

**WHITE MALENESS IN FOUR BRITISH NOVELS OF
IMPERIAL TERROR**

MONSTERS AT HOME AND ABROAD

**THE CRISIS OF WHITE MALE IDENTITY IN FOUR BRITISH
NOVELS OF IMPERIAL TERROR**

**By
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ABSTRACT

This thesis employs a postcolonial perspective to explore the construction of white English male identity in four supernatural novels by Edward Bulwer-Lytton, H. Rider Haggard, and Bram Stoker: *A Strange Story* (1862); *She* (1887); *Dracula* (1897); and *Lair of the White Worm* (1911). The examination of this privileged subject position in late Victorian and Edwardian culture enables a new understanding of the techniques of imperialism. The thesis focusses in particular on two of imperialism's most pervasive supporting discourses: empiricism and science. In this critical context, the expression of imperial anxieties in the supernatural fiction of these eras might be understood as strategies of retrenchment and the call to vigilance for empire's privileged subjects. The sub-genre in which these four novels participate, which Patrick Brantlinger has called "imperial Gothic," both expresses and attempts to suppress the fear of foreign forces, manifesting in the texts as foreign monsters, which not only attack the protagonists, but threaten to subvert the foundations of their scientific and philosophical systems. The shift in the construction of science as an individual pursuit to its deployment as a means to guarantee the purity of the British "race" is revealed as a partial response to increasing concern over imperial security.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction

Science, Empiricism, and the Literature of Imperial Terror.....1

Chapter One

Edward Bulwer-Lytton's *A Strange Story* and the Creation of the Settler Subject....21

Chapter Two

Empire Unveiled: H. Rider Haggard's *She*.....52

Chapter Three

Roman and Teuton:

Racial Discourse and The Threat from Within in Bram Stoker's *Dracula* and
Lair of the White Worm.....79

Conclusion

Imperial Gothic and the Imperative of Vigilance.....119

Bibliography.....122

INTRODUCTION

Science, Empiricism, and the Literature of Imperial Terror

In H. Rider Haggard's *She* (1887), Ayesha, the terribly beautiful and practically immortal "white queen" who rules over a cannibal tribe in Africa, demonstrates a new technology to English academic Horace Holly. It is a pool of water in which she can see far-off events. "Aghast," Holly cries out that it is magic, to which Ayesha responds, "Nay, nay; O Holly...it is no magic, that is a dream of ignorance. There is no such thing as magic, though there is such a thing as a knowledge of the secrets of Nature" (113). The scene neatly reverses the typical power differential of the contact zone. An example of a more typical encounter can be found earlier in Holly's narrative. In that earlier scene, the native people of the region, the Amahaggar, are awed by Holly's and Vincey's pipe smoke: "when they saw us come out [of the cave where we are staying] smoking, they vanished this way and that, calling out that we were great magicians....indeed, nothing about us created so great a sensation as our tobacco smoke" (Haggard 62). The classic condescension of the European explorer, mocking the awe of the "ignorant" natives, is

upended in Holly's encounter with Ayesha's divining pool technology. His meeting with Ayesha leaves him "dumbfounded.... The matter was too overpowering for my intellect to grasp" (Haggard 112). Ayesha's longevity, her superior technology, and her willingness to toss aside her male guests' morality in favour of her own ravaging imperialism overwhelm the men's belief in the evidence of their senses, their reliance on logic, and the related belief that their home culture has prepared them for all that they might encounter in the foreign territory of Africa. This encounter constitutes a confrontation with the possibility of their own empire's fragility, a shock from which they will never fully recover.

Haggard's text is one of a complex of supernatural novels that appears to disrupt what Martin Green identifies as the function of adventure tales in the Victorian and Edwardian eras, to support "the energizing myth of English imperialism. [Adventure tales] were, collectively, the story England told itself as it went to sleep at night; and, in the form of its dreams, they charged England's will with the energy to go out into the world and explore, conquer, and rule" (Green 3). This Romantic function, however, is not always as affirming as Green's statement implies. Instead, the threats to empire depicted in the novels I will examine in this thesis—Edward Bulwer-Lytton's *A Strange Story* (1862), H. Rider Haggard's *She* (1887), and Bram Stoker's *Dracula* (1897) and *Lair of the White Worm* (1911)—offer to catastrophically alter the lives of these texts' protagonists. If adventure stories are the dreams of empire, then these tales of imperial shock are its nightmares, its encounters with its own shadow self. They record the bad dreams of empire's subjects, in which the first fruits of empire appear to be the loss of that very identity which empire claims to guarantee. Simultaneously, these texts offer a

portrait of the resilience of its protagonists, a characterization which evokes faith in empire's projects beyond the need for scientific proof of British superiority. Through the representation of empire's "worst case scenarios," in which the foundations of identity are threatened, these texts offer its protagonists the opportunity to acquire new, stronger subject positions. The will, sometimes overtly expressed, to erase and forget these encounters indicates the desire to demonstrate that the British subject already possesses the qualities that allow him to rise to the challenge and defend himself and his culture.

Several critics have noted the imperial anxieties expressed in the supernatural fiction of the late Victorian and Edwardian eras. Patrick Brantlinger has labelled this sub-genre "imperial Gothic," which he claims "combines the seemingly scientific, progressive, often Darwinian ideology of imperialism with an antithetical interest in the occult" (Brantlinger 227). He argues that "Although the connections between imperialism and other aspects of late Victorian and Edwardian culture are innumerable, the link with occultism is especially symptomatic of the anxieties that attended the climax of the British Empire. No form of cultural expression reveals more clearly the contradictions within that climax than imperial Gothic" (Brantlinger 227-228). H. L. Malchow observes the shift in emphasis that this later Gothic form entails: "If earlier gothic was often occupied with the *liberation* of the physical self from unjust imprisonment and degradation, the late-nineteenth century stories frequently revolve around the *preservation* of one's individual identity, the conscious self, from disintegrating internal conflict...or from alien pollution" (Malchow 127). Malchow's observation highlights the threat to individual subjectivity in these tales of imperial

horror. The terrifying impact of these texts operates at the very centre of a complex of beliefs that made British empire what it was: in short, its support of the individual *as* an individual. We see evidence of this threat in Holly's encounter with Ayesha's divining pool: Holly is "dumbfounded," "aghast;" the very seat of consciousness, his intellect, is "unable to grasp" the situation.

Although Brantlinger and Malchow successfully identify the site of imperial crisis in these texts as individual subjectivity, they neglect to identify the precise character of this subjectivity. In imperial Gothic, it is not merely individual identity *per se* that is at risk, but rather that of empire's most precious subject, the white English male. In this thesis, I will focus my discussions of imperial Gothic on an exploration of the specifics of white English maleness, on its construction as a subject position, and on the forces that threaten to transform it in these texts. For the purposes of this study, I will for the most part assume rather than argue the centrality of whiteness and maleness within late Victorian and Edwardian culture, for three reasons. First, these subjects have been thoroughly explored and established in previous critical discussions of the time period. Second, the texts I will study, for the most part narrated by white male characters, themselves offer primarily white male perspectives that also assume the primacy of white male subjectivity. Third, and most importantly, I am interested in moving beyond the understanding that British imperial culture values white maleness, to an exploration of the specifics of what that subject position and its crises offer as evidence of the techniques of empire itself. Although many critics have noted the effects of empire on its colonized subjects, a focus on its demands upon and transformations of its colonizers will, I hope, reveal new insight into empire's techniques of control, its

reliance on consensus, its sometimes contradictory support of individuality, and its motivations.

The texts I have selected share the basic traits of Brantlinger's imperial Gothic: a confrontation between the scientific and the occult or supernatural. Their distribution over a considerable time period will enable me to trace the changes in the role of scientific and empirical discourse throughout this era. As we shall see, these texts offer evidence of a shift away from the roles of science and empiricism in the constitution of the individual, to their more broadly cultural investments in the defense of the British race as a collective. These texts also place the sites of imperial crisis in a variety of geographical locations, including the new colony of Australia, the wilds of Africa, and England itself. We can thus witness the permutations of Empire's demands on its favoured subjects in a variety of roles, including the settler, the explorer, and the domestic citizen. Additionally, these specific texts feature male characters whose range of occupations will allow us to trace the pervasive effects of the rhetorics of science and empiricism in late Victorian and Edwardian culture. In light of the fact that these texts were written for popular audiences, the central positions of the scientists, academicians, and natural historians who populate them offer evidence of the transparency of scientific and empirical thought and language to their readers. We will also note the deployment of these rhetorics by the characters who are not scientists.

Before we turn to an examination of the texts of imperial Gothic themselves, however, it is important to note the specific character of the collusions of white racial beliefs, scientific projects, and empirical rhetoric in the construction of white male identity. The interrelated character of these factors is evident not only in these texts, but

also in the culture as a whole. While white culture cultivates an emphasis on individuality, the particular form of individual subjectivity in the late Victorian and Edwardian eras was driven by an increasing belief in the ability of science to guarantee cultural progress. The rise in the primacy of science as a resource of strength for British imperial projects had its corollary in a public fascination with scientific practice and the theories that emerged out of that practice. Not coincidentally, the specifics of scientific methodology and the empiricist philosophy which underwrote it emphasize the importance of the individual. Through the reception of new sense data and the use of the mental faculties to arrange this data into new conclusions, the individual engages in the practices that drive British culture's advancement, through which it gains new knowledge and builds new technology. With few exceptions, this practice operated largely within the realm of male subjectivity in this time period. Thus, science and empiricism become the methodological underpinnings not only for many imperial projects, but also for the construction of the specifics of white male identity in the late Victorian and Edwardian eras. This construction operates from a belief in the guarantees of logical proof, from its promise that, in the cautious progress from premise to conclusion, the information gained will be irrefutable. Implicit in this promise is the equally comforting suggestion that the mind itself, in its sound knowledge of the world around it, will itself be unassailable, impossible to confound. Equally, the belief in logical proof drove the establishment of scientific theories of race, increasingly prevalent in the late nineteenth century, which offered to guarantee the central position of British whiteness in world politics.

The central position of the rhetoric of the individual in white culture has been noted by several critics of racial discourse. Ross Chambers argues that whiteness is constructed in white culture as an unexamined category, enabling whites to be perceived “as individual historical agents whose unclassifiable difference (one from the other) is their most prominent trait. Whiteness itself is thus atomised into invisibility through the individualization of white subjects.... That essential identity is thus their individual self-identity, to which whiteness as such is therefore a secondary, and so negligible, factor” (Chambers 145). Richard Dyer notes that “a white person is taught to believe that all that she or he does, good and ill, all that we achieve, is to be accounted for in terms of our individuality” (Dyer 9). If the individual subject is indeed under attack in the texts of imperial Gothic, then so is the foundation of whiteness itself.

It is important to note that the rhetoric of whiteness, operating to support individuality, possesses a dual support system, in both Romantic discourse and in science. Dyer notes that whiteness entails the privilege of laying claim to a “something else” that differentiates whites from other races:

All concepts of *race*, emerging out of eighteenth-century materialism, are concepts of bodies, but all along they have had to be reconciled with notions of embodiment and incarnation. The latter become what distinguish white people, giving them a special relation to race. Black people can be reduced (in white culture) to their bodies and thus to race, but white people are something else that is realised in and yet is not reducible to the corporeal, or racial.

(Dyer 14)

Dyer links this ineffable factor to white culture’s imperial drive: “At some point, the embodied something else of whiteness took on a dynamic relation to the physical world, something caught by the ambiguous word ‘spirit.’ The white spirit organises white flesh and in turn non-white flesh and other material matters: it has *enterprise*” (Dyer 14).

Dyer's account emphasizes the Romantic features of white racial discourse. He notes that "the Romantics [admired] 'small, virtuous and "pure" communities in remote and cold places'" for their affinity with the supposed origins of the white race in the Caucasus mountains. Apparently "these virtues could be seen to have formed the white character, its energy, enterprise, discipline and spiritual elevation, and even the white body, its hardness and tautness...its uprightness (aspiring to the heights), its affinity with (snowy) whiteness" (Dyer 21). The second support of white supremacy emerges through the transformation of this energy into the efforts of natural scientists: "From this flowed the mania for measurable biological distinctions in so much subsequent racial thought....from phrenology, craniology and anthropometry to genetics" (Dyer 22). This effort, like the Romantic "enterprise," is in turn one of the supports of empire: "It is hard not to see biological race research as the arm of imperial and domestic control, whose aim is to know, fix and place the non-white rather than, as the genealogical approach does, to establish the characteristics of whiteness" (Dyer 23). Imperial effort, then, relies on the engagement of both the emotional and the logical faculties in its favoured subjects.

Among the difficulties of any discussion of race, as many critics point out, is the risk of over-generalization: the hegemonic discourses of empire and race will not affect all of its subjects equally, or in the same way. In other words, empire makes different demands of its different subjects. It also places different value on different subjects. Chambers likens white identity to "a poker hand, in which the value of the ace (whiteness) can be either enhanced, if one holds a couple of court cards or another ace (masculinity, heterosexuality, middleclassness...), or alternatively depreciated by

association with cards of lower value (ethnicity, color, lack of education, working-classness...)” (Chambers 144). It is important to note that the terrifying impact of imperial Gothic texts relies upon their transformation of those characters who hold, as it were, the most valuable cards. In these texts, the threat to imperialism is configured through its threat to its most precious subjects: educated, largely upper-class, white English men. Imperial Gothic terrorizes through its revelation of empire’s favoured male subjects as vulnerable to attack; these are the stories of men at the centre of imperial privilege, empire’s best representatives, who nonetheless slip through the cracks in empire’s hegemonic discourse.

The constitution of individuality in the texts of imperial Gothic is more closely allied with empire’s scientific discourse than its Romantic roots. This emphasis reflects the increasing division between imperial and spiritual or religious rhetoric extant in the late Victorian and Edwardian eras. Mary Pratt notes that the imperial project required “new legitimating ideologies: [among them] scientific racism, and technology-based paradigms of progress and development” (Pratt 74). British confidence in British intellectual superiority was an oft-cited reason for the imperial presence abroad. In 1908, Evelyn Baring, Lord Cromer, wrote that “The European is a close reasoner;...he is a natural logician, albeit he may not have studied logic; he is by nature sceptical and requires proof before he can accept the truth of any proposition; his trained intelligence works like a piece of mechanism” (qtd. in Said 38). Cromer proceeds to contrast this innate logical ability with the cognitive skills of Egyptians, whose inability to reason invites and requires British intervention. British imperialism is thus constituted as a truth-seeking and common sense-driven project; this notion allows its agents to view

British projects and British political activities as innately correct. In the late Victorian and Edwardian eras, there is an increasing movement toward the discourse of logic as a defense of imperial activity.

British science in turn strove to define its place in imperial projects. Perhaps the most blatant attempt to define this role took place in the field of eugenics. In his 1900 address to the Literary and Philosophical Society at Newcastle, boldly entitled *National Life from the Standpoint of Science*, Karl Pearson argues that science's first contribution to nationhood

is to show us what national life means, and how the nation is a vast organism subject as much to the great forces of evolution as any other gregarious type of life. There is a struggle of race against race and of nation against nation.... At the present day, in the case of the civilised white man, it has become more and more the conscious, carefully directed attempt of the nation to fit itself to a continuously changing environment.

(Pearson 36)

Pearson goes on to argue that science has a second duty to national life, which entails the transformation of the individual subject into the man of science: "[Science] has to develop our brain-power by exercising our powers of cautious observation.... This is the only sort of technical education the nation ought to trouble about, the teaching people to see and to think.... There is a most simple description of true science which is embraced in the words: *Keep your eyes open and apply common-sense*" (Pearson 37). The dual duties of science, according to Pearson, may be understood as the dual demands of the nation upon its subjects: to understand the forces of evolution acting upon the nation, and to transform its subjects into good empiricists, adaptable to any environment through their ability to observe and process new information. This formula might be understood as standing in reciprocal relation to Cromer's comments about the constitution of the

English subject, and his fitness for imperial conquest. While imperial activity is justified by the superior intellectual capabilities of “the European,” in Pearson’s view the British subject must arm himself with the intellectual techniques of scientific methodology in order to become a fit imperial subject.

That this rhetoric separates itself from the realm of feeling is evidenced by another of Pearson’s comments. At the beginning of his address, he asks his audience to refrain from judging his arguments on the basis of feeling: “If at the very offset my statements strike you as harsh, cold, possibly immoral, I would ask you to be patient with me to the end, when some of you may perceive that the public conscience, the moral goodness which you value so highly, is established by science on a firmer and more definite, if a narrower, foundation than you are wont to suppose” (Pearson 16). That foundation is predicated upon the fact that “national spirit takes the form of a strong feeling of the importance of organizing the nation as a whole,” and that organization cannot occur “if we allow class distinctions to permanently endow the brainless and to push them into posts of national responsibility” (Pearson 53, 55). Although science does not seek to displace the Romantic values of aspiration and enterprise which empire requires, it does seek to find a logical grounding for these hopes. Pearson asserts that feeling must drive the implementation of scientific principles, and that the implementation of those principles is a necessary condition of hope for the future. Toward the end of the nineteenth century, logical soundness obtains a primacy over the more energetic and emotional bases of empire, insofar as it is viewed as a good in itself (as in Cromer’s address) and secondly because it offers to justify the emotional investment in imperial projects.

The drive to seek logical groundings for the success of British imperial projects resulted in the creation of a distinct subject position for male British elites, which appears variously in imperial Gothic texts as the man of science, the academic, the medical man, and the supporter of, in Pearson's terms, the "natural history standpoint" (Pearson 60). The establishment of the "man of science" who dominates late Victorian and Edwardian imperial discourse might best be understood in terms of the interactions of the discourses in which he participates: imperialism, scientific methodology, and empiricist philosophy. We can see these factors at work in, for example, the constitution of those key colonial players who enter into what Mary Pratt calls the "contact zone." The contact zone is that territory Pratt defines as "the space of colonial encounters, the space in which peoples geographically and historically separated come into contact with each other and establish ongoing relations, usually involving conditions of coercion, radical inequality, and intractable conflict" (Pratt 6). Among the qualities that allow the colonizer to enact the "highly asymmetrical relations of domination and subordination" (Pratt 4) to the benefit of the colonial project is his understanding and belief that these relations will produce nothing surprising, nothing other than evidence of his own culture's superiority. Said notes this transformation closer to home, in the person of the Orientalist academic: "Most often an individual entered the profession as a way of reckoning with the Orient's claim on him; yet most often too his Orientalist training opened his eyes, so to speak, and what he was left with was a sort of debunking project, by which the Orient was reduced to considerably less than the eminence once seen in it" (Said 150). The constitution of the colonizer depends upon this transformation: in his eyes, new territory is no longer primarily an object of personal interest and desire; it is

banal, transparent, merely academic. Like Pearson's constitution of the reliance of national life on the dictates of science, which breaks nationalism's grand schemes down to the application of a few simple principles, the colonizer's success depends upon the ability to assimilate new information according to his training.

Again, it is important to note that the relationship between science and imperialism is reciprocal: domestic scientists also borrowed from the rhetoric and techniques of empire in order to organize their efforts. In his inaugural address to the British Association for the Advancement of Science (est. 1831), W. V. Harcourt draws parallels between the uncontrolled progress of individual fields of science and an empire in decline:

When any science becomes popular, and those who interest themselves in its advancement perceive the necessity of working for it by united exertions, that science is detached from the central body; first one fragment falls off, and then another; colony after colony dissevers itself from the declining empire, and by degrees the commonwealth of science is dissolved...each separate undertaking justifies itself by the most promising appearances and undeniable fruits.... Nothing, I think, could be a more disastrous event for the sciences, than that one of them should be in any manner dissociated from another; and nothing can conduce more to prevent that dissociation, than the bringing into mutual contact men who have exercised great and equal powers of mind upon different pursuits.

(Harcourt 32-33)

Like a good colonial bureaucrat, Harcourt argues that the maximization of the benefits of science is to be achieved through greater unification. His argument turns upon an unstated premise: that the loss of colonies is necessarily bad. Not coincidentally, his resolution to the problem of greater specialization and its effects in the sciences employs the rhetoric of empire-building:

What numberless suggestions, what a crowd of valuable but abortive hints are continually floating in the thoughts of philosophers, for the pursuit of which time is wanting to themselves! Now I say, Gentlemen, that we have among us, scattered through the country, men willing to adopt these unexecuted hints, as they

arise out of the profound and varied meditations of more experienced minds, men not incapable of surveying with accuracy a limited district, though they may not pretend to draw the general outline of the map, or fill up the whole of its details.

(Harcourt 34)

Harcourt's depiction of science as the exploration of new territory is by no means unusual; indeed, it is virtually impossible to discuss the progress of science in anything other than territorial terms: we speak of scientific discoveries, exploration, areas, fields; scientists take steps toward the completion of their projects. What is remarkable about his comments is that they suggest the employment of a bureaucratic method to delegate the exploration of this territory, modelling itself after the activity of empire. This collusion of scientific organization and imperial technique is less surprising, however, when we consider the third element in this set of relations, empiricist philosophy, the methodology of which provided theoretical and rhetorical underpinnings to both scientific and imperial expansion.

Empiricism is that complex of philosophical thought, the basic tenets of which are that all knowledge derives from experience, and that the mind is not furnished with a set of concepts, but rather derives these concepts from data which it receives through the senses. This theory found its extremes in the philosophies of Locke and Condillac, who held that the mind at birth is a blank slate, requiring sensory information to fill it (Fawkes 216-218). The mind is thus structured by these contents; its ideas are derived from experience of the external world. Although recent discussions of scientific methodology have questioned the role of empiricism in the construction of scientific theory, in the nineteenth century, even the most radical philosophers of science still held that the gathering of facts through the senses and the scientific equipment which assisted them was the first step toward

learning about the world. Furthermore, as many critics of empire have noted, the role of “going and seeing” new territories in the acquisition of imperial knowledge derives its notion of its own soundness from these same empirical roots. In the texts of imperial Gothic, both scientific methodology—the structuring of knowledge of the external world through sensory experience—and an empirical mindset—the structuring of the mind through sensory experience—play key roles in the constitution of the white male subject position.

As the imperial project requires the rendering of the colonial territory banal, predictable, and transparent to the colonizer, so the success of empiricism relies upon normative claims that render the contents of the mind acceptable, manageable, and clear. Anne-Lise François notes David Hume’s methodological “need for repetition—for a slow process of familiarization—in sustaining and giving depth to critical doubts and questionings” (François 141). In his *Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding* (1748), Hume argues that the proper scope of philosophical inquiry should be limited to the “sphere of ‘common practice,’...a fluid body of habits and beliefs broadly defined for Hume by a sense of overall continuity, coherence, and ease of transition” (François 141). Hume writes,

The *imagination* of man is naturally sublime, delighted with whatever is remote and extraordinary, and running, without control, into the most distant parts of space and time in order to avoid the objects, which custom has rendered too familiar to it. A correct *Judgement* observes a contrary method, and avoiding all distant and high enquiries, confines itself to common life, and to such subjects as fall under daily practice and experience...philosophical decisions are nothing but the reflections of common life, methodized and corrected.

(qtd. François 141)

Like the debunking intellect of the Orientalist, Hume's good philosopher trains his mind to disregard what the judgment cannot incorporate; empiricism demands a double function of the definition and acceptance of banal commonality on the one hand, while simultaneously disavowing those items of thought that cannot be incorporated into its system. The increasing role of logical thought in the culture of late nineteenth-century Britain naturally increased the utility of empiricism as a basis for imperial projects. Empiricism's reliance on common sense is itself among the techniques of hegemony. François cites Raymond Williams's characterization of "the relations of domination and subordination, in their forms as practical consciousness, as in effect a saturation of the whole process of living...to such a depth that the pressures and limits of what can ultimately [after reflection, that is] be seen as specific economic, political, and cultural systems seem to most of us the pressures and limits of simple experience and common sense" (qtd. in François 231). The historical adhesion to the techniques of empiricism provides the British imperialist with a tool by which to normalize that which falls under his gaze, while simultaneously enabling him to hold to his own understanding of the real; cultural relativism dissolves under the viewpoint that what we experience on a daily basis in our home countries is nothing short of reality, and hence truth itself.

Cathy Caruth traces similar imperatives in Locke's system, in which the concept of "association"—the incorrect and unreasonable attachment of one idea with another—disrupts the correct operation of the intellect. In that correct operation, "sensation"—the experience of the external world through the senses—and "reflection"—the organization of that experience in the experiencer's mind—cause, or rather, allow ideas to become necessarily, naturally, and logically connected with each other. While sensation and

reflection allow the thinking subject to know the world, association leads to error and self-deception. In his *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1690), Locke writes of this erroneous

Connexion of *Ideas* wholly owing to Chance or Custom; *Ideas* that in themselves are not at all of kin; come to be so united in some Mens Minds, that 'tis very hard to separate them, they always keep in company, and the one no sooner at any time comes into the Understanding but its Associate appears with it; and if they are more than two which are thus united, the whole gang always inseparable shew themselves together.

(qtd. Caruth 22)

Caruth notes the distaste with which Locke describes these “unwanted guests...stranger thoughts trying to pass themselves off as relatives at reason’s family gatherings...every rational connection of ideas threatens to be plagued by an importunate outsider who pushes his way in on thought and plants his obscene presence in the way of proper thinking” (Caruth 22-23). In Locke’s and Hume’s systems, the empiricist dream of a completely knowable self is threatened by the sometimes familiar freaks of the human mind. This fear results in the dismissal of the imaginative capacity to somewhere outside the aegis of correct thinking; in scientific pursuits, this imperative manifests itself as the requirement that all claims be proven—in other words, in the differentiation between hypothesis and conclusion as realm of speculation and realm of fact. In imperial Gothic, the guarantees offered by the correct relation of ideas under the empiricist system is disrupted, as its protagonists encounter eccentric data which cannot be reconciled with their previous notions of the structure of both the external world and their own minds. According to Locke’s and Hume’s systems, this normally requires that the eccentric data be rejected; however, in imperial Gothic, this data often refuses to go unacknowledged.

Although empiricist philosophy was often unequipped to manage that data which falls outside the realm of the everyday, European science attempted to reconcile itself to the problem of eccentric data. The normative projects of nineteenth-century science, particularly in its fascination with exploration and classification of foreign territory, include the drive to incorporate eccentric information into its systems. Said notes this effect in the work of Étienne and Isidore Saint-Hilaire, who specialized in “the philosophy and anatomy of monstrosity,” also known as teratology (Said 144). Branches of science such as teratology operated, so to speak, on the frontier of the known. The Saint-Hilaires were able to consider “the most horrendous physiological aberrations....A result of internal degradation within the species-life” (Said 144). In the world of scientific data, therefore,

there is no such thing as a phenomenon, no matter how aberrant and exceptional, that cannot be explained with reference to other phenomena...a scientist has at his disposal a sort of leverage by which even the totally unusual occurrence can be seen as natural and known scientifically, which in this case means without recourse to the supernatural, and with recourse only to an enveloping environment constituted by the scientist. As a result nature itself can be perceived as continuous, harmoniously coherent, and fundamentally intelligible.

(Said 144-145)

As we have already seen, it is precisely this desire to render their areas of inquiry intelligible that binds imperialism, empiricism, and practical science together. Under this shared mandate, in addition to the acquisition of resources and exotic commodities, they all participate in the rhetoric of territorial definition and the techniques of the control of the prodigy. In imperial Gothic, one technique for the management of the monstrous foreign is the at times outrageous expansion of the realm of known phenomena. This expansion enables some of imperial Gothic’s protagonists to treat the eccentric data as

any other new subject of study, while simultaneously allowing them to determine the means of its destruction.

The works of Bulwer-Lytton, Rider Haggard, and Stoker operate under the imperatives of the horror genre to disturb and terrify their readers; the shocks suffered by the good British subjects who occupy their disorienting worlds as protagonists are the shocks of empire, empiricism, and science, as they confront that impossible thing, the prodigy that refuses to concede to their classificatory objectives. Confronted with the monster that cannot be explained, often on British soil, these protagonists struggle with the desire of the prodigy to disrupt and sometimes co-opt their skills. Engaged with the unexplained and unintelligible, the man of science slips outside his own culture's authoritative structures. Ultimately, his understanding of himself as the product of a superior culture, his very confidence in the verifiability of his knowledge of the world, must be sacrificed in favour of a new understanding that incorporates this new, monstrous data and (sometimes) enables him to defend his homeland. The monstrous foreign also threatens through its racial otherness, a status often heightened in these texts by its immortality and its occult knowledge. This status threatens to subvert the man of science's belief—safeguarded by the techniques of science and the constitution of whiteness as invisibility—that his own racial lineage is superior. Although through the defeat of these prodigies empire is secured, the intellectual territories of science and empiricism become in these texts a kind of contact zone in which the power differential is for a time threateningly upended. In these works, the shock of empire strains the harmonious relation between its practical objectives and the rhetoric which usually supports it. Ultimately, however, imperial Gothic plays out the terror of Empire in order

to lay these fears to rest; having witnessed what is constituted as the worst threats that can terrorize empire, imperial Gothic's readers are empowered by the knowledge of the resilience of its protagonists, their flexibility in attaining new subject positions, their ability to incorporate the monstrous into their systems, and in most cases to defeat it. Imperial Gothic also dramatizes the requirement of its subjects that they be vigilant and powerful; this dramatization heightens the perceived requirement for empire's aggressive action in world politics. Through these texts, we might more closely examine the mechanics of empire's demands upon its favoured subjects as they participate in its defense.

Chapter One

Edward Bulwer-Lytton's *A Strange Story* and the Creation of the Settler Subject

Edward Bulwer-Lytton's two careers—as a novelist and as a politician—were both intimately linked with his belief in the redemptive power of the colonies. Brantlinger notes that “According to his biographer, T. H. S. Escott, ‘the true cult of the colonies was founded by Bulwer-Lytton in the *Caxtons* [1850]’” (Brantlinger 27-28). In that novel, Bulwer-Lytton “perceives the home country as deluged, overloaded with redundant population to the extent that members of the middle and upper-classes are themselves becoming superfluous, [whereas] Australia is virtually empty, a desert vacuum” (Brantlinger 122). The new colony serves, through its requirements of hard work and its dearth of opportunity for criminal behaviour, to redeem the *Caxtons*' ne'er-do-well characters. Bulwer-Lytton's interest in the development of the colonies would also manifest itself in his political career: in 1858 he became secretary for the colonies in the Derby-Disraeli cabinet. In *A Strange Story* (1862), he would expand upon the theme of redemption in the colonies, while displacing many of the political concerns

accompanying colonization onto the novel's supernatural trappings. The novel is ostensibly the story of the transformation of Allen Fenwick, whose empiricism and cautious forays into experimental science attract the attention of a prodigy from the East, Margrave. Margrave claims to have indefinitely extended his life by consuming an Arabian alchemist's elixir. Seeking to co-opt Fenwick's scientific skills in order to continue his alchemical experiments, Margrave thrusts Fenwick outside the law, and hence outside the authoritative structures of his home culture. Although Fenwick must abandon his faith in the techniques of science and the transparency of the world of fact promised by empiricism by the end of *A Strange Story*, his encounters with the occult force him into a new subject position within the empire: that of the settler. In this transformation, the requirements of empire and the threat of racial otherness are configured as spiritual and occult forces respectively. Through this displacement of the issues of imperial discipline and racial competition, Bulwer-Lytton constructs a narrative that heightens the requirement for a loosening of Fenwick's empirical outlook, while he simultaneously avoids the literal presentation of the call to duty and conflict with the aborigine which drives and underlies the project of colonization. At the same time as it obscures these requirements of imperialism, Bulwer-Lytton's text serves as an exemplar of the sometimes competing requirements of the imperial project and the intellectual rhetoric that supports it.

From the beginning of *A Strange Story*, Bulwer-Lytton establishes Allen Fenwick's character as a paragon of empiricist philosophy. By profession a doctor, Fenwick spends his spare time performing experiments in chemistry and electricity, and composing disparaging pamphlets about his less rigid colleagues. His careful

methodology functions for him as a guarantor of the soundness of his scientific and philosophical conclusions. He describes his personal philosophy early in the narrative: "I had espoused a school of medical philosophy severely rigid in its inductive logic. My creed was that of stern materialism. I had a contempt for the understanding of men who accepted with credulity what they could not accept by reason. My favourite phrase was 'common sense'" (Bulwer-Lytton 12-13). Fenwick bears all the markings of a good Humean empiricist. His adherence to the notions of common sense, common experience, and everyday life offers him the reassurances that he can and will divine the truth through his scientific and philosophical pursuits. Under this system, Fenwick believes that he is moving forward to discovery: "At the same time I had no prejudice against bold discovery, and discovery necessitates conjecture, but I dismissed as idle all conjecture that could not be brought to a practical test" (Bulwer-Lytton 13). Even prior to the mental acts of exploration that fall under the category of "conjecture," Fenwick's scientific territory is sharply circumscribed by this criteria of verifiability. Within this territory, however, he feels that he is working toward a goal that parallels the course of empire. After a particularly successful evening of work, he claims, "I said then, in the triumph of my pride, as I laid myself down to rest: 'I have written that which allots with precision man's place in the region of nature; written that which will found a school, form disciples; and race after race of those who cultivate truth through pure reason shall accept my bases if they enlarge my building'" (Bulwer-Lytton 81). Fenwick believes his life's work has the potential to effect an intellectual *coup*, and that the sharp differentiation he makes between conjecture and proof will build, as it were, a fortress of thought that is unassailable. His confidence in his own project resembles British

confidence in the course of empire, and employs its rhetoric to reinforce its own impact and soundness.

However, the emptiness of Fenwick's empire of science is slowly revealed in the remainder of Bulwer-Lytton's novel. Ironically, Fenwick's methodical forays into scientific experimentation attract the attention of the monstrous Margrave, a mysterious and attractive young man who has recently returned from travels in the East. Having read one of Fenwick's discourses on chemistry, Margrave appears at Fenwick's study door one morning and claims to have the key to that which Fenwick seeks: a means of revitalizing the human body through the discovery of "the vital principle itself" (Bulwer-Lytton 99). Margrave shares the traits of the abject, that frightening entity that Julia Kristeva describes. The abject resembles the rejected data of science, the idea that fails to stand in right relation to its peers, the object of the imperial gaze that refuses to be subjugated by it. Kristeva writes that the abject "lies outside the set, and does not seem to follow the latter's rules of the game. And yet from its place of banishment, the abject does not cease challenging its master" (Kristeva 2). Perhaps it is the ease with which Margrave promises to furnish Fenwick with the solution to his life's work that causes Fenwick to dismiss his claims outright; perhaps it is the fact that Margrave seems to be "wanting that mysterious something which is needed to keep our faculties, however severally brilliant, harmoniously linked together" (Bulwer-Lytton 105); perhaps it is his crass disbelief in British superiority as he scoffs at Fenwick's use of the term "civilized race" to describe Western culture. Singing a "low, wild tune" in a foreign language, Margrave pauses to tell Fenwick, "Civilized race! What is civilization? Those words were uttered by men who founded empires when Europe itself was not civilized!"

(Bulwer-Lytton 100). From the moment he walks unannounced into Fenwick's study, Margrave violates the laws of scientific methodology, empirical right thinking, and imperial pride that mark the good British domestic subject. Fenwick's own subject position in the heart of this values system prevents him from taking Margrave's claims seriously; however, with Margrave's entry into the narrative, Bulwer-Lytton admits to the realm of British empiricism a monstrous presence who threatens to disrupt its orderly progress. Kristeva writes that the abject "draws me to the place where meaning collapses" (Kristeva 2). Likewise, as we shall see, Margrave will engage Fenwick in an ongoing pursuit of meaning that will ultimately resolve itself in a redefinition of Fenwick's notions of reality. Fenwick's reconstruction will entail a belief in the ineffable. In the meantime, however, a more direct assault on Fenwick's position occurs in the name of defending the world against this prodigy.

Fenwick's true induction into the realm beyond the readily accessible objects of sensory perception and thought occurs not through Margrave's alternative knowledge, but through another adventurer, Sir Philip Derval. Also recently returned from travels in the East, where he is rumoured to have studied under the same sage from whom Margrave is supposed to have taken the elixir of life, Derval's claim to authority precedes him. A guest at a dinner party Fenwick attends tells him that Derval lays claim to "insight into various truths of nature" inherited from his foreign teacher, "on the promulgation of which [Derval] cherished the ambition to found a philosophical celebrity for himself" (Bulwer-Lytton 86). Like Margrave, Derval also seeks to co-opt Fenwick's scientific abilities, but in this case his goal is the service of science, and not only personal gain: he desires help in the verification of the fantastic discoveries of his

time in the East. Derval thus lays claim to the appearance of scientific authority: although he wishes to introduce occult knowledge to the West, he is determined to do so within the accepted methodologies of scientific thinking. Derval also seeks to rid the world of the threat he perceives in Margrave. Telling Fenwick that Margrave is a monster, he argues that the best proof of this fact lies in direct observation: "It is of importance that I should convince you at once of the nature of that prodigy which is more hostile to mankind than the wolf is to the sheepfold. No words of mine could at present suffice to clear your sight from the deception which cheats it. I must enable you to judge for yourself. It must be now and here" (Bulwer-Lytton 140). Derval's words are virtually incomprehensible to Fenwick, but are understandable in terms of the shock to British hegemony Margrave represents. The prodigy threatens with its ability to create a deception which "cheats" that primary resource of empiricism: the sense perception. Later, Derval will tell Fenwick that he must change his perception in order that he

will be prepared to listen to my explanations and my recital, in a spirit far different from that with which you would have received them before.... You will now, I trust, be fitted to become my confidant and my assistant; you will advise with me how, for the sake of humanity, we should act together against the incarnate lie, the anomalous prodigy which glides through the crowd in the image of joyous beauty.

(Bulwer-Lytton 140)

Fenwick dismisses Derval's words as "so out of the reach of common-sense.... All then, that I felt...was that curiosity which...any one of my readers himself would have felt" (Bulwer-Lytton 141). Having come to rely so heavily on the truthfulness of his perception, what Locke calls "the first operation of all our intellectual faculties, and the inlet of all knowledge in our minds" (II.IX.15), Fenwick cannot consider Derval's news

for what it is: a warning that Fenwick's fortress of thought has already been compromised, and that he must change his sense perception in order to see the truth.

The proof of Margrave's nature consists in an opening of Fenwick's senses to a world he cannot accept as legitimate. Having brought Margrave to the room in which Derval waits, Fenwick watches as Derval pulls a small steel casket from his pocket and sprinkles some powder from it onto a lamp. The doors of Fenwick's perception are in that moment opened; he is plunged into a world beyond previous experience:

The room swam before me. Like a man oppressed by a nightmare, I tried to move, to cry out; feeling that to do so would suffice to burst the thrall that bound me; in vain.... Every bone, sinew, nerve, fibre of the body seemed as if wrenched open, and as if some hitherto un conjectured Presence in the vital organization were forcing itself to light with all the pangs of travail.... I feel in this description how language fails me.... This dreadful interval subsided as suddenly as it had commenced.... I felt as if a something undefinable by any name had rushed from me, and in that rush that a struggle was over.

(Bulwer-Lytton 143)

Derval uses his powder to temporarily, literally change Fenwick's perspective on that which surrounds him. Derval perceives Margrave as a threat to British security that requires that Fenwick, the good scientist and empiricist, suffer a shock himself that will allow him to rise to meet the threat.

Derval's attempt to change Fenwick's perspective and rally him to take action in defense of his homeland is nearly successful. Under the influence of the strange powder, Fenwick is given new insight into Margrave and the threat that he constitutes. Fenwick's altered vision enables him to adopt a new perspective, one which enables him not only to see and gather information, but to adopt a more possessive—one might say "colonizing"—approach to what he sees. During this time, Fenwick surveys Margrave's psyche as a landscape:

I saw therein a moral world, charred and ruined, as, in some fable I have read, the world of the moon is described to be; yet withal it was a brain of magnificent formation. The powers abused to evil had been originally of rare order; imagination and scope, the energies that dare; the faculties that discover. But the moral part of the brain had failed to dominate the mental. Defective veneration of what is good or great; cynical disdain of what is right and just; in fine, a great intellect, first misguided, then perverted, and now falling with the decay of the body into ghastly but imposing ruins.

(Bulwer-Lytton 144)

Fenwick thus views Margrave's corrupt personality in terms of a territory that was once the site of a great civilization, but through bad management has fallen into moral ruin. Beyond the reach of empiricism alone, the acquisition of this gaze has its basis in the more speculative fields of imperial self-narrative, and is supported by a science that is likewise largely speculative in character: archaeology. Pratt criticizes the function of archaeology in the projects of empire:

As with the monumentalist reinvention of Egypt...the links between the societies being archaeologized and their contemporary descendants remain absolutely obscure, indeed irrevocable.... The European imagination produces archaeological subjects by splitting contemporary non-European peoples off from their precolonial, and even their colonial, pasts. To revive indigenous history and culture as archaeology is to revive them *as dead*.

(Pratt 134)

Emulating this technique of control, Fenwick's vision of Margrave's interior landscape allows him to realize this prodigy as spiritually dead; Margrave's body has become home to "secretiveness, destructiveness, and the ready perception of things immediate to the wants of the day...the relics of a culture wide and in some things profound...sharpened and quickened into formidable, if desultory force" (Bulwer-Lytton 146-147). This ruin is attributable, we are to assume, to Margrave's literal incorporation of the knowledge of the East in the form of the elixir of life, as well as his own inherent corruption—proof of

which Bulwer-Lytton will offer later in the narrative, as Margrave hints at his possibly half-caste racial status. Margrave's threat to humanity is constituted in terms that invite intervention from the good British subject; his moral state proves that he cannot rule himself, so authority (in the form of Derval) seeks to recruit Fenwick to step in. This new role necessitates an alteration in the role of perception in Fenwick's understanding: his relatively small ambitions to conquer the world of science threaten to be replaced by his new and occult role as covetous imperial surveyor, whose gaze urges him toward conquest and control.

Fenwick refuses the new role of defender of humanity offered by Derval; he cannot accept the shock of the sharp transition demanded by Derval's authority. Unfortunately, his refusal to accept the request to turn from man of science into man of action places him in further danger at the hands of Margrave. Derval is murdered; Fenwick is left alone to confront Margrave's eccentric demands. Unprotected by Derval's magical expertise, he slips outside of the protection of authority altogether. This shift is also symptomized by the loss of Derval's manuscript, the last remaining evidence of Derval's life's work, and the only proof of the occult events which Fenwick has experienced. Ultimately, he will suffer a profound shift in consciousness (as well as geographical location) that will leave him in a new position in the empire, after all; unable to remain in the centre of metropolitan intellectual life, he will become a settler in the new land of Australia. Fenwick's refusal to suffer the shocks of the transition demanded by empire's desire to protect itself ironically results in a different transition, with a different set of subjective changes to be suffered.

Leaving Derval in the street after refusing to help him in his pursuit of Margrave, Fenwick returns later to discover Derval's dead body. After a vagrant reports the heated conversation between Fenwick and Derval, Fenwick becomes the prime suspect in the murder investigation. Ironically, his previous role in the community as staunch defender of empirical methodology prevents him from clearing his name:

I became truly embarrassed. What could I say to a keen, sensible, worldly man of law? Tell him of the powder and the fumes, of the scene in the museum...of the elixir of life, and of magic arts? I—I tell such a romance! I the noted adversary of all pretended mysticism. I—I a sceptical practitioner of medicine!... Mr. Stanton...left me, with a dry expression of hope that my innocence would be cleared in spite of evidence that, he was bound to say, was of the most serious character.

(Bulwer-Lytton 197)

Fenwick faces the nightmare of empiricism, that his personal experience is no longer in line with his culture's definition of the plausible. At the heart of this conflict is the clash between two elements of empiricism itself: the reliance on the evidence of the senses and the adherence to notions of "common sense" or the everyday. While the first allows for individual testimony, the second depends on consensus, agreement, and majority rule. Because of his experience, "outside the set" of common-sense, Fenwick's ability to rely on his greatest treasure, the power of his own intellect, is the first casualty in his confrontation with the occult.

The loss of Derval's manuscript is another of the symptoms of Fenwick's losing battle with occult forces. This loss is part of an ongoing contentious relationship with the act of writing and the production of proof which Fenwick suffers throughout the novel. After all, Fenwick's articles on chemistry attract Margrave's attention in the first place. After Derval's death, the only support for Derval's claims to have discovered—or

rather, recovered from the discarded past—amazing scientific truths is the manuscript he leaves behind. Reading that text, Fenwick first encounters Derval's combination of modern science, Western society's disavowed alchemical past, and foreign knowledge that promises to revolutionize Fenwick's own plodding forays into scientific discovery. Derval's manuscript makes reference to a prior "collection of manuscripts" in his ancestral home, describing

astrological observations and predictions;...the nature of the Cabbalah;...the invocation of spirits and the magic of the dark ages.... But along with these shadowy lucubrations were treatises of a more uncommon and more startling character; discussions on various occult laws of nature, and detailed accounts of analytical experiments. These opened a new, and what seemed to Sir Philip a practical, field of inquiry—a true border-land between natural science and imaginative speculation.

(Bulwer-Lytton 177)

At the frontiers of scientific thought, Derval's manuscript entices Fenwick with the promise of the verifiability of its outrageous claims. It is itself evidence of an encounter in an intellectual contact zone, a "border-land" not only between natural science and speculation, but also between Western notions of scientific progress, which depend upon the solitary scientist working toward discovery in his field, and a "foreign" model in which knowledge is preserved through generations, and passed from teacher to student as an inheritance. The record of this foreign knowledge in the form of the manuscript constitutes its potential legitimation for Fenwick. As he states at the beginning of his narrative, "I dismissed as idle all conjecture that could not be brought to a practical test;" the manuscript tempts with its promise that its claims can be proven (Bulwer-Lytton 13). Its source in Eastern mysticism is relatively unimportant in light of its claim to verifiability. In order to secure this knowledge, Derval writes that "the taste he had

imbibed for occult studies led him towards those Eastern lands in which they took their origin, and still retain their professors” (Bulwer-Lytton 177). The written report of these discoveries likewise tempts Fenwick to a journey, but to a new intellectual territory in which he hopes to discover “an art of magic,” knowledge of which allows access to “certain latent powers and affinities in nature...akin to that [philosophy] which we receive in our acknowledged schools, inasmuch as it is equally based upon experiment, and produces from definite causes definite results” (Bulwer-Lytton 178). It is important to note that Fenwick values the manuscript not as an occult record, or as evidence of the greatness of its author, but rather as a potential resource for new directions in scientific experimentation. Where Derval failed to tempt Fenwick into a new perspective, the manuscript seduces with its promise of new fruits to be won while allowing Fenwick’s reliable scientific methodology to remain intact. It functions as a sort of passport into the territory that Fenwick previously believed did not exist.

The fetishized nature of the written text in Fenwick’s understanding is revealed when the manuscript disappears. Alone in Derval’s study, a phantom appears to Fenwick and paralyzes him; when he comes to, the manuscript is gone. During the interval in which the authorities suspect him of murder, he believes that the manuscript might function as proof of his innocence:

Had that manuscript of Sir Philip’s been available—substantial record of marvellous events by a man of repute for intellect and learning—I might, perhaps, have ventured to startle the solicitor of L— with my revelations. But the sole proof that all which the solicitor urged me to confide was not a monstrous fiction or an insane delusion had disappeared; and its disappearance was part of the terrible mystery that enveloped the whole.

(Bulwer-Lytton 197)

Fenwick's belief in the verificational capacity of the manuscript is frustrated, however, when it is only partially recovered. A housekeeper claiming that "the Devil put it into her head" to take and burn the manuscript is discovered to be holding it (Bulwer-Lytton 221). Unfortunately, the salient information it contained has been destroyed:

the part burned—reduced, indeed, to tinder—was the concluding part that related to Haroun—to Grayle [who Derval claims is Margrave's alter-ego]: no vestige of that part was left; the earlier portions were scorched and mutilated, though in some places still decipherable; but as my eye hastily ran over those places, I saw only mangled sentences of the experimental problems which the writer had so minutely elaborated.

(Bulwer-Lytton 221)

Fenwick suspects that the housekeeper has fallen under the spell of the same phantom that appeared to him in the study. The recovery of the manuscript in partial form denies him that access to the twilight world of science and magic which it earlier promised. From this point forward, he must engage with the occult forces confronting him without the authenticating discourse Derval's manuscript offered. With its loss, the world of the novel passes from potentially enlightened discovery into the dark territory of the occult, with Margrave himself as the only possible guide and reference point. According to Fenwick's Western model, which requires that all claims be verifiable, the destruction of the manuscript's experimental guidelines is equivalent to the destruction of the only acceptable mode of inheritance of the knowledge to which it lays claim, the reproduction and thus the legitimation of its experiments. It also constitutes a loss of Derval's access to the immortality Western modes of knowledge offer. Fenwick laments: "O mind of man, can the works, on which thou wouldst found immortality below, be annulled into smoke and tinder by an inch of candle in the hand of an old woman!" (Bulwer-Lytton 221). The dependence of fame, which Fenwick identifies with immortality, on the

fragile materials of the manuscript exposes the extreme contingency of the Western paradigm of success, on which Fenwick has relied so heavily in his life's work.

Fenwick's ongoing battle to preserve his place in the intellectual territory of European science continues after he believes Margrave has left the town where he lives. In his retreat from the realm of the occult following Margrave's departure, Fenwick attempts to use his own work to place himself more firmly in the realm of common sense, where the world of knowledge is readily transparent to his scientific gaze. He tells his mentor, Julius Faber, "I regain the unclouded realm of my human intelligence; and, in that intelligence, I mock the sorcerer and disdain the spectre" (Bulwer-Lytton 236). Faber approves of this retreat, and enables Fenwick to explain the supernatural events he has witnessed as the hallucinations of an overtaxed mind. He invites Fenwick to turn his own empiricism to the examination of those experiences: "The more minutely you analyze your own hallucinations...the more they assume the usual characteristics of a dream; contradictory, illogical, even in the marvels they represent" (Bulwer-Lytton 233). Faber assumes the appearance of a different type of authority from that of Sir Derval, offering the assurances of rational thought and the transparency of earthly phenomena. However, Faber has further demands to make of Fenwick, which, like Derval's invitation to act for the sake of defending humanity, require that Fenwick make a mental transition.

Faber is quick to remind Fenwick of the dangers of his philosophical stance as strict empiricist. Upon reading Fenwick's treatise, he offers the criticism that Fenwick has dismissed that other territory of thought, religious feeling. Significantly, Faber's critique places Fenwick in the role of disadvantaged explorer of foreign territory, presuming to explain that which he does not fully comprehend:

Alas, my poor Allen! here, perhaps, hallucination, or self-deception, is more apparent than in all the strange tales you confided to me. For here is the hallucination of the man seated on the shore of Nature, and who would say to its measureless sea: 'so far shalt thou go, and no farther'; here is the hallucination of the creature, who, not content with exploring the laws of the Creator, ends with submitting to his interpretation of some three or four laws, in the midst of a code of which all the rest are in language unknown to him—the powers and free-will of the Lawgiver himself; here is the hallucination by which Nature is left Godless, because Man is left Soulless.... Why mete out...the earth and the sea, and number the sands that divide them, if the end of this wisdom be a handful of dust sprinkled over a skull!

(Bulwer-Lytton 239)

According to Faber's construction, Fenwick is the perpetual foreigner, struggling to understand the customs and languages of a new land, while simultaneously attempting to systematize the few pieces of information on which he can get a firm grasp. What is remarkable about this passage is that Faber recognizes the fruitlessness of the systematizing gaze that is unable to capture the spirit of the matter at hand. Even more remarkable is his advice to Fenwick: "Burn your book" (Bulwer-Lytton 242). Faber depicts Fenwick's hardened empiricism as harmful to himself and to others; he characterizes the exclusion of religious knowledge from Fenwick's system as misleading and wrongheaded. The beginning point of Faber's influence on Fenwick lies in this suggestion, that he expand his intellectual territory to include that which he cannot know according to his strict requirements for proof.

But this is not the only way in which Faber calls upon Fenwick to expand: in addition to inviting him to loosen the boundaries Fenwick draws between correct thought and speculation, Faber also convinces him that the resolution to his difficulties lies in moving to Australia, where both Faber and Fenwick hope the change of scene will help Fenwick's mentally ill wife, Lillian. While he has been building his philosophical

system, a cruel letter from a neighbour throws Lillian into a dissociative state. Fenwick recognizes that his retreat into empirical certainty has left Lillian open to attack:

While I had, indeed, been preparing my reason and my fortitude to meet such perils, weird and marvellous, as those by which tales round the winter fireside scare the credulous child, a contrivance so vulgar and hackneyed that not a day passes but what some hearth is vexed by an anonymous libel, had wrought a calamity more dread than aught which my dark guess into the Shadow-land unpierced by Philosophy could trace to the prompting of malignant witchcraft.

(Bulwer-Lytton 310)

Having fled from the disavowed intellectual territories of the occult, Fenwick finds his own empire of thought helpless against the mundane forces that threaten his household. Thus he suffers another of the shocks of empire's transformations: he must become the settler subject, moving to the geographical frontier to participate in the practical work of empire.

In this new colony, Fenwick's contentious relationship with the production of Western knowledge continues. Once at the centre of British philosophical and scientific discourse, he clings to his life's work to maintain his sense of connectedness with the projects of his homeland. Fenwick constructs a building apart from his house to serve as his study, and retreats to it. Thus isolated, he imagines his work to be a crucial part of his identity:

My Work, my Philosophical Work—the ambitious hope of my intellectual life—how eagerly I returned to it again. Far away from my household grief, far away from my haggard perplexities—neither a Lillian nor a Margrave there!...the Work was I myself! I, in my solid, sober, healthful mind, before the brain had been perplexed by a phantom. Were phantoms to be allowed as testimonies against science? No; in returning to my Book I returned to my former Me!

(Bulwer-Lytton 353)

Fenwick struggles to close the gap between himself and the home culture that would support him in his philosophical work; he effectively ignores the fact that there is no one to witness his success. He writes, "Here, in the barbarous desert, was a link between me and the cities of Europe. All else might break down under me....my heart might be lonely, my life be an exile's.... But here, at least, was a monument of my rational, thoughtful Me—of my individualized identity in multiform creation" (Bulwer-Lytton 354). Alone in the cultural desert of the new colony, Fenwick clings to what Alan Lawson characterizes as the settler's reassurance that he "enacts colonial authority on behalf of the imperial enterprise which he...represents; the Settler subject mimics the authentic imperial culture from which he...is separated" (Lawson 157). However, Fenwick's claim to this authority, expressed through his written treatise, falls short of endowing him with the tools necessary to find success as a settler. A final alteration in his subject position will allow him to make the transition from domestic citizen to settler; this alteration consists in the adoption of the transcendent values of spirituality promoted by Faber, and already present in the native inhabitants of Australia.

Among the difficulties Fenwick faces in making the transition from man of science to settler is his lack of hope in his future happiness in marriage. Lillian's poor health annuls Fenwick's drive to develop his homestead:

The avocation of a colonist, usually so active, had little interest for me. This vast territorial lordship, in which, could I have endeared its possession by the hopes that animate a Founder, I should have felt all the zest and pride of ownership, was but the run of a common to the passing emigrant, who would leave no son to inherit the tardy products of his labor. I was not goaded to industry by the stimulus of need. I could only be ruined if I risked all my capital in the attempt to improve. I lived, therefore, amongst my fertile pastures, as careless of culture as the English occupant of the Highland moor, which he rents for the range of its solitudes.

(Bulwer-Lytton 354)

According to Fenwick's construction, he requires that ineffable quality, hope, which he feels he could gain if he had a reason—or, in his specific case, a son. Fenwick's reluctance to adopt the forward-looking role of Founder is thus linked to his fear that his genealogical lineage will end with him; the landscape therefore becomes an aesthetic object rather than the site of potential imperial development. Believing that Lillian's condition will not improve, Fenwick remains locked in the belief that immortality is to be won through his work, rather than through more pedestrian modes of reproduction. By the end of the novel, however, he will find that hope for the future lies outside the guarantees of reason, a discovery that will allow him to become a settler.

The landscape itself plays a key role in the final transformation of Fenwick's imperial subject position. Bulwer-Lytton presents Australia as a lush land of ripe opportunity and natural religion. In this land, Faber, who manages to find happiness with his daughter and son-in-law's family, continues to coach Fenwick to abandon his strict empiricist mindset. Reeling after one of their protracted discussions, Fenwick wanders and gets caught in a thunderstorm. Emerging from the cave in which he has waited out the storm, he finds a rich vein of gold on what he realizes is his property. Again, his personal difficulties stand in the way of the development of this resource: "I closed my eyes; for some moments, visions of boundless wealth, and the royal power such wealth could command, swept athwart my brain. But my heart rapidly settled back to its real treasure: 'What matters,' I sighed, 'all this dross?'" (Bulwer-Lytton 337). Material wealth cannot resolve Fenwick's problem; he is caught in the limbo of his frustrated hopes for a family. Even with the resources of this lush young land offering

themselves to him, he cannot develop them without the forward-looking optimism that Empire requires of its settler subjects.

The racial other in Bulwer-Lytton's text here takes on a positive role in the transformation of Fenwick's identity. As if to indicate a possible resolution to his frustrated hopes, Fenwick experiences a curious moment of contact with an indigenous group immediately following his discovery of the gold. Face to face with these "savage natives," Fenwick obtains momentary insight into his own position as a man confronted with the unknown:

I...sought to find and to face these dastardly foes; they contrived to elude me. But when I moved on, my ears, sharpened by danger, heard them moving, too, in my rear. Once only three hideous forms suddenly faced me, springing up from a thicket, all tangled with honeysuckles and creepers of blue and vermillion. I walked steadily up to them; they halted a moment or so in suspense, but perhaps they were scared by my stature or awed by my aspect; and the Unfamiliar, though Human, had terror for them, as the Unfamiliar, although but a Shadow, had had terror for me. They vanished, and as quickly as if they had crept into the earth.

(Bulwer-Lytton 337)

In this encounter with the "dastardly foes" that trail him, Fenwick almost manages to make a connection with his own status as settler subject—in Lawson's terms, "a site of a very particular dual inscription; a place that is colonized at the same time as it is colonizing" (Lawson 157). In Bulwer-Lytton's text, the threat of the supernatural forces that have haunted Fenwick stands in the same relation to Fenwick-as-settler as the empire itself, desiring to recruit him for its colonizing project. The momentary recognition of the same terror evoked by the colonizer in the faces of these "savages" offers him a reflection, although momentarily and, as it were, darkly, of his own terror. Although Fenwick is aware of empire's claims upon him as a settler, that he should work to develop the new land he occupies, he cannot accept this role. Instead, these claims are

sublimated into the terrors of the unknown, the phantom that threatens to destroy his system, the occult forces that seek to recruit him, and the Christian spirituality he refuses to accept.

The resolution to Fenwick's struggles lies in part in the margins of Bulwer-Lytton's text itself; here, in the series of substantial "editorial notes" offered to the reader by "Bulwer-Lytton-as-editor," the connection between the transcendent Christianity urged upon Fenwick by Faber and the settler's impulse to indigenize is made explicit. The function of these notes is largely to offer the reader bibliographical information on the many philosophers and scientists Fenwick and Faber cite in their conversations; many of the notes also point out the positive roles of mysticism, the occult, and spiritualism in the lives and works of these thinkers. Just prior to Fenwick's encounter with his "savage natives," however, a footnote appears, an annotation of a point Faber makes about the natural religious tendency of even the most benighted, uncivilized groups. The note corrects a mistaken impression regarding Australian indigenes specifically. It states,

It is set forth, for example, in most of the popular works on Australia, that the Australian savages have no notion of a Deity or a Hereafter; that they only worship a devil, or evil spirit. This assumption, though made more peremptorily, and by a greater number of writers than any similar one regarding other savages, is altogether erroneous, and has no other foundation than the ignorance of the writers. The Australian savages recognize a Deity, but He is too august for a name in their own language; in English they call Him The Great Master—an expression synonymous with "The Great Lord." They believe in a hereafter of eternal joy, and place it among the stars.

(Bulwer-Lytton 333)

This note substantiates Faber's claim to the natural religion of native populations. It also suggests the resolution to Fenwick's troubled subject position: if people in their

“savage” state can come to basically the same monotheistic conclusions as Westerners, then there must be some compulsion to believe the correctness of those conclusions. The note’s flirtation with the relations of power in the substitution of “Lord” for the less common “Master” in reference to God hints at without stating the other benefit of the acceptance of Christianity for Fenwick: in his acceptance of a “higher power” that will facilitate his spiritual happiness, he will also attain greater happiness in his role as a subject of empire, in which he must accept a less central, more obedient, position.

Although as man of science Fenwick is lord of his own realm of discovery, as settler he is a worker under the aegis of imperial colonizing projects. The implication for Fenwick of Faber’s assertion that the natives have access to natural religion is that if natives willingly take on the yoke of servitude, then he should not hesitate to put it on as well.

This strange suggestion, that Fenwick should emulate the indigene, is related to Lawson’s claim regarding the second criterion of the settler subject: that he “exercises authority over the indigene and the land while translating his...desire for the indigene and for the land...into a desire for native authenticity in a long series of familiar historical and fictional narratives of psychic encounter and indigenization” (Lawson 157).

Fenwick’s transitory moment of identification in the woods, while it fails to impress him, becomes significant in light of the impulse toward indigenization that the settler subject enacts in his struggle to legitimate his presence in foreign territory.

In order for these clues to the development of Fenwick’s subject position to resolve themselves, two distinct changes must occur: a final transformation of his intellectual position, and the restoration of his domestic happiness. Both of these changes are expressed through Fenwick’s feelings about that chimera of empirical thought, the

real. Having undergone assault by the occult forces he cannot reconcile with common sense, Fenwick is unable to reckon with the ordinary, that which he once took for granted. He now finds it repugnant; he questions “the absorbing tyranny of everyday life...[that] hastens to bury in its sands the object which has troubled its surface; the more unaccountable, the more prodigious has been the phenomenon which has scared and astounded us; the more, with involuntary effort, the mind seeks to rid itself of an enigma which might disease the reason that tries to solve it” (Bulwer-Lytton 258). While Faber urges that Fenwick accept “the probability of a future life” after death (Bulwer-Lytton 353), he also recommends the adoption of pragmatism. In the intellectual climax of the novel, preceding the return of Margrave and the climax of the novel’s action, Faber tells Fenwick that “the happiest art of intellect, however lofty, is that which enables it to be cheerfully at home with the Real” (Bulwer-Lytton 341). Adopting this credo, however, requires a more slippery definition of reality than Fenwick has been willing to accept. Struggling to settle intellectually as well as physically, Fenwick realizes he has spent too much time wandering in the shadows with the occult forces that have pursued him. He realises that his previous strict definition of reality, delimited by common sense in its most tyrannical form, has held him in thrall to these occult influences:

The moment we deal with things beyond our comprehension, and on which our own senses are appealed to and baffled, we revolt from the Probable, as it seems to the senses of those who have not experienced what we have. And the same principle of Wonder that led our philosophy up from inert ignorance into restless knowledge, now winding back into Shadowland, reverses its rule by the way, and, at last, leaves us lost in the maze, our knowledge inert, and our ignorance restless.

(Bulwer-Lytton 384)

Fenwick opens himself to the possibility that his strict worldview has led him astray; in order to become “at home with the real,” he must abandon that definition of reality that

allowed him to build his empire of thought in the first place. The demands of empire require Fenwick's transition from staunch empiricist to pragmatic settler, relinquishing his belief that the objects of the senses foster knowledge in a reliable and consistent way. Instead, the Australian landscape will soon be transformed into evidence of quite another reality than that of plant, animals, and savages; it will become his key to understanding the transcendent.

Before he can take his place in the Australian colonial landscape as the settler subject, however, Fenwick must undergo a final test of his credulity. In this test, he will not only reconcile himself to the mundane activities of the homestead, but he will also adopt one of the values of the settler: hope for the future. Margrave arrives at Fenwick's study once again, claiming to have learned the exact method for the manufacture of the elixir of life. Bargaining for a portion of the elixir to save Lillian, Fenwick agrees to help the desperately ill Margrave. Margrave tells Fenwick that he does not need Fenwick's scientific knowledge, but rather his skepticism for the experiment, for the alchemical process will evoke the violent attentions of supernatural forces beyond the normal realm of perception. It is at this point in the narrative that the desire of the occult, to employ Fenwick in its plans, reveals its status as racial other. Bulwer-Lytton's text configures the threat of racial otherness by splitting the spiritual qualities of the indigenous population of Australia from their more dangerous potentials. Other authors in Bulwer-Lytton's time depicted Australian aborigines as inherently threatening to British projects: Brantlinger notes that "Samuel Sidney, author of *Sidney's Australian Handbook*...believed that, if it proved difficult to gun down aborigines, poison might do the trick" (Brantlinger 125). Bulwer-Lytton's distinction between racial and occult other

allows him to positively value the indigene, while transferring the notion of racial competition onto the occult forces that have threatened Fenwick throughout the novel.

The first step in this transference is racial othering of Margrave himself. In conversation with Fenwick, Margrave claims that he is not Louis Grayle, who Derval claimed stole the elixir of life from the Sage of Aleppo. Rather, Margrave hints that he is Grayle's "love-son" (Bulwer-Lytton 377). Margrave himself speculates that his mother is the mysterious veiled Indian woman who raised him, and who has travelled with him to Australia to tend him in his illness. The dangers of Margrave's occult powers and his wrongful ravaging after life are heightened by the suggestion of the taint of miscegenation he carries. H. L. Malchow writes that, in the wake of the Indian Mutiny of 1857, "even a discreet concubinage became increasingly less acceptable for British officers.... Subsequently, the half-caste, whatever his or her antecedents, was bound to be associated with a 'social evil'" (Malchow 208). The hint at Margrave's half-caste racial status, would probably have rendered his desire to rule over nature through the consumption of the elixir of life more sinister to Bulwer-Lytton's audience. Margrave declares his desire to become a superior being in Nature's hierarchy: "Oh again, oh again! to enjoy the freedom of air with the bird, and the glow of the sun with the lizard; to sport through the blooms of the earth, Nature's playmate and darling; to face, in the forest and the desert, the pard and the lion—Nature's bravest and fiercest—her first-born, the heir of her realm, with the rest of her children for slaves!" (Bulwer-Lytton 361). The possibility of Margrave's half-caste status renders his desire to become nature's "first-born" particularly wrongful in the world of Bulwer-Lytton's text.

It is perhaps Margrave's racial status which causes Fenwick to make the first

declaration in his narrative of his own racial identity, an identity that has been invisible up to this point. Disgusted by an Arabian member of Margrave's entourage, Fenwick is possessed by a feeling of racial pride: "[I had] rather, a hundred times, front and defy those seven Eastern slaves—I, haughty son of the Anglo-Saxon who conquers all races because he fears no odds—than have seen again, on the walls of my threshold, the luminous, bodiless Shadow" (Bulwer-Lytton 394). For Fenwick, fear of Margrave's slaves—a formidable and well-armed group—is transferred directly to the fear of the unknown; this transfer will be confirmed by the climax to Bulwer-Lytton's novel, in which, as we will see, the forces of the occult are depicted as an invading racial other. The fear Margrave invokes is reinforced by the revelation that he might be himself racially tainted; his association with his Eastern entourage only confirms this corruption. Fenwick's agreement to participate in Margrave's alchemical experiment signals the entrance into the text of a competing force of colonization: rather than allow the Christian spirituality of his home culture to save Lillian and guarantee his role as settler, Fenwick feels driven to accept Margrave's Eastern techniques. Australia is thus dramatized in Bulwer-Lytton's plot as the site of two contestatory colonizing forces, both configured in the text as otherworldly.

This transference of the site of contention to the realm of the occult is reinforced as Margrave explains Fenwick's role in the alchemical experiment. He tells Fenwick that although the substances to be used in the manufacture of the elixir are not themselves dangerous, the experiment itself will expose the men to the colonizing forces of the occult world:

there are races in the magnitude of space unseen as animalcules in the world of a drop. For the tribes of the drop, science has its microscope. Of the hosts of yon Azure Infinite magic gains sight, and through them gains command over fluid

conductors that link all the parts of creation. Of these races, some are wholly indifferent to man, some benign to him, and some dreadly hostile.... He who once quaffs that elixir...passes the boundary which divides his allotted and normal mortality from the regions and races that magic alone can explore, so, here, he breaks down the safeguard between himself and the tribes that are hostile.

(Bulwer-Lytton 398-399)

The introduction of the occult races to Bulwer-Lytton's text facilitates an understanding of even the apparently benign act of colonization in which Fenwick participates as having implications for a larger political scene. Bulwer-Lytton's narrative suggests that even as Fenwick struggles to come to terms with the mundane activities of life in the colonies, there is a realm of which he is unaware, whose occupants aggressively desire to enter his territory, and which occupies a separate conceptual space. The specific configuration of this threat as supernatural allows Bulwer-Lytton to covertly depict Australia as the site of interracial conflict, while simultaneously denying that the conflict is enacted within exclusively human populations. As Margrave's explanation continues, Bulwer-Lytton suggests the real-world colonial discourse behind this notion of occult inhuman races:

Is it not ever thus between man and man? Let a race most gentle and timid and civilized dwell on one side a river or mountain, and another have home in the region beyond; each, if it pass not the intervening barrier, may with each live in peace. But if ambitious adventurers scale the mountain, or cross the river, with design to subdue and enslave the populations they boldly invade, then all the invaded arise in wrath and defiance—the neighbours are changed into foes. And therefore this process, by which a simple though rare material of nature is made to yield to a mortal the boon of a life which brings...desires and faculties to subject to its service beings that dwell in the earth...has ever been one of the same peril which an invader must brave when he crosses the bounds of his nation.

(Bulwer-Lytton 399)

The climax of Bulwer-Lytton's text reveals the competitive motivation of empire underlying the work of the settler-subject: through the deployment of the occult

thematics which haunt his story of Fenwick's transformation into the settler subject, Bulwer-Lytton dramatizes the competition of nations for new colonial territory which must form the background to any act of colonization.

Fenwick's agreement to participate in the experiment is driven by his desperation to save Lillian and return to the comforts of the real. Fenwick responds to Margrave's warning: "I do not merit the trust you affect in my courage...but I am now on my guard against the cheats of the fancy.... You and I are both brave from despair.... Both know how little aid we can win from the colleges, and both, therefore, turn to the promises most audaciously cheering" (Bulwer-Lytton 400). This moment marks a substantial alteration in Fenwick's attachment to European academic practice. Although he has rejected both the occult and the staid methods of scientific learning, he is willing to find recourse in whatever will be most likely to produce the results he desires. His new position must be something between that of the calculating Margrave, willing to pillage the otherworldly resources of the occult, and the overcautious European schools, who fail to explore the full resources of their own intellectual past in pursuit of the valuable cure Fenwick needs.

This partial repudiation of the intellectual traditions of Europe will soon be abandoned in favour of Fenwick's embrace of its religious traditions. Related to this new faith in the security of his worldly projects is his constitution of the occult "races" that threaten him as harmless. This conceptual act is enabled through his identification of these "races" with the relatively benign aboriginal population which decorates the Australian landscape. Prior to these two acts of new understanding, however, Fenwick suffers through a night of hallucinogenic terror in the wilderness as he and Margrave

attempt to make the elixir. Among the strange sights that Fenwick witnesses during the experiment is a group of giant floating eyes, and a giant foot that intrudes into the protective magic circle the men have drawn around themselves. This foot, with “the sound of its tread, a roll of muttered thunder,” knocks Fenwick to the ground (Bulwer-Lytton 410-411). Margrave’s warning about the colonizing intentions of the occult races the experiment evokes is here literally expanded upon: the giant foot has no trouble intruding upon the territory the men have defined for themselves. Despite the terror this night evokes, Fenwick is able to conceptually dismiss his experience as hallucination. In part, this is a result of the end of his belief that the occult might save Lillian. When he comes to, Fenwick sees that the elixir has been spilled on the ground. The threat of Margrave’s occult intrusions is also ended: Margrave has died of shock. Having rejected the chimeras of his own scientific tradition and lost the fruits of his final foray into Margrave’s shadowland, Fenwick has recourse only to Faber’s values, which once again enable him to rationalize the strange things he has witnessed: “Doubtless the sights and the sounds which had haunted the last gloomy night, the calm reason of Faber would strip of their magical seemings; the Eyes in the space and the Foot in the circle might be those of no terrible Demons, but of the wild’s savage children whom I had seen, halting curious and mute, in the light of the morning” (Bulwer-Lytton 416-417). In his return to Faber’s pedestrian reality, ruled by the pragmatic reconciliation with the real that his own empiricism could not allow, Fenwick is able to collapse the occult racial threat he has witnessed into the benign racial other of the Australian aborigines. This major transformation, combined with Margrave’s death, enables Fenwick to deny the presence of the threatening forces which desire to colonize his world, which he now

equates with mundane reality. Among the techniques of empire Bulwer-Lytton covertly expresses, then, is the settler's insistence on the separation of his own work in the colony from the political competition with other nations that it also entails.

On his way back home, Fenwick must rally himself against the possibility that Lillian has also died in the night. Again, Faber's emphasis on the importance of Christian faith allows Fenwick to accept the range of outcomes the future might hold for him. The novel's true alchemical transformation lies in Fenwick's ability to unite the real with the hope that has previously eluded him:

Man and fiend had alike failed a heart not feeble and selfish, not dead to the hero's devotion, willing to shed every drop of its blood for a something more dear than an animal's life for itself! What remained—what remained for man's hope?—man's mind and man's heart thus exhausting their all with no other result than despair? What remained but the mystery of mysteries, so clear to the sunrise of childhood, the sunset of age, only dimmed by the clouds which collect round the noon of our manhood? Where yet was Hope found? In the soul; in its every-day impulse to supplicate comfort and light, from the Giver of Soul; wherever the heart is afflicted, the mind is obscured.

(Bulwer-Lytton 415-416)

Fenwick's "hope" is an indicator of the pragmatic application of his newly-acquired religious faith; in accepting that his future will be guided by a higher power, he attains the benefit of looking forward, and gains a guarantee of his ability to reconcile himself to earthly reality. Once the lord of his own kingdom of thought, Fenwick becomes the submissive subject: "I prayed that my soul might be fitted to bear with submission whatever my Maker might ordain" (Bulwer-Lytton 416). Fenwick's new belief in a higher power allows him to transform the mundane physical reality that surrounds him into evidence of transcendence, and to resolve the conundrum that has troubled him through a newly-acquired optimism, through the contemplation of the future as

guaranteed to be good, despite its lack of transparency. In keeping with the novel's themes of the intrusion of the otherworldly into the everyday, Fenwick conflates his newfound religious belief with his reasons to hope for his earthly future: he prays that if Lillian has died, "my Maker...[would] guide my steps that they might rejoin her at last, and, in rejoining, regain forever!" (Bulwer-Lytton 416). As if in reward for his transformation, he learns that Lillian has recovered. Fenwick's transformation enables him to embrace a subject position that will properly outfit him to embrace the tasks of the settler. Detached from the metropolitan centre of Europe, detached also from the hope of fame that previously sustained him, Fenwick finds reassurance in the unexaminable, the belief that transcends proof, which he now views as "natural." From this new perspective, the "proof" for the existence of God—that Fenwick himself yearns for a future state—reconciles him to the mysterious relation between himself and two higher powers: the transcendent power of religion to heal and guarantee his life's course, and the power of empire, which also requires Fenwick's investment of belief beyond proof in its plans for him.

Fenwick's transformations in his relationship with reality, common sense, and the everyday might be understood in terms of the shocks suffered by the imperial domestic subject as he is transformed into the good settler. In Bulwer-Lytton's text, this disorienting transition is itself perhaps as strange as the occult events to which his title refers. Ultimately, Fenwick's reconciliation with his new subject position offers him a challenge more difficult than the confrontation with sense data he cannot accept, for it requires the acceptance of his own subordination to a master plan, figured in the novel as Divine will, beyond his control and largely opaque to his understanding. In *A Strange Story*, empire by turns encourages and repudiates Fenwick's strict empiricism. While his

strict requirement for proof lends him the courage necessary to venture into new geographical and occult territory, it must ultimately be abandoned in favour of hope, the source of which cannot be seen or sensed, but only accepted wholesale.

Chapter Two

Empire Unveiled: H. Rider Haggard's *She*

While the more violent forces of empire remain obscured in Bulwer-Lytton's *A Strange Story*, the title character of H. Rider Haggard's *She* confronts his English protagonists with a representation of empire as the embodiment of absolute power, fully embracing its drive to conquer all that it surveys. The shock facing Horace Holly and his adopted son Leo Vincey lies not in their transformations into men of action, for they are already possessed of the adventurous qualities lacking in Allen Fenwick. Rather, they are presented with the conundrum of an engagement with an imperialism more powerful than that of their home culture. This imperial force is embodied in She herself, the practically immortal Arabian woman, Ayesha. Haggard's text traces the transformations this confrontation evokes as his protagonists become increasingly attracted to Ayesha's plans for world domination. My examination of the means by which Ayesha convinces the men to submit to her imperial plans will focus in particular on Holly's role in

Haggard's text, for two reasons. First, because Holly is Haggard's narrator, the text more closely records his impressions than it does Vincey's. Second, and more importantly, as the more intellectual of the pair, Holly offers insight into the means by which Ayesha's power coerces through its logic, and thus allows us to examine the links between imperial might and empirical and scientific rhetorics.

Holly and Vincey begin their imperial adventure under the impetus of an ostensibly empirical mission: to discover the truth behind a series of documents that purport to explain the Vincey family's origin. These documents also record an encounter with an apparent anomaly, a white queen who rules an Arabic-speaking tribe in the wilds of Africa. To Haggard's protagonists' surprise, they encounter this queen, who terrorizes and fascinates them with her power. However, something even more terrorizing than Ayesha is waiting for Holly and Vincey in Africa. During their journey, they encounter overwhelming evidence of still greater forces that threaten to annihilate even the most powerful empire: dissolution and death. While empire in the form of She-who-must-be-obeyed promises to catastrophically alter the course of world history, the knowledge of the fragility of human projects urges Holly and Vincey to a mystical alliance with her. Haggard's text thus reveals the drive for catastrophic change that underlies empire's projects, and the apocalyptic fears that this drive seeks to camouflage. In choosing to support Ayesha's absolute exercise of power, Holly and Vincey come to believe that they can avoid what Haggard's text constructs as its opposite. In the climax of the novel, Ayesha's death dissolves this binary. Configured in the text as the result of the limits of eternal law, the failure of Ayesha's attempt to exercise her power in the world supports a more moderate approach to the implementation of imperial force.

Nonetheless, the intersections of imperial, empiricist, and scientific ideology which cause Holly and Vincey to travel to Africa and which result in their agreement to become part of Ayesha's imperial project suggest that Haggard's surprise ending is not as dismissive of Ayesha's values as it at first appears to be. In what follows, I will attempt to trace these intersections, and demonstrate that the residual effect of Ayesha's influence on Holly and Vincey is not entirely incompatible with the values of Victorian British culture.

The dichotomy Haggard's text establishes between the threat of imperial dissolution and death on the one hand, and the drive to attain power and conquer on the other, is echoed both in the discoveries of Victorian science and in the disavowals of empiricism. Although Victorian science became increasingly driven by the dream of progress, the discoveries it made occasionally manifested as nightmares. Etherington points out that in *She*, the repeating tropes of the dissolution of empires and the fragility of human existence echo certain Victorian discoveries in physics, what he calls "the newly discovered terrors of nineteenth-century science:"

The Second Law of Thermodynamics, first enunciated by Sadi Carnot in 1824 and definitively stated by Lord Kelvin in 1851, decreed that heat cannot be transferred from a colder to a warmer body; it carried the cosmic implication that energy in the universe was dissipating in an entropic process that would inevitably end in a total coldness and deadness.... Haggard links a similar vision...to a great range of themes: the mortality of individuals and the vanity of their feeble efforts to cheat death through embalming or pompous funerals, the impermanence of empires, and the terror of an unstoppable progress toward nothingness in a Darwinian universe governed by chance and conflict.

(Etherington 230)

Caruth notes that the inability to encompass death and the losses it entails is among the difficulties confronting empiricist systems. In her discussion of Locke's example of the

madness of an excessively mourning mother who has suffered the death of her child (Locke II.33-13), she states,

In the child's death...the mother faces only an absence, a blank. And this absence, moreover, is precisely what is proper to the child: in dying, the child is properly connected with the idea of death. Indeed, "death" becomes the child's *only* "property" because in dying it loses all empirical properties whatsoever, and the term *dead* now names precisely this absencing of the child from the world of perceptual qualities.... The mother's error would seem to consist not in a substitution of one perceptual property for another, not in a substitution of ideas [as in the wrongful connection of ideas in Lockean "association"], but in the insistent linking of the idea of the child with what is not a perception at all.

(Caruth 36)

In light of the terror of traditional empiricism with regard to the absence implied by death, and the ironic discovery of Victorian science that dissolution is precisely where the universe as a whole is headed, the promise of hope for the future Ayesha will offer Holly and Vincey will be rendered much more attractive. The Faustian deal they will engage in with her—exchanging their allegiance to Britain for the transformation of their bodies, and the extension of their lives—resembles the deal they have already made with regard to the British empire itself. This deal exchanges belief in empire's superiority for the avoidance of the insecurities evoked by contemplation of the ultimate fate of humanity. To repudiate Ayesha is in some sense to repudiate the belief in any imperial project, and the continued meaning-making that such projects make possible.

At the beginning of *She*, Holly and Vincey occupy positions of skepticism similar to that of Fenwick in *A Strange Story*; however, an important difference emerges both in terms of Holly's temporal placement in his own narrative, and in terms of the nature of the men's education. The narrative time of *She*, told by Holly, is figured as time past, after the experiences he narrates have occurred. Although this is apparently

Fenwick's narrative, he does little to explain the differences between his narrative self and his "present" position. Holly, on the other hand, admits to having changed his perspective as a result of his experience. Describing the wild story his colleague, the Elder Vincey, tells him one night, Holly admits that "The whole story, on reflection, seemed to me utterly incredible, for I was not then old enough to be aware how many things happen in this world that the common sense of the average man would set down as so improbable as to be absolutely impossible. This is a fact that I have only recently mastered" (Haggard 12). Through Holly's narrative time, Haggard allows his readers to prepare for the maverick and prodigious nature story to follow. Holly's world is constructed such that "common sense" and experience might not only contradict each other, but that they often do is part of an elite set of "facts" on which the modified understanding of the characters depends. This modification of standard empiricist formulations will also enable Holly to focus on the specifics of his intellectual alterations under Ayesha's tutelage, and thus to constitute his new conclusions as lingeringly correct, even after her death. Although Ayesha passes away, the residual of her promotion of the exercise of absolute power is preserved in the permanently altered state of Holly's empiricism. This residual, alive in Holly's memory, enables a reading of the British subject which links him more strongly with Ayesha's model of empire than the collapse of her project at the end of the novel might appear to suggest.

More importantly, the techniques of British hegemony with which Holly and Vincey are outfitted at the beginning of *She* themselves result in their movement toward Ayesha's empire. Holly's ability to adapt new information to fit his set of acceptable data is due in part to his prior induction into the science of the foreign through his and Vincey's

education. Vincey's father, who dies at the beginning of Holly's narrative, requests that Holly adopt his son. Among the conditions of this arrangement is that young Vincey will be schooled in foreign languages. Holly reports, "We followed out his father's instructions as regards his education strictly enough, and on the whole the results, especially in the matters of Greek and Arabic, were satisfactory. I learnt the latter language in order to help to teach it to him, but after five years of it he knew it as well as I did" (Haggard 16). Prior to their induction into Ayesha's school of imperial hard knocks, Holly and Vincey are prepared to confront a foreign world that, they expect, will be as readily transparent to them as their Cambridge classrooms. As Said argues, the introduction of more foreign languages to Western education in the nineteenth century contributed to that function by which the West constructed the Orient as completely knowable. Eventually, the expectation of Oriental transparency "overrode the Orient" itself (Said 96). Ironically, while rendering Ayesha's language transparent, Holly's knowledge of it will only serve to facilitate his and Vincey's transition into acolytes assisting her even stronger imperialism. As we will see, discussion plays a key role in Holly's increasing belief in the correctness of Ayesha's application of power and his willingness to participate in her plans.

The characters' intellectual constitutions also compel them to pursue the quest to find the source of Vincey's family history. Although this quest presents itself as a genealogical debt, its appeal for Holly and Vincey lies in its promise of verifiability. Vincey's father lays claim to a family history traceable to ancient Egypt. He passes on the evidence of this claim in a chest which young Vincey opens on his twenty-fifth birthday. A letter enclosed by Vincey's father invites him to take up the quest to find the "*beautiful white woman*" (Haggard 20, emphasis his) who rules over an Arabic-speaking tribe in

Africa, and who is supposed to have found the means of indefinitely extending her life.

This story invites and taunts Vincey with the possibility of exploration, while simultaneously inviting him to cast it aside. In a tease that any good seeker of knowledge, particularly one forearmed with the techniques of the Orientalist, could not resist, the elder Vincey writes,

The unknown is generally taken to be terrible, not as the proverb would infer, from the inherent superstition of man, but because it so often *is* terrible. He who would tamper with the vast and secret forces that animate the world may well fall victim to them.... Choose, my son, and may the Power who rules all things, and who says, “thus far shalt thou go, and thus much shalt thou learn,” direct the choice to your own happiness and the happiness of the world, which, in the event of your success, you would one day certainly rule by the pure force of accumulated experience.

(Haggard 21)

The elder Vincey’s letter offers its readers an apparent contradiction. First, it asserts that a higher power delimits the extent of both imperial and empirical projects. On the other hand, it suggests that Vincey himself might go beyond the bounds of the world of common experience to encounter terror or unprecedented success. That success is significantly configured as experience, the basis of empirical knowledge. The elder Vincey’s letter thus suggests what will be a recurring supposition in Haggard’s text, that the acquisition of experience—an empirical occupation—will increasingly and directly translate into the acquisition of power—a first principle of empire. Haggard’s characters imagine that through this accumulated experience, they will gain the potential to move beyond the limits established by “the Power who rules all things”—that they will somehow escape the notice of the omniscient to construct their own empires without limits. The rest of the narrative will play out the contestatory nature of empire’s drive for increased power and the limits “fate” places on its acquisition.

The prior obligation Holly and Vincey share, to accept the elder Vincey's invitation to investigate Vincey's heritage, is constituted as more than a debt to Vincey's family line. Although Holly's initial reaction to the letter is dismissive, it also reveals the empiricist's desire to see for himself that partially motivates imperial expansion. When Vincey asks him what he thinks, he replies,

I believe that the whole thing is the most unmitigated rubbish. I know there are curious things and forces in nature which we rarely meet with, and, when we do meet them, cannot understand. But until I see it with my own eyes, which I am not likely to, I never will believe that there is any means of avoiding death, even for a time, or that there is or was a white sorceress living in the heart of an African swamp. It is bosh.

(Haggard 34)

Haggard's explorers are equipped with the dual characteristics that make the letter's propositions irresistible: an acknowledgment that curiosities abound in the world, on the one hand; and on the other, that old demand of empiricism that things must be seen to be believed. Vincey's reply to Holly's diatribe summarizes this stance: "I express no opinion. But I say this. I am going to set the matter at rest once and for all, and if you won't come with me I will go by myself" (Haggard 34). For Haggard's protagonists, the lure of the foreign is grounded in the conflation of ancient history with Vincey's personal history. However, in its constitution as fodder for the curiosity-seeker, that history also promises with Alphonse de Lamartine that colonial territory is "the land of prodigies; everything sprouts there"—or might (qtd. Said 178). Presented in the safe guise of archaeology, the rumour of Ayehsa's existence is not yet disruptive enough to cause Haggard's heroes to question their positions as men of education whose knowledge is sufficient to render the foreign transparent. At the beginning of *She*, Holly and Vincey believe that "going and

seeing” what the foreign holds is sufficient to place ancient history in its proper location, in the long-dead past. Again, the men’s confidence, fueled by their education as privileged British subjects, launches them on the investigation that will alter their notions of empire itself.

Although Holly’s and Vincey’s commitment to investigate the elder Vincey’s claims is sufficient to cause them to travel to Africa, it is not enough in itself to cause them to embrace Ayesha’s philosophy upon meeting her. Before their change in allegiances can occur, they must accept their new status as true subordinates to her knowledge and power. They travel to Africa fully armed with European culture’s constitution of its subjects as mentally and physically ready to meet the challenge of new environments. Among the first casualties of their presumption of privilege, however, is that most invisible of their supports of individuality, their whiteness. As they approach Ayesha’s territory their racial identity takes on a new salience. Moving inland from the East Coast of Africa, Holly and Vincey encounter a group of Arabic-speaking natives. The leader of the group, hidden from view by a spear held to Holly’s throat, asks, “What is the colour of the men?” (Haggard 53). The response, that they are white, saves them. The leader speaks: “Slay not.... Four suns since was the word brought to me from ‘*She-who-must-be-obeyed*,’ ‘White men come; if white men come, slay them not’” (Haggard 53). This encounter confirms the support white culture offers its subjects, that whiteness equates with privilege, while disturbingly rendering that privilege contingent. It also disturbingly endows whiteness with the characteristic of markedness it usually repudiates. As Chambers argues, whiteness is constituted in white culture as a category of privilege with the ability to render other racial categories visible (Chambers 142). Ayesha’s ability to

transform the men's whiteness into a marked characteristic is a sign of her power over them; even from a great distance, she is able to render their skin colour a matter of life and death.

This ability itself allows us to account in part for the unquestioned designation of Ayesha herself as white throughout Holly's narrative. The elder Vincey's letter insists upon Ayesha's whiteness, as it reports his own attempt to find her: "I learnt also that the people there speak a dialect of Arabic, and are ruled over by a *beautiful white woman* who is seldom seen by them, but who is reported to have power over all things living and dead" (Haggard 20). In his first encounter with her, Holly describes Ayesha's "white hand (white as snow)" (Haggard 96). Ayesha claims to be "Arabian...by my birth" (Haggard 99). However, this identity does not interfere with her own constitution of herself as white: when she unveils herself to Holly, she asks him to admire the "whiteness of my skin" (Haggard 127). Haggard's text is otherwise aware of Arabian genealogy as equivalent to non-whiteness. In their first encounter with the group of natives, who call themselves the Amahaggar, these people identify Holly's and Vincey's Arabian travelling companion Mahomed as "black" (Haggard 53). This designation proves fatal as he is singled out to be the first man sacrificed in the Amahaggar's cannibalistic ritual (Haggard 69). Ayesha's whiteness, then, must be considered a separate category from the North European designation of itself as white. It is certainly a product of her skin colour, itself perhaps related to her ghostliness (she "is seldom seen" by her subjects, preferring to live in a cave that is also a tomb). However, we must note that skin colour alone does not account for the text's insistence on her whiteness. Rather, Ayesha's identity as white is constituted through her power to differentiate herself from and control even other, lesser forms of

whiteness, such as the men embody. Ayesha's power and immortality constitute her as a separate racial category, a race unto herself. Even as she employs the same techniques of racial categorization and control as Holly's and Vincey's home culture, her possession of superior power and knowledge forces the text's constitution of her as more unquestionably white than Holly and Vincey themselves.

As they approach the discovery of the truth behind the elder Vincey's story, Holly and Vincey are increasingly robbed of the techniques of empiricist thought and imperial superiority on which they have come to rely. Despite the great distance between Holly's group and Ayesha herself, Billali informs them that she knows of their approach; indeed, that she knew of it before they arrived. When Holly asks how this is possible, Billali replies, "Are there none in your land who can see without eyes and hear without ears? Ask no questions; *She* knew" (Haggard 59). Ayesha possesses the ability to disrupt the correct relations between the senses and knowledge of the external world; she disturbingly refuses from the outset to play by the rules of the empiricist game.

As I discussed in the Introduction to this thesis, the classic condescension of the European explorer, mocking the awe of the "ignorant" natives, is upended in Holly's encounter with Ayesha's divining pool technology. Ayesha's command of science, in fields as diverse as chemistry and archaeology, further proves her technological superiority over the men. Perhaps most surprisingly, she claims to have made several forays into the field of eugenics. Alone in conversation with Holly, Ayesha explains that her personal attendants

are mutes, thou knowest, deaf are they and dumb, and therefore the safest of servants.... I bred them so—it has taken many centuries and much trouble; but at last I have triumphed. Once I succeeded before, but the race was too ugly, so I let it

die away; but now, as thou seest, they are otherwise. Once, too, I reared a race of giants, but after a while Nature would have no more of it, and it died away.

(Haggard 104)

Ayesha's command over the natural world is formidable, and her ability to manipulate human life is perhaps even more disturbing. As Holly's narrative continues, he becomes increasingly awed by the superiority of Ayesha's accumulated knowledge over his own. In addition to her techniques of control over human life, her claim to immortality and her beauty cause Holly to question even the evidence of his senses. The function of Holly's empirical mind, to collect new information and assimilate it, becomes disturbed. Like Fenwick's phantom, Ayesha defies and confuses rational attempts to analyze her:

the more I reflected the less I could make of it. Was I mad, or drunk, or dreaming, or was I merely the victim of a gigantic and most elaborate hoax? How was it possible that I, a rational man, not unacquainted with the leading scientific facts of our history, and hitherto an absolute and utter disbeliever in all the hocus-pocus which in Europe goes by the name of the supernatural, could believe that I had within the last few minutes been engaged in conversation with a woman two thousand and odd years old? The thing was contrary to the experience of human nature, and absolutely and utterly impossible.... What, too, of her wonderful and awful loveliness? This, at any rate, was a patent fact, and beyond the experience of the world.

(Haggard 107)

In his confrontation with the "authentic supernatural," Holly risks the loss of his identity as a rational man. Significantly, as his fact-gathering impulse continues to work on the eccentric data he has gathered, only his aesthetic judgment remains intact: the one "patent fact" he is able to gather is that Ayesha is beautiful beyond previous experience. This clinging to a fact that usually falls outside of the empiricist purview is the first evidence of the slippage in moral and ontological perspective that both Holly and Vincey will suffer.

This slippage will in turn allow them entrance into Ayesha's world of power for power's sake.

Beyond the shocks to empiricism and imperialism offered by Ayesha's claims to excessively long life and superior technology, Ayesha seeks to challenge Holly's and Vincey's intellectual views directly, in order that they might better serve her imperial project. Like Fenwick's transformation into the settler subject, this expectation requires a leap of faith beyond the systems they have come to accept. Ayesha insists that she has developed a system of thought to support her projects. After she argues Holly into silence on the topic of religion, he admits that he stands "little chance...against one whose brain was supernaturally sharpened, and who had two thousand years of experience, besides all manner of knowledge of the secrets of Nature at her command! Feeling that she would be more likely to convert me than I should to convert her, I thought it best to leave the matter alone, and so sat silent" (Haggard 129-130). In Haggard's text, the empiricist's totalizing system, absolutely dependent upon sense experience to build its view of the world, must concede to anyone with greater experience, for he or she must be by definition a superior thinker. Ayesha does not stop at this demonstration of her strength, however. She desires to co-opt Holly's opinions, and offers to transform him: "but, my Holly," she says,

art thou weary of me already, that thou dost sit so silently? Or dost thou fear lest I should teach thee my philosophy?—for know I have a philosophy! What would a teacher be without her own philosophy? And if thou dost vex me over much beware! for I will have thee learn it, and thou shalt be my disciple, and we twain will found a faith that shall swallow up all others. Faithless man!

(Haggard 130)

Ayesha's argument is simple, but elegant: she possesses more power than Holly, and in exchange for not exercising it against him, she will recruit him to become an upper-echelon

member of her new society. Although her accusation that Holly is “faithless” is probably a prideful assessment of his current allegiance to her, it is also a key to the shifting function of that term in Holly’s own system. Having admitted that his own religious views are likely to falter in light of Ayesha’s superior argumentation, he faces the likelihood of the replacement of that faith with another, perhaps more logically sound faith: the belief in raw power, in its ability to manufacture a superior system, more compelling than all others. As in *A Strange Story*, there is a slippage between belief in the higher power offered by religion, and the higher power of imperial discourse to control its subjects.

The transformation of Holly into Ayesha’s subject is displayed perhaps most directly in his arguments with her over her decisions as leader of the Amahaggar. Ayesha explains to Holly how her raw power functions in the tribal society she rules. This is among the first of her direct discourses on her application of power. Ultimately, she will neatly dismisses Holly’s morality through recourse to an argument that nicely incorporates a popular scientific trope of his own late Victorian science, Darwinian fitness. Arguing that she should execute those Amahaggar who earlier attempted to kill Holly and Vincey, Ayesha rejects Holly’s request that they be spared. “How thinkest thou that I rule these people?” she asks him.

I have but a regiment of guards to do my bidding, therefore it is not by force. It is by terror. My empire is of the imagination. Once in a generation mayhap I do as I have done but now, and slay a score by torture. Believe not that I would be cruel, or take vengeance on anything so low. What can it profit me to be avenged on such as these? Those who live long, my Holly, have no passions, save where they have interests.

(Haggard 118)

Admitting the use of terror in her techniques of control, Ayesha violates the rules of right thinking and moral correctness in which Holly believes. This conflict will emerge even more strongly in Holly's disagreement with Ayesha's decision to murder Ustane, the Amahaggar woman who has married Vincey according to the rules of her culture. Ayesha believes that Vincey is her lost love Kallikrates, reborn; she tells Holly that this belief necessitates the removal of Ustane:

Is it, then, a crime, O foolish man, to put away that which stands between us and our ends? Then is our life one long crime, my Holly; for day by day we destroy that we may live, since in this world none save the strongest can endure. Those who are weak must perish; the earth is to the strong, and the fruits thereof. For every tree that grows a score shall wither, that the strong ones may take their share. We run to place and power over the dead bodies of those who fail and fall; ay, we win the food we eat from out the mouths of starving babes. It is the scheme of things.

(Haggard 136)

Ayesha's speech cuts through what she perceives as Holly's illogic, the veneer of morality that hides the consequences of his position as a relatively privileged member of an imperial culture. In Ayesha's system, experience, moral relativism, and a historical long view operate to take her outside the laws of right and wrong that constrain Holly's actions and beliefs. But these arguments would have been familiar to Haggard's audience: the naturalization of the projects of empire through the Darwinian notion of "survival of the fittest" was a commonplace in Haggard's day. As Etherington notes, this time period "saw the extension of colonial empires by the sword and the extermination of 'lesser breeds' as harsh but necessary steps toward a better future for all mankind" (Etherington 231). Although Ayesha's bald statement of this belief renders it perhaps shocking, its resemblance to Victorian culture's deployment of Darwinian theory forms another ideological link between it and Ayesha's harsh realm.

Holly's equivocal response to Ayesha's speech reflects his inability to equate her crass statement of murderous intent and the ideology which supports it with his own culture's drive to conquer:

I felt it was hopeless to argue against casuistry of this nature, which, if it were carried out to its logical conclusion, would absolutely destroy all morality, as we understand it. But her talk gave me a fresh thrill of fear, for what may not be possible to a being who, unconstrained by human law, is also absolutely unshackled by a moral sense of right and wrong, which, however partial and conventional it may be, is yet based, as our conscience tells us, upon the great wall of individual responsibility that marks off mankind from the beasts?

(Haggard 136)

Despite all the rhetorical supports Holly has brought with him from England, he is forced by Ayesha's superior power and logic to abandon all but that "partial" moral sense that his home culture supