to keep these schools segregated for the most part.

All these experiences likely influenced his creative enterprise, *Blake, or the Huts of America*, which was published in serial form in *The Anglo-African Magazine* (1859), but never appeared in novel form until the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Such neglect of Delany’s genius gives us pause to wonder just how virulent the strains of racism were even through the period of Reconstruction after the Civil War. Nevertheless, Delany tirelessly advocated for the schooling of black children. In an earlier letter to Douglass, from November 1848, he wrote:

[T]here is an excellent school for colored children, supported by the public fund, taught by Miss Bell, an amiable and quite accomplished teacher – one who is qualified to teach the children the higher as well as the practical branches of education, which has long been and still much wanted in many of the schools in this country established for colored children.<sup>28</sup>

An educational utopia still existed in the mind of Delany, one that would eradicate the virus of poverty and illiteracy. The labors of unknown anti-racist teachers like the anonymous Miss Bell will never be recorded in the pages of history, but it was they who supported Delany and enabled his project of liberation. Though Delany is known as an emigrationist, and travelled to Liberia in order to hasten it, he still had yet hoped that the United States could be reformed. Only about 3,000 African Americans ever emigrated to Liberia.<sup>29</sup>

Yet, in his travels, he met with failed expectations about his supposed pan-African utopia. Delany's emigrationist policy led him overseas, which transformed his project into a transatlantic pan-African utopia. While the first chapters of *Blake* were being published in 1859, Delany was en route to Monrovia, Liberia. Delany boarded the 'Mendi' with his compatriots and over \$20,000 in cargo, and departed for his utopian paradise, Liberia. But oddly enough, Delany was not quite at home in Liberia either, as Dorothy Sterling observes: "Delany remained more American than African."<sup>30</sup> He suggested that missionaries cease eating on the ground with natives and that they eat with white tablecloths seated in a chair. He also took issue with the nudity of Africa, and averred that they ought to "wear some sort of garment to cover the entire person."<sup>31</sup> Delany also encountered anti-Americanism in Liberia, including some chieftains who charged him triple because of his American nationality, and many of the goods that were designed for bartering were lost, including African artifacts as well as "personal belongings and photographs."<sup>32</sup>

One of the main goals of the political project of Delany was the alleviation of poverty – especially the kind of abject penury that he witnessed in the slave states. Delany's goal was to take the potential power of African-Americans and use it to the betterment of another country in the West Indies or Central and South America. This same utopian project is evident in the

structure of *Blake*, whereby Henry's dilatory efforts to raise up a slave insurrection leads him inevitably to Cuba, where some Blacks enjoyed a certain amount of aristocratic refinement and affluence. In publishing *Blake*, Delany believed in the possibility of the utopian novel to transform society, but also recognized the challenges. In 1859, he wrote William Lloyd Garrison: "I am anxious to get a good publishing house to take it, as I know I could make a penny by it, and the chances for a Negro in this department are so small, that unless some disinterested competent persons would indirectly aid in such a step, I almost despair of any change."<sup>33</sup> He knew that the odds were stacked against him in the business sphere, but his hopes for *Blake* as a source of material benefit to himself and his emigration project were high. The literary elucubrations of this project probably had stretched the imagination of Delany to its apogee. He would need to find an audience for *Blake*, but unfortunately, the novel remained in its serialized form in *The Anglo-African Magazine* for nearly 100 years. Delany would never see the commercial success of his masterpiece in his lifetime.

In *Without Regard to Race*, Tunde Adeleke, postulates that Delany had conflicting values: "The same person often combined radical and conservative strategies."<sup>34</sup> In the beginning of his working life, he was a strident supporter of emigrationism, but after the Civil War, these notions became more conservative and accommodationist. "Delany, therefore," Adeleke argues, "seemed a perfect candidate for instrumentalist history. He espoused nationalist, Pan-Africanist, and even separatist ideas. These images spurred further interest in him... Many critics perceived him as someone who pioneered black cultural nationalism, separatism, and Pan-Africanism."<sup>35</sup> For the purposes of this study, Delany's interest in a pan-African utopia through the novel represents yet another prime example of novelism, not just in the mingling of history and literature, but also the firm belief that the novel could transform or at least reform

society. The novel format remains a plum pudding of utopian ideals: the thought was that by entertaining the literate middle class, he could popularize the idea of emigration. Delany's hardcore audience remained the acolytes of black liberation theology, a form of black nationalism that included a spiritual animadversion to the institution of slavery.

One major problem that stultified Delany's attempts at emigrationism and black nationalism was the black church itself. Delany lamented that blacks in large part "had no interest in anything but religious meetings," and "had criticized criticized [them] for neglecting ... lectures that did not pertain to religious matters."<sup>36</sup> His goal, both in *Blake* and his private letters, was to deconstruct Christian dogmas based on race inequality and try to reform the theology of 'standing still.' Curtis Evans also admits that the church "was a surrogate state legislature and blacks' only source of information."<sup>37</sup> The novel constructs a transatlantic utopian space in which pan-African revolt could draw on Christian motifs. But Delany's disaffection with Christianity remained potent in his letters, as in a comment to William Lloyd Garrison: "Heathenism and Liberty, before Christianity and slavery!"<sup>38</sup> The 'meekness' of Christianity, Delany argued, kept blacks in subservient and often obsequious positions in society, and much of Delany's work was to eradicate these notions that prevented his utopian aspirations from taking form in the Caribbean and Liberia.

As Rei Nawa notes, "it is clear that Blake treats not only black men but black women as leading figures in the insurrection."<sup>39</sup> The commitment that Blake shows in political reeducation of his wife Maggie upon their reunion plays into this 'gender ambiguity' that constitutes the utopian project of the novel. Nawa cites one passage where this educational utopia comes into view:

My dear wife you have much yet to learn in solving the problem of this great question of the destiny of our race. I'll give you one to work out at your leisure; it

is this: Whatever liberty is worth to the whites, it is worth to the black; therefore, whatever it cost the white to obtain it, the black would be willing and ready to pay if they desire it.<sup>40</sup>

This particular event shows the didactic aim of the novel to raise the status of black women even as Delany is trying to establish black consciousness. As Nawa avers: “Blake constantly educates Maggie as he proceeds to achieve his scheme of insurrection.”<sup>41</sup> This utopian project begins to shatter the “sacred orb” of difference between man and woman that existed as this time.<sup>42</sup>

Ria Nawa also astutely points out the Christian eschatology inherent in the text. The phrase ‘Arm of the Lord awake’ from Isaiah 51:9 is repeated three times throughout the novel, once before Blake crosses the Red River in the U.S.<sup>43</sup> secondly by a slave named Abyssa during the middle passage aboard the *Vulture*,<sup>44</sup> and again by Abyssa in front of the members of the ruling Council at Madame Cordora in Cuba.<sup>45</sup> This phrase is meant to “raise morale” for the slaves who are marshalling forces for the slave insurrection.<sup>46</sup> The decidedly Christian aspects of this revolt have been ignored by most critics, but it is clear that these references to the Old Testament have a martial aspect to them. A holy war is being fought on the part of the dispossessed slaves; it is likely that the religious hue of their struggle for freedom is wrought by Delany in order to make the new government by blacks fit in to the soteriology that once characterized the slave coffle. The use of Biblical imagery continues to have a vital role in the establishing of a pan-African republic in Cuba, which reflects the goal of Delany’s political writings and especially *Condition, Elevation, and Emigration*. Delany’s *Condition, Elevation, Emigration* (1852) had previously set the stakes for a mass exodus of blacks from the United States to the Caribbean and Central America. Delany had hoped that blacks would be capable of learning Spanish and relocating to Nicaragua if necessary. He had originally ruled out the possibility of Liberia, but this view would shift over time. The problem lay in the distribution of

his idea: the book sold less than 3,000 copies when it was released in 1852. What lies at the heart of this book is the formal rejection of the white form of Christianity. As Delany vituperates in this first of his major books, “[w]e had rather be a Heathen freeman, than a Christian slave.”<sup>47</sup> In this work was the formal rejection of polygenesis forms of caste systems, and he comes precipitously close to rejecting Christianity altogether, as many later black nationalists had done. But ideally, the message of Christianity was able to be intact in the latter half of *Blake*, as Delany wished to reform Christianity, but not utterly abolish it.

The main sticking point of the *Condition* is that slavery is only a manifestation of the pervasive racism that established it. In many respects, Delany here argues, the position of the slave is enviable to the free black, who is without a writ of habeas corpus, without suffrage, and subject to racist laws. He continues: “The slave is more secure than we; he knows who holds the feel upon his bosom – we know not the wretch who may grasp us by the throat.”<sup>48</sup> The positive alienation that the freeman feels, is visited in multiple chapters of *Blake*. In many ways, the novel is an extension of his ideals about black nationalism that have developed from his advocacy of emigration. He uses the example of the diaspora of the Jews in the book of Exodus as a prime example: “This we see in the Exodus of the Jews from Egypt to the land of Judea; in the expedition of Dido and her followers from Tyre to Mauritania, and not to dwell upon hundreds of modern European examples.”<sup>49</sup> The ‘European examples’ include the Puritans themselves, which links the liberation of African slaves with the persecuted religious minorities who originally fled the European mainland continent in search of religious austerity. What Delany proposes is no less than a connection with the original providential designs of the original settlers to be afforded to the African American race. His argument, though seeming to slough off religion, tends instead to confirm it.

Delany admitted that, “one of our great temporal curses is our consummate poverty.”<sup>50</sup> The concentration on this world politics in service of a larger religious aim accurately reflects twentieth century ideals about religion – as an entirely private matter. The increasing of wealth according to capitalist means, occupied Delany in the latter half of his life after the Civil War in resolving legal disputes in Charleston, South Carolina, as well as his philanthropic work. As Dorothy Sterling relates: “Much of [Delany’s] time was spent in giving out rations and clothing to the needy.”<sup>51</sup>

Still, the “providential design” of the literary work shows forth a Christianity, at once stripped of its polygenesis and yet still powerful in its message of redemption.<sup>52</sup> Delany’s meeting with Captain John Brown in Chatham West Canada in what is now the province of Ontario mirrors the agitation of Henry Blake in the opening chapters. The way in which the novel reflects Delany’s ambivalence about joining Brown is key: “[W]hile he was willing to help Brown and those who took Brown’s militant line, Delany did not join Brown’s company.”<sup>53</sup> Blake is able to help where Delany the real person failed, he is abroad in Lagos, Nigeria when he receives word of Brown’s raid on Harper’s Ferry and subsequent death.<sup>54</sup> This mimics the episode aboard the doomed vessel the *Vulture*, where Henry plots an insurrection of slaves with his coadjutor Seth. Clearly, the maritime fictional aspect of the plot mirrors Delany’s own travels in his struggle for emigration.

#### **4.2 Liberation Theology**

The religious undertones that furnish the seeds of liberation theology are pertinent in Delany’s novel. Jason Richards has argued that the very existence of the novel as an index of the national conversation had not existed for African Americans until the early nineteenth century. Writers such as Frank Webb’s *The Garies and their Friends* (1857), William Wells Brown’s

*Clotel, or the President's Daughter, a Narrative of Slave Life in the United States* (1853), and others wanted to bring attention to the specter of slavery in a novelized form. Richards asserts this optative mood: “the novel did more than mimic the national form; it also helped to form the nation and shape the national discourse.”<sup>55</sup> *Blake* is just one of those novels that helped shape the framework of national identity. Fiction was a format that naturally lent itself to the utopian struggle for abolition, and “gave black writers a sense of self-possession lost through the demands of autobiography.”<sup>56</sup> Indeed, the liberation of black writing from the slave narrative meant that the stories of African Americans now need not be a mere commodity for sale. These authors “imagine a new future” for the black race independent of the antebellum narrative, and they become rare jewels ahead of their time – not commercialized entities.<sup>57</sup>

Some scholars have suggested that the negro spiritual, which Delany weaves into the narrative, tends to emphasize the way in which blacks had crippled their chances of being free by focusing too much on the afterlife, and not enough on the material world. As Curtis J. Evans observes in his book *The Burden of Black Religion* (2008):

Black religion became the chief bearer of meaning for the nature and place of blacks in America because of questions raised by the early conversion of slaves to Christianity (in the eighteenth-century Southern colonies) and the nearly universal belief ... that Africans were lacking in intellectual capacity. What followed, through a long and complex historical process, was a heightened attention to religion as the signal quality of blacks in America and as the central locus of their actual and potential contributions to the nation.<sup>58</sup>

Black religion thus became the identity of slaves in such a ‘heightened’ way that it could not be ignored by Delany, as eager as he was to challenge the hermeneutics of polygenesis. Characters like Daddy Joe represent Delany’s view that an intractable Christian hermeneutics keeps blacks in an inferior caste. The first part of the novel is meant to offer an African-centered utopian literature that would offer an alternative to this form of Christian dogma. But unusually, the

second part of the novel does not dispense with Christianity per se but offers a radically different form of it in the establishing of a royal black hierarchy very similar to W. E. B. Dubois' concept of the "talented tenth."<sup>59</sup>

Delany recognized that the negro spiritual brings the Christian convictions of early liberated slaves into view. Andy, for instance, the enslaved character who most accurately reflects Blake's utopian agitation, sings a negro spiritual that would later be canonized with the songs of Paul Robeson:

We are like a band of pilgrims,  
In a strange and foreign land,  
With our knapsacks on our shoulders,  
And our cudgels in our hands,  
We have many miles before us.  
But it lessens not our joys,  
We will sing a merry chorus,  
For we are the tramping boys.<sup>60</sup>

The song has a simple rhyme and echoes the testimonial of the tortured servant – a pre-figuration of liberation theology. The goal in this kind of eschatological framework is to liberate the singer from the world and the way that it warps the soul into thinking itself is independent of social context. Like a Bunyanesque narrative, the manumitted slave is brought into perfect freedom from the capitalistic burdens of society. Like a religious warrior, the freeman then is brought into glorious liberation, but not before the epic battle – symbolized by the cudgel. The knapsack in this negro spiritual is redolent of the African diaspora, which Blake organizes into a military struggle for black nationalism. The 'tramping boys' are similar to the slave coffle gang, but now able to function as citizens of a heavenly utopia because of their detachment from the soil – hence, they are "deracinated" former slaves.<sup>61</sup> Their divorce from the 'soil' that brings about their freedom also makes them 'rootless' and tied to diaphanous geopolitical space that could logically result in resettlement in a black republic.

The use of old hymns also ties this work to antiquity in the struggle for freedom. Delany rewrites an old song ‘Suwanee River’ into an anti-slavery negro spiritual:

Way down upon the Mobile river,  
Close to Mobile bay;  
There’s where my thoughts are running ever,  
All through the livelong day:  
There I’ve a good and fond old mother,  
Though she is a slave;  
There I’ve a sister and a brother,  
Lying in their peaceful graves.<sup>62</sup>

The use of the tune that is familiar to even contemporary audiences underscores Delany’s attempt to reach a wide audience with his antislavery message. The death of the children in the form of the spiritual’s ‘sister’ and ‘brother’ highlights the infant mortality that was common in slave families during the time. The effort of the author to bring attention to the suffering of ordinary slaves sheds light upon the issue of poor health standards in the ‘coffle gang’ communities, which reflects the inhumane squalor upon the vessel the *Vulture*, where slaves are denied basic bread and water and psychologically abused in the journey commonly known as ‘The Middle Passage.’

Curtis Evans points out that the black church was somewhat indistinguishable from the “naturally religious slave.”<sup>63</sup> Delany weaves the narrative of naturally religious slaves into the dialogue of the novel. These parroted phrases, which indicate low literacy of the Bible, imply the illiteracy of the slave population. The lack of proper grammar employed by Delany’s flat minor characters throughout the novel, such as Jesse the driver, also indicates their low social status, even in the black church. Jesse, who is overheard saying the phrase that Henry most despises, still reflects the typology of the illiterate religious slave: “Stan’ still child’en, and see the salvation uv the Laud!”<sup>64</sup> Over time, this illiteracy was combatted by compulsory schooling, but nowhere does it seem more of a problem than in the black church. Evans avers that the “romantic

racialists” had typecast the illiterate religious negro as lacking in intellect but endowed with moral sense.<sup>65</sup> These stereotypes had been inculcated by Thomas Jefferson himself, who in his *Notes on the State of Virginia*, lambastes blacks as inferior intellectual beings. The key is that Henry Blake, as the heroic center of the epic tale, overturns these expectations.

