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Borders of Culture: The Native American in Friedrich Gerstäcker's North American Narratives

In the story "Der gemalte Indianer" (1862),¹ the narrator states that he finds those Indians most interesting who are neither "wild" nor "civilized," having selectively adopted aspects of European life.² Narrated in humorous, anecdotal fashion, "Der gemalte Indianer" also suggests as its theme the power that European-American artists exercise over the Native American through their artistic representations of the Indian at a time when the Native Americans' world is changing rapidly through expropriation and appropriation.³ During his travels through North America in 1837-43, 1849, and 1867, Friedrich Gerstäcker had the opportunity to observe firsthand those points where the Native American, the European-American, and the African American cohabited and collided, where all parties participated in material and cultural exchanges, notwithstanding clear hierarchies and systems of domination, which are described by Gerstäcker in *In Amerika* (1871) as "ein Wirrsal von verschiedenen Leidenschaften und Interessen von schwarzer, rother und weißer Haut."⁴ In current theoretical terms, the phenomenon that most fascinated Gerstäcker can be defined as "transculturation," a term Mary Louise Pratt borrows from ethnographers "to describe how subordinated or marginal groups select and invent from materials transmitted to them by a dominant or metropolitan culture."⁵ The concept of transculturation as applied to writing in "'contact zones,' social spaces where disparate cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in highly asymmetrical relations of domination and subordination"⁶ informs my analysis of Gerstäcker's texts because it "foreground[s] the interactive, improvisational dimensions"⁷ of the encounters between disparate cultures and avoids reducing the dominated group solely to passive victim. In the

contact zone each culture has at least some choices about what it appropriates from the other and about how it puts material objects and cultural practices to use.

Although the focus of this study is on Gerstäcker's North American narratives, it should be noted that he traveled to and wrote about South America, the South Seas, Australia, and North Africa, as well.⁸ Gerstäcker's travel writings, novels, and short stories instruct and entertain. The borders between the genres of travel writing and fiction themselves are blurred: the travelogues are marked by suspense, anecdotes, and humor, and the fiction informs the reader about North American life. Characterizing Gerstäcker's fictional style, Jeffrey L. Sammons states: "At times the term 'documentary realism' would not be misplaced."⁹

To date, most studies of Gerstäcker's works focus on his journalistic and fictional accounts of the German immigrants' experience in the New World, generally giving him good marks for his sober assessments of the opportunities and hardships awaiting would-be immigrants among his German reading audience. With respect to the Native American, Karl W. Doerry claims Gerstäcker neglected the Indian,¹⁰ while Manfred Durzak recognizes that Gerstäcker's encounter with the Indian—as mediated by fiction as well as firsthand—was an integral part of his American experience and resulted in the creation of some memorable literary figures.¹¹ Jeffrey L. Sammons believes Gerstäcker "probably knew more about Indians than any other German writer of his time."¹²

I propose here to survey Gerstäcker's physical and cultural topography of the regions where the Native American and European-American meet, analyzing those points where borders overlap, shift, and blur. Evidence of transculturation in these contact zones is, of course, from the perspective of a European, although Gerstäcker does attempt to give the Native American a voice. Recent studies on alterity focusing on America also suggest lines of inquiry about how Gerstäcker perceives and describes the Native American. Gerstäcker's reception of and reflections on literary and artistic representations will be taken into account. The study begins with an analysis of Gerstäcker's travel writing, noting differences in the representation of the Native American as Gerstäcker gained knowledge of them through experience and shifts in perspective as Gerstäcker's own life circumstances changed. There follows an analysis of representative works of fiction that, while continuing to serve Gerstäcker's didactic intent, free the author to create alternative modes of interaction between the Native American and European-American, as well.

Gerstäcker's *Streif- und Jagdzüge durch die Vereinigten Staaten Nordamerikas* (1844)¹³ gives an account of his adventures on his first trip to America (1837-43). As a boy Gerstäcker's head was filled with tales

from *Robinson Crusoe* and James Fenimore Cooper's novels, which was also true of many a German lad who never ventured far from his home. Gerstäcker must have been propelled not only by these literary images but also by the thrill of risk-taking, great energy, restlessness, and curiosity. When he left Germany he had expressed intentions of becoming a farmer, but he soon embarked on a peripatetic way of life. Performing odd jobs and hunting for subsistence—routes, activities, and occasional companions determined by inclination and chance—he criss-crossed the United States and southeast Canada from New York to Louisiana, on foot and by waterway, going as far west as Texas. The area he enjoyed most and about which he wrote extensively was the backwoods of Arkansas, itself a frontier state. Hans Plische notes that Gerstäcker was enthusiastic about the frontier in the English part of the New World.¹⁴ Reporting on his first encounter with "einem etwas cultivierten Indianer" (72) in Canada, Gerstäcker was struck by the Indian's physical features and dress. His description of the Indian's long black hair and flashing, fiery eyes is a literary cliché, but the commentary on the Indian's raiment, a blend of Native American and European-American components—a woolen coat and dark blue cloth trousers, a red shawl wound like a turban around the head, crystal earrings, moccasins, a tomahawk in the beaded leather belt, and a long American rifle slung over the shoulder which gave him, "ein kühn romantisches Aussehen" (73)—is significant because it was the first visible indication to the author of the impact European-American culture had on the Native American. As described, the exoticism of the Indian's native accoutrements is accentuated by the foil of European garb. Sometimes the appropriation of European attire resulted in comical incongruities rather than aesthetically appealing combinations. In St. Louis Gerstäcker was greatly amused when he spied a handsome, lithe young man with painted scalplock and face, clad in leggings and moccasins, naked from the waist up, except for the shabby black silk tie he proudly sported (101). But Gerstäcker also suggests the larger context of such oddities, for St. Louis was an inland trade center which engaged in fur trade with Indians from the West. The Indian's new mode of dress was merely an outward sign of how his entire life had begun to change through contact with European-Americans. Appropriations of dress, however, were not uni-directional. When Gerstäcker's shoes wore out, he made himself moccasins, and when a bear tore up his hunting shirt, an Indian sold him a shirt fashioned from an old woolen blanket, laced at the sides in leather strips and cinched with an embroidered belt. As time passed Native American influence on Gerstäcker's attire increased: he hunted for deerskins and deer brains, tanned the hides in Indian fashion, and sewed himself a buckskin shirt. The Native Americans' adaptation of European dress would be more or less permanent, whereas when Gerstäcker left the Arkansas backwoods

and became a hotel manager in Pointe Coupée, Louisiana, to earn his passage back to Germany, he bought himself a white suit from a German-Jewish tradesman, temporarily slipping into the attire of a Southern planter before reassuming his European garb and identity. Usually Gerstäcker regarded the acculturated natives' dress to be a unique melange of two cultures; in later works, however, he would at times criticize the Native Americans' eagerness to snatch white people's discards as a mark of their degradation.

Streif- und Jagdzüge reveals a qualitative change in the nature of Gerstäcker's relationship to Native Americans from his early encounters with them in late 1837 and early 1838 to his final hunt in early 1842. Initially, Gerstäcker indulges in stereotypical literary terms when he characterizes the Indians as "wild[e] Waldsöhne" (128), adopting the romantic notion of the "noble savage."¹⁵ He even constructs himself as Hawkeye, the unfettered outdoorsman of Cooper's tales.¹⁶ The first time Gerstäcker came upon a party of Native Americans in the woods he was filled with excitement. The meeting was all the more welcome because Gerstäcker had been hiking in the wilderness, the disputed "Red Land" between Texas and the United States, for six days. Although he enjoyed solitude, at this point he was so tired of being alone that he had already turned course to a southeasterly direction when he heard shots fired. He was overjoyed to find any human beings at all in the wilderness. From a knoll he looked down on "ein buntes wildromantisches Schauspiel" (128) as the Indian men and women simply went about their daily chores, setting up camp, chopping down tent poles, gathering wood for the fire, hobbling the horses, and skinning a deer. "Ich konnte mich nicht satt sehen an den schönen, kräftigen Gestalten, mit ihren bemalten Gesichtern, ihren in grelle Farben gekleideten Körpern und mit Federn geschmückten Häuptern" (128). Mary Louise Pratt notes that promontory descriptions are very common in all kinds of Romantic and Victorian travel writing. Although Gerstäcker's scene does aestheticize the "moment of discovery," it does not, to me, seem to have the ideological function of what Pratt calls "master of all I survey scenes" in colonial exploration literature.¹⁷ This scene is rather a reflexive relationship to the travelogue genre that is quickly interrupted: "Mir blieb jedoch nicht lange Zeit sie zu betrachten, denn die Hunde schlugen an und kamen auf mich zu" (129).

Finding a lone white man in these woods astonished the Indians, and the elder, who spoke English far better than did Gerstäcker, asked whether there were so few white men that he had to come by himself. Naturally, the number of white people in any given area was of vital concern to Native Americans, including this hunting party of Choctaws from Arkansas. When Gerstäcker assured them he was only passing through, they granted his request to camp overnight. The common bond between Gerstäcker and the Indians was the hunt, as it was between him

and a number of American backwoodsmen. Gerstäcker received his first lesson from the Indians when the elder admonished him that it had been foolhardy for a novice to tangle with a bear while hunting without a companion. The activities of the next few days—hunting, trapping, shooting arrows, and hurling tomahawks at a target—are described in some detail. But Gerstäcker did not have much use for the singing and dancing, and conversation left much to be desired. He remarks wryly, "Das in das Feuerstarren der Indianer fand ich übrigens sehr langweilig und versuchte mehrere Male ein Gespräch anzuknüpfen, bekam aber nur sehr kurze Antworten, so daß mir am Ende nichts übrig blieb als ebenfalls den Indianer zu spielen und in schweigsamer Würde zu verharren"(130). After several days, he stated that he had "das Leben der Indianer genugsam gekostet" and yearned to return to "einer etwas mehr cultivirten Welt" (132). Although this first encounter was a German's boyhood dream come true, in essence Gerstäcker remained only an observer at the scene, at best, an actor in what he regarded to be a play, literally "at play." Not one of his companions is even named, and the Indians' contemplative silence, their unwillingness to communicate in European fashion evoked in him a feeling of boredom. Raymond William Stedman observes that the "time has passed for fully reconstructing the actual manner in which Indians handled English conversation," but cites a 1925 study by George Philip Krapp, *The English Language in America*, that explains that Indians who did not learn English remained silent in the presence of white men to avoid appearing ridiculous. The impassive Indian is but one of the stereotypes of "Indian Talk."¹⁸ At any rate, the cultural and linguistic gaps during Gerstäcker's first substantive encounter with Native Americans were too great to be bridged. To his credit, Gerstäcker treats ironically the disparity between his reception of Indian life as mediated by literary texts and his responses when witnessing it firsthand. He will do this again in the account of his third trip to North America:

Ich wäre der Letzte es zu leugnen, daß es etwas ungemein Romantisches hat, ein solches indianisches Lager zu betreten. Uns Allen liegen noch viel zu sehr Cooper's Romane in der Erinnerung, um den Zauber zu vergessen, den gerade er über indianisches Leben ausgegossen, oder den ihm vielmehr, selbst wo er vollkommen wahr geschildert, unsere Phantasie gegeben. Ich muß aber eben so bestimmt eingestehen, daß viele Sachen in der Welt diesen Zauber verlieren, wenn man ihnen zu nahe auf den Leib rückt. Das indianische Leben ebenfalls ist eine Art von Decorationsmalerei, und die Sehnsucht danach vollständig gestillt, sobald man nur erst einmal in dasselbe eintritt.¹⁹

With its mixture of fact and fantasy, the depiction of the exotic in literature casts a magical spell on European readers because it corresponds to the projection of their own desires. Yet what the European wishes the other to be does not correspond to "reality."

In contrast to the merry frolic of Gerstäcker's first exchange with Native Americans, his final hunting expedition in their company on 1 February 1842 was fraught with foreboding, danger, and horror. Despite the continuing differences between European-American and Native American cultures, Gerstäcker and his Indian companions were on a more even footing during this foray. Gerstäcker and his friend, Conwell,²⁰ were discouraged and weary, for the game in northeast Arkansas was depleted by too many hunters that winter, when they came upon an Indian camp comprised of Cherokees and Choctaws plus a young Englishman, Erskine. The two parties joined forces on a bear hunt which led them to numerous caves. When Gerstäcker and the Indian, Wachiga, whom the author at first still just calls "der Indianer," entered the first cave, they were greatly shaken to confront the skeletons of an Indian and a bear who had engaged in a fatal struggle. At the point in the narration when Wachiga refused to go further into the cave, the reader learns Wachiga's name when he protested, "'Der Geist des rothen Mannes ist in der Höhle, und Wachiga geht nicht weiter.' . . . 'Die Gebeine des rothen Mannes gehören einem großen Häuptling; der Bär sucht nicht sein Bett, wo der Jäger schläft'" (448-49). Gerstäcker, a practical man who lived in the moment and was not given to speculation of any sort about life hereafter—Native American or Christian—found the argument convincing and willingly left the cave. That night, he, Wachiga, and Erskine built a campfire:

Wachiga war aber sehr nachdenkend geworden, rauchte aus seinem Tomahawk [sic] und sah starr in die Flamme. Trotz dem daß er ein Christ geworden war, mochte der alte Aberglaube noch zu tiefe Wurzeln in seinem Innern behalten haben, oder war wohl gar durch die vielen neuen Histörchen, die ihm die Missionäre aufgebunden, noch mehr befestigt. (450)

Gerstäcker took a dim view of the missionary effort, not only because he regarded it as the substitution of one form of superstition for another but, as we shall see in his first novel, *Die Regulatoren in Arkansas*, because it alienated the Native Americans from their own people and culture.

The next morning Wachiga joined the other Indians. In the afternoon Gerstäcker and Erskine had a fierce struggle with a bear that left Erskine, five hunting dogs, and the bear dead and Gerstäcker seriously wounded and unconscious. Gerstäcker spent a horrifying night surrounded by torn, bloody corpses until Wachiga responded to his signals. Two Indians dug a grave for Erskine with their tomahawks, covering it with dirt and

stones. Then Wachiga and another Indian pulled Gerstäcker's dislocated arm into place. Gerstäcker describes the burial as "kaltblütig" (455), but this seems accurate only insofar as it underscores the author's realization that in the wilderness he was far from his loved ones; in truth, the Indian rescue party saved his life.

With respect to treatment of the dead, Gerstäcker heard and witnessed cases of the Americans' cruel and indifferent treatment of Indians, alive or dead, whereas he himself was always treated amicably and with kindness by Indians. Gerstäcker describes in detail a trail in Arkansas that gave testimony to the white man's cruel, greedy, and genocidal displacement of the Native American. The United States government had contracted private parties to transport Indians to the West who were treated more "wie eine Sendung Waaren, als lebende Wesen" (382). To maximize their profits the transporters drove the Indians on relentlessly and did not provide for food or medicine:

Mancher tapfere Häuptling, manche junge *squaw*²¹ fand dort auf der Straße durch Krankheiten, die unter den armen Vertriebenen herrschten, ihren Tod. Selbst die nächsten Verwandten und Freunde *konnten* nichts weiter für sie thun, als sie in ihre Decken wickeln, mit Pfählen und Reisern bedecken, um die Aasgeier abzuhalten (die, wie mir alte Amerikaner erzählten, zu Tausenden fortwährend über dem Zuge hinschwebten und demselben folgten), rissen dann natürlich schon denselben Abend die schwache Schutzwehr ein und zerrten die Gebeine der aus ihrem Vaterland Verjagten im Walde umher. Traurige Folgen der Civilisation! Hier aber zeigte sich auch ganz wieder der schändliche Schachergeist, mit dem Alles in Amerika rein kaufmännisch betrieben wird, in seinem grellsten Lichte. (381)

Gerstäcker does not suggest that this process could be stopped, but the author's words evoke empathy in the reader. Indians in their prime—brave and young—surrounded by both human and animal predators, were driven from their homes to sure death and even in death were deprived of a final resting place. No word but "Vaterland" could cause the German reader to identify more with the Indian, for a fatherland was what at least democratically inclined Germans felt deprived of themselves.²²

The first volume of *Reisen, Südamerika, Californien, Die Südsee-Inseln* (1853),²³ contains Gerstäcker's account of his adventures as a gold digger in California in 1849-50 during his second trip to the North American continent. While a major portion of the text is devoted to the gold mining enterprise and Gerstäcker's own participation in it, early on Gerstäcker

discusses the permanent damage the influx of miners did to Native American life. He contrasts the gradual displacement of the Indian in the more easterly regions of North America with their rapid displacement in California. The description of the scattered artifacts in the hastily abandoned Indian camp where Gerstäcker and his mining companions spent their first night en route from Sacramento to the mines underscores the speed with which Native Americans were being pushed out and their cultural continuity ruptured: "Die *Geschichte* der Indianer Californiens hört mit dem Jahre 49 auf . . ." (256). Gerstäcker does not share the Eurocentric notion that non-literate peoples have no history, yet his detailed ethnography of the physiognomy, habitat, clothing, ornamentation, diet, exchange system, subsistence, and languages of various Indian tribes seems intended to preserve within the pages of a German book a culture facing immanent destruction.

As in Arkansas, Gerstäcker observes at this final cultural border in North America the deleterious effect of human greed on the Native Americans. Once again, clothing is the most visible sign of changes taking place in Native American life. Since Indian culture apparently requires women to be more reserved than men—they lower their eyes or go into the huts when white men approach—they have less contact with foreigners and their dress has remained more traditional than that of the men, whose attire ranges wildly from nudity to a full European wardrobe. The random order in which Indians don European-American articles of clothing seems to Gerstäcker childlike and comical. We can infer that this *Unsinn* (355) denotes to him the Indians' lack of comprehension of European-American systems and order. But one can also see freedom, choice, and creativity in the Native Americans' appropriation of European-American artifacts to suit their own needs and aesthetic.

Transculturation is also evident in the Indian's enjoyment of learning European languages. The name of every artifact brought to them by foreigners retained its foreign name. Commenting that the first English words Indians comprehend are curse words, he concludes it is because the Indians feel a greater affinity for Spanish than English. He fails to consider whether this seeming preference for Spanish may be attributed to a longer standing, and relatively more amicable, relationship with Mexicans and Spanish-speaking missionaries. The English curse words are a sign of the obscenely violent nature of the interaction between Native Americans and the predominately English-speaking miners.

The longer Gerstäcker stayed, the grimmer his assessment of the Native Americans' situation became. Cultural and economic destruction—the Indians were reduced to washing gold in exchange for a blanket and a handful of flour—was augmented by physical destruction and violence: drunken Indians lolled around Mission Dolores, whose original function was abandoned; an eight-year-old boy died of

alcoholism; the once pacific Indians could barely suppress their hatred of the "Americans"—whites were stabbed on the highways and in the mines.

There is a marked change of observations and tone in Gerstäcker's discussion of Native American displacement in *Neue Reisen durch die Vereinigten Staaten, Mexiko, Ecuador, Westindien und Venezuela* (1868) that treats his third trip to the United States in 1867. Gerstäcker was neither the unknown, youthful adventurer randomly wandering through Arkansas wherever abundant game or a companion might lead him, nor was he one among many from various parts of the world who had come to seek their fortune in the gold mines of California. He had become one of Germany's most popular authors of travel and adventure fiction, an established, if still restless, member of society. On his first trip he continued to walk in his stocking feet when the soles of his shoes wore out; in 1867 he rode out west on a train, covering the final stretch as a reporter in General William Tecumseh Sherman's private car.²⁴ The process of Native American displacement, resettlement, and containment had continued relentlessly during the thirty years that had passed since Gerstäcker first set foot on American soil. The latest blow to the Native American was the construction of the Northern-Pacific railroad. Some tribes sabotaged the construction; others stood guard to ward off hostile Indians. Sherman was on his way to a council in North Platte, ostensibly to negotiate. In truth it was a foregone conclusion that he would inform one and all that the railway would be completed and that, in order to survive, the Indian would have to adopt a new way of life. Gerstäcker's account reveals his own conflicted attitude toward the enterprise. In his faith in progress and his admiration for the will power that accelerated it, he was very much a product of his century. He was greatly impressed by the railway's construction:

Es war ein eigenthümlicher und, ich kann wohl sagen, großartiger Eindruck, den das Ganze auf mich machte: dort nach Westen lag die weite, wilde Steppe, mit keinem Haus, keinem Baum oder Strauch, keinem Zeichen menschlichen Fleißes oder Schaffens, die Heimath des Büffels und der Antilope. Mehr, weit mehr als tausend Meilen voraus wusch der Stille Ocean den Strand, und dem entgegen, trotz aller Schwierigkeiten und Gefahren, trotz der mächtigen Felsengebirge, die dazwischen lagen, trotz wilder Indianerhorden, welche die Arbeit bedrohten, trotz Mangel an Wasser und Holz, preßte menschliche Thatkraft und der entschiedene Wille eines Volkes seinen eisernen Weg in diese Wildniß hinein, das eine und einzige Ziel nur vor Augen: Durch!²⁵

In the above passage the plains are home only to the animals; Indian hordes are part of a hostile nature that must be tamed. Indian labor is discounted, impeding construction being viewed as the Indians' only activity. Gerstäcker believes the railway—the phrase "eiserner Weg" lends it its own volition—will lead to the extermination of the Indian, but is convinced that progress is inexorable:

Dem Indianer bringt die Bahn den Tod, denn sie durchschneidet seine Jagdgründe und vertreibt sein Wild, von dem er lebt und leben muß; aber was vermögen alle wilde Horden gegen den fortschreitenden Geist—sie können ihn nicht dämmen, ja vermögen seinen Flug kaum für Momente anzuhalten.—Arme Indianer! Kommende Generationen werden von Euch und Eurem Leben wohl noch in Geschichtsbüchern und Romanen lesen, aber der Pflug geht dann über eure Gräber. (76)

For Gerstäcker, like so many Europeans who lamented the Native Americans' plight, their demise is a foregone conclusion.²⁶ Moreover, in sections of the travelogue he is complicitous in the Americans' enterprise because of the details about Native American life he selects to report and the language he uses to describe the Indians. As a reporter Gerstäcker should not suppress the news that Cheyennes had ambushed a train in order to frighten the people away from continuing the railroad's construction, that Indians had kidnapped some white women and children during an attack on Fort Kearney and Little Blue two months before. Yet as a writer of adventure tales he seems to capitalize on horror for literary effect. Not only does Gerstäcker relate a second-hand account of the ambush: "Und indessen mordeten und scalpirten die Wilden, was sie fanden, plünderten den Zug und steckten ihn dann in Brand" (70), he recounts how he relived this scene in his mind while speeding down the tracks to the site where the attack had taken place. Gerstäcker wondered whether "die Wilden" would attack the train again "mit wildem Geheuel" but believed the passengers had enough arms to put "eine wilde Horde" into place. The word *wild* appears three times in one paragraph (69). It clearly means "savage" rather than "living in a state of nature," as Gerstäcker had used the word in *Streif- und Jagdzüge* and in *Südamerika, Californien, Die Südsee-Inseln*. His account continues with the Indians' return of their white captives in exchange for some "squaws" captured by the Pawnees. Among them were two young Scotswomen and an adolescent girl, a situation evoking scenes from Cooper's *The Last of the Mohicans* and gruesome captivity narratives. The girl's muteness causes Gerstäcker to speculate, "Wohl mag es sein, daß das arme Kind den Verstand verloren, als sie von diesen wilden Bestien [my emphasis]

überfallen und bei Nacht und Nebel aus ihrer Heimath fort in die öde Steppe hingschleppt wurde" (81).

The third example of how Gerstäcker dehumanizes, indeed demonizes the Native American is his characterization of old women as hags and witches stirring a disgusting brew. When he entered the wigwam of Itchonka, the chief of the Ogallala Sioux, he met two "gelbraune Megären, die sich aus Rindermilz, Gedärmen, und Schmutz ein Ragout zusammenhackten, das Einem hätte den Appetit für Fleisch auf Jahre lang benehmen können. Es waren wirklich zwei Scheusale" (78). In *Deconstructing America: Representations of the Other*, Peter Mason discusses the long tradition in which European texts demonized or made monstrous the other since Greco-Roman times, a process of "internal negative self-definition"²⁷ whereby educated Europeans expunged everything they considered negative within themselves. In addition to fabulous non-European others, wild men and women, madmen, and witches were all projections of alterity. Boundaries were fluid and attributes ascribed to the internal (European) and external (non-European) other were interchangeable. To be sure, Gerstäcker was a post-Enlightenment liberal, and his texts cannot be equated exactly with the fantastic accounts written in the early centuries of colonization. Yet his narrative harkens back to superstitious imagery at a point in historical time when he will witness a showdown between the United States government and the Native Americans. He has written before about the extermination of the Indian, but what he actually saw was random and sporadic violence. Now violence—in the guise of relocation—would be legitimized and official. Gerstäcker had no personal stake in the eradication of the Native American; he was sympathetic to their plight. Perhaps his depiction of Indians as massacring monsters and foul witches at this juncture might have served unconsciously to put as much distance as possible between himself and them, thus rendering the Native Americans' plight, in his view an inevitable result of progress, less painful for him.²⁸ But some of his attitude toward Indians seems to rub off from the white company he is presently keeping.

The report on the actual pow-wow or council, however, is far more balanced and analytical in tone than the preceding chapter. Gerstäcker's independent stance is first evident with respect to the issue of Indians and alcoholic consumption. General Sherman was outraged to hear that the Indians had obtained alcohol. Fearing that would sabotage the entire council, he placed guards at every stand that sold whiskey (*Trinkzelt*) and offered a \$500 reward for the name of the supplier. Gerstäcker wandered over to the Indians' camp and confirmed what he already suspected: the Indians did have "whiskey on the sly" but no one was drunk. When Spotted Tail was asked whether he thought the Indians would be able to meet, he replied calmly, "Ei gewiß—ich habe Whiskey getrunken, aber ich

kann so viel vertragen, wie ein Weißer. Laßt uns zusammenkommen!" (93) In his travels Gerstäcker had encountered Native Americans (as well as Americans) who consumed too much alcohol. In an Indian camp in Arkansas he relented to an Indian's pleas and procured whiskey for him, spending almost the last of his own money, for Gerstäcker had the decency not to take a hunting rifle in exchange—so great was the Indian's craving for alcohol (*Streif- und Jagdzüge*, 114-15). Gerstäcker clearly regarded whiskey to be the white man's instrument of genocide. Yet he found that the notion that all Indians were unable to control their consumption of liquor was not based in fact and further demeaned the Indian.

A sense of justice puts Gerstäcker on the side of the Native Americans when, citing Senate documents, he provides the background for the causes of the Indian War that had been instigated and manipulated by white men solely for political purposes. The territory of Colorado had an insufficient voting population for a referendum on statehood. In order to make up the deficit in numbers, war against the Indians was deliberately waged so that the Colorado voluntary regiment would be called back to the territory, increasing the number of voters. Indians, falsely accused of crimes, were betrayed and brutally massacred. Now that the political ends had been achieved, the government wanted to make peace. It is clear that the Indians have been sacrificed for nation-building, although Gerstäcker does not state this explicitly. Gerstäcker describes in detail the members of the Commission of Peace and the Indian chieftains—noting each participant's appearance, demeanor, and elocution. Most importantly, he claims that because the negotiations were conducted in the Sioux language, the pauses required for interpretation enabled him to record the discussions verbatim, and he provides the reader with the highlights of the deliberations. The Indians wanted the construction of the two railway lines to the north and the south to cease, for these lines cut through their hunting lands. Sherman made it eminently clear that the lines would remain, as they were necessary to carry settlers and supplies to the West; if the Indians continued to interrupt construction they would be swept from the earth. The Indians' very minor victory was that both friendly and hostile tribes were granted enough arms and munitions to hunt for the next two months. Gerstäcker suspects that the French-Canadian translators, the only ones who mingled with the Indians so intimately as to learn their language, did not have the ability to convey the full import of Sherman's words, for otherwise the Indians would not have remained so calm. Having noted earlier that some French-Canadians live among the Indians and even intermarry, Gerstäcker laments that they were only "half-civilized" and did not comprehend the Americans' concepts during the negotiations. Barely understanding

abstractions themselves, how could the translators convey them to Indians whose language was metaphoric?

From Sherman's (and hence the United States government's) perspective, it was time for the Indians to begin a new life on reservations to the east, a life founded on diligence and delayed gratification, (European-American) values he clearly deemed superior:

Wir kennen den Unterschied zwischen Roth und Weiß. Ihr jagt, und nehmt dafür Kleider als Geschenke. Aber für Alles, was die Weißen haben, müssen sie hart und schwer arbeiten. Sie haben aber dafür auch gute Kleider, viel zu essen und schöne Wohnungen. Das Alles könnt Ihr ebenfalls haben, und wir glauben, daß jetzt die Zeit gekommen sei, wo Ihr damit beginnen müßt. (95)

In the interest of Western settlement, the government was demanding concurrent separatism and assimilation. Gerstäcker considers this a doomed enterprise. Settlers bordering the reservations were particularly hostile to Indians, and deceitful Indian agents were getting rich at the expense of the Indians. Gerstäcker predicts the Indians will be allowed to remain on the reservations only until gold, oil, or some other precious metal is discovered there. "Ihre Zeit ist vorbei, und von jenem Council an leben sie nur geduldet auf der Erde" (104). Gerstäcker blames the Indians' victimization and degradation on American cupidity, but he is also convinced that given land to cultivate, an Indian's chances for survival are as slim as those of a white man forced to subsist by means of bow and arrow (101). In a fictional piece he assumes a position closer to Sherman's, suggesting that if the Indians were less eager to appropriate the outer trappings of European-American life and would adopt the ethos of "the white race"—diligence, persistence, provision for the future—they might have a chance to survive ("Der gemalte Indianer," 325). Both views suggest that Gerstäcker lacked knowledge about the history of Indians who had assimilated. Raymond William Stedman relates:

Late in the 1700s the Cherokees set out to prove to the white men that Indians could be just as "civilized" as whites. They learned to use looms, spinning wheels, and factory-made farm implements. They used Sequoyah's Cherokee alphabet in a well-set-up newspaper. By 1827 they had a written constitution for a government similar to that of the United States. They had schools, churches, roads, mills, and a rich economy. They even had a verdict from the Supreme Court protecting their right of self-government against attempts at sovereignty by the state of Georgia.²⁹

Despite all this, President Andrew Jackson, operating under the notion of Manifest Destiny, had Congress pass the Indian Removal Act of 1830, and in 1835 Jackson declared that Indians "can not live in contact with a civilized community and prosper."³⁰ If Native Americans occupied land European-Americans wanted, they were forced to move.

In his concluding passage to the episode, Gerstäcker does challenge European-American notions about which peoples are civilized or savage. He recollects how he stood at North Platte between the camp of the Sioux and the frontier town, at the margins of both cultures. The Sioux men were hunting or smoking their pipes, the women embroidering moccasins and tanning hides, while the children played. In town, one bar, gambling hall, or brothel stood next to the other. Equating civilization with domestication, Gerstäcker implies the Indian is superior—he does not deserve his fate.³¹ This inversion of difference from a European perspective is still based on an inferior or superior relationship, but it does call into question European assumptions about cultural superiority.

At this juncture I would like to return to the story noted in my introduction, "Der gemalte Indianer." The painted Indian is the old Osage Indian chief, Olatuoh, who reluctantly agrees to allow a German artist to paint a full-length study of him decked out in chieftain's regalia. As described, the artist's watercolors resemble Karl Bodmer's Native American portraits.³² At the start of the sitting, Olatuoh and the artist differ because the chief wants to pose with his new European-style rifle while the artist prefers that he hold the native bow or lance. Afraid that he might lose his subject, the artist bows to the Indian's wishes; the ensuing conflict between Native American and European centers on this rifle as painted. Before the sitting, the superstitious Indian had already had a nightmare about being trapped and suffocated in the artist's book (portfolio); he feared that he himself, not just his image, would be transported to the white people's settlements. The narrator makes it clear that Germans cherish their own heathen superstitions and life would be less poetic without them. After posing for the portrait, Olatuoh begins missing his shots and is convinced that the artist has cast a spell on his rifle by capturing it in the watercolor. He believes the rifle is the only artifact in the portrait that is vulnerable to a white man's spell because it is a European invention; the white man has no power over what is uniquely Indian. Olatuoh tracks down the artist and threatens to kill him if he does not cut out the rifle from his prize portrait. The issue is solved to their mutual satisfaction when the artist washes out the rifle done in watercolor. This story alludes to the historical fact that the European-American presence in the New World had made the rifle a necessary component of Native American life, allowing the Indian to compete for ever-scarcer resources. The Native American was ready to adopt objects the European-American introduced to his world, sometimes out of

necessity, other times out of fascination by novelty. But the new destabilizes Native American culture and this story is emblematic of the Native American's uneasiness, insecurity, and quite healthy wariness about the intrusion of European-American ways the import of which is not yet fully understood.

Recent studies on alterity in texts demonstrate that Olatuoh's fears that the German artist would gain tremendous power over him through representation are well-founded, for the image of the Indian in European art and literature—often reduced to stereotypes—reflected the Europeans' longings and served their religious, philosophical, sexual, territorial, political, and economic interests.³³ Yet emphasis solely on unequal power relationships in representations eradicates ideological distinctions among works of art and negates art's emancipatory capacity to envision alternative modes of interaction. As Peter Mason discusses, the philosopher Emmanuel Levinas's phenomenological speculations about alterity and desire³⁴ inspired Tzvetan Todorov's study on the discovery and conquest of America.³⁵ In his epilogue to *The Conquest of America* Todorov interprets the narrative of the discovery and conquest of America to be paradigmatic of Europe's attempt "to assimilate the other, to do away with an exterior alterity."³⁶ In a three-hundred-and-fifty-year history Western Europe dominated the other, using as its instrument 1) the capacity to understand the other and 2) the process of assimilating the other. Todorov views assimilation negatively because it destroys indigenous cultures. He asserts that the discovery of the other has both a history and relevance to contemporary society even though our—Todorov speaks from the point of view of a European intellectual—approach to alterity has changed markedly, "we want *equality* without its compelling us to accept identity; but also *difference* without its degenerating into superiority/inferiority" (249).

Within the specificity and the confines of his own time and space, Gerstäcker's fictional narratives meet the desiderata of what Jeremy Varon refers to as "a new appreciation of difference and a politics of mutual recognition as global ethics"³⁷ to a remarkable degree because they not only identify the problems arising from the encounter between the Native American and the European-American but imagine alternative modes of interaction. To be sure, in the didactic introductory passages of his fiction, Gerstäcker does make the same assertions about the encounter between the European-American and the Native American found in his travelogues: the Indian is slowly but surely dying out—through the loss of home and hunting lands, through alcoholism and disease. A first step towards breaking a pattern of inequality may be one of negation. Gerstäcker's fictional treatment of Indian alcoholism, for example, creates moments of resistance through trickery, retaliation, reform, or refusal. In "Civilisation und Wildniß" (1855, 1857?) two Kickapoos, ein "paar der

miserabelst aussehenden Subjecte indianischer Race,³⁸ drink themselves into a stupor. A trader illegally sells them "the seductive poison" (299) and we feel pity when, despite his better instincts, one half-inebriated Indian sells an otter skin he had been saving for his wife to buy more whiskey. So when the trader who has profited by all this misery discovers the next morning that the Indians have absconded with a venison hind, the reader believes the trader has gotten less than his just deserts. The eponymous hero of "Der Osage" (1847) only seems to have drunk too much to catch on that he was cheated in a target-shooting bet made with a trader's son; he returns the next week and outsmarts his opponent.³⁹ In the tragic story "Die Tochter der Ricarees" (1857), alcohol has become an instrument of suicide for Wetako, son of a Ricaree chieftain whose tribe has almost been wiped out. But when he learns that his sister, Nedaunis-Ais' (Saise), is alive and must be rescued from her abductor, he hurls away the poisonous bottle of whiskey and plunges into the Mississippi to sober up: "der Indianer, der kalte, besonnene Wilde war wieder in ihm erwacht, und mit schnellem Blick übersah er die Gefahren, die das Wesen, das er auf Erden am meisten liebte, bedrohten."⁴⁰ The heroic brave, Assowaum, in *Die Regulatoren in Arkansas* (1846),⁴¹ refuses to allow "Sünden der Weißen" (49) to enter his heart—he does not drink alcohol.

Gerstäcker's fiction garners sympathy for the Native American by reversing European reader expectations: not the Indians but scurrilous, vengeful white males are excessively and gratuitously violent. Even though the European-American lives in fear of "the savage," no scalping is as horrendous as "the white man's revenge" in the story of the same name, "Die Rache des weißen Mannes" (1847).⁴² Hopkins, nick-named both "die blutige Hand" and "bloody Ben" by the Indians, commits genocide by deliberately exposing whole tribes of Indians to smallpox.

Tales of victimization are most graphic and personalized when the object is a Native American woman. Native American women suffer under the constant threat of sexual violation as well as murder. After having enjoyed the hospitality of Indians in their camp, an Asian Indian, one of many who have come to California from all over the world to seek their fortune, tries to rape a chaste Indian woman who has refused his advances.⁴³ In "Die Tochter der Ricarees," Saise has been taken into possession by Duxon, a duplicitous overseer and slave thief who bought falsified papers claiming she is a black slave. Neither the fact that Duxon lusts after Saise nor that she is his "property" restrains him from stabbing her to death when she obstructs his escape from the sheriff. In Gerstäcker's first novel, *Die Regulatoren in Arkansas*, Alapaha's betrayal and murder seems particularly monstrous. Conversion to Christianity by Rowson, a horse thief posing as a Methodist circuit rider, has alienated her from her forebears. When, by chance, she sees Rowson and his gang in the act of stealing horses, he stabs her to death. Clues in the text

suggest that Rowson rapes Alapaha before killing her; such a scene would have to be left to the imagination of a nineteenth-century reader of family literature. Gerstäcker understood that rape is a violent strategy by which one group dominates another. The character of the circuit rider Rowson, rapist and murderer, suggests, furthermore, that Gerstäcker regarded the missionary enterprise as cultural rape.⁴⁴ Both Saise and Alapaha put up a tremendous struggle before they are overpowered; indeed, the button off Rowson's shirt that Assowaum found still clenched in Alapaha's stiff fingers results in the murderer's final and irrefutable identification.

On a more sanguine note, *Die Regulatoren in Arkansas* suggests that despite past and present conflicts between the Native American and the European-American, they can coexist—if only intermittently—in mutual respect and friendship. Brown, the main white protagonist, barely escaped an Indian massacre in Kentucky, where his father and Daniel Boone had established one of the first settlements. Although his whole family was killed, Brown tells his beloved Marion:

Es ist in jenen Zeiten viel Blut—viel unschuldiges Blut vergossen, und ich weiß noch nicht, ob die weißen Männer damals ein Recht hatten, so hart und grausam von Anfang an gegen die Eingeborenen aufzutreten. Freilich rächten sich die Wilden dann auch wieder auf eine fast zu entsetzliche Art, was nicht geduldet werden konnte. (74)

Assowaum, the main male Indian protagonist, killed his wife Alapaha's previous mate as the latter, "von dem Feuerwasser der Europäer berauscht" (41), was beating Alapaha.⁴⁵ In order to escape the revenge of his enemies, Assowaum and Alapaha accompanied the Americans, Harper and Brown, on a move from Missouri to Arkansas. Another reason all four moved was that the increasing population in Missouri had caused game to become scarce. The Indians, of whom Assowaum remains more reserved than Alapaha, built their wigwam in the vicinity of Harper's cabin and both parties assist each other on the hunt and in times of need (41-42). Assowaum reproaches Alapaha for momentarily neglecting her wifely duties in her eagerness to attend the Christian church service. Nevertheless, she is free, he declares, to practice this faith even if it causes a rift between them. In general, Assowaum and Alapaha are an ideal couple who care deeply for one another. Controversy over the wife's Christian zeal parallels the situation in the Roberts family; Roberts resents the preacher's influence over his wife and disparages her need to be on her knees praying so frequently. One of the few and lengthiest passages on Indian religion and mythology found in Gerstäcker's North American novels is the scene where Assowaum, having patiently listened to Rowson's account of Christ's resurrection, relates the Indians' story of

the creation. His eyes flash with sheer hatred when Rowson disparages this as mere superstition, "Ich erzähle Euch jetzt, wie der große Geist in diesem Theile der Welt seine Kinder erschaffen habe, und Ihr nennt mich einen Lügner. Geht!" (53)

The theme of *Die Regulatoren in Arkansas* is vigilantism as practiced in a remote backwoods region where federal law is considered irrelevant and the arms of justice ineffective. The plot is in the form of a detective story, and Assowaum is the chief detective who tracks down Rowson, the leader of the horse thieves and the perpetrator of two murders.⁴⁶ When all horse thieves, accomplices, and the murderer are caught, each is meted out punishment according to the extent and nature of the crime. There is no question in the minds of the white vigilantes—or of the narrator—that Assowaum is entitled to punish his wife's murderer in his own fashion. In the moments before she was stabbed to death, Alapaha told Rowson she belonged from now on to the Manitu of her people (she felt betrayed by Christianity) and painted a vivid picture of how Assowaum would avenge her in Indian fashion (179-80). As the plot thickens, Rowson's increasing terror of being scalped becomes part of his punishment. Assowaum sets fire to the wigwam in which he has bound Rowson. Rowson's screams, combined with Assowaum's cries of jubilation, are so terrifying they frighten away a wolf. But the lyrics of the victory song have a sweet quality because Assowaum has obeyed the cries of his beloved Alapaha. After spending nine days at Alapaha's grave, Assowaum heads west to new hunting grounds, declining Brown's solicitous offer to stay with him and his bride now that he has no one to cook and sew moccasins for him. For the Native American, the borders must once again shift westward.

Fictional modes of coexistence point the way toward transcending the limits of prejudice and patterns of domination. In "Höhlenjagd in den westlichen Gebirgen" (1859) Werner, a German, and Tessakeh, an Indian, assist each other on a treacherous bear hunt in a cave while an Englishman keeps the fires burning outside the entrance. After they have successfully completed their hunt, Werner expresses his eternal gratitude to Tessakeh for saving his life twice. Tessakeh responds that it was neither their first nor their last hunt together: "Wo Tessakeh am Abend sein Lager aufschlägt, wird das Rindendach immer zwei Männer vor dem Regen schützen. Tessakeh und sein weißer Bruder sind eins."⁴⁷ "Civilisation und Wildniß" (1854), the story of a young white man raised by his Indian kidnappers, suggests that differences among peoples are primarily cultural, not racial.⁴⁸ Nevertheless, in existing societies, it seems, the greater the heterogeneity, the stronger the need to shore up the barriers between groups, as we see in the stringent race laws of Louisiana ("Die Tochter der Ricarees"). "Jazeda" (1847),⁴⁹ another adventure story set in Louisiana, may serve as a paradigm for an alternative mode of interaction

among diverse peoples. With the aid of a quick-witted, fiercely independent Indian, Quapas, and three black slaves, Titus, Sam, and Scipio, a Spanish river smuggler, Laniera, abducts his fiancée, Jazeda, the quadroon daughter of a Louisiana plantation owner who died before setting her free. Acting outside of unjust, racist laws, these cohorts outrun, outride, outmaneuver, and outsmart the posse of plantation owners. They all head down the Mississippi in a swift sailboat to meet a steamer that will transport them into the Gulf of Mexico and across the border to Texas. The nickname for the type of sailboat, "chicken thief," underscores not only the vessel's swiftness but also the "outsider" status and wiliness of its motley crew. When he sees the posse about to board the steamer, Laniera quickly slips the "chicken thief" into a dock; the party will take a circuitous route to the Gulf. Scipio's side-splitting laugh expresses triumph at having bested the oppressors. The border ahead—reachable through the cooperation of Native American, European, and African American—will take Laniera, Jazeda, and the three other slaves to safety and freedom.

In Gerstäcker's North American narratives specific issues concerning the encounter of the Native American with the European-American remain consistent, yet the narrator's representation of the Native American changes in perspective according to Gerstäcker's experience, the passage of time, and the nature of the literary genre. During his first stay in America, Gerstäcker's sense of awe, while viewing the exotic Indian about whom he had read and fantasized as a youth, quickly yielded to quotidian interaction with them. He respected most Indians, and he willingly learned from them what was useful for hunting and surviving in the backwoods. Although he dwelled in their territory, he had absolutely no desire to remain in their world, preferring a European culture he would leave again and again. The mature Gerstäcker gained a deeper insight into the political, economic, and institutional factors governing the displacement of the Native American. Read as a whole, Gerstäcker's writings display an extensive knowledge about the cultural differences among Indians of various tribes, their linguistic groups, the effect colonization and settlement had on their movements and location, their relation to various European-American interest groups, and the extent of their acculturation. Unlike the authors of more famous novels about Indians—James Fenimore Cooper, François-René Chateaubriand, and Karl May—he wrote about what he actually knew and witnessed.⁵⁰ He was perceptive about the textual reification of Indians and the psychic motivation for exoticizing them. His writings contain none of the overheated, prurient discourse on Indian sexuality so frequently cited in studies on Indians as other. In this, Gerstäcker may have adhered to the sexual norms of his age as to what was speakable and to the standards of the family magazines in which his stories appeared concerning what was

printable. Nevertheless, by not projecting fantasies of hypersexuality onto the Indians, Gerstäcker does not demonize and dehumanize them.

With respect to diction, the Indians usually speak English rendered in normal German conversational tones, particularly where Gerstäcker wishes to place the Native American and the European-American on equal footing. In humorous stories and anecdotes the author is sometimes not above quoting directly Indians who speak broken English (in broken German, of course). When a German's English syntax is equally imperfect, his words are rendered in indirect quotation. We occasionally find the all-purpose "Wah!" but seldom an attempt to recreate a "metaphoric" Indian language. In general, Gerstäcker's solution to the dilemma of "Indian Talk" is felicitous.

Many of the issues Gerstäcker discusses, recurrent themes of the European's or white American's portrayal of the Native American, are controversial insofar as they have hardened into stereotypes. Gerstäcker himself was aware of stereotypes with respect to two very different kinds of images—"the noble savage" and "the drunken Indian." Yet particularly in his travelogues he himself became entrapped in the central notion about the Native Americans in the second half of the nineteenth century—that their extermination was inevitable. One could argue that his own presence on American soil—whether as a traveler, hunter, gold miner, or reporter—no matter how periodic, ultimately implicated him in the havoc wrought on the Native Americans and their culture. Although his sympathies lay with the Indians, he was convinced that American greed, the inevitability of progress, and/or the inability of the Indians to adapt to new ways of life would wipe them from the face of the earth. Today, Native American critics consider the image of "the vanishing American" to be a stereotype with political implications. Rennard Strickland asserts, "the Indian has neither faded nor died. . . . Indians have no intention of committing cultural or economic suicide. . . . The American Indian is alive and well."⁶¹ In his fiction Gerstäcker often points the way out of the dilemma by creating Indian figures who resist, rebel, and reaffirm their cultural identity. With Europeans-Americans of good will they enter into cooperative relationships, giving and taking from each other's cultures material goods and practices that are of mutual benefit. In this Gerstäcker may have been utopian, but given the number of shifting borders in the world today, he presents us with models not unworthy of emulation.

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Notes

¹My source for the original dates of publication of the works discussed in this article is Armin Stöckert's bibliography in Thomas Ostwald, *Friedrich Gerstäcker: Leben und Welt*, 2d ed. (Braunschweig: A. Graff, 1977).

²In *Heimliche und unheimliche Geschichten* (Jena: Hermann Costenoble, n.d.), vol. 20 of *Gesammelte Schriften von Friedrich Gerstäcker*, 2d ed., 325.

³Whether to use the term "Native American" or "Indian" is problematic, particularly since Raymond William Stedman explains that the term "Indian" is "the word still chosen by Indians themselves for collective purposes," *Shadows of the Indian: Stereotypes in American Culture*, foreword by Rennard Strickland (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1982), xvii. I choose the term Native American because I wish to compare this group with the European-American and, occasionally, the African American. When expressing Gerstäcker's views on the indigenous peoples of North America, I shall use the term "Indian." The term European-American will appear when I conflate two groups Gerstäcker discusses: those whose identity is immediately European, such as Gerstäcker himself, whether they be recent settlers or merely travelers, and those of European (usually Anglo) origin who have attained a distinctly American (colonial and post-colonial) identity. Distinctions between Europeans and Americans will be made as appropriate.

⁴In *Amerika: Amerikanisches Lebensbild aus neuerer Zeit* (Jena: Hermann Costenoble, n.d.), 3: 87, vol. 19 of *Gesammelte Schriften von Friedrich Gerstäcker*, 2d series.

⁵Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (London and New York: Routledge, 1992), 6.

⁶Pratt, 4.

⁷Pratt, 7.

⁸For more biographical details see Jeffrey L. Sammons, "Friedrich Gerstäcker," *Nineteenth-Century German Writers, 1841-1900*, vol. 129 of *Dictionary of Literary Biography*, eds. James Hardin and Siegfried Mews (Detroit: Brucoli Clark Layman, 1993), 110-19; James William Miller, Introduction, *In the Arkansas Backwoods, Tales and Sketches*, by Friedrich Gerstäcker (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1991), 1-4; Jeffrey L. Sammons, "Friedrich Gerstäcker: American Realities through German Eyes," *Germans in America: Aspects of German-American Relations in the Nineteenth Century*, ed. E. Allen McCormick (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983), 79-90; Thomas Ostwald, *Friedrich Gerstäcker—Leben und Werk* (Braunschweig: A. Graff, 1976).

⁹Friedrich Gerstäcker: American Realities through German Eyes," 84.

¹⁰Karl W. Doerry, "Three Versions of America: Sealsfield, Gerstäcker, and May," *Yearbook of German-American Studies* 16 (1981): 45.

¹¹Manfred Durzak, "Nach Amerika: Gerstäcker's Widerlegung der Lenau-Legende," *Amerika in der deutschen Literatur*, eds. Sigrid Bauschinger, Horst Denkler, and Wilfried Malsch (Stuttgart: Philipp Reclam jun., 1975), 149.

¹²Friedrich Gerstäcker: American Realities through German Eyes," 87. Bjarne Emil Landa also discusses Gerstäcker's Indian types in "The American Scene in Friedrich Gerstäcker's Works of Fiction" (Ph.D. diss., University of Minnesota, 1952), 234-50.

¹³(Jena: Hermann Costenoble, n.d.) vol. 18 of *Gesammelte Werke von Friedrich Gerstäcker*, 3d ed. Further references to this work will be cited parenthetically within the text. Translated as *Wild Sports in the Far West: The Narrative of a German Wanderer beyond the Mississippi*, intro. Edna Steeves and Harrison Steeves (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1968).

¹⁴Hans Plische, *Von Cooper bis Karl May: Eine Geschichte des völkerkundlichen Reise- und Abenteuerromans* (Düsseldorf: Droste, 1951), 91.

¹⁵Tzvetan Todorov states that Amerigo Vespucci's letter of 1503, *Mundus Novus*, that "depicts Indian life on the . . . South American continent as resembling what life must be like in paradise" foreshadows future portraits of the noble savage, *On Human Diversity*:

Nationalism, Racism, and Exoticism in French Thought, trans. Catherine Porter (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993), 267, originally published as *Nous et les autres: La Réflexion française sur la diversité humaine*, 1989. This European longing for a better world culminated in numerous depictions of the idealized life of the Noble Savage by the end of the eighteenth century, Ray Allen Billington, *Land of Savagery, Land of Promise: The European Image of the American Frontier in the Nineteenth Century* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1981), 18-25.

¹⁶Durzak notes that Cooper leaves literary traces in Gerstäcker's work, 149; cf. Sammons, "Friedrich Gerstäcker: American Realities through German Eyes," 85.

¹⁷*Imperial Eyes*, 201-5.

¹⁸*Shadows of the Indian*, 73, fn. 3.

¹⁹*Neue Reisen durch die Vereinigten Staaten, Mexiko, Ecuador, Westindien und Venezuela* (Jena: Hermann Costenoble, n.d.), 77, vol. 13 of *Gesammelte Schriften von Friedrich Gerstäcker* 2d series.

²⁰His real name was McKinney (Miller, "Introduction," 10).

²¹Stedman explains that the term *squaw* was a generalization "based upon the misconception that all the nations spoke something called 'Indian.'" The word, an approximation of regional Algonquin, should be avoided (71-72). Gerstäcker must have shared this misconception and never uses the term in a derogatory manner.

²²In his commentary to *Der exotische Roman: Bürgerliche Gesellschaftsflucht und Gesellschaftskritik zwischen Romantik und Realismus*, Anselm Maler maintains that Gerstäcker's exoticism [his adventures in far places], an expression of his reservations concerning conditions at home, resonated because it triggered real resentments (Stuttgart: Ernst Klett, 1975), 36.

²³(Jena: Hermann Costenoble, n.d.), vol. 5 of *Gesammelte Schriften von Friedrich Gerstäcker*, 2d ed. Further references to this work will be cited parenthetically in the text.

²⁴Ostwald highlights some of the passages I shall discuss, 121-25.

²⁵*Neue Reisen* . . . 75-76. Subsequent references will be cited parenthetically in the text.

²⁶See the chapter "Native Americans: Doomed to Extermination" in Ray Allen Billington, *Land of Savagery, Land of Promise: The European Image of the American Frontier in the Nineteenth Century* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1981) 129-49.

²⁷Peter Mason, *Deconstructing America: Representations of the Other* (London: Routledge, 1990), 41.

²⁸Gerstäcker was just as ready to criticize a German innkeeper for his bug-ridden beds as an Indian for a messy wigwam. He is certainly within his rights to find Indians' hygiene wanting. What I wish to point out is that the diction describing the Indians in this section of the *Neue Reisen* is far more highly charged than a similar observation he made about California Indian women in *Reisen I*: "etwas Seifenwasser hätte ihr Aeußeres entschieden verbessern können."

²⁹*Shadows of the Indian*, 185.

³⁰Stedman, 185.

³¹Jane P. Tompkins, *West of Everything: The Inner Life of Westerns*, (New York: Oxford, 1992), maintains that the westernizing impulse was grounded in the increasing feminization and domestication of nineteenth-century America.

³²For examples of Bodmer's watercolors and an integrated anthropological and art-historical critique of the pictorial representation of the American Indian see Patricia Trenton and Patrick T. Houlihan, *Native Americans: Five Centuries of Changing Images* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1989).

³³See, for example, Tzvetan Todorov, *The Conquest of America: The Question of the Other*, trans. Richard Howard (New York: Harper & Row, 1984); Todorov, *On Human Diversity: Nationalism, Racism, and Exoticism in French Thought*, trans. Catherine Porter (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993), 264-352; also Billington and Mason. Although not treating European domination over the Native American, Edward Said's *Orientalism* (New York: Pantheon, 1978) remains the paradigmatic study of how the West developed a vocabulary,

imagery, and style for writing about the other in order to dominate, restructure, and gain authority over a different part of the world.

³⁴Emmanuel Levinas, *Totality and Infinity: An Essay on Exteriority*, trans. Alphonso Lingis (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1969), originally *Totalité et Infini*, 1961.

³⁵Mason, 2.

³⁶Todorov, 247.

³⁷Jeremy Varon, "The Dreadful Concatenation: Modernity and Massacre in Todorov, Adorno and Horckheimer," *New German Critique* 59 (Spring/Summer 1993): 164. Varon is among those to correctly criticize Todorov for leaving "virtually unchallenged many of the traditional assumptions concerning the bases of Western superiority" (180), but this in no way vitiates the ideals as formulated in the epilogue.

³⁸In *Aus zwei Welttheilen: Aus Nord- und Südamerika* (Jena: Hermann Costenoble, n.d.), 3d and 4th printings, 298, vol. 13 of *Gesammelte Schriften von Friedrich Gerstäcker*. This volume does not identify from which of the two original volumes these short stories came.

³⁹*Mississippi Bilder: Licht- und Schattenseiten transatlantischen Lebens* (Jena: Hermann Costenoble, n.d.), 4th printing, 79-92, vol. 10 of *Gesammelte Schriften von Friedrich Gerstäcker*.

⁴⁰*Aus zwei Welttheilen: Aus Nord- und Südamerika*, 438.

⁴¹(Jena: Hermann Costenoble, 1873), vol. 7 of *Gesammelte Werke*.

⁴²*Mississippi Bilder*, 531-48.

⁴³"Der Ostindier," *Skizzen aus Californien und Südamerika* (Jena: Hermann Costenoble, n.d.), 2d printing, 277-78, vol. 16 of *Gesammelte Schriften von Friedrich Gerstäcker*.

⁴⁴Gerstäcker pursued the theme of the missionaries' destructive effect on indigenous cultures in his novels *Tahiti* and *Die Missionare*. See Plischke (92) and Anselm Maler, ed., *Der exotische Roman: Bürgerliche Gesellschaftsflucht und Gesellschaftskritik zwischen Romantik und Realismus* (Stuttgart: Ernst Klett, 1975), 36, 41-43.

⁴⁵The wife-beating here is mentioned only in a synopsis. In the novel *Nach America* a German's and a Polish aristocrat's wife abuse is treated in detail.

⁴⁶Durzak prefers to call the novel a crime story because only in an idealized sense does the protagonist defend and restore the morality of the human community by ascertaining who the evildoer is, 140; Sammons states, "His fundamental narrative structure is actually that of the detective story. . . ." "American Realities through German Eyes," 84.

⁴⁷*Hell und Dunkel: Gesammelte Erzählungen* (Jena: Hermann Costenoble, 1872), 250, vol. 4 of *Gesammelte Schriften von Friedrich Gerstäcker*. Jeffrey L. Sammons first drew my attention to this story.

⁴⁸*Aus zwei Welttheilen: Gesammelte Erzählungen* (Jena: Costenoble, n.d.), 3d printing, 293-335, vol. 13 of *Gesammelte Schriften von Friedrich Gerstäcker*.

⁴⁹*Mississippi-Bilder*, 433-76.

⁵⁰Raymond William Stedman states that Cooper's primary knowledge regarding the American Indian was Reverend John Heckewelder's 1818 book of history and recollections, *History, Manners, and Customs of the Indian Nations*. Chateaubriand's source for *Les Natchez* was father Pierre-François Charlevoix's *Histoire de la Nouvelle France*, Todorov, *On Human Diversity*, 298. May borrowed from George Catlin's writings about the American Indian, as well as from, among others, Gerstäcker, Karl W. Doerry, "Karl May," *Dictionary of Literary Biography*, 129:247.

⁵¹Foreword to *Shadows of the Indian* by Raymond William Stedman, xii.

