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“An honest scar received in the service of my country”: Lismahago’s Colonial Perspective in *Humphry Clinker*

JAMES E. EVANS

When Matthew Bramble’s expedition reaches Durham, his family encounters a character introduced as “a tall, meagure figure, answering, with his horse, the description of Don Quixote mounted on Rozinante.”¹ While Lieutenant Obadiah Lismahago may appear quixotic, his formative experience has not been imagined chivalric adventures, but military combat in the North American colonies. Wounded in battle and confined to a French hospital, he was later captured by the Miamis. The “out-lines of Mr. Lismahago’s history” (189), as Smollett calls the oral account reported by Jery Melford in his letter of July 13, resemble some conventions of the contemporary non-fiction genre known as the captivity narrative. To that extent, his history is one of those instances, which Nancy Armstrong and Leonard Tennenhouse describe, “when colonial writing flowed back across the Atlantic to England.” Considering England “as part of a larger nation whose boundaries extended overseas to North America,” they argue that the novel was not “first and foremost a European genre, but rather one that simultaneously recorded and recoded the colonial experience.”² In *Culture and Imperialism* Edward W. Said more generally relates the novel to the colonies in declaring, “Without empire . . . there is no European novel as we know it [T]he novel, as a cultural artefact of bourgeois society, and imperialism are unthinkable without each other.” Said judges eighteenth-century novelists after Defoe, whose fiction “is explicitly enabled by an ideology of overseas expansion,” to be less direct in connecting their novels “to the act of accumulating riches and territories abroad.” Said adds, however, that

Richardson, Fielding, Sterne, and Smollett do "situate their work in and derive it from a carefully surveyed territorial greater Britain, and that *is* related to what Defoe so presciently began."³

Humphry Clinker, despite Said's reservations, manifests both of the features he discusses. Largely through the adventures and speeches of Lismahago, Smollett connects the domestic plot of the novel more directly to British overseas expansion, though he also invites skepticism about the ideology that legitimates it. Lismahago's story and his status as a veteran of colonial strife provide a wider context for the comic adventures described in the letters of five travelers through the more closely surveyed space of England, Scotland, and Wales. Smollett's eccentric Scot returns home after the Peace of Paris ended the Seven Years War (1756-63), at the moment when England triumphed over its principal colonial rivals, France and Spain, and thus dominated the North American continent, as well as much of India, West Africa, and the West Indies. Linda Colley calls the Seven Years War "the most dramatically successful war the British ever fought"; it allowed them to assume "the reputation of being the most aggressive, the most affluent and the most swiftly expanding power in the world." Yet Colley also identifies in this period a "post-war uncertainty," the causes of which were "profound and long-lasting": "The success had been too great, the territory won was at once too vast and too alien. The British had enormously inflated their national prestige and imperial power. But . . . at the end of the day they were left wondering if they had overstretched themselves, made nervous and insecure by their colossal new dimensions."⁴ Smollett's last novel represents this ambiguity and tension, for Lismahago's North American sojourn provides the basis for a critique of the new world order, with his grotesque body serving as a material sign of its costs. As Michael Rosenblum recognizes, Smollett "is not quite like Defoe, a novelist who . . . 'enables' the new order," for his "relation to change is mainly anxious, even adversarial."⁵

Charlotte Sussman finds in Lismahago's captivity the novel's only "extended anecdote about colonial life" and interprets it as "a parody of the narrative convention that encompassed these complicated relations, the captivity narrative," but she takes a different approach from mine. While stressing "the growing connectedness of English and colonial society in the period,"

Sussman does so "to reveal the work the novel performs to neutralize any textual evidence of this increasing interdependence, and to erect instead a compensatory fantasy of English self-sufficiency."⁶ Her emphasis denies Smollett's possible dissent from Britain's recently enhanced colonial power or skepticism about supposed national self-sufficiency. Far from neutralizing interdependence or erecting a fantasy, *Humphry Clinker* uneasily and satirically represents a greater Britain. Nor does it evidence the tendency Said describes in novels of a later era, in which "The continuity of British imperial policy" was complemented by novels "whose main purpose is not to raise more questions, not to disturb or otherwise preoccupy attention, but to keep the empire more or less in place."⁷ In the century before the British empire and its narrative were fully articulated, Smollett's novel sets out to raise questions and disturb attention. While Swift, in his satire, intended "to vex the world rather than divert it," Smollett combines the modes of diversion and vexation.

There is plenty of diversion when, more than halfway through the novel, Jery introduces its last major character, a "strange figure" with thighs "long and slender, like those of a grasshopper" and a face "at least, half a yard in length, brown and shrivelled," whose horse "was exactly in the stile of its rider; a resurrection of dry bones" (183). For much of the novel Lismahago seems to Jery and Bramble an "original," "a high flavoured dish," "a curiosity" (186, 195, 198, 263). Thomas Preston locates this comic figure in "the humor tradition," but argues that he is "not an amiable humorist. He belongs instead to that Jonsonian tradition which extends in a direct line from Theophrastus's 'Grumbler,' through the Renaissance 'surly man,' to Samuel Johnson's 'contentious man.'"⁸ Given his treatment in North America, Lismahago has ample reason to be surly. Indeed, his strangeness and his resemblance to "dry bones" evoke elements of the "runaway Scotophobia in England after 1760"; for example, a satirical print of 1763, entitled "Famine," presents Scotland as a tattered, emaciated figure of poverty.⁹ Eric Rothstein describes the "barage of Scotophobe verses and prints during the 1760s" as providing Smollett with "a body of topics to be taken up and offensive strategies to counter"; in the course of Lismahago's characterization, he argues, Smollett brings the reader "to respect a man established as a stereotypical Scot."¹⁰

From the outset, Jerry also presents this contentious Scot as a soldier: "He wore a coat, the cloth of which had once been scarlet, trimmed with Brandenburgs, now totally deprived of their metal, and he had holster-caps and housing of the same stuff and same antiquity" (182). Win Jenkins describes him as "an ould Scots officer," who "looks for all the orld like the scarecrow" (213). As amusing as the picture seems, Lismahago enlists the compassion of his new acquaintances: "We were immediately interested in behalf of this veteran—Even Tabby's heart was melted; but our pity was warmed with indignation, when we learned, that in the course of two sanguinary wars, he had been wounded, maimed, mutilated, taken, and enslaved, without ever having attained a higher rank than that of lieutenant" (183). Bramble remains outraged at the injustice, "that a gentleman who had served his country with honour, should be driven by necessity to spend his old age, among the refuse of mankind, in such a remote part of the world"; he identifies the cause as "the impossibility of subsisting in it with any decency upon the wretched provision of a subaltern's half-pay" (258). His compassion for Lismahago may reflect "the predictable social strain of absorbing more than 200,000 demobilised men, most of them poor, some of them mutilated"; more likely it raises the specter of English ingratitude to the Scottish officers and soldiers to whom their southern neighbors owed so much. Scotland in the eighteenth century, Colley observes, "had become the arsenal of the empire."¹¹ Even Tabitha Bramble, not often politically astute, observes, "all the world allows that the Scots behaved gloriously in fighting and conquering the savages of America" (197).

Jerry's phrase "two sanguinary wars" identifies the continuing, costly colonial strife between England and France associated with the War of the Austrian Succession (1740-48) and the more recent Seven Years War. His letter reiterates Bramble's earlier indignation about the consequences of "the general tide of luxury, which hath overspread the nation," a theme introduced amid the social disorder Matt experiences at Bath:

Clerks and factors from the East Indies, loaded with the spoil of plundered provinces; planters, negro-drivers, and hucksters, from our American plantations, enriched they know not how; agents, commissaries, and contractors, who have fattened, in two successive wars, on the blood of the nation; usurers, brokers, and jobbers of every kind; men of low birth, and no breeding, have found themselves suddenly translated into a state of affluence, unknown to

former ages; and no wonder that their brains should be intoxicated with pride, vanity, and presumption. (36)

Fraught with nostalgia for the old order and anger about bourgeois ascendance in the new, this passage offers a satiric anatomy of the consequences of empire. Coming early in the novel, Bramble's invective situates his domestic journey amid the greater Britain of two colonial wars and connects the current wealth of the nation to the blood of its soldiers. "History, past and contemporary, enters all of Smollett's novels," asserts Jerry C. Beasley, "but it is at the very center of *Humphry Clinker*, giving the work a topical value unusual even for Smollett."¹² The tale Lismahago relates to Bramble and company gives a local habitation and a name to the history of Britain's colonial strife.

At his first meeting with Bramble's family, the mutilated Lismahago apologizes in this way: "Leddies, (said he) perhaps ye may be scandaleezed at the appearance my heed made, when it was uncovered by accident; but I can assure you, the condition you saw it in, is neither the effects of disease, nor of drunkenness; but an honest scar received in the service of my country" (183). Jerry goes on to relate how, "having been wounded at Ticonderoga, in America, a party of Indians rifled him, scalped him, broke his skull with the blow of a tomahawk, and left him for dead on the field of battle" (183). Aileen Douglas, who describes this novel as "Smollett's most sophisticated articulation of the body as sign," asserts that "Representations of materiality are crucial because the body is used to naturalize political and social systems. One of the body's most important functions is to serve as a 'natural symbol' of social order."¹³ Her approach invites readers to discern how Lismahago's body manifests the threat to the British body politic inherent in the colonial enterprise. Though Native Americans are the agents of his scalping and maiming, the novel makes an ungrateful nation, devoted to luxury, seem at fault. Were he not engaged in "service of my country," Lismahago would not have received the "honest scar" he feels compelled to justify.

Smollett derived Lismahago's story of captivity, as Preston demonstrates, from the "general storehouse of 'Indian matter'," which included such works as John Oldmixon's *The British Empire in America* (1708), Cadwallader Colden's *The History of the Five Indian Nations* (1727), "the standard English work on the North

American Indians throughout the eighteenth century," and the composite "History of Canada" published in the *British Magazine* (1760-63). Preston concludes that Lismahago's adventures, while "in some sense, transcriptions . . . are at the same time strikingly and memorably related — Lydia Melford, we recall, faints during their recital."¹⁴ Smollett's use of this discourse accords with the rewriting process Gordon M. Sayre describes in other authors' accounts of Native Americans: "The *moeurs des sauvages américains*, which were rewritten by so many travelers, should be viewed as textbooks, compilations of a few new, firsthand reports . . . added to the accepted knowledge found in the previous texts." In his representation of the Miamis in *Humphry Clinker*, Smollett follows the method of many other writers on the subject, "suppressing these differences [in customs] to make the new nation fit the conventional pattern of the *sauvage*."¹⁵

Most notably, in fashioning Lismahago's narrative, Smollett translates customs of torture and adoption from the *History of the Five Nations* (Seneca, Mohawk, Cayuga, Oneida, and Onondaga) by assuming that the Miamis have similar ones. Colden's influential text invited such usage with this declaration: "This Cruelty is also not peculiar to the Five Nations, but equally practised by all other Indians."¹⁶ As Jerry relates the Scot's captivity with the Irishman Murphy after their escape from the French, then, readers discover how imperialistic bodies were brutally assimilated by their Native American antagonists.

The intention of these Indians was to give one of them as an adopted son to a venerable sachem, who had lost his own in the course of the war, and to sacrifice the other according to the custom of the country. Murphy, as being the younger and handsomer of the two, was designed to fill the place of the deceased, not only as the son of the sachem, but as the spouse of a beautiful squaw, to whom his predecessor had been betrothed; but in passing through the different whigwhams or villages of the Miamis, poor Murphy was so mangled by the women and children, who have the privilege of torturing all prisoners in their passage, that, by the time they arrived at the place of the sachem's residence, he was rendered altogether unfit for the purposes of marriage: it was determined therefore, in the assembly of the warriors, that ensign Murphy should be brought to the stake, and that the lady should be given to lieutenant Lismahago, who had likewise received his share of torments, though they had not produced emasculation. — A joint of one finger had been cut, or rather sawed off with a rusty knife; one of his great toes was crushed into a mash betwixt two stones; some of his teeth were drawn, or dug out with a crooked nail; splintered reeds had been thrust up his nostrils and other tender parts; and the calves of his legs had been blown up with mines of gunpowder dug in the flesh with the sharp point of the tomahawk. (188)

Murphy's story concludes with cannibalism, for the Miamis make "a hearty meal upon the muscular flesh which they pared from the victim" (188). Though Lismahago's bride shows "a great superiority of genius in the tortures," after their marriage the couple live "very happily" together for two years and produce a son. Following his wife's death, Lismahago is "elected sachem, acknowledged first warrior of the Badger tribe," and receives a tribal name, Occacanastaogarora (188-89). This representation of Miami customs fits the profile of nations "known for the torture to which they subjected prisoners," though also of criminal justice suitable to migratory life. Furthermore, according to Sayre, "Captives and prisoners had to be either incorporated into a family or tortured and killed"; the practice of adoption was "routine."¹⁷

Sussman remarks that these Native American rituals demonstrate "the ability of the northeastern tribes to 'incorporate' and 'adopt' foreigners into their own society, without diminishing their own cultural integrity."¹⁸ Colden describes this process in the *History of the Five Nations* as follows:

They strictly follow one Maxim, formerly used by the Romans to increase their Strength, that is, they encourage the People of other Nations to incorporate with them; and when they have subdued any People, after they have satiated their Revenge by some cruel Examples; they adopt the rest of their Captives; who, if they behave well, become equally esteemed with their own people; so that some of their Captives have afterwards become their greatest Sachems and Captains.¹⁹

So the fates of Lismahago and Murphy, in Sussman's reading, "function as positive and negative versions of the same event in the eyes of the European victims. Both options focus on Native American social tenacity: both adoption and cannibalism ultimately work to maintain social coherence." In Smollett's novel, she concludes, "the colonial encounter violates Europe, rather than the New World."²⁰ To be more precise, this encounter violates two individual bodies, neither of which is English. The cannibalized Irishman, the mutilated Scot, and the violent Miamis are brought together in an imperial drama as actors in the scripts of Whitehall and Paris.

Usually in captivity narratives, Armstrong and Tennenhouse point out, endangered bodies are female, and, they add, "Even when the storytellers were men, these men wrote of their experience as Englishmen enslaved by Indians. Captive men owned

neither their labor nor their bodies, according to legal theory of the period, and under such conditions there is reason to think that an eighteenth-century readership would not have considered them men."²¹ Lismahago's survival and adoption, which depend on his masculinity (finally on his ability to reproduce), as well as his later tribal prominence, belie this pattern, though Murphy's emasculation may refer to it. Sayre points out that the ethnocentrism of the typical Indian captivity narrative "provides a valuable perspective on Amerindian practices, particularly those of adoption." He continues: "The New England captives' refusal to assimilate also responds to the problem of trying to distinguish original native techniques and customs of warfare from the changes caused by European invaders." However, Smollett modifies this aspect of the form in *Humphry Clinker*, for his captive does not refuse assimilation. Sayre helpfully distinguishes departures from typical New England narratives: "Rather than an utter negation of civilization, as Puritan propagandists such as the Mathers portrayed Indian captivity to be, it was frequently merely a substitution or adaptation of familiar wartime tactics to the American setting, which lacked standing armies, prisons, and executioners."²² After all, the Miamis were fighting and capturing British soldiers as proxies of the French army. Lismahago was a French prisoner following the British attack on Fort Ticonderoga in 1758.

Despite his torture, Lismahago does not share his friends' views of the Miamis as "cruel barbarians," "savages" or "the refuse of mankind" (189, 197, 257, 258). As Preston observes, "he projects a generally positive attitude towards the Indian way of life."²³ Nowhere is this more significant than when, in response to Tabitha's query about weddings, Lismahago provides this perspective:

The captain would have declined giving a categorical explanation of all these particulars, observing, in general, that the Indians were too tenacious of their own customs to adopt the modes of any nation whatsoever: he said, moreover, that neither the simplicity of their manners, nor the commerce of their country, would admit of those articles of luxury which are deemed magnificence in Europe; and that they were too virtuous and sensible to encourage the introduction of any fashion which might help to render them corrupt and effeminate. (189)

As in so many uses of "Indian matter," Smollett shares with other authors the tendency to blur the borders between the savage and

the civilized. For example, William Smith, in *Historical Account of Bouquet's Expedition against the Ohio Indians, in 1764*, writes "These qualities in savages challenge our just esteem. . . . Cruel and unmerciful as they are, by habit and long example, in war, yet whenever they come to give way to the native dictates of humanity, they exercise virtues which Christians need not blush to imitate."²⁴ In *History of the Five Nations* Colden remarks that "in their Love of Liberty, and of their Country, in their Bravery in Battle, and their Constancy in enduring Torments" these nations "equal the Fortitude of the most renowned Romans." To complete "their general Character," Colden quotes a French historian of North America:

When we speak (says he) of the Five Nations in France, they are thought, by a common Mistake, to be mere Barbarians, always thirsting after human Blood; but their true Character is very different. They are indeed the fiercest and most formidable People in North America, and, at the same Time, are as politick and judicious, as well can be conceived; and this appears from the Management of all the Affairs which they transact, not only with the French and English, but likewise with almost all the Indian Nations of this vast Continent.²⁵

Addressing such passages as these, Sayre remarks: "One feature of an ideology is that it effectively suppresses contradictions, and contradictions contained in the Noble Savage helped colonial writers to justify learning from and imitating the Indians even as they believed the natives to be the savage foe of civilization."²⁶ Smollett voices both perspectives through the varied characters of *Humphry Clinker*, though Lismahago tends to mute the latter.

Lismahago's invocation of "simplicity," as an antithesis to luxury, introduces a way to learn from the Miami that ironically grounds the novel's satire of British domestic and overseas expansion in this remote North American site. His speech, quoted above, explains how commerce, when it leads to luxury and fashion, can transform a people into effeminacy and corrupt their virtue. In this light, the Miamis' threat to British masculinity can be seen as a threat the British have inflicted on themselves. Without colonial wars, Lismahago and Murphy would not have been in harm's way. Without the ideology of expansion, the nation would not be losing its masculine strength. In this regard Smollett's text parallels *An Estimate of the Manners and Principles of the Times* (1757), a pre-war critique in which Anglican clergyman John Brown asserts that "the ruling Evils of our Age and Nation have

arisen from the unheeded Consequences of our Trade and Wealth. That these have produced effeminate Manners, and occasioned loss of Principle: That these have brought on a National Debility."²⁷ Enemies were not limited to the French or the Native Americans whom the British fought overseas, but were also located much closer to home, as Lismahago discovers after his return from war.

Like his ancient Scottish origins (in a village to the southwest of Lanark for which the family was named), Lismahago's colonial experience adds force to his later discourse, which, "despite the humorous functions," Louis L. Martz regards as "primarily didactic." John Sekora concurs, arguing that Lismahago has "his own particular function as political spokesman for Smollett," temporarily displacing Bramble, who becomes "adversary to Lismahago, thereby softening a little the lieutenant's didactic voice." Bramble and Lismahago stand together, Sekora believes, in this "highly political novel," which is "most vigorous as a tract against the times."²⁸ For example, Lismahago's first attack on British commerce and "the thirst of lucre" includes this passage, which echoes Bramble's tirade about Bath and the lieutenant's earlier reflections about the Miamis: "That commerce would, sooner or later, prove the ruin of every nation, where it flourishes to any extent. . . . Mean while the sudden affluence occasioned by trade, forced open all the sluices of luxury and overflowed the land with every species of profligacy and corruption; a total pravity of manners would ensue" (198). While Bramble mocks "the dogmata of my friend" (269), his letters from Bath and London are hardly less strident and include similar tropes (see letters of April 23 and May 29). Lismahago, the adopted sachem later exchanged for a British prisoner, "the orator of the community" (189), takes on some of the eloquence associated by Colden with Native Americans: "The People of the Five Nations are much given to Speech-making, ever the natural Consequence of a perfect Republican Government: Where no single Person has a Power to compel, the Arts of Persuasion alone must prevail."²⁹ Beasley finds that, "his absurdity and his cranky disputatiousness notwithstanding," Lismahago "proves himself worthy of Matt's respect for his intelligence and his loyalty to ideals of honor"; Rothstein points out that Smollett "allows him to speak at great, persuasive length, almost always getting the last word."³⁰ Indeed, the reader can

witness this effect in Bramble's response to Lismahago's defense of Scotland: "I must own, I was at first a little nettled to find myself schooled in so many particulars.—Though I did not receive all his assertions as gospel, I was not prepared to refute them; and I cannot help now acquiescing in his remarks so far as to think, that the contempt for Scotland, which prevails too much on this side the Tweed, is founded on prejudice and error" (268).

Lismahago's analysis of Scotland and his decision to abandon his native country are both informed by his colonial experience. After he declares "Great and manifold . . . the advantages which England derives from the union," he enumerates benefits related to empire. For instance, Lismahago regards additional citizens as

a most valuable acquisition to a trading country, exposed to foreign wars, and obliged to maintain a number of settlements in all the four quarters of the globe. In the course of seven years, during the last war, Scotland furnished the English army and navy with seventy thousand men, over and above those who migrated to their colonies, or mingled with them at home in the civil departments of life. (267)

Lismahago also laments the "extravagant luxury" in which Scots emulate the English by acquiring colonial commodities, "superfluities" including furs, silks, sugar, rum, tea, chocolate, and coffee (268). Turning from this corruption, he finally represents Scotland as the functional equivalent of a colony: "If, therefore, North-Britain pays a balance of a million annually to England, I insist upon it, that country is more valuable to her in the way of commerce, than any colony in her possession, over and above the other advantages which I have specified" (p. 268). After years as a soldier and captive in North America, Lismahago views Scotland's relationship to England from the perspective of empire. Earlier Bramble, while visiting Scotland, observes that "Our people have a strange itch to colonize America, when the uncultivated parts of our own island might be settled to greater advantage" (248). From Lismahago's perspective, this colonizing is well under way.

Lismahago's "solemn" oration follows the news, when he rejoins Bramble's expedition in Carlisle, that he intends to return to North America "to pass the rest of his days among his old friends the Miamis, and amuse himself in finishing the education of the son he had by his beloved Squinkinacoosta" (257). For Bramble, Lismahago is "but little honoured in his own country, which he has now renounced for ever" in order "to seek for

repose among the forests of America" (262, 263). The epiphany in Lismahago's odyssey, which leads to this decision, occurs during his return to "the place of his nativity," where he finds his nephew, now "the head of the family" married to "the daughter of a bourgeois, who directed a weaving manufacture, and had gone into partnership with his father-in-law":

Chagrined with this information, he had arrived at the gate in the twilight, where he heard the sound of treddles in the great hall, which had exasperated him to such a degree, that he had like to have lost his senses: while he was thus transported with indignation, his nephew chanced to come forth, when, being no longer master of his passion, he cried, "Degenerate rascal! you have made my father's house a den of thieves;" and at the same time chastised him with his horse-whip. (262)

Discovering that bourgeois England has penetrated to his ancestral hall in rural Scotland, that Scotland is being transformed from England's most valuable colony into the likeness of England itself, Lismahago visits the graves of his ancestors and renounces his country. Such disillusionment supports John P. Zomchick's assertion: "Although the England represented in *Humphry Clinker* is by and large still pre-industrial, Smollett captures the disruptive effects of economic and social change in the conflict between emergent and traditional groups."³¹ Though the novel praises the beauty of rural Scotland and the industry of its people, Lismahago's paradoxical decision to find "repose" among people who tortured him results from his belief that a better society lies elsewhere. With the old order of Scotland being altered by the ideology of expansion, Lismahago's "American project" (258) involves recapturing the simplicity he experienced among the Miamis.

Of course, Lismahago is part of the conventional marriage plot toward which the novel is proceeding. From the moment of their introduction, Tabitha is attracted to this Scottish veteran, enchanted by his marvelous adventures: "Such are the out-lines of Mr. Lismahago's history, to which Tabitha *did seriously incline her ear*;—indeed, she seemed to be taken with the same charms that captivated the heart of Desdemona, who loved the Moor *for the dangers he had past*" (189). While Lismahago's colonial exoticism, like Othello's, serves as one basis for the amusing courtship "between this amiable pair of originals" (191), Matt and Jerry keep his status as a British veteran before them. And despite his role as a

satiric spokesman against the ideology of expansion, Lismahago cannot avoid being implicated in the colonial enterprise. Just before he marries Tabitha, Bramble relates that Lismahago has "amassed eight hundred pounds, which he has secured in the funds," so that he has more than "personal merit" to recommend him as a husband. Bramble continues,

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

As an investor and trader, Lismahago participated in the economy he now wants to flee. When he bestows "a fur cloak of American sables, valued at fourscore guineas" on his bride, Win Jenkins declares it "a long marokin furze cloak from the land of the selvidges, thof they say it is of immense bally" (331, 337). Even in its final comic moments, the novel reminds us how empire fashions these characters' lives.

The multiple marriages at the end of the novel seem to many readers to be fraught with cultural significance. According to Robert Mayer, for example, "The link between the marriages and the historical destiny of the United Kingdom is unmistakable; in the letter in which Bramble and Lismahago air their views on the Union, Bramble announces the coming marriage of Tabitha and the Scottish veteran."³² Beasley remarks that "The debate between Matt and Lismahago takes place as the novel approaches its festive conclusion in the several weddings that will actually join Welsh and English estates, unite people of different nationalities, and alter the structure of relations among classes." He concludes that the "the families created by the marriages replicate the configuration of the recently formed United Kingdom, but in an idealized version."³³ Each marriage unites a Welsh character with another character associated with the old order. While Tabitha marries a Scot offended by the intrusion of luxury into his country and longing to return to the simplicity of the Miamis, Lydia marries young Dennison, an English representative of the old order, whose father steadfastly resists "times of luxury and dissipation" (313). The servant Win Jenkins marries the Wiltshire-born Clinker, a lower class figure who may bring new vitality, but who, as Bramble's bastard son, embodies both simplicity and gratitude,

the latter an important value of the old order. While these marriages may be comically satisfying, they hardly represent a complete union of the personal with the political. Unlike the marriage that concludes *Tom Jones*, in which the joining of estates mirrors the political state in 1745, the analogy of estate and state is strained to the breaking point in this novel. As Byron Gassman describes it,

Humphry Clinker is not a reconciliation of seemingly opposed forces as some critics have analyzed it, but rather a symbolic destruction of Hanoverian England, the kingdom of George III's inheritance, and a reconstruction of England as the erstwhile hoped-for kingdom of George III. What Smollett knew was a historic impossibility, knowledge dramatized by the journalistic, realistic, satiric content of *Humphry Clinker*, could only be given existence by incarnating it as the second kingdom of George III, just out of reach at Brambleton Hall and momentarily touched in the closing pages of the book.³⁴

The "two sanguinary wars" in which Lismahago participated, in which his body was so badly mutilated, remain a major cause of this historic impossibility, a reason that national union can only be partial during the period of malaise that followed the Seven Years War. At best, Smollett's "bizarre mismatches" forge, in Tom Keymer's words, "an exuberant, chaotic and thoroughly carnivalesque mingling of cultures, languages and bloods."³⁵

Bramble's wish that Lismahago "will find a retreat without going so far as the wigwams of the Miamis" (263), provides a guide to reading the novel's ending, by suggesting that it is a "retreat" from a disturbing, corrupt greater Britain into the pastoral space of Wales, where commerce and luxury have not invaded. Bramble cannot reside in England; nor Lismahago, in Scotland. The triple marriages constitute a familiar comic ending that blends uneasily with the novel's satiric emphasis. Said finds such endings problematic in later novels: "However much Dickens, for example, stirs up his readers against the legal system, provincial schools, or the bureaucracy, his novels finally enact what one critic has called a 'fiction of resolution.' The most frequent figure for this is the reunification of the family, which in Dickens's case always serves as a microcosm of society."³⁶ In Smollett's case, however, the integration of Bramble's family in *Humphry Clinker* constitutes an abandonment of the status quo through a return to the status quo ante. Having seen England and Scotland and having incorporated Lismahago's colonial experience, Bramble's family leaves the greater world of empire for the prospect of a rural Welsh

community. Like the protagonist of *Candide*, they can hope to cultivate their own garden there.³⁷

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NOTES

- 1 Tobias Smollett, *The Expedition of Humphry Clinker*, ed. Thomas R. Preston (U. of Georgia Press, 1990), 182.
- 2 Nancy Armstrong and Leonard Tennenhouse, *The Imaginary Puritan: Literature, Intellectual Labor, and the Origins of Personal Life* (U. of California Press, 1992), 196, 197.
- 3 Edward W. Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Knopf, 1993), 69, 70-71.
- 4 Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707-1837* (Yale U. Press, 1992), 101.
- 5 Michael Rosenblum, "Smollett's *Humphry Clinker*," *The Cambridge Companion to the Eighteenth-Century Novel*, ed. John Richetti (Cambridge U. Press, 1996), 193. Byron Gassman judges Smollett, in his journalism of the 1760s, to be "something of an anti-imperialist" (Introduction, *Poems, Plays, and The Briton*, ed. Gassman [U. of Georgia Press, 1993], 229).
- 6 Charlotte Sussman, "Lismahago's Captivity: Transculturation in *Humphry Clinker*," *ELH* 61 (1994): 599, 600, 597.
- 7 Said, 74. Like other Scottish literature of the century, according to Robert Crawford, Smollett's novel involves "a continuing examination of, and response to, the strains and possibilities of Britishness" (*Devolving English Literature* [Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992], 46). To Crawford, *Humphry Clinker* is "arguably the first fully *British* novel," in part because of "its juxtapositions of societies and individuals within a comparative perspective" (55, 75).
- 8 Preston, Introduction, *Humphry Clinker*, xxxi-xxxii. Joanne Lewis discusses this character's relationship to another comic tradition in "Death and the Comic Marriage: Lismahago in *Harlequin Skeleton*," *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture*, vol. 18, ed. John W. Yolton and Leslie Ellen Brown (East Lansing: Colleagues Press, 1988), 405-17.
- 9 Colley, 117, 114.
- 10 Eric Rothstein, "Scotophilia and *Humphry Clinker*: The Politics of Beggary, Bugs, and Buttocks," *University of Toronto Quarterly* 52 (1982): 66, 74.
- 11 Colley, 101, 120. To the extent of recognizing their contribution, Smollett's novel participates in "a celebration of the growing contribution made by post-Union Scots to the domestic security and imperial expansion of the new British state,"

- which Colin Kidd describes in *Subverting Scotland's Past: Scottish Whig Historians and the Creation of an Anglo-British Identity, 1689-c. 1830* (Cambridge U. Press, 1993), 214.
- 12 Jerry C. Beasley, *Tobias Smollett: Novelist* (U. of Georgia Press, 1998), 192. This Bath letter epitomizes, according to Robert Giddings, the "complex materiality" of the novel's antagonism toward colonial expansion ("Matthew Bramble's Bath: Smollett and the West Indian Connection," *Smollett: Author of the First Distinction*, ed. Alan Bold [London: Vision Press, 1982], 63).
 - 13 Aileen Douglas, *Uneasy Sensations: Smollett and the Body* (U. of Chicago Press, 1995), xxvii, xxii. Douglas connects Lismahago's once and future wives to "Bramble's identification of women with luxury" (172).
 - 14 Thomas R. Preston, "Smollett Among the Indians," *PQ* 61 (1982): 232.
 - 15 Gordon M. Sayre, *Les Sauvages Américains: Representations of Native Americans in French and English Colonial Literature* (U. of North Carolina Press, 1997), 122. For an account of the Miami see Charles Callender, "Miami," *Handbook of North American Indians*, gen. ed. William C. Sturtevant (Washington: Smithsonian Institution, 1978), 15: 681-89.
 - 16 Cadwallader Colden, *The History of the Five Indian Nations of Canada*, 2 vols. (New York: Allerton Book Co., 1922), 1: xxii.
 - 17 Sayre, 253, 281, 285. In *Divine Hunger: Cannibalism as a Cultural System* (Cambridge U. Press, 1986), Peggy Reeves Sanday hypothesizes that such violent acts were "both part of the need to socialize and regulate violence and an acting out of the dissymmetries of power among Europeans and the various Indian nations of this part of colonial North America." "The ferocity of the torture rituals," she concludes, "cannot be separated from the severity of conditions . . . where death from hunger, disease, and warfare became a way of life" (149).
 - 18 Sussman, 601. As Sanday observes, "In a fundamental sense, it did not matter whether the victim was allowed to live or was tortured to death, because in either case the victim was physically incorporated into the community" (125).
 - 19 Colden, 1: xxi.
 - 20 Sussman, 602, 601.
 - 21 Armstrong and Tennenhouse, 204.
 - 22 Sayre, 259, 264.
 - 23 Preston, "Smollett Among the Indians," 237. In "Scots, Savages, and Barbarians: *Humphry Clinker* and the Scots' Philosophy," Andrew Sharp describes Smollett's "treating of savages" as demonstrating "the remarkable conjunction of the crude common sense of the uneducated and the refined empiricism of the philosophers" (*Eighteenth-Century Life* 18 [1994]: 75). Of this novel Sharp observes, "Smollett's British travelers found savages and barbarians objects not at all of contempt, but rather of ordinary human curiosity" (76).

- 24 Quoted in Sayre, 128.
- 25 Colden, 1: xx.
- 26 Sayre, 126-27.
- 27 Quoted in Susan L. Jacobsen, "'The Tinsel of the Times': Smollett's Argument against Conspicuous Consumption in *Humphry Clinker*," *Eighteenth-Century Fiction* 9 (1996): 85. Colley finds in Brown's "lengthy jeremiad" about the nation's corruption an expression of "anxiety that Britain laboured under a malaise and must be regenerated from within" (87-88).
- 28 Louis L. Martz, *The Later Career of Tobias Smollett* (Yale U. Press, 1942), 170; John Sekora, *Luxury: The Concept in Western Thought, Eden to Smollett* (Johns Hopkins U. Press, 1977), 222, 219. Crawford observes that "We cannot assume that Lismahago's voice . . . is that of Smollett, but we can see how intently the author wishes his readers to reflect on the nature of Britishness" (74).
- 29 Colden, 1: xxxiv.
- 30 Beasley, 206; Rothstein, 73.
- 31 John P. Zomchick, "Social Class, Character, and Narrative Strategy in *Humphry Clinker*," *Eighteenth-Century Life* 10 (1986): 173. However, this episode qualifies Zomchick's assertion that Scotland, as "a nation at the threshold of modernity," becomes "a model for an imaginary solution to the social dislocations accompanying development" (179).
- 32 Robert Mayer, "History, *Humphry Clinker*, and the Novel," *Eighteenth-Century Fiction* 4 (1992): 248.
- 33 Beasley, 222-23.
- 34 Byron Gassman, "*Humphry Clinker* and the Two Kingdoms of George III," *Criticism* 16 (1974): 108. On the importance on gratitude to the old order, see Maaja A. Stewart, "Ingratitude in *Tom Jones*," *JEGP* 89 (1990): 512-32.
- 35 Tom Keymer, "Smollett's Scotlands: Culture, Politics and Nationhood in *Humphry Clinker* and Defoe's *Tour*," *History Workshop Journal* 40 (1995): 130-31. Keymer identifies Smollett as "a central figure in this growth of a British consciousness and a British literature that could at once transcend, enrich and profoundly revise the narrowly Anglocentric" (119-20).
- 36 Said, 77.
- 37 Susan L. Jacobsen finds this ending "ultimately pessimistic and nostalgic. The gentry cannot stop the 'tide of luxury'; they can only remove themselves from it" (88). For a discussion of the novel's ending as a retreat from satire into romance, see Michael Rosenblum, "Smollett and the Old Conventions," *PQ* 55 (1976): 389-402.