Henry’s distaste for white religion is obvious from the text: “Don’t tell me about religion! What’s religion to me?”<sup>66</sup> But, oddly enough, the religious language bathes the narrative in a way that is almost imperceptible. Describing a slave being whipped, Delany cannot help but refer to the slave’s tortured cry as “oaths which would make a Christian shudder.”<sup>67</sup> Likewise, Henry’s pursuit of accomplices who will help him overthrow the slave government has a messianic structure. The characters that he meets during his peregrinations in the American South, Andy, Daddy Joe, and others become his disciples in an overwhelmingly political project to free the slaves through observing the constellations (Appendix C). Though decorated in religious language, his work in this stage of the novel is admittedly a pan-African political project. They constantly lead each other in prayer: “First to prayer, and next to seclusion.”<sup>68</sup> Yet, Henry is overheard by the members of the slave insurrection. Ironically, Blake’s fight becomes a religious battle, recalling the plight of the slaves in Egypt in the book of Exodus to overturn the injustice of a society of oppressors. Furthermore, Andy, helps stage the rebellion, utters a negro spiritual which begins “we are like a band of pilgrims.”<sup>69</sup> Thus, Blake never quite discards religion, but he merely modifies it for his purpose.

*Blake* has its origins in the anti-slavery socio-political culture of the era. The 1852 presidential election between Winfield Scott and Franklin Pierce begins the novel, and since the last chapters of *Blake* were never recovered, we can guess that the novel ends with the struggle of Cuban revolutionaries to obtain a hemispherical utopia between people of color and the

Caribbean. Thus, whatever else transpires in the novel, everything is subservient to the political ideal of Black Nationalism, which would not attain cultural prominence until the 1960s. The novel's bipartite structure also rules the creative enterprise. Henry Blake's agitation in the Southern United States, his anti-religious mood, and the importance of black liberation movements figures heavily in the first part. By the second part, Henry's true identity with Cuban royalty as Carolus Henrico Blacus is revealed, and much of the novel mirrors Plato's *Republic* in its offering the ideal black nation state.<sup>‡</sup> Most of the dramatic interludes in part two concern the marriage ceremonies of bit characters and the interweaving of sentimental poetics with robust statements of political hubris on the part of Placido, the insurrection leader, and his subordinates.

The sale of Henry's wife Maggie in "Natchez under the hill" introduces a form of dramatic pathos that begins the idea of the separation of the Holy Family, an idea that builds support for Delany's own emigrationist stance.<sup>70</sup> The use of the phrase 'under the hill' suggests the metaphorical death of Maggie, inasmuch as she is completely stripped of her human dignity and civilian rights. The separation of families was a key instrument in the argument of abolitionists for the ending of human chattels. Slaves 'sold down the river' could expect nothing but the barracoon, a kind of holding barracks for prisoners, and the dirt floors of huts. In fact, Delany's own experience in slave quarters prefigured his writing of these early scenes: "Delany had slept in slave cabins in Louisiana and Mississippi. The quarters that he described were real – dark and roach infested, with logs and inverted buckets serving as furniture."<sup>71</sup> The genesis of the project is essentially Delany's own recollections about the scourge of slavery.

The freedom of worship is one that is frequently denied to citizens who were considered by United States Congress to be three-fifths of a person. The plantation of Col. Franks depends

---

<sup>‡</sup> cf. Notes Ch. 1 (Introduction), 54.

on a form of hermeneutics of the Bible called polygenesis – where certain races were assigned castes based on their progenitor from the sons of Noah. Yet, the black servants are the most pious of all of Col. Franks' household. Mrs. Franks reads as a spoiled child of the plantation economy:

Daddy Joe and Mammy Judy, were anxious spectators of all that transpired at the door of the mansion, and that night, on retiring to their humble bed, earnestly petitioned at the altar of Grace, that the Lord would continue upon her his afflictions, until their master convinced of his wrongs, would order the return of their child.<sup>72</sup>

Again, the splitting up of family units remains a central focus in Delany's abolitionism. Blake advocates for violent overthrow of the status quo, in a time when the *Dred Scott* decision by Supreme Court chief justice Roger Taney declared that persons of African descent "have no rights that white men are bound to respect!"<sup>73</sup> These bit characters in the drama gives us some sense of the iniquitous fracturing of the 'holy family,' a prototypical feature of antebellum novelistic enterprise. Some if not all of Delany's moral appeal is addressed to reform liberation theologians and abolitionists of this period.

The other anomaly to liberation theology is Postlewaite, "a man of very generous disposition," and yet a slave owner.<sup>74</sup> His reprimanding of George is light-hearted, and we witness Delany's concession that there could be good slave masters. He is the example of the slave master who has submitted to the requirements of his religion. For after all, Delany's point is to illustrate the hypocrisy of holding Christian values and not putting them into practice by caring for the slave and the indigent. Postlewaite is as close to the fiction of William Gilmore Simms as perhaps Delany ever gets. The main issue is that Delany does not seek to overthrow plantations, nor the economic structure of society, (as seen in later chapters which endorse slavery in a utopian Cuban republic ruled by Blacks) but merely the focus on the horrid abject

humiliation of the negro through the institution of slavery. Delany must concede that generous slave owners did exist, but usually asserts that not many were nearly as benign.

The transatlantic nature of Henry's insurrection is probably most accurately depicted by the character of Madame de Bonselle in the latter part of the novel. A French woman who represents all of the aspects of the French Revolution, Bonselle is described as "an inherent votary of the late revolution and reform."<sup>75</sup> This character's genesis may well represent Henry's aspiration that the black insurrection not only be multi-national, but multi-lingual. She is castigated by Madame Garcia as a "forward strap" with "crazy notions of equality."<sup>76</sup> But in Cuba, she bridges the continental divide more than any other character. She is the avatar of Louis Blanc, who with Lamartine the celebrated poet and politician, were key figures in the French Revolution of 1848. Delany is poised to seize upon the overthrow of royalist governments in his sentimental embrace of many of its egalitarian principles.

One other aspect of Delany's masterful negotiation of language is his use of "dialect orthography."<sup>77</sup> This use of the original pidgin of slaves can still be heard today in the Georgia Barrier Islands, and particularly Sapelo Island off the coast of Georgia. The reader experiences some dysphoria in encountering such phrases, but from time to time, Delany translates this unique form of African American Vernacular English (AAVE). One example occurs as the slave Judy is commenting about the breakup of black families: "Maus Stephen, ah do'n undehstan' dat duckin or 'duckshun,' dat wa't yeh call it – dat big wud!" 'O! 'abduction' means stealing away a person, Judy."<sup>78</sup> Indeed, the usage of this term defamiliarizes the reader about the alterity between black and white. White families are always afforded unity, while slaves are stripped of their human rights. The use of dialect orthography allows for at once outrage by the reader on behalf of the depersonalized slave, and yet we, as readers of *Blake*, are still made aware of the

inability of the written English language to adequately represent the AAVE dialect due to anti-literacy laws on the books which deprived Delany's own mother the opportunity to instruct young black men and women about the rules of grammar.

Part of the utopian posturing of the novel, and what makes it comparable to Upton Sinclair's *The Jungle*, is the sordid depiction of the squalor in which African slaves lived in at the time. Save for the light of animal fat, these "dwellings in the dark" have bare dirt floors.<sup>79</sup> The conditions in which slaves prepare their food is less than salubrious, for even the bowls "[were] found to be partially filled with large black house roaches."<sup>80</sup> This lean-to quality of the housing is contrasted with the presidential environs of Placido later in the novel. To raise the standard of living for blacks was a key component of the teleological function of *Blake*. The inhabitants of the huts, Mammy Judy and Daddy Joe, are barely aware of the shanty-town. For them, this kind of abject poverty is normal, but readers would have been shocked at the conditions.

Forced entertainment of the slaves is a way in which blackface continued to be a blight on African-American identity. The slave boy Rube, under penalty of corporal punishment, is forced to produce a vaudeville routine:

With a peculiar swing of the whip, bringing the lash down upon a certain spot on the exposed skin, the whole person being prepared for the purpose, the boy commenced to whistle almost like a thrush; another cut changed it to a song, another to a hymn, then a pitiful prayer, when he gave utterance to oaths which would make a Christian shudder.<sup>81</sup>

The footnote in the McGann edition of Delany's *Blake* gives us an indication that this episode was true, and that slaves were often forced to entertain whites under the threat of scourging. The injustice of the slave system becomes most potent in regards to the suffering of the innocent, a scene that mimics the passion of the Christ in the English Standard Version of the Bible. This

scene, as constructed by Delany, “hijack[s] the minstrel tradition and turn[s] it against the powers that be.”<sup>82</sup> The messianic overtones of the novel are most accurately demonstrated in the unjust suffering of the slave population of the era, formally demonstrated in the diegesis of the novel.

The messianic undertones of *Blake* suggest utopian social agitation in its magnifying for the antebellum readership the poor and indigent. This part of the novel seems most closely related to later Gilded Age muckraking memoirs such as Jacob Riis’ *How the Other Half Lives*. He meets with one slave with no arms, who can pick cotton with his toes.<sup>83</sup> After the war of 1812, the primacy of cotton to the Southern economy is well established: “[w]ith the cessation of hostilities between Europe and North America, the price of raw cotton doubled on the New Orleans market, to 27 cents per pound.”<sup>84</sup> The value of such crop was able to keep slaves in their caste, but Delany’s novel is able to show the lingering effects of the desolate poverty upon the slaves. Slaves were expected to work seven days a week, with only a brief respite to wash their clothes.<sup>85</sup> The threat of wild animals or “panther[s],” as southerners called cougars at the time, was always an issue for slaves out in the fields.<sup>86</sup>

The encounter with Sampson, the bodyguard of a slaveowner Richardson, shows the difficulty that Delany’s main character had it agitating amongst religiously conservative slaves. The slaveowner Richardson is very close to Sampson, often shouting “Sampson, stand by me!”<sup>87</sup> Sampson and his wife Drusie cannot be forthright about their liberation, so swayed are they by their religious convictions. But they had stowed 2,000 dollars in gold in a remote location underground so as to effect their manumission. Whether this event could be confirmed as a historical event is not clear, but their blandishments of Henry’s project for insurrection show that they are physically able to gain their freedom, but not mentally able to seize upon the opportunity. At that point, Henry gives up his insurrectionary project in Texas and moves on.

After the implementation of the Fugitive Slave Law (FSL) after the Compromise of 1850 crafted by Henry Clay, the hunting of slaves like stray dogs was a more common occurrence. One particular scene of Delany's reenacts this heinous hunt, and we see the logical dehumanizing effects of negroes forced to catch other negroes and put them back in chains. "What does it mean? the dogs has ceased to bay!" remarked Colonel Sprout. "Maybe they caught a nigger," replied John Spangler. "It might be a 'Tartar!'"<sup>88</sup> The chase for runaway slaves becomes an episode which comically lampoons not only the fawning slaves who participate, but also the hunters themselves. Delany has a way of inverting the power structure, in order to make the runaway slaves seem heroic and their slave masters foppish. These events are construed to aid the reader in making value judgments that effectively nullify the FSL and lend credibility to a utopian mindset whereby these fatuous characters are seen for who they are.

When Henry reaches the Dismal Swamp, Henry is compared by Gamby Gholar to Nat Turner, and he must now be sucked into a wilderness that does not acknowledge him to be free. Henry wants to identify with the 'old confederates' of rebellious slaves who can challenge the slaveocratic government. Gamby had consorted with the likes of Turner, and he constitutes as a mystical sage with the power to set slaves free. His assortment of green and blue glass stones is a wonder to Henry, but perhaps his most important role is as a remnant of the Turner rebellion. The "talismán" of associations with the greatest black generals of the anti-slavery movement proves to be a sacred passage in the peregrinations of Henry Holland, before he departs from the United States.<sup>89</sup> Gholar has fought alongside the patriots of the American Revolution, which makes him identify with the sacred trust given by the founding fathers. The denizens of the swamp, known as the 'High Conjurors,' are mystical figures in the struggle for freedom, who live close to the land and know how to survive without the aid of a corrupt civilization.<sup>90</sup>

Henry is sheltered by a negro brahmin family in Richmond, where he learns of his destiny to liberate the slaves. He is nearly taken into custody by the ‘Dutchman,’ but Henry escapes due to his wit and revolver. As Henry ambles into Charleston, he realizes his own penury and the gravity of his situation: “Charleston, at best, was a hard place for a negro, and under the circumstances, had he been discovered, no plea would have saved him. Breathlessly crouched beneath the foliage and thorns of the fetid weed, he was started by a voice.”<sup>91</sup> This free indirect discourse is the way that Henry expresses what Emmanuel Levinas terms “alterity and transcendence” – he is brought into a “profound utopia” that is the literal translation of the word – ‘no place.’<sup>92</sup> In hiding from the authorities in Richmond and Charleston, he secures the hopes of all free blacks who desire abject poverty and even death to slavery. The manner of narration brings the reader into a utopian space that is at once ‘alterity’ and ‘transcendence’ – only within the diegesis of the novel.

There is a sense that, despite Henry’s travels in Tennessee and Kentucky, Henry Blake is an outlier – he doesn’t belong anywhere. He consistently relies on the dispensation of religious credence everywhere he goes, but his utopia is clearly ‘no place,’ because he doesn’t stay long anywhere very long. Henry meditates on the music of the spheres “the golden orbs of Heaven,” but is unable to accommodate himself to the pernicious state of affairs for the black man on earth.<sup>93</sup> The return to Mississippi focuses his sight on the heavens and the motions of the heavenly bodies including the “comet” and the “meteor.”<sup>94</sup> But these motions, based on Newtonian physics, only reflect an Edenic utopia that cannot be reconciled to the evil practice of slavery and violence in the natural world.

The steamer, the steam-powered boat, provides Henry with some sense of freedom in the natural world. As he approaches ‘Natchez under the hill,’ he finds himself once again ‘under the

hill,' or bound by the racist apartheid government, always under the threat of becoming human chattel:

Henry effected, without detection, an easy transit to the wharf, and from thence up the Hill, where again he found himself amid the scenes of his saddest experience, and the origination and organization of the measures upon which were based his brightest hope and expectations for the redemption of his race in the South.<sup>95</sup>

Henry's 'expectation,' is not merely earth-bound, but an alterity between heaven and earth that will allow his utopian plan for insurrection to move forward. The liberty of the steam ship is a potent metaphor for a soul always in transit, and as such never able to rest, for fear of re-enslavement. Thus, Henry remains a fugitive from justice, but boldly re-enters the plantation of Col. Franks in order to prove his worthiness for liberation and confirm his messianic hopes.

Often, the novel employs religious rituals such as the sacrament of marriage to create diaphanous geopolitical space. Canada represents a panacea for all former slaves as reflected in Delany's own relocation to West Canada shortly before the composition of *Blake*. The portion of the novel that takes place in Canada is the part that most clearly draws on marriage as a religious motif. Slaves who would otherwise be unable to marry are given the opportunity to do so. The clergyman, an antitype of the slaveowner Colonel Franks, makes the giving and receiving of vows as similar to sentimental wedding fiction of the era:

The party gathered standing in a semicircle... with the fatherly advice and instructions of their domestic guidance in after life by the aged man of God; the sacred and impressively novel words: "I join you together in matrimony!" gave Henry the pleasure before leaving of seeing upon the floor together, Charles and Polly, Andy and Clara, Eli and Ailcey 'as man and wife forever.'<sup>96</sup>

What is unusual about the ceremony is the mass-wedding that was performed. This freedom of choice is showcased as the purview of free societies, of which Canada is portrayed here as a Shakespearean drama not unlike the forest of Arden in *As You Like It* (1623). The sentimental

wedding drama, prominently figured in such antebellum novels as *The Lamplighter* (1854) by Maria Cummins, continued to draw appeal from the readership of the day.

The antebellum argument for abolition is the cynosure of the reader's attention as Henry's journey diverges to Cuba. He visits the house of Zoda and Huldah Ghu, Christians who oppose the pernicious net of slavery, which catches the innocent unawares. The Ghus had escaped from slavery, but not at the behest of their own faith, for they were broken up, and Ghu was able to purchase his wife:

Goaded and oppressed by a master known to be her own father, under circumstances revolting to humanity, civilization and Christianity, she had been ruthlessly torn from her child, husband and mother, and sold to a foreign land, all because, by the instincts of nature; if by the honor of a wife and womanhood she had not been justified.<sup>97</sup>

In this episode, the breakup of families is used as parable of countless slave families that are separated. In Cuba, we see a kind of natural restoration of their natural rights as human beings, but this story introduces the reader to the trauma of the slave, and its offense to the idea of Christian ethics. Zoda the stevedore is a Priapus, a man-god who is able to rectify his efforts to reconstruct his own family by his male ego.

Occasionally, Delany takes pains to illustrate the intellectual superiority of certain slaves to their masters. In Cuba, the "intelligent" Dominico, a slave under the master Albertis in Cuba, is able to outwit his master and tell the tale of Lotty's assault. Dominico's deposition is graphic: "He beat her like a dog."<sup>98</sup> Dominico relates how he was able to rescue Lotty from the clutches of Albertis, making himself out to be the hero. But it is exactly intelligent slaves that Henry most fears because they could blow his cover and foil his insurrection plans. In fact, Henry chooses to give himself a pseudonym Jacob, which means 'liar' in Hebrew, as his moniker in order to cover his tracks should he be betrayed. But the relating of slaves' physical torture and abuse gives us a

sense of the unheard trauma of thousands under slavery. Dominico may be more intellectually astute than his Cuban overseers, but only Henry has the courage to try to overthrow slavery by staging a revolt.

More than any other character, Blake's uncle Placido represents the theology of liberation most precisely. An anachronistic insertion of the historical figure Gabriel Valdès, a poet who led a slave revolt in Cuba, the character stands in for the hopes of Delany's emigrationist utopia. Placido, though committed to the liberation of people of color, is unequivocal about his faith in Christian apologetics. In learning of Blake's plan to liberate the slaves of Cuba, he retorts: "Amen!" exclaimed Placido. "Heaven certainly designed it, and directed you here at this most auspicious moment, that the oppressed of Cuba may 'declare the glory of God!'"<sup>99</sup> The paradox of Blake's secular disavowal of religion in the opening pages, and Placido's faith in Christianity writ large, is a tension that is never entirely resolved. Since the last few chapters of Blake were lost and never recovered from the magazine *The Anglo-African Weekly*, it is impossible to tell how Delany resolved this conflict between the Edenic pan-African revolt and the Christian eschatology of its second part. The Jerome McGann edition doesn't entirely resolve this problem, and we the readers are left to wonder what the stance of Blake is towards Christianity at the end of the novel.

More than anything, the northeaster aboard the *Vulture* that leads to a slave revolt, shows the unique eschatological framework of the text. Delany's characters are at the point of death during the 'Middle Passage' and harassed and helpless due to the poor conditions aboard the ship. They are thrust into a situation so dire, that they begin to pray:

Then came a scene the most terrible. Men, women, and children raging with thirst, famished, nauseated with sea sickness, stifled for want of air, defiled and covered with loathsomeness, one by one were brought out, till the number of six hundred

were thrown into the mighty deep, and sunk to rise no more till summoned by the trump of heaven in the morning of the General Resurrection of the dead.<sup>100</sup>

The novel brings the trauma of the slaves into focus, and the fact that many of them were tossed overboard is a testament to their suffering. The general idea here is that the utopian longings of many slaves were thwarted by their deplorable condition. It would be necessary to appear before God in the judgment to sort out the injustice of the Middle Passage, or so this passage should suggest. Passages like this one put slavery within a religious context, envisioning a Christianity that opposes the hermeneutics of white superiority.

The echelons of society in Delany's black utopia remain fixed, and they oddly defy any sense of social mobility. The main hegemon of this society, Gofer Gondolier, Juan Montego, and Carolus Blacus are at the top, and there is little blurring of these eminent social distinctions. Like Plato's *Republic*, *Blake* dislikes the blending of social distinctions so that the ordered republic will function properly:

The four great divisions of society were white, black, free and slave; and these were again subdivided into many other classes, as rich, poor, and such like... And there was among them even another general division – black and colored – which met little favor from the intelligent.<sup>101</sup>

In fact, the rule of the literati seems to be a nod to Plato's philosopher king, who was supposed to rule with intellectual astuteness and wisdom. The marriages in *Blake* likewise have all the redolence of arranged marriages which are organized to gain power. It is notable that with this rule of the literati, *Blake* does not ultimately abolish slavery, but still preserves a kind of racialist hierarchy within its ranks.

Delany's relationship to Liberia is complex if not charged with pathos. In his essay on Liberia, he is ambivalent about blacks' relationship to it, claiming that its first president, Joseph Jenkins Roberts "[has] a bearing not only upon the Liberians as a nation, but upon the whole

colored race in America.”<sup>102</sup> Delany was initially critical of Liberia as a place where free blacks would be sent after their manumission, but he later changed his stance upon his visit in 1859. Nonetheless, Delany’s utopian vision is squarely situated in Africa, where he envisioned American emigrants being ruled by other more talented Africans. In this way, Delany is not entirely Democratic. The saving grace of the emigrationist project was to be a black nation, not entirely American, that would become the seat of government for a utopian colony. Count Alcora’s wife, has a dream in Blake that solidifies the African leanings of the implied author of Blake, as she envisions a massive withdrawal of persons from the American mainland to an African republic:

“I dreamed,” related the Countess, “of being in the interior of Africa surrounded entirely by negroes, under the rule of a negro prince, beset by the ambassadors of every enlightened nation, who brought him many presents of great value, whilst the envoy of Her Catholic Majesty, say quietly at the foot of the African prince’s throne.”<sup>103</sup>

While Delany wishes to deflect attention from coastal Africa to the interior here, his visits to Monrovia and Lagos had a direct impact on the shape of the utopian vision described here. What is fundamentally interesting is the emphasis given to the Catholic religious envoy, who sits at the foot of the African prince, and is prized as a prominent yet subservient aspect of the culture.

Blacus (Henry Blake) is intent on his transnationalist agenda. In a sense, his utopian vision stretches beyond the confines of the United States to all countries in the western hemisphere. The religious vision that he conjures requires the mixture of blood of all people of color: “This they urged gave them an indisputable right with every admixture of blood, to an equal, if not superior claim to an inheritance of the Western Hemisphere.”<sup>104</sup> The idea is that the true natives – the Indian population – would merge with the colored races in a racialist fantasy of political alliance. Blacus accomplishes what Blake never was – removed from the moral stain of

slavery, he reconstitutes a political hegemony based on skin color. For the antebellum writer, the ideal of desegregationism would have been nearly impossible. For Delany, the alternative goal was to establish a black republic that would rival the white one in power and authority.

The Bible is cited but one time, and specifically Psalms 68:31 “Envoys will come from Egypt; Cush will submit itself to God.”<sup>105</sup> This view of Cush was widely perceived as Ethiopia, as it appears in Delany’s text “Ethiopia shall yet stretch forth her hands unto God; Princes shall come out of Egypt.”<sup>106</sup> The status of African nations in the racist hierarchy was low in the occidental nations. Delany is perhaps prophetic in prophesying a revitalized Africa that would contribute to the world economy. In any case, his sojourn in Lagos, Nigeria disproved the assumption that Africans lived in squalor, but rather, they lived quite habitably in well-developed cities with a panoply of comestible items. Delany wrote of Lagos: “the descendents of Africa... a part of the most enlightened race in America, [could] introduce all the well-regulated pursuits of civilized life. Our policy must be Africa for the African race, and black men to rule them.”<sup>107</sup> Thus, Delany disproved the European thesis that the Africans were nothing but savages living in squalor. According to Sterling’s account, “Lagos was not typical of the Yoruba city-states. Formerly a slave-trading post, it was now a commercial city, exporting millions of dollars worth of palm-oil and ivory per year.”<sup>108</sup>

Gofer Gondolier, a bit character in the second part, can establish this tenet of black liberation theology through his soliloquy:

Freedom should ever be potent to repeal and annul the decrees of oppression, and repel the oppressor. The instant a person is claimed as a slave, that moment he should strike down the claimant. The natural rights of man are the faculties of option, heaven bequeathed, and endowed by God, our common Father, an essential to our being, which along distinguish us from the brute. The authority of the slaveholder ceases the moment that the impulse of the slave demands his freedom, and by virtue of this divine attribute, every black is as free as the whites in Cuba.<sup>109</sup>

The freedom that was attributed to whites during the revolutionary period is imputed to blacks in this passage. John Locke's theory of the rights of man is replete through the verbiage, but moreover a theology that credits all humans with egalitarianism. The violent underside of this black revolutionary eschatology allows for nationhood to be defined according to transnational categories. In fact, Cuba is itself a utopian clash of values between the burgeoning United States and the West Indies. This country, which was the site of major imperial ambitions of the United States of the antebellum period, remained for Delany a utopian space where racialist rhetoric could lead to its legitimate expression in black theology.

Delany weaves the issue of 'divine providence' – a trope well-trodden in early American literature – into the wellspring of his utopian vision: "Then let us determine to be ready, permitting nothing outside of an interposition of Divine Providence to interfere with our progress."<sup>110</sup> Each religious statement is inherently pregnant with political action in Blake. He wants to use Cuba as a springboard for a pan-African utopia, and he uses the novel as a way of communicating it. That Delany never returned to the novel as a form of political action is evidence that the discrimination that he faced after the Civil War made him into a more conservative arbiter of legal disputes as a trial judge in South Carolina. But as McGann points out in the footnote, this idea of 'divine providence' "portends" what was likely the goal of the final missing chapters of Blake, which must remain as an unsolved mystery to scholars of Delany.

### **4.3 Pan African Utopia**

Arthur Riss has described the personhood of the slave as a person at once "alive and dead."<sup>111</sup> The social death of the slave, and his non-status as a person stripped with any personhood, shifts the debate about utopian agitation in Delany to a debate about the natural

rights of man according to John Locke's *Essay on Human Understanding*: "But though the same immaterial substance or soul does not alone, wherever it be, and whatsoever state, make the same man; yet tis' plain consciousness."<sup>112</sup> That every man had a consciousness made Locke believe in the personhood of the black race. For Riss, Delany "neither...imagined the 'person' as essentially determined by race... nor champion[ed] some for transcending such prevailing racialism."<sup>113</sup> The definition of "personhood," therefore, includes the fight for an idea of race that transcends the color of one's skin and the 'rouge' (as Oliver Wendell Holmes called 'melanin' at the time) which characterizes its reality. The real issue of slavery in *Blake* is an obsession with the personhood of the slave, and how its denial is a fundamental delimitation of the 'soul' of the black or person of color. That such persons should be called "living dead" is the defining salient characteristic that haunts the paradox of liberal thought of the era.<sup>114</sup><sup>§§</sup>

Riss is unequivocal in his support for the idea that literature is the prime corrective for this problem of 'personhood' or 'non-personhood' as it existed under antebellum slavery: "If, on one hand, critics acknowledge that literature was a crucial apparatus for producing knowledge about the 'person,' it nonetheless appears that prevailing readings of these authors continue to depend upon a static notion of the 'person.'"<sup>115</sup> Riss allows for reader interpretation about what it means to be human, but every piece of literature that identifies a black 'personhood' is a palliative for the collective disease of slavery to the ideals of nationhood as voiced by Jefferson in the Declaration of Independence. The 'static' notion of person, I would argue, is inherently denied by black utopian literature such as Delany's *Blake*. What the reader rather receives is rather a dynamic view of the human 'person' which declines to participate in the dehumanizing process of slavery.

---

<sup>§§</sup> Orlando Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death*. (Cambridge University Press, 1982).

The relationship between historical artifacts such as Delany's *Blake* and trauma is one taken up by numerous. For Gesa Mackenthun, these "literary texts are discursively relatively autonomous cultural artifacts" within the New Historicist framework.<sup>116</sup> Delany's novel documents such trauma which "inscribes itself in the very form, or formlessness, of fictional texts."<sup>117</sup> For these lesser known utopian texts by writers such as Delany, Brown, and Northup, representing trauma remains an essential method for cataloguing the erasure of personhood of slaves. The representing of such erasure gives voice to the unspeakable traumas from the antebellum period that create "holes in existence."<sup>118</sup>

The appearance of the McGann edition of *Blake* gives us pause to wonder what the utopian ending of *Blake* might have been like. Sharada Orihuela has argued that she laments "Delany's attachment to normative political and legal structures."<sup>119</sup> Marlene Daut identifies Haiti as the corollary for Delany's revolutionary aspects, adding "Haiti is also both explicitly and implicitly referenced throughout *Blake*: from the novel's more subtle evocation of the Black Spartacus narrative."<sup>120</sup> One wonders if the overthrow of the Cuban government would have been the climactic scene in the novel. But one thing remains apparent: the intention of *Blake* to subvert the normative understanding of the novel and allow it to function for political change – one of the inherent aspects of novelism in this approach. Orihuela's approach certainly highlights the nature of "liberal personhood" as it is revealed in context.<sup>121</sup> But Delany's method, in which "religion dominates the political action," seems at least as undermining of 'liberal personhood' as can be found in this text.<sup>122</sup>

Some critics have arisen to postulate the editing process that has given us this novel, and they theorize how exactly Delany would have wanted his text published. John Ernest points out that, by and large, we have "almost no records of the author's own thoughts about the book," and

“limited information about the author’s life.”<sup>123</sup> It is clear that the lack of an original manuscript poses a problem, but it also liberates the text from suppositions about authorial intent. This chapter has been written with a mindset that it is possible to glean the value of the text from the historical context of abolitionism to emigrationism, sentiments which both find their legitimate expression in Delany’s *Blake*. Ernest sees no substantial improvement to “considerable weakness[es]” in the text when compared to the original version by Floyd J. Miller in 1970.<sup>124</sup> But McGann’s copious historical notes on the text tend to illuminate these discrepancies in editorial choice, and certainly his efforts to preserve the black pidgin of characters like Andy in the *Blake* text serve to make it more, not less comprehensible to modern audiences.

The common assertion that Delany is a ‘bad novelist’ do not go unrecognized by John Ernest, or his ilk. McGann concedes that “Delany was not a novelist – he was a polemicist.”<sup>125</sup> In fact, this is not only true of this black utopian novel, but of utopian novels in general before the Civil War. In particular, the novel *Travels in Icaria* (1847) by Étienne Cabet which showcased the romantic strivings of the French Icarian movement in Texas and Illinois, was often lampooned by its cartoonish characterizations and didactic dialogue. But like *Icaria*, the words of *Blake* are meant to praise separatism from the dominant culture through revolution and colony building. The artistic portrayals in both novels are subordinate to their message. The black utopian writing in *Blake* is valuable not only for its romantic characterizations, but its contributions to the utopian literature genre in its nascent form.

Robert S. Levine pinpoints the essential aspect of this novel which makes it valuable within the shifting canon: Delany’s “romantic conception (or fantasy) of heroic black leadership is expressed most powerfully in his novel, *Blake*, which focuses on the efforts of a single black leader to bring a hemispheric revolution.”<sup>126</sup> The actuality of a ‘hemispheric’ revolution puts

*Blake* beyond geopolitical space in an alterity between his transcendent values and the actual political situation. The *realpolitik* of such an insurrection largely depends on the racialist categories that Delany still holds – this novel is no proponent of desegregation. His black utopian metaphor of ‘Afraka’ continues to hold sway with Levine and other critics as evidence of Delany’s republican leanings. That his political writings do not advocate for Liberia may well be evidence that Delany himself still thought of himself as an American author, albeit trans-American to include Latin America.

The religious aspects that Levine points out tend to undermine his political aims in this respect: “Delany writes of Black religiosity: ‘They carry it too far. Their hope is largely developed, and consequently, they usually stand still – hope in God, and really expect Him to do that for them.’”<sup>127</sup> The ‘stand still’ theology is one that Delany labored to abolish in his political and literary elucubrations. Levine, in particular, sees the action dominated by the ‘religious’ credence that typified the antebellum mind. In some respects, Delany’s perspective on black power is decidedly Christian, but it is his opposition to polygenesis that makes his writing atypical of the period. In order remain dedicated black utopia, 1960’s black nationalists such as Malcolm X would make similar moves regarding religious motifs rejecting the Christian dogma in favor of the Nation of Islam.

Other critics have pointed out the jarring discontinuity of time in *Blake*, which lends credence to the thesis that the novel is utopian in mindset and therefore is ‘no place.’ Katy Chiles has located the black diaspora in a timeless zone, whereby political boundaries cease to exist. Her essay “illustrates the relationship between a particular kind of intratextuality and Delany’s conception of the raced nation,” which “invites us to reconsider how seriality [the existence of the novel in the *Anglo-African Magazine*] helps to imagine the nation-state, and critiques and

reinscribes aspects of the racialized nation-state in its move towards diasporic trans-nationality.”<sup>128</sup> In this way, the anachronistic arrival of Placido on the scene is no more than a transcription of his appearance in the *Anglo-African Magazine* (AAM) serial form. His role, like the ‘High Conjurors’ of the Dismal Swamp episode, offers the gravitas of a serialized fictional character that makes the black diaspora into a ‘raced’ nation. Like the slave insurrectionists Nat Turner, Gabriel Prosser, and Denmark Vesey, Placido is the hegemon of a nation without fixed boundaries – the firebrand of a utopian hemispheric revolution. As Chiles elucidates: “These texts, [the novel and other errata in the AAM], like Delany’s nations, do not reside tidily inside one another as if each version of the nation were just a smaller replica of itself.”<sup>129</sup> This idea of nationhood as a *mis-en-abime* is one unique to her thinking but seems to underscore her notion of nationhood as transcribed in AAM as a “exceptional palimpsest.”<sup>130</sup>

Jennifer C. Brittan has also chosen to emphasize the ‘speculative’ nature of *Blake*’s geopolitics. As she argues, Blake is a member of a “transborder region,” a “speculative geography.”<sup>131</sup> This alterity between the geopolitical boundaries of the time and the hemispherical revolution that he purports to be the catalyst, extends equally to the speculative economy of the time: “All geographical imaginaries create speculative futures, meaning sites of investment and imaginative projection.”<sup>132</sup> She allocates Blake’s “financial ecology” as someplace in the “transnational South.”<sup>133</sup> Thus, the utopian strivings of Blake tend to highlight the inextricable quality of being tied to the land, as a slave would, and his black republic is more or less situated in this ecology. Chiles calls this diffuse area according to the pidgin “the Newnited States of Ameriky,” a place where every free black is a “fugitive.”<sup>134</sup> The antebellum novels explicated here foretell the genesis of a republic where “the laws, mandates, and even racial ideologies of the “Newnited States” are susceptible to destruction.”<sup>135</sup>

Furthermore, Brittan suggests that Blake has a “transracial regional identity that operates alongside...black cosmopolitanism.”<sup>136</sup> *Blake* is shot through with this racist idea, albeit these racial categories include maroon, mulatto, and mestizo groups. But in the absence of abolitionism, Blake can only respond to the racist hierarchy with different black hierarchies – such is Delany’s hidden elitism in his ‘cosmopolitanism.’ Rebecca S. Biggio transposes these racial categories onto the pattern of internecine racial warfare. She suggests that, “Delany’s approach to the novel was informed by his belief that the threat of black community was more frightening to whites than the threat of black violence, because community among blacks...fundamentally undermined the system of slavery by creating a place...where slaves could see themselves as something more than ‘socially dead.’”<sup>137</sup> This issue of ‘social death’ is a problem that the novel particularly helps to remediate by showing the ‘personhood’ of slaves and establishing racial categories that elevate the status of non-persons. This facet of the utopian novel is not unique to *Blake* but is common to all novels that address minorities of subcultures, including the Icarian colony, Brook Farm, and the Cherokee nation in Georgia.

#### 4.4 Conclusion

Delany’s project is a signpost for the antebellum era – one of nebulous geopolitics. With the lack of political boundaries in the United States, the multiplicity of utopian colonies and strategies for political maneuvering seems to put the focus on the antebellum novel as a bellwether for the liberal social engineering that is typical of the period. What remains to be seen is how the novel could become a palimpsest for the origination of the Christian mythos in the period. The Christian messianism of *Blake* bleeds into its politics, and these principles undergird the project of emigration as Delany envisions it. What utopian novels such as *Blake* must tell a modern audience must be couched in the context of the historical framework of the antebellum

period. Several critics of the novel have postulated the trauma theory that may allow for the retelling of voices marked by erasure. The side-story of the insurrection in Cuba may be the seat of American imperial ambitions in the region, but nonetheless, this political no-man's land compels the reader to create a social imaginary that is at once a part of America and not a part of it. The result is a national utopian vision that is at once dissonant and foreboding of the Civil War. *Blake* fits into the historical tradition of providential literature, but not neatly or without a raised fist of protest: "Then, let us determine to be ready, permitting nothing outside of an interposition of Divine Providence to interfere with our progress."<sup>138</sup> *Blake* is unique amongst the novels in this study mainly because it is not wholly a novel, but a polemic that reverses the evangelical traditions and puts new pan-African ones in their place.

## 5 CONCLUSION: NOSTALGIC UTOPIA

Over the course of the dissertation, I have tried to place four novels and one memoir from the antebellum era in constellation with each other. But in my research, many novels from the antebellum era were certainly stars in the constellation that for the sake of brevity, I could not include. These include Royall Tyler's *The Algerine Captive* (1793), John Neal's novel of the Salem witchcraft trials *Rachel Dyer* (1828), Orestes Brownson's quasi-novel memoir of mesmerism *The Spirit Rapper* (1854), Lydia Maria Child's *Hobomok* (1824), and Robert Montgomery Bird's *Sheppard Lee* (1836). Each of these literary achievements could merit a dissertation chapter, though not all are specifically utopian in genre. My hope remains that a study of 'diaphanous geopolitical space' in antebellum novels may garner future research into other lost artefacts of the antebellum era because of the hyper-focus on the avatars of the American Renaissance and critical neglect of some of these works. Though the utopian orientation of each of the four major novels in this study diverged, I endeavored to prove that save William Gilmore Simms oeuvre, theological liberalism introduced by Unitarian paradigm shifts in American literary history, and higher education provided the impetus by which the utopian novel could be generated in the embryonic stage in American literature. My hope to do further research on utopian fiction of the Gilded Age (1866-1910), while impossible due to the limited scope of this study, might yield further insights about how later American authors William Dean Howells, Edward Bellamy, and Jacob Riis pioneered a new form of utopian fiction absent the eschatological framework that largely characterized antebellum efforts, and certainly the four novels and one memoir in this study. Overall, I have offered an argument which makes a unique contribution to the field of American studies and American antebellum literature by tying

together separate threads in the monographs that concern this era and offered a unique approach to the ever-expanding field of transatlantic literary studies.

One specific novel, which enjoyed immense popularity during the antebellum period and has since fallen into critical oblivion, is R. H. Newell's *Avery Glibun, or, Between Two Fires* (1867). What Newell offers his readers is something of a comedic utopia – a fictional space that helped the American public take its mind of the horrors of the war. This utopia is one of fictional fantasy, but no less a nostrum for the public ills of losing brothers and loved ones to the Civil War. Like Franz Kafka's *Metamorphosis* (1915), the tale of man transformed into a giant cockroach with a sister who comically tries to attend to his convalescence, R. H. Newell's brand of utopian idealism might be humorous, but the reader dare not laugh. In his fantasy fiction, one sees a romance that offers the peace of domesticity in the antebellum era as a kind of utopia. We are drawn into a utopian Elysium that is still every bit as concerned about socialism's place in the political fabric, and yet 'glib' and comedic about its claims to transform society.

This period during and immediately after the Civil War, which critic Cody Marris has coined the term "transbellum" to refer to an interregnum of quasi-comedic attitudes about politics of the antebellum period.<sup>1</sup> The war had so colored Americans perceptions of political wrangling, that 'utopia' was more of a sound for them more than a meaning. Marris' definition of this term extends to include "writer's careers [which] extend from the antebellum period, across the Civil War, and into the 'postbellum' era."<sup>2</sup> The politics of *Avery Glibun* are decidedly Republican, which likely endeared him to his most famous reader, Abraham Lincoln. Newell fictionalizes the parties into the 'Demolition' party and the Ebullition party. These titles are ultimately humorous but have the importance of showing the pro-slavery factions that are still within the government. One warrior from the Civil War era is General Cringer, who is himself a

staunch ‘Ebullitionist.’ One particular interchange with Cringer and his party members shows the alignment of the two parties at the time:

Honest conviction, and all that sort of thing, is good. Facilitate, too, is very good. But what I like about the General, you know, is his independence; to-day with the Ebullition party, if they’re in the right, and negotiating with the Demolition party, if they’re in the right, and negotiating with the Ebullitionists for ditto, ditto. That’s what I call jolly.<sup>3</sup>

The attempt to call politics “jolly,” when it is anything but that is the attempt to bring back a sense of dignity and civility to the nation which had been torn apart by factions. The lack of clear distinctions in the fictional political parties shows the relative amount of tact that Newell used without clearly showing the alignments, he could project an image of tranquility upon a boiling pot of disunion and faction. This feature of poking fun at politics is a decided feature of the novel, which still has its wars, albeit internal to the plot.

After his departure from the Oxford Institute, Avery must live in ‘Rack-and-Ruin row’ in the Bowery district of New York City. This site of abject poverty is the reason that Avery becomes a writer, for he must write in order to earn his bread. The newly emerging tenement system, run by Tammany Hall, the notorious political machine, is just starting to influence New York politics. The tenement lifestyle, detailed in Jacob Riis’ class *How the Other Half Lives*, shows a side of New York City which is seedy and keeps people living in crowded tenements with very little air. Each member of the tenement had to share the same bathroom, and the climate was less than salubrious. Avery is admonished by one of his peers for living there to do investigative journalism: “Rack-and-Ruin Row is not a place to improve one of your years, and I don’t know how long we may have to stay here; but if you do as I tell you, you will come to no harm while I’m away.”<sup>4</sup> In fact, the detailing of muckraking journalism of this time period may

serve as a prescient reminder that for millions of Americans, economic equality was more of a dream-like utopia than a reality.

The Democratic machine is run by Mealy O'Murphy, who is a stand in for the nefarious Boss Tweed, who kept the city under their control by ruthless machine politics. Some of the campaign slogans of the era were preserved in the literature here: "Vote for the Hon. Mealy O'Murphy; "Regular Demolition Ticket"; "The Workingman's Champion"; "Honest Labor versus British Gold."<sup>5</sup> The Demolition party, or the Democratic party, could be said to have undue influence over the poorest classes. One of the salient characteristics of transbellum literature is the emphasis on class warfare, which came to displace the martial combat of the Civil War as the main struggle of ordinary Americans. The leisure class had yet to come into fruition. Yet, these fantasy political 'tickets' still lack specifics because they are meant to whitewash over the underbelly of New York City, where the teeming masses still lived in utter penury.

The gold standard continued to be an issue in American politics, which divided the country into sharp divisions. Paper specie, or greenbacks, continued to circulate as currency, but were not always backed by the federal government. This 'money' issue is featured prominently in the political discussions of Avery and his peers Mr. James Reese and Wolfton Marsh: "Money paid down at once, and wine to be sent when convenient. 'The Mealy O'Murphy Club' are hereby invited to call upon Mr. McGinnis and make sure that the amount has not be paid in British gold."<sup>6</sup> The machine politics thrived on a culture of money and mutual suspicion as working-class Americans could not verify the monetary value of their wages, since the Gold Standard still reigned supreme. The political agon of this situation leads to conflict between the

pro-British factions of the economic establishment, and the lively characters who live with Avery in the Rack-and-Ruin Row.

The utopian speech of Benton Stiles remains one of the most salient evidence of its presence in this last of antebellum novels. In an orotund fashion, he summarizes the zeitgeist of the antebellum era's vision of national prominence:

“Men of America!” shouted he, supremely indifferent to certain facetious remarks of the populace upon the rakish style of his costume, ‘the national melody having ceased, I will proceed to return thanks that I am permitted to live to see this evening, when the noble working-man stands here under the blue dome of the empyrean, to protest against all richness whatsoever... No! the honest poor man, the noble working-man, scorns to assume the pomp of foreign lordlings. I, myself, once threaded the glittering ranks of haughty fashion and took my place in the gaudy throng; but shortly after losing my property I became the friend of the poor man, and am to this day in favor of either the abolishment of riches, or their equitable division among all men, without further confusion.’<sup>7</sup>

The notion of the working man cut down by gold-standard regulations in the form of gold bullion is one of the many issues developing in the utopian aspects of the burgeoning Democratic party under Jackson. What stands out here is the ‘national melody’ of an empyrean reality that touched the heart of working-class voters. Benton Stiles taps into an antebellum idea of the perfectibility of society, and especially with the appearance on the national stage of the industrial proletariat. This provides an escutcheon of the working class, that had heretofore not existed. The Marxist ideas prevalent at the time give us a better idea of how the Christian values of Henri Saint-Simon and Charles Fourier have begun to shift to dialectical materialism in the social fabric of American culture.<sup>8</sup> From this point on, the utopian aspirations of the working class would be unyoked with the Christian ideal; in fact, it would transform the texture of utopian novels irrevocably away from community building and towards class struggle.

Stiles' speech has the alternative quality of making room for Marxist doctrine above its evangelical purpose. He continues into this vein by citing utopian language that accounts for the lifting of the working classes above their abject poverty and squalor:

The defeat and that election, were at once the patriot's trial and the patriot's reward. (Applause of wild beasts.) They are the record which the Honorable Mealy O'Murphy presents in justification of his claim for your ballots now. Arise, then, noble working-men of America, and vote for the man whose nose has bled for poor old Ireland, and to whom a bloated aristocracy furthermore object, because the present green baize-covered tables..., from which he derives a frugal livelihood, are free for an innocent game of cards.<sup>9</sup>

The fictional character of Benton Stiles politically wrangles the working class due to the Marxian ideals percolating in the substructures of society. With the advent of these new ideas, the Christian hegemony of socialist ideals is fading from view. Rather, the 'noble working-men of America,' constitute a considerable voting block that will elevate the working class. These men lambaste the 'Eb'ulitionists' or 'abolitionists' who had once been the bedrock of the Republican party, with a highly racialized version of Democratic dogma – a centrality of the Irish poor and their lot in society with no quarter for the freed slaves who were trying to make their way in American society during Reconstruction. There is clearly a disdain for marginalized racial groups, but in the same thought, an elevation of the working class and an emphasis on class struggle.

The primacy of muckraking journalism plays a vital role in Avery's picaresque journey. Having left the 'Rack-and-Ruin' Bowery area, he seeks the identity of his father assiduously. But he cannot forget his past of penury:

I was, in fact, ashamed of my vagabond experiences; and, aside from my fear of further persecutions from my father. Should he against find me and learn that I had been talking of him, his conduct and the schoolmaster's was so far from explicable to myself that I dreaded relating it to others lest they should infer some deserving, on my part of such unnatural treatment.<sup>10</sup>

His mother deceased and his father unknown, Avery searches aimlessly for his own identity, which would give him the self-confidence to begin his journalism career. But after leaving the Oxford Institute, he is adrift in a sea of self-doubt, and he needs some sense of *élan vital* to jumpstart his career. We learn that he is yet a “sick creature in a miserable dream,” and without any substantial aid to change his misfortune.<sup>11</sup> Like many inhabitants of New York tenements, he feels stuck in his dire situation.

Further research may illuminate how well ingrained utopian ideology was in the transbellum era. Certainly, the age of the intentional utopian commune had passed and given way to Marxian notions sympathetic to Communist agitation. But as for the antebellum era, intentional utopian micro-communities were an indelible fixture of the early nineteenth century, and many lasted until the end of the century (such as Cabet’s Icarian colony in Nauvoo, Illinois). But this period of resurgent utopian idealism and simple living through retreating from urban areas may well be perpetuated through the Post-World War II construction of American suburbia. Although modern suburbs do constitute a flight from the vices of urban existence, these commercialized utopias fall short of the community engagement of Brook Farm. As Robert J. Putnam commented in his modern sociological work *Bowling Alone*: “These declines in [social] participation appear all along the spectrum from hyperactivists to civic slugs. The fraction of the public who engaged in none of these [social outlets] rose by more than one-third over this period [1973-1994].”<sup>12</sup> If you couple this with the decline in social participation in civic institutions as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the reconstruction of thriving micro-communities remains a dire problem in the American social fabric to this day.

I do not wish to suggest that these antebellum intentional communities are a panacea for our cultural and social disengagement. But regaining some semblance of a “sacred aura” around

the distribution of paper, which Sonia Hazard argues was an essential part of the antebellum era, might be able to reconstitute community around paper-based literary works, analog audio, and other items of non-digital cultural capital considered ‘obsolete’ by the cultural elite, and young people in Generation Z.<sup>13</sup> The reviving of community in the United States might well be the subject of a further study which examines with more quantitative data and rigorous analysis of Putnam’s study, a prescriptive method for regaining a sense of community in the post-COVID American cultural landscape.

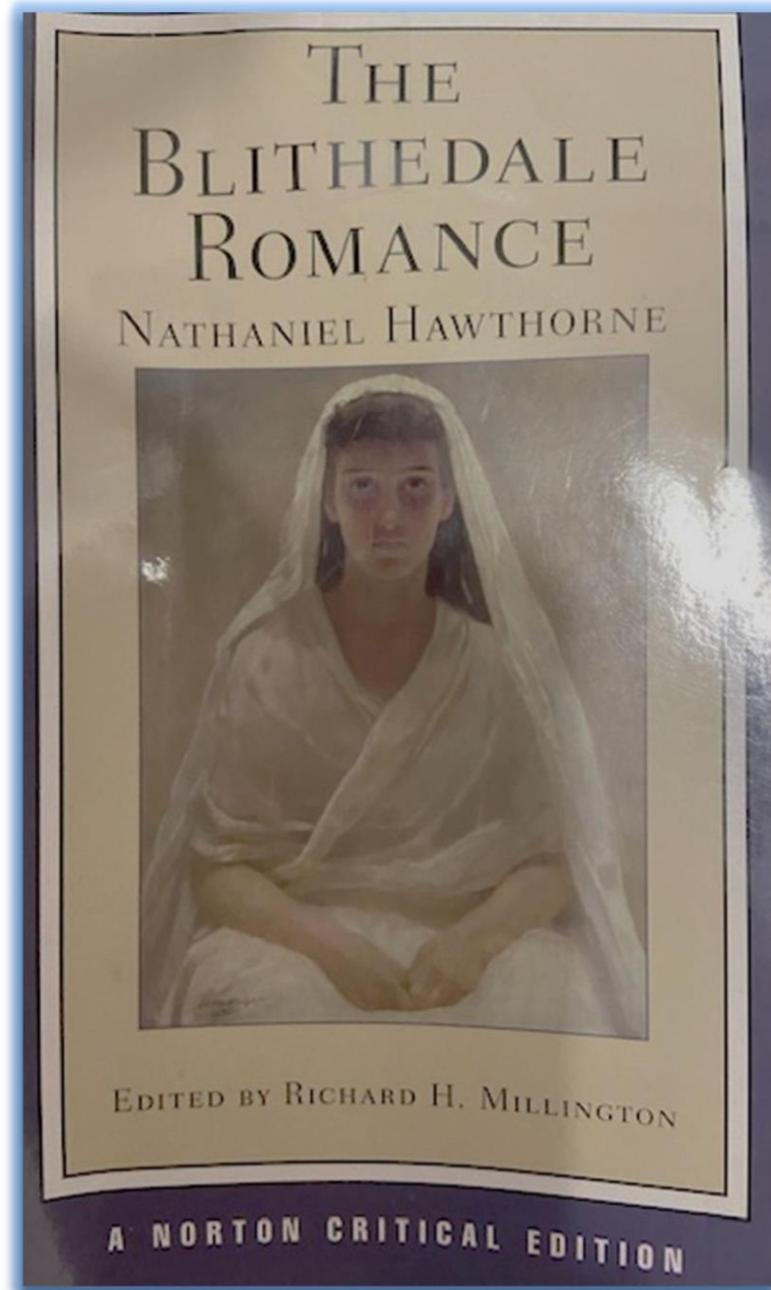
But in some sense, American literary history repeats itself. William Charvat, in reference to the Brook Farm experiment, charts a similar social divide in America which ultimately separates the European continent from the United States. The hard facts of cultural life in the United States, he argued, places the literary corpora of each community in the early nineteenth century in stark contrast:

But the relation of the big city to the province and of the writer to society has never been the same in America as in Europe, and one difference has been that our authors have, on the whole, been as alienated from each other as from the rest of society.<sup>14</sup>

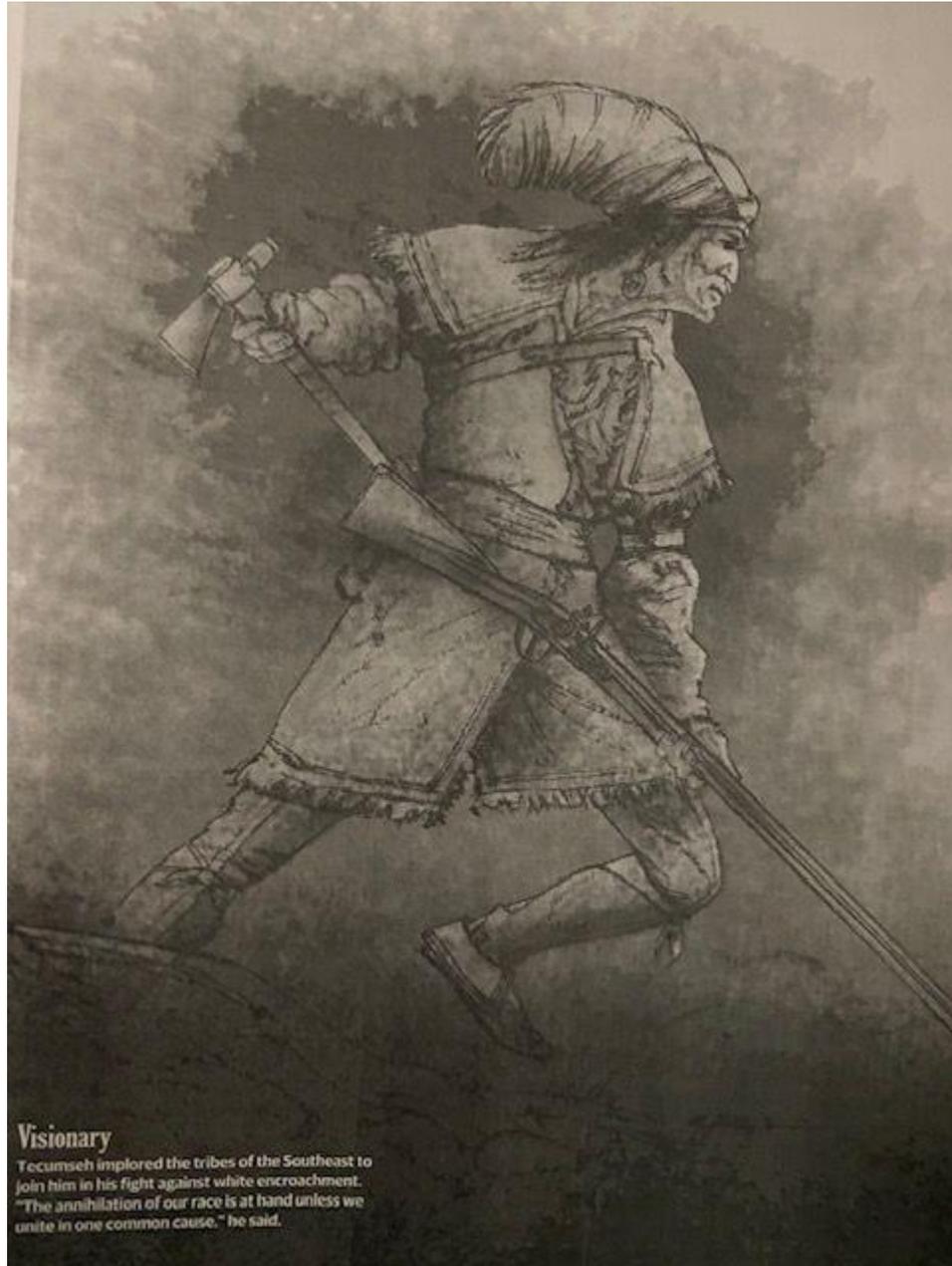
As such, the ‘alienating’ factor of artistic hubris may well be an underlying foundation that accounts for the etiology of an ‘artistic’ commune’s ephemerality. Brook Farm may well share more characteristics with an artist colony than the utopian colonies that followed, from Noyes’ Oneida religious community to Wright’s Nashoba commune.

## APPENDICES

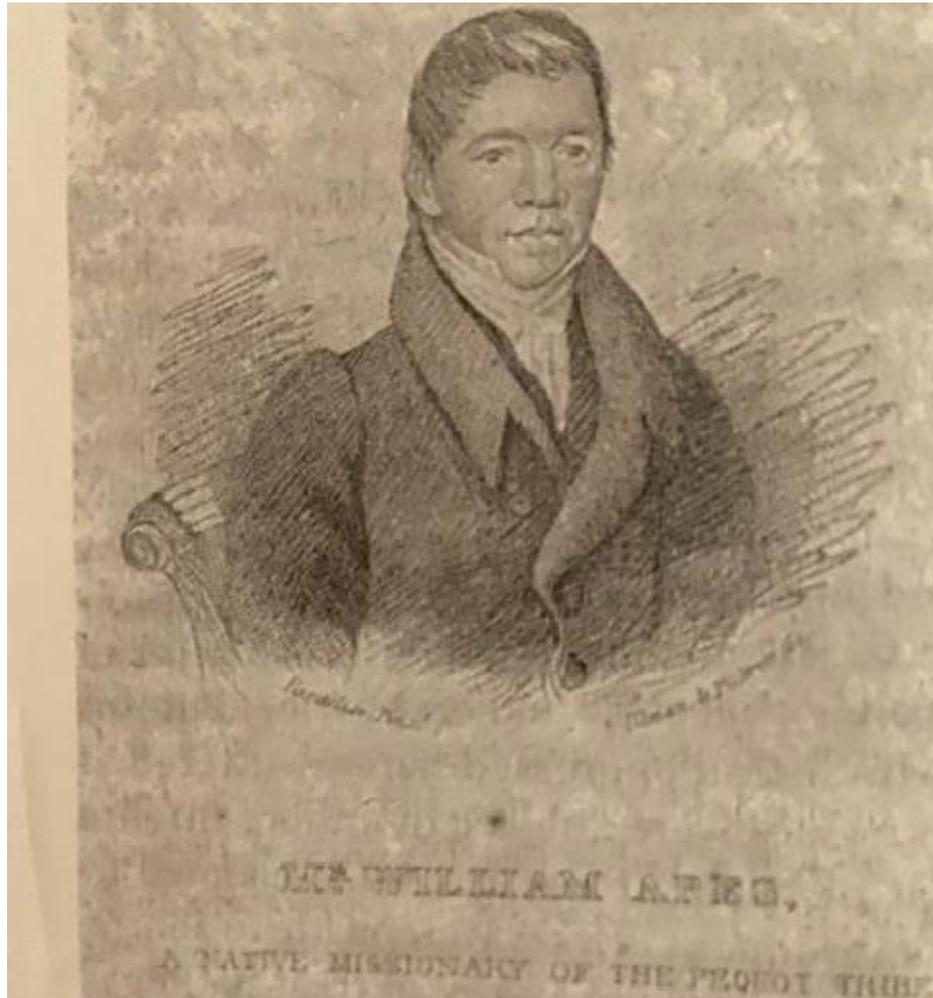
## Appendix A



“The Veiled Lady” (Priscilla) from the cover of the Norton Critical Edition of TBR. Note the resemblance to a religious ‘Diana’ wedding icon.

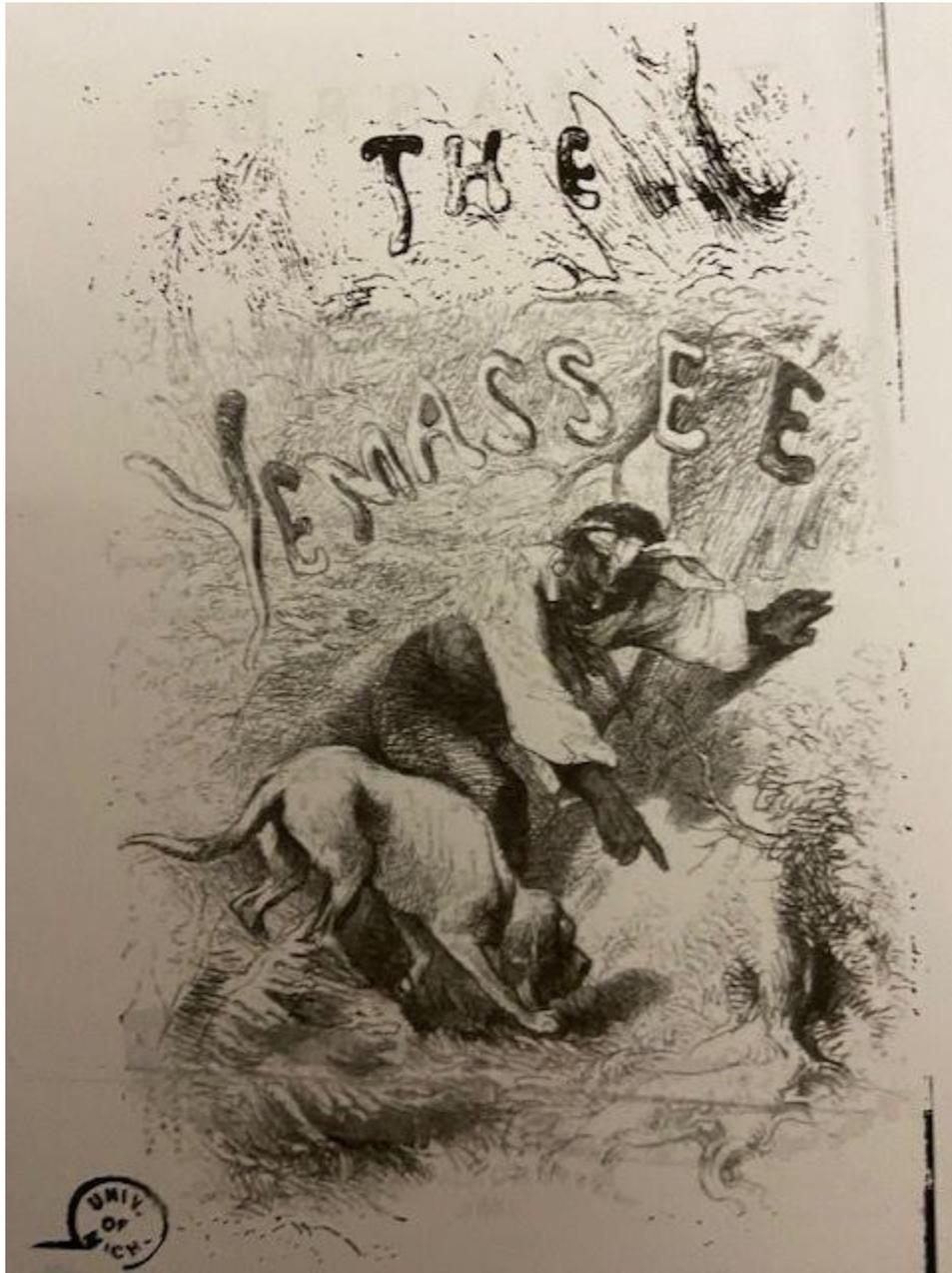
**Appendix A.1**

From Eliot West's "Tecumseh's Last Stand" *American History* (Dec 2012) Vol. 47, No. 5, pp. 34. Note the contrast in dress between the military leader Tecumseh and William Apess in Appendix A.2

*Appendix A.2*

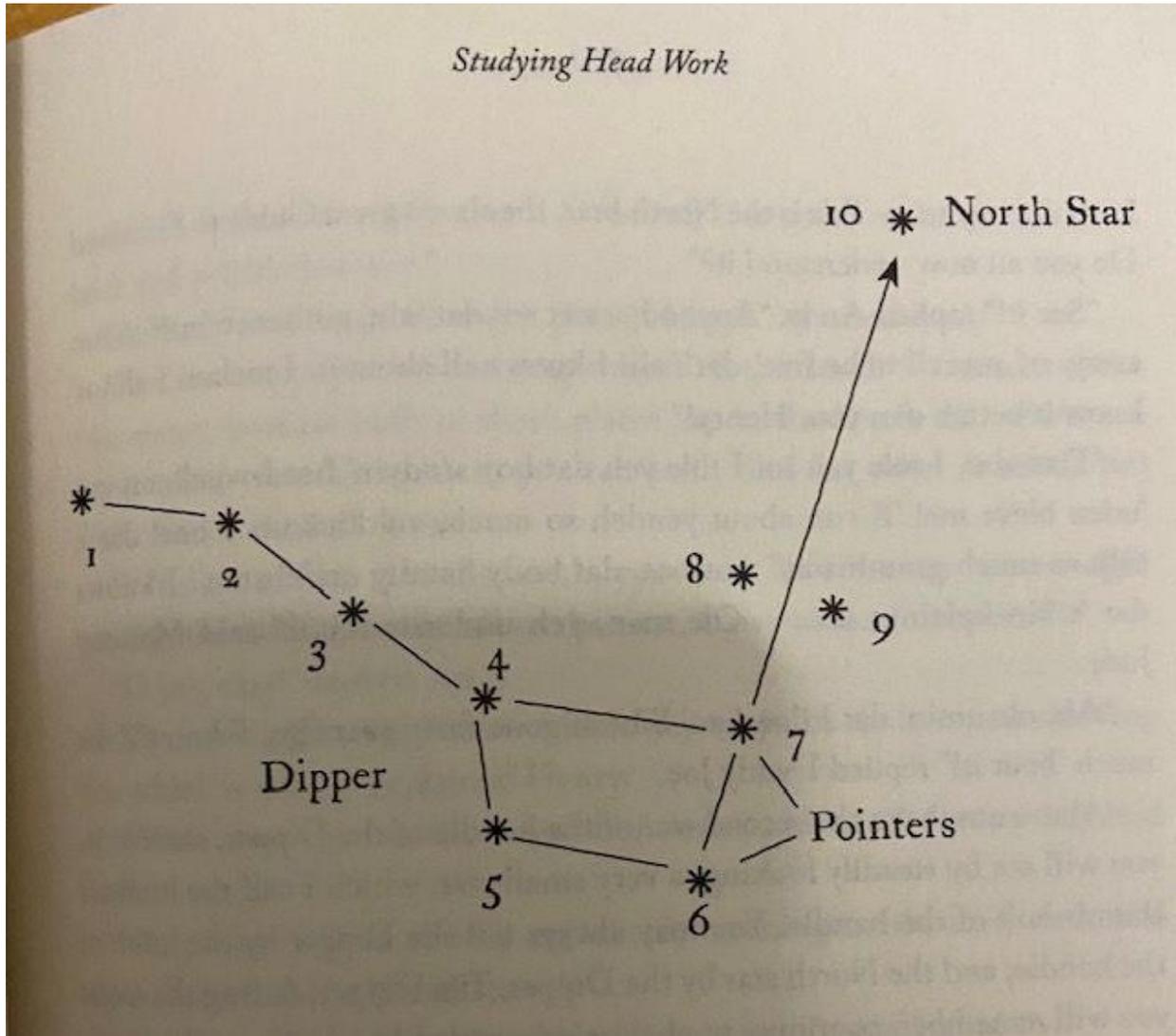
From the original frontispiece of the 1831 edition of *A Son of the Forest*. Copied from the *Norton Anthology of American Literature* (2022) vol.2 "1820-1865." Note the European dress and absence of Native American regalia.

## Appendix B



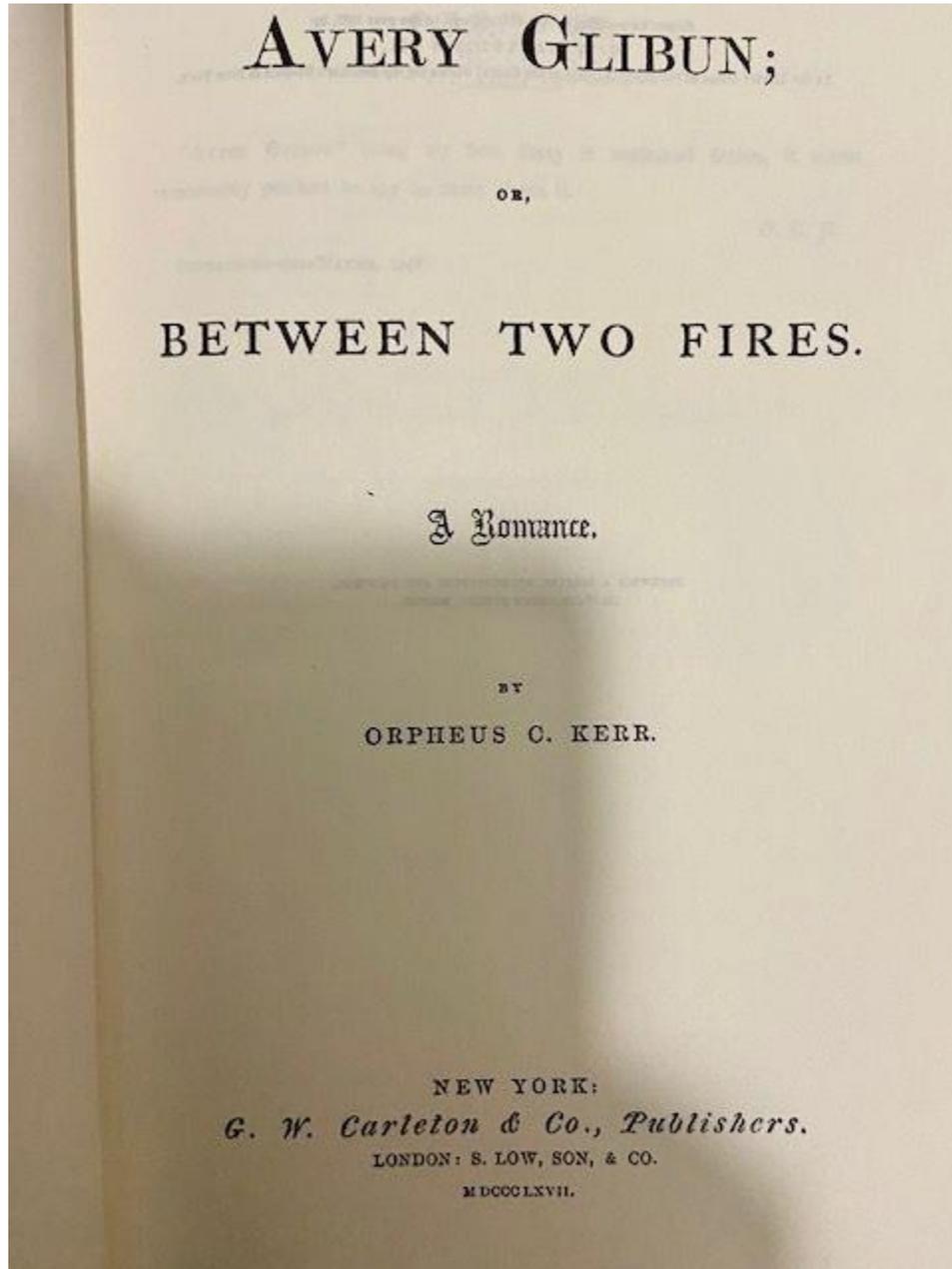
From the frontispiece of the original 1835 edition of William G. Simms' novel *The Yemassee*. Note the pictorial representation of the slave Hector who refuses manumission after rescuing his master Gabriel Harrison (Lord Craven) from a skirmish in the Yemassee war.

## Appendix C



From p. 133 of the authoritative Jerome McGann edited version (2017) of Martin R. Delany's unfinished novel *Blake, or the Huts of America* (1859) serialized in the magazine *The Anglo-African Weekly*. Note the reference to the big dipper and its location in the night sky pointing to the North Star. Such constellations would have been used by real slaves in order to direct them to freedom in Canada, where Delany resided for a short time and met the noted abolitionist, John Brown.

## Appendix D



A facsimile of the original frontispiece of Robert Henry Newell's novel *Avery Glibun, or Between Two Fires* (1867) published recently by 'Hanse Books' <https://www.hansebooks.com>. Note the the sobriquet Orpheus C. Kerr, a transliteration of the phrase "Office Seeker," an epithet for a corrupt bureaucrat during the Buchanan, Lincoln, and Johnson administrations.

## NOTES

### Preface

1. Kozakavich, *The Archaeology of Utopian and Intentional Communities*, 3.
2. Kozakavich, 10.
3. Saint-Simon qtd in Gura, "The Transcendentalist Commotion," 56.
4. Packer, *The Transcendentalists*, 48.
5. Kozakavich, 14.
6. Greenblatt, *The Greenblatt Reader*, 15.
7. Kozakavich, 14.
8. Matthiessen, *American Renaissance*, 57.

### Chapter 1 (Introduction)

1. Acts 2:44, ESV
2. Buell qtd in Jones, *American Hungers*, 11.
3. Dimock, *Through Other Continents*, 3.
4. Wright qtd in Wright, *A Few Days in Athens*, iv.
5. Simms, *The Yemassee*, 444.
6. Giles, *The Deterritorialization of American Literature*, ix.
7. Kozakavich, 19.
8. Taylor, *A Secular Age*, 159
9. Bloom, *The Western Canon*, 180.
10. Tyler, *A History of American Literature*, 286.
11. Tyler, 269.

12. Tyler, 277.
13. Tyler, 285.
14. Tyler, 285.
15. Tyler, 225.
16. Koenigs, *Founded in Fiction*, 31.
17. Koenigs, 14.
18. Koenigs, 29.
19. Tompkins, xviii.
20. Tompkins, 35.
21. Tompkins, 37.
22. Haines, *A Desire Called America*, 3.
23. Haines, 5.
24. Haines, 5.
25. Murison, *The Politics of Anxiety*, 88.
26. Koenigs, *Founded in Fiction*, 5
27. Koenigs, 29.
28. Koenigs, 29.
29. Koenigs, 16.
30. Saint-Simon qtd in Gura, "The Transcendentalist Commotion," 56.
31. Walters, *American Reformers*, 41.
32. Jones, *American Hungers*, 29.
33. Jones, 28.
34. Jones, 32.

35. Jones, 151.
36. Reynolds, *Beneath the American Renaissance*, 23.
37. Reynolds, 56.
38. Reynolds, 142.
39. Reynolds, 144.
40. Howe, *What Hath God Wrought*, 349.
41. Howe, 349.
42. Howe, 350.
43. Gura, *American Transcendentalism*, 47.
44. Gura, 49.
45. Gura, 186.
46. Gura, 186.
47. Crowe, *George Ripley*, ##
48. Francis, 86.
49. Lepore, *The Name of War*, 43.
50. Simms, 118.
51. Greenblatt, *The Greenblatt Reader*, 3. [Third Rule of New Historicism (NH):] “3. [Practitioners of NH] are persistently aware that history is both what happened in the past...and an account of those events (a story); historical truth arises from a critical reflection on the *adequacy* of the story that is told.” (Italics mine).
52. Simms, 441. cf. [References Ch.2; Notes Ch.2 ##] Hector’s quip “foolish talk about freedom” is robustly critiqued in Vincent King’s “Foolish Talk ‘bout Freedom,” Simms’ Vision of America in *The Yemassee*.” (Summer 2003).

53. O'Connell qtd in Apess, *On Our Own Ground*, liii.
54. Delany, *Blake*, 277. (cf. Ch. 4 References)
55. Adeleke, *Without Regard to Race*, 77. (cf. Ch.4 References)
56. Evans, *The Burden of Black Religion*, 52. (cf. Ch.4 References)
57. Marrs, *Nineteenth-Century American Literature*, 3. (cf. Ch. 5 References)
58. Glass, "NEWELL, Robert Henry," 820. (cf. Ch.5 References)
59. Bremner, "Civil War Humor," 122. (cf. Ch.5 References)
60. Bremner, 124.

## Chapter 2

1. Guarneri, *The Utopian Alternative*, 35.
2. Fluck, *A New Literary History of America*, 292.
3. Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane*, 33.
4. Hawthorne, *The Blithedale Romance*, 7.
5. Berger, *The Sacred Canopy*, 33.
6. TBR, 166. At this concluding part of the novel, "Bunyan's book" is invoked to describe Hollingsworth's precipitous fall from grace when he, arriving at heaven's gate, is subject to the "by-way to the pit."
7. Guarneri, *The Utopian Alternative*, 16.
8. Guarneri, 21.
9. Guarneri, "The Associationists," 36-37.
10. Guarneri, *The Utopian Alternative*, 1.
11. Gura, "Transcendentalist Commotion," 56.

12. Fourier, *The Theory of Four Movements*, 110.
13. Fourier, 143.
14. Brisbane, *The Social Destiny of Man*, 452.
15. Fourier, 152.
16. Fourier, 115.
17. TBR, 12.
18. Jones qtd in Fourier, *Theory of Four Movements*, xiii.
19. Jones qtd in Fourier, xvii.
20. Fourier, 14.
21. Fourier, 20.
22. Fourier, 70.
23. Guarneri, *The Utopian Alternative*, 18.
24. Guarneri, 17.
25. Guarneri, 17.
26. Taylor qtd in Saint-Simon, *Selected Writings*, 27.
27. Taylor, 35.
28. Saint-Simon, *Selected Writings*, 21.
29. Saint-Simon, 21.
30. Fourier, 22.
31. Guarneri, *The Utopian Alternative*, 116.
32. Brisbane, *The Social Destiny of Man*, 18.
33. Brisbane, 30.
34. Brisbane, 40.

35. Brisbane, 77.
36. Brisbane, 98.
37. Guarneri, *The Utopian Alternative*, 28.
38. Guarneri, 33.
39. Guarneri, 43.
40. Guarneri, 35.
41. Guarneri, 45.
42. Brooks, *The Flowering of New England*, 251.
43. Dwight qtd in Guarneri, *The Utopian Alternative*, 52.
44. Brisbane, *The Social Destiny of Man*, 40.
45. Brisbane, 167.
46. Brisbane, 132.
47. Brisbane, 244.
48. Brisbane, 249.
49. Crowe, *George Ripley*, 56.
50. Crowe, 74.
51. Crowe, 125.
52. Crowe, 127.
53. Crowe, 136.
54. Crowe, 143.
55. Crowe, 149.
56. Crowe, 149.
57. Crowe, 146.

58. Crowe, 175.
59. Crowe, 146.
60. Crowe, 163.
61. Crowe, 181.
62. Gura, *American Transcendentalism*, 133.
63. Hawthorne, TBR, 9.
64. TBR, 9.
65. TBR, 14.
66. TBR, 184.
67. Lawrence, "Disintegration of the Psyche," 112.
68. Hawthorne, TBR, 47-48.
69. TBR, 24.
70. TBR, 29.
71. TBR, 29.
72. TBR, 30.
73. TBR, 31.
74. Kierkegaard, *The Sickness Unto Death*, 43.
75. Ripley qtd in Frothingham, *George Ripley*, 307.
76. Hawthorne, TBR, 39.
77. TBR, 150.
78. TBR, 42.
79. TBR, 43.
80. TBR, 44.

81. TBR, 45.
82. Hawthorne, *The Letters*, 589.
83. Hawthorne, 530.
84. Hawthorne, TBR, 56.
85. TBR, 117.
86. TBR, 78.
87. TBR, 123.
88. TBR, 124.
89. TBR, 144.
90. Berlant, "Fantasies of Utopia," 50.
91. Berlant, 43.
92. Berlant, 50.
93. Berlant, 49.
94. Berlant, 46.
95. Hawthorne, TBR, 11.
96. TBR, 97.
97. TBR, 97.
98. TBR, 83.
99. TBR, 83.
100. TBR, 83.
101. TBR, 64.
102. TBR, 85.
103. Andrews, *Transcendentalism and the Cultivation of the Soul*, 10.

104. Hawthorne, TBR, 118.
105. TBR, 159.
106. TBR, 73.
107. Eliot qtd in Winslow, *John Eliot*, 34.
108. Winslow, 128.
109. Hawthorne, TBR, 140.
110. TBR, 110.
111. TBR, 99.
112. TBR, 102.
113. TBR, 145.
114. TBR, 137.
115. TBR, 146.
116. TBR, 146.
117. Winslow, *John Eliot*, 170.
118. Winslow, 176.
119. Hawthorne, TBR, 147.
120. TBR, 147.
121. TBR, 147.
122. TBR, 150.
123. Hawthorne, "Grandfather's Chair," 46.
124. "Grandfather's Chair," 48.
125. "Grandfather's Chair," 67.
126. Hawthorne, TBR, 155.

127. TBR, 156.
128. TBR, 156.
129. TBR, 158.
130. TBR, 161
131. TBR, 162.
132. TBR, 164.
133. Diamond, "But All This While, We Have Been Standing on Zenobia's Grave,"  
53.
134. Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane*, 33.
135. Mielke, "Native American Presence," 46.
136. Mielke, 46.
137. Hawthorne, TBR, 111.
138. TBR, 156.
139. TBR, 133.
140. Colacurrio, "Nobody's Protest Novel," 18.
141. Colacurrio, 20.
142. Holland, "Spectatorship and Entanglement," 35.
143. Haslam, "Punishing Utopia," 12-13.
144. Hawthorne, TBR, 163.
145. Bennett, *Transatlantic Spiritualism*, 11.
146. Hawthorne, TBR, 163.
147. TBR, 166.
148. Bunyan, *The Pilgrim's Progress*, 166.

149. Bunyan, 154.
150. Hawthorne, TBR, 167.
151. Blankenship, "Earn it with the sweat of my brow," 67.
152. Hawthorne, TBR, 168.
153. Colacurrio, "Nobody's Protest Novel," 24.

### Chapter 3

1. Koenigs, *Founded in Fiction*, 3. (cf. Ch. 1 References)
2. Moltke-Hansen, *William Gilmore Simms*, 6.
3. Moltke-Hansen, 7.
4. Moltke-Hansen, 297.
5. Hart, *The Popular Book*, 69.
6. Hart, 83.
7. Hagstette, "Simms' Ghosts," 399.
8. Hoeffler, "The Slaves That They Are," 116.
9. Hoeffler, 121.
10. Frye, "Simms's *The Yemassee*, American Progressivism, and the Dialogue of History," 83.
11. Simms, TY, 73.
12. Simms qtd in Frye, 84.
13. Simms, TY, 442.
14. Koenigs, *Founded in Fiction*, 152. (cf. Ch. 1 References)
15. Reed, "Sectional Tensions in Simms' *The Yemassee*," 284.

16. Reed, 284.
17. Simms, TY, 344.
18. TY, 184.
19. TY, 74.
20. TY, 127.
21. TY, 135.
22. TY, 181.
23. TY, 182.
24. TY, 186.
25. TY, 190.
26. Moltke-Hansen, "To Civilize King Cotton's Realm," 27.
27. Simms, TY, 198.
28. TY, 201.
29. TY, 208.
30. TY, 208.
31. TY, 210.
32. TY, 211.
33. Saunt, *Unworthy Republic*, 278.
34. Saunt, 175.
35. Mielke, "Native American Presence," 52. (cf. Ch.2 References)
36. Oxford English Dictionary (online), "Totem."
37. Simms, TY, 78.
38. TY, 87.

39. Bennett, 9. (cf. Ch.2 References)
40. Simms, TY, 108.
41. TY, 112.
42. TY, 229.
43. TY, 232.
44. TY, 259.
45. TY, 344.
46. TY, 267.
47. Weaver-Hightower, "Do We Reverse the Medal?," 28.
48. Simms, TY, 271.
49. TY, 276.
50. TY, 325.
51. TY, 354.
52. Frye, "Simms's *The Yemassee*, American Progressivism, and the Dialogue of History," 83.
53. Packer, *The Transcendentalists*.
54. Bennett, 58.
55. Barr qtd in Sleeper-Smith et al, "Borders and Borderlands," 16.
56. Barr, 16.
57. Apess, ASOTF, 36.
58. Clinton qtd in Apess, *On Our Own Ground*, 73.
59. Apess, ASOTF, 73.
60. ASOTF, 4.

61. Lepore, *The Name of War*, 47.
62. Lepore, 27.
63. Lepore, 27.
64. Lumpkin qtd in Saunt, *Unworthy Republic*, 262.
65. Apess, ASOTF, 26.
66. Apess, ASOTF, 25.
67. Rifkin, "Shadows of Mashantucket," 691.
68. Zinn, *A People's History of the United States*, 127.
69. West, "Tecumseh's Last Stand," 34.
70. West, 40.
71. Apess, ASOTF, 17.
72. ASOTF, 14.
73. ASOTF, 18, 20.
74. ASOTF, 20, 21.
75. ASOTF, 22.
76. Miller, "Mouth for God," 230.
77. Miller, 235.
78. Nora, "Between Memory and History," 7.
79. Nora, 8.
80. Miller, "Mouth for God," 251.
81. Miller, 228.
82. Miller, 236.
83. Miller, 245.

84. Lopenzina, ““In De Dark Wood, No Indian Nigh’,” 477.
85. Apess, ASOTF, 37.
86. Lopenzina, 483.
87. Mielke, “Native American Presence,” 77. (cf. Ch. 2 references)
88. ASOTF, 49.
89. ASOTF, 50.
90. Lopenzina, ““In De Dark Wood, No Indian Nigh’,” 483.
91. Saunt, 278.
92. Mather qtd in Lepore, *The Name of War*, 25.
93. Lepore, 25.
94. ASOTF, 3.
95. ASOTF, 61.
96. ASOTF, 61.
97. ASOTF, 61.
98. ASOTF, 63.
99. ASOTF, 65.
100. ASOTF, 33.
101. Jefferson qtd in Ambrose, *Undaunted Courage*, 55.
102. Ambrose, 93.
103. Jefferson qtd in Apess, ASOTF, 87.
104. ASOTF, 79.
105. ASOTF, 83.
106. ASOTF, 76.

107. Kelly, *Marooned*, 87.
108. ASOTF, 10.
109. Kelly, *Marooned*, 18.
110. Apess qtd in Round, "Indigenous Illustration," 272.
111. Round, 272.
112. Miller, "Mouth for God," 236.

#### **Chapter 4**

1. Delany, BOTHOA, 308.
2. McGann in BOTHOA, xi.
3. BOTHOA, xxv.
4. Levine, *Martin R. Delany: A Documentary Reader*, 6.
5. Delany, BOTHOA, 212.
6. Levine, 17.
7. Lepore, *These Truths*, 74.
8. Lepore, 74.
9. Lepore, 159.
10. Lepore, 203.
11. Delany, BOTHOA, 264.
12. Pierrot, "Writing Over Haiti," 176.
13. Pierrot, 176.
14. Zamalin, "Black Utopia," 25.
15. Zamalin, 23.

16. Zamalin, 23.
17. Zamalin, 25.
18. Worill, "Dr. Martin R. Delany: A Man Missing from Black History."
19. Sterling, *The Making of an Afro-American*, 44.
20. Sterling, 71.
21. Sterling, 83.
22. Sterling, 117.
23. Delany, BOTHOA, 156.
24. Sterling, *The Making of an Afro-American*, 94, 105.
25. Adeleke, *Without Regard to Race*, 50.
26. Adeleke, 55.
27. Delany qtd in Levine, 234.
28. Delany qtd in Levine, 123.
29. Lepore, *These Truths*, 179.
30. Sterling, *The Making of an Afro-American*, 198.
31. Sterling, 198.
32. Sterling, 206.
33. Delany qtd in Sterling, 185.
34. Adeleke, xxii.
35. Adeleke, 23.
36. Evans, *The Burden of Black Religion*, 52.
37. Evans, 52.
38. Evans, 51.

39. Nawa, 74.
40. Delany, BOTHOA, 194.
41. Nawa, 72.
42. BOTHOA, 136.
43. Delany, BOTHOA, 70.
44. BOTHOA, 226.
45. BOTHOA, 258.
46. Nawa, "The Ambiguity of Sea and Gender Roles in Martin Delany's Blake," 76.
47. Delany qtd in Levine, 207.
48. Delany qtd in Levine, 201.
49. Delany qtd in Levine, 203.
50. Delany qtd in Levine, 214.
51. Sterling, *The Making of an Afro-American*, 262.
52. McGann qtd in Delany, BOTHOA, xx.
53. McGann qtd in Delany, BOTHOA, xx.
54. Sterling, 202-203.
55. Richards, *Imitation Nation: Red, White, and Blackface in Early and Antebellum Us Literature*, 160.
56. Richards, 161.
57. Richards, 161.
58. Evans, *The Burden of Black Religion*, 4-5.
59. Dubois, *The Souls of Black Folk*, 79.
60. Delany, BOTHOA, 143.

61. Adeleke, *Without Regard to Race*, 192.
62. BOTHOA, 102.
63. Evans, 25.
64. BOTHOA, 81.
65. Evans, 27.
66. BOTHOA, 17.
67. BOTHOA, 69.
68. BOTHOA, 104.
69. BOTHOA, 143.
70. Delany, BOTHOA, 13.
71. Sterling, *The Making of an Afro-American*, 180.
72. BOTHOA, 15.
73. BOTHOA, 63.
74. BOTHOA, 177.
75. BOTHOA, 170.
76. BOTHOA, 170.
77. McGann qtd in Delany, BOTHOA, xix.
78. BOTHOA, 48.
79. BOTHOA, 51.
80. BOTHOA, 52.
81. BOTHOA, 69.
82. Richards, *Imitation Nation*, 160.
83. BOTHOA, 75.

84. Howe, *What Hath God Wrought*, 128.
85. BOTHOA, 76.
86. BOTHOA, 80.
87. BOTHOA, 85.
88. BOTHOA, 96.
89. BOTHOA, 114.
90. BOTHOA, 115.
91. BOTHOA, 120.
92. Levinas, *Alterity and Transcendence*, 23.
93. Delany, BOTHOA, 125.
94. BOTHOA, 125.
95. BOTHOA, 126.
96. BOTHOA, 157.
97. BOTHOA, 193.
98. BOTHOA, 180.
99. BOTHOA, 197.
100. BOTHOA, 231.
101. BOTHOA, 277.
102. Delany qtd in Levine, 148.
103. BOTHOA, 267.
104. BOTHOA, 287.
105. The Bible, *NIV*, Ps 68:31.
106. BOTHOA, 286

107. Sterling, *The Making of an Afro-American*, 199.
108. Sterling, 194.
109. BOTHOA, 274.
110. BOTHOA, 294.
111. Riss, *Race, Slavery, and Liberalism*, 44.
112. Locke, *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, 307.
113. Riss, 10-11.
114. Patterson qtd in Riss, 42. (cf. footnote on p.###)
115. Riss, 18.
116. Mackenthun, *Fictions of the Black Atlantic*, 24.
117. Mackenthun, 24.
118. LaCapra, *Writing and Trauma*, 41.
119. Orihuela, "Black Revolution and Martin Delany's *Blake*, 80.
120. Daut, "Martin Delany's *Blake* in Black Atlantic Revolutionary Context," 83.
121. Orihuela, 80.
122. McGann, "Introduction," BOTHOA, xiii.
123. Ernest, "Editing Instabilities," 85.
124. Ernest, 85.
125. McGann, BOTHOA, xv.
126. Levine, "Introduction," 17.
127. Levine, 17.
128. Chiles, "Within and Without Raced Nations," 326.
129. Chiles, 333.

130. Chiles, 341.
131. Brittan, "Martin R. Delany's Speculative Fiction and the Nineteenth-Century Economy of Slave Conspiracy," 81.
132. Brittan, 81.
133. Brittan, 84.
134. Delany, BOTHOA, 141.
135. Chiles, 345.
136. Brittan, 81.
137. Biggio, "The Specter of Conspiracy in Martin Delany's *Blake*," 440.
138. BOTHOA, 294.

### **Chapter 5 (Conclusion)**

1. Marris, *Nineteenth-Century American Literature and the Long Civil War*," 3.
2. Marris, 3.
3. Newell, AG, 117.
4. AG, 120.
5. AG, 139.
6. AG, 131.
7. AG, 150.
8. Cohen, *Evangelical Encounters*, 17.
9. AG, 151.
10. AG, 156.
11. AG, 154.

12. Putnam, *Bowling Alone*, 55-56.
13. Hazard, "Evangelical Encounters," 226.
14. Charvat, *Literary Publishing in America*, 21.

## REFERENCES

## Preface

- Greenblatt, Stephen. *The Greenblatt Reader*. Michael Payne Blackwell Publishing, 2005.
- Gura, Philip F. "The Transcendentalist Commotion." *New England Review: Middlebury Series* 28, no. 3 (2007): 50-78.
- Kozakavich, Stacy C. *The Archaeology of Utopian and Intentional Communities*. University of Florida Press, 2017.
- Locke, John. *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*. Edited by Roger Woolhouse. Penguin, 1997.
- Matthiessen, F. O. *American Renaissance: Art and Expression in the Age of Emerson and Whitman*. Oxford University Press, 1941.
- More, Thomas. *Utopia*. Edited by Paul Turner. Penguin, 2003.
- Plato. *The Republic*. Translated by Tom Griffith. Cambridge Texts in the History of Political Thought. Edited by G. R. F. Ferrari. Cambridge University Press, 2000.

## Ch. 1

- Bellamy, Edward. *Looking Backward: 2000-1887*. Edited by Sylvester Baxter. Boston, MA: Digireads.com Publishing, 2018.
- Bird, Robert Montgomery and Christopher Looby. *Sheppard Lee, Written by Himself*. New York Review Books Classics. New York: New York Review Books, 2008.
- Bloom, Harold. *The Western Canon: The Books and School of the Ages*. Harcourt Brace & Co, 1994.
- Buell, Lawrence. *New England Literary Culture: From Revolution through Renaissance*. Cambridge University Press, 1986.
- Child, Lydia Maria. *Hobomok, and Other Writings on Indians*. American Women Writers. Edited by Carolyn L. Karcher. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2011.
- Crowe, Charles. *George Ripley, Transcendentalist and Utopian Socialist*. 1967.
- Dimock, Wai Chee. *Through Other Continents: American Literature across Deep Time*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006.
- Dostoevsky, Fyodor. *Crime and Punishment*. Translated by Richard Peavar and Larissa Volokhonsky. New York: Vintage, 1993.
- Fluck, Winfried. "1852: Nathaniel Hawthorne's *Blithedale Romance* Reconsiders the Transcendentalist Living Experiment at Brook Farm: A More Natural Union." In *A New Literary History of America*, edited by Marcus Greil and Werner Sollors. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2009.
- Francis, Convers. *Life of John Eliot, Apostle to the Indians*. Boston: Gray Hilliard, 1836. <http://hdl.handle.net/2027/hud.ah651k>.
- Fuller, Margaret. *Woman in the Nineteenth Century*. Norton Critical Edition. Edited by Larry J. Reynolds. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1998.
- Giles, Paul. *The Global Remapping of American Literature*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2011.
- Haines, Christian. *A Desire Called America: Biopolitics, Utopia, and the Literary Commons*. Bronx, NY: Fordham University Press, 2019.

- Howe, Daniel Walker. *What Hath God Wrought: The Transformation of America, 1815-1848*. The Oxford History of the United States. New York: Oxford University Press, 2007.
- Howells, William Dean. *A Traveller from Altruria*. Columbia, SC: Dystopian Classic Editions, 1908.
- Irving, Washington. *Salmagundi: Voyages and Discoveries of the Companions of Columbus*. Works of Washington Irving. Vol. 5, New York, London: Co-operative Publication Society, 19--.
- Jameson, Frederic. *The Political Unconscious: Narrative as a Socially Symbolic Act*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1981.
- Jefferson, Thomas. *Notes on the State of Virginia*. Edited by Frank C. Shuffleton. New York: Penguin Books, 1999.
- Jones, Gavin. *American Hungers: The Problem of Poverty in U.S. Literature, 1840-1945*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009.
- Koenigs, Thomas. *Founded in Fiction: The Uses of Fiction in the Early U.S.* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2021.
- Morris, William. *The News from Nowhere, or, an Epoch of Rest : Being Some Chapters from a Utopian Romance*. [Auckland, NZ]: The Floating Press, 2010.
- Morrison, Toni. *What Moves at the Margin: Selected Nonfiction*. Edited by Carolyn C. Denard. Jackson, MI: University Press of Mississippi, 2008.
- Murison, Justine S. *The Politics of Anxiety in Nineteenth-Century American Literature*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2011.
- Neal, John. *Rachel Dyer*. Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books, 1996.
- Neely, Michelle C. *Against Sustainability: Reading Nineteenth Century America in the Age of Climate Crisis*. Bronx, NY: Fordham University Press, 2020.
- Newell, Robert Henry. *Avery Glibun; or, between Two Fires*. New York: G. W. Carleton & Co., Publishers, 1867.
- "Orpheus C. Kerr Papers." AMS Press, 1971, <http://hdl.handle.net/2027/uc1.31822001625581>
- Reynolds, David S. *Beneath the American Renaissance: The Subversive Imagination in the Age of Emerson and Melville*. London: Oxford University Press, 2011.
- Sedgwick, Catharine Maria. *Hope Leslie; or, Early Times in the Massachusetts*. Edited by Carolyn L. Karcher. New York: Penguin Books, 1998.
- Sedgwick, Ora Gannett. "A Girl of Sixteen at Brook Farm." *Atlantic Monthly*, 1900, 394-404.
- Simms, William Gilmore. *The Yemassee: A Romance of Carolina*. New York: A. C. Armstrong & Son, 1882.
- Taylor, Charles. *A Secular Age*. London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2007. philosophy.
- Thoreau, Henry David. "A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers; Walden; or, Life in the Woods; [Etc.]." In *A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers; [Etc.]*, edited by Robert F. Sayre, 1-588. New York: The Library of America, 1985.
- Tompkins, Jane. *Sensational Designs: The Cultural Work of American Fiction*. London: Oxford University Press, 1985.
- Tyler, Moses Coit. *A History of American Literature During the Colonial Period, 1607-1765*. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1898.
- Walters, Ronald G. *American Reformers, 1815-1860*. New York: Hill and Wang, 1997.

- Ware, William. *Zenobia; or, the Fall of Palmyra, in Letters of L. Manlius Piso [Pseud.] from Palmyra, to His Friend Marcus Curtius at Rome*. Letters of Lucius M. Piso from Palmyra. Edited by Ware. New York: T. R. Knox & Co., 1866.
- Wells, H. G. *A Modern Utopia*. [Waiheke Island]: The Floating Press, 2009.
- Wright, Frances (Fanny). *A Few Days in Athens; Being the Translation of a Greek Manuscript Discovered in Herculaneum*. Hathitrust. Edited by J. M. Wheeler. London: R. Forder, 28 Stonecutter St. E.C., 1893.

## Ch. 2

- Bennett, Bridget. *Transatlantic Spiritualism and Nineteenth Century American Spiritualism*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007.
- Berger, Peter L. *The Sacred Canopy: Elements of a Sociological Theory of Religion*. Anchor Books, 1990.
- Berlant, Lauren. "Fantasies of Utopia in *the Blithedale Romance*." *American Literary History* 1, no. 1 (Spring 1989): 30-62.
- Brisbane, Albert. *Social Destiny of Man, or, Association and Reorganization of Industry*. C. F. Stollmeyer, 1840.
- Brooks, Van Wyck. *The Flowering of New England 1815-1865*. E. P. Dutton, 1936.
- Bunyan, John. *The Pilgrim's Progress*. Oxford World's Classics. Edited by W. R. Owens. New York: Oxford University Press, 2003.
- Colacurrio, Michael J. "Nobody's Protest Novel: Art and Politics in *the Blithedale Romance*." *Nathaniel Hawthorne Review* 34, no. 1-2 (Spring-Fall 2008): 1-39.
- Diamond, David B. "But All This While, We Have Been Standing on Zenobia's Grave: Zenobia's Suicide in *the Blithedale Romance*, a Psychoanalytic Perspective." *Nathaniel Hawthorne Review* 45, no. 1 (2019): 46-82.
- Eliade, Mircea. *The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion*. Translated by Willard R. Trask. Harcourt, Brace & World Inc., 1957.
- Fourier, Charles. *The Theory of Four Movements*. Translated by Ian Patterson. Cambridge Texts in the History in Political Thought. Edited by Gareth Stedman Jones. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1996.
- Frothingham, Octavius Brooks. "George Ripley." (1882): 307-12.
- Guarneri, Carl. *The Utopian Alternative: Fourierism in Nineteenth Century America*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991.
- Gura, Philip F. *American Transcendentalism: A History*. New York: Hill and Wang, 2007.
- Haslam, Jason. "Punishing Utopia: Whitman, Hawthorne, and the Terrible Prison." *Arizona Quarterly: A Journal of American Literature, Culture, and Theory* 73, no. 3 (2017): 1-22.
- Hawthorne, Nathaniel. *The Blithedale Romance*. A Norton Critical Edition. W. W. Norton & Co., 2011.
- . *The Letters, 1813-1843*. Edited by L. Neal Smith Thomas Woodson, Norman Holmes Pearson. Columbus: The Ohio State University Press, 1984.
- . *The Whole History of Grandfather's Chair or True Stories from New England History, 1620-1808*. Electric Book Co., 2001.
- Holland, Owen. "Spectatorship and Entanglement in Thoreau, Hawthorne, Morris, and Wells." *Utopian Studies* 27, no. 1 (March 2016): 28-52.
- Mielke, Laura. "Native American Presence." In *Nathaniel Hawthorne in Context*, edited by Monika Elbert: Cambridge University Press, 2018.

Saint-Simon, Henri. *Henri Saint-Simon (1760-1825): Selected Writings on Science, Industry, and Social Organisation*. Translated by Keith Taylor. Routledge, 1975.

Winslow, Ola Elizabeth. *John Eliot: "Apostle to the Indians"*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1968.

### Ch. 3

- Ambrose, Stephen E. *Undaunted Courage: Meriwether Lewis, Thomas Jefferson, and the Opening of the American West*. New York: Touchstone, 1996.
- Apess, William. "A Son of the Forest." In *On Our Own Ground: The Complete Writings of William Apess, a Pequot*, edited by Jerome McGann, 1-98. Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 1992.
- Blankenship, Avery. "'Earn It with the Sweat of My Brow': Essential Labor and Survival in the Blithedale Romance." *Nathaniel Hawthorne Review* 47, no. 1 (March 2021): 67.
- Boyd, Molly. "The Southern American Adam: Simms's Alternative Myth." *The Southern Quarterly* 41, no. 2 (2003).
- Child, Lydia Maria. *Hobomok and Other Writings on Indians*. Edited by Carolyn L. Karcher. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1986.
- Donaldson, Laura E. "Son of the Forest, Child of God: William Apess and the Scene of Postcolonial Nativity." In *Postcolonial America*, 201-22. Champaign-Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2000.
- Franchot, Jenny. *Roads to Rome: The Antebellum Protestant Encounter with Catholicism*. The New Historicism. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press 1994.
- Frye, Stephen. "Simms's *the Yemassee*, American Progressivism, and the Dialogue of History." *The Southern Quarterly* 35, no. 3 (Spring 1997).
- Guilds, John Caldwell. *Simms: A Literary Life*. Little Rock: University of Arkansas Press, 1992.
- Hagstette, Todd. "Simms' Ghosts and the Ghosts of Simms: 'Grayling,' Genre, and Revolutionary Memory in the Antebellum South." *Mississippi Quarterly* 70, no. 4 (2020): 395-408.
- Hart, James D. *The Popular Book, a History of America's Literary Taste*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1950.
- Hoefler, Anthony Dyer. "'The Slaves That They Are' and the Slaves That They May Become: Bondage and Liberty in William Gilmore Simms' 'the Yemassee'." *MELUS* 34, no. 3 (2009): 115-32.
- Johnson, Jeffery. *A New Literary History of America*. London: Cambridge University Press, 2009.
- Kelly, Joseph. "The Evolution of Slave Ideology in Simms' *the Yemassee* and Woodcraft." *The Simms Review* 20, no. 1-2 (2012): 53-68.
- . *Marooned: Jamestown, Shipwreck, and a New History of America's Origin*. New York: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2018.
- King, Vincent. "'Foolish Talk 'Bout Freedom': Simms's Vision of America in *the Yemassee*." *Studies in the Novel* 35, no. 2 (2003): 139-48.
- Koenigs, Thomas. "The Shifting Logics of Historical Fiction." In *Founded in Fiction: The Uses of Fiction in the Early U. S.*, 131-68. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2021.
- Lepore, Jill. *The Name of War: King Philip's War and the Origins of American Identity*. New York: Vintage Press, 1998.
- Lopezina, Drew. "'In De Dark Wood, No Indian Nigh,': William Apess and the 'Indian Hymn'." *Early American Literature* 55, no. 2 (1970).

- Meyer, Neil. "To Preserve This Remnant' William Apess, the Mashpee Indians, and the Politics of Nullification." *European Journal of American Studies* 13, no. 2 (2018).
- Mielke, Laura L. *Moving Encounters: Sympathy and the Indian Question in Antebellum Literature*. Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 2008.
- Miller, Mark J. "Mouth for God': Temperate Labor, Race, and Methodist Reform in William Apess' *a Son of the Forest*." *Journal of the Early Republic* 30, no. 2 (Summer 2010).
- Moltke-Hansen, David. "To Civilize King Cotton's Realm': William Gilmore Simms Chivalric Quest." In *The Field of Honor: Essays on Southern Character and American Identity*, 21-39. Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2007.
- . "William Gilmore Simms: A Biographical Overview." In *Reading William Gilmore Simms: Essays of Introduction to the Author's Canon*, edited by Todd Hagstette, 1-14. Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2011.
- Nora, Pierre. "Between Memory and History: Les Lieux De Memoire." *Representations* 26 (April 1, 1989): 7-24. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2928520>.
- Packer, Barbara L. *The Transcendentalists*. University of Georgia Press, 2007.
- Reed, Glenn. "Sectional Tensions in Simms' *the Yemassee*." *Southern Studies* 26, no. 4 (1987): 282.
- Rifkin, Mark. "Shadows of Mashantucket': William Apess and the Representation of Pequot Place." *American Literature* 84, no. 4 (2012): 691-714.
- Round, Philip H. "Indigenous Illustration': Native American Artists and Nineteenth Century US Print Culture." *American Literary History* 19, no. 2 (July 2007): 267-89.
- Saunt, Claudio. *Unworthy Republic: The Dispossession of Native Americans and the Road to Indian Territory*. New York: W. W. Norton and Co., 2020.
- Simms, William Gilmore. *The Yemassee: A Romance of Carolina*. New York: American Book Co., 1937.
- . *The Yemassee: A Romance of Carolina*. Selected Fiction of William Gilmore Simms. Edited by John Caldwell Guilds. Little Rock: University of Arkansas Press, 1994.
- . *The Yemassee: Romance of Carolina*. Edited by J. S. Redfield. New York: A. C. Armstrong & Son, 1882.
- Susan Sleeper-Smith, Juliana Barr, Jean O'Brien, Nancy Shoemaker, and Scott Manning Stevens. "Borders and Borderlands." In *Why You Can't Teach U.S. History without American Indians*, 9-25. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2015.
- Weaver-Hightower, Rebecca. "Do We Reverse the Medal?': Settler Guilt, the Indian Speech, and the Untold Side of the Story." *Western American Literature: A Journal of Literary, Cultural, and Place Studies* 52, no. 1 (2017): 25-53.
- West, Elliott. "Tecumseh's Last Stand." *American History* 47, no. 5 (December 2012): 34-41.
- Widmer, Edward. *Young America: The Flowering of Democracy in New York City*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1999.
- Zinn, Howard. *A People's History of the United States*. Modern Classics. Edited by Cynthia Merman. New York: HarperPerennial, 2003.

#### Ch. 4

- Adeleke, Tunde. *Without Regard to Race: The Other Martin Robeson Delany*. Jackson, MI: University of Mississippi Press, 2003.
- Biggio, Rebecca Skidmore. "The Specter of Conspiracy in Martin Delany's *Blake*." *African American Review* 42, no. 3-4 (Fall-Winter 2008): 439.

- Brittan, Jennifer C. "Martin R. Delany's Speculative Fiction and the Nineteenth-Century Economy of Slave Conspiracy." *Studies in American Fiction* 46, no. 1 (2019): 79-102.
- Cabet, Etienne. *Travels in Icaria*. Translated by Leslie J. Roberts. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2003.
- Chiles, Katy. "Within and without Raced Nations: Intratextuality, Martin Delany, and *Blake, or the Huts of America*." *American Literature* 80, no. 2 (June 2008): 323-52.
- Daut, Marlene L. "Martin Delany's *Blake* in Black Atlantic Revolutionary Context." *American Periodicals: A Journal of History and Criticism* 28, no. 1 (2018): 82-84.
- Delany, Martin R. *Blake; or, the Huts of America (a Corrected Edition)*. Edited by Jerome McGann. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2017.
- Dubois, W.E.B. *The Souls of Black Folk*. New York: Barnes and Noble Classics, 2003.
- Ernest, John. "Editing Instabilities." *American Periodicals: A Journal of History and Criticism* 28, no. 1 (2018): 85-86.
- Evans, Curtis J. *The Burden of Black Religion*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2008.
- Howe, Daniel W. *What Hath God Wrought: The Transformation of America, 1815-1848*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2007.
- King, Vincent. "'Foolish Talk 'Bout Freedom': Simms' Vision of America in *the Yemassee*." *Studies in the Novel* 35, no. 2 (Summer 2003): 139-48.
- LaCapra, Dominick. *Writing History: Writing Trauma*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2014.
- Lepore, Jill. *These Truths: A History of the United States*. New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 2018.
- Levinas, Emmanuel. *Alterity and Transcendence*. Translated by Michael B. Smith. New York: Columbia University Press, 1999.
- Levine, Robert S. *Martin R. Delany: A Documentary Reader*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2003.
- Locke, John. *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*. New York: Penguin, 2004.
- Mackenthun, Gesa. *Fictions of the Black Atlantic in American Foundational Literature*. New York: Routledge, 2004.
- Nawa, Rei. "The Ambiguity of Sea and Gender Roles in Martin Delany's *Blake*." *Journal of American and Canadian Studies* 37 (Jan 2019): 65.
- Orihuela, Sharada Balachandran. "Black Revolution and Martin Delany's *Blake*." *American Periodicals: A Journal of History and Criticism* 28, no. 1 (2018): 80-82.
- Pierrot, Gregory. "Writing over Haiti: Black Avengers in Martin Delany's *Blake*." *Studies in American Fiction* 41, no. 2 (Fall 2014): 175-99.
- Richards, Jason. *Imitation Nation: Red, White, and Blackface in Early and Antebellum US Literature*. Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press, 2017.
- Riss, Arthur. *Race, Slavery, and Liberalism in Nineteenth-Century American Literature*. Cambridge Studies in American Literature and Culture. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2006.
- Sterling, Dorothy. *The Making of an Afro-American: Martin Robison Delany, 1812-1885*. New York: Doubleday & Co., 1971.
- Worill, Conrad W. "Dr. Martin R. Delany: A Man Missing from Black History." *Los Angeles Sentinel* (Los Angeles, CA), 15 Feb 2007.
- Zamalin, Alex. *Black Utopia: The History of an Idea from Black Nationalism to Afrofuturism*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2019.

## Ch. 5

- Charvat, William. *Literary Publishing in America, 1790-1850*. University of Massachusetts Press, 1993.
- Cohen, Lara Langer. *The Fabrication of American Literature: Fraudulence and Antebellum Print Culture*. Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012.
- Hazard, Sonia. "Evangelical Encounters: The American Tract Society and the Rituals of Print Distribution in Antebellum America." *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 88, no. 1 (Mar 2020): 200-34.
- Marrs, Cody. *Nineteenth-Century American Literature and the Long Civil War*. Cambridge Studies in American Literature and Culture. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015.
- Newell, R. H. (Orpheus C. Kerr). *Avery Glibun, or, between Two Fires*. G.W. Carleton & Co., 1867.
- . *The Orpheus C. Kerr Papers : Being a Complete Contemporaneous Military History of the Mackerel Brigade : Its Unparalleled Strategical Exploits on Land and Water, and Unprecedented Struggles for the Union and Its Presidency in the War with the Southern Confederacy*. New York: G. W. Carleton & Co., 1871.
- Putnam, Robert D. *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Commodity*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 2020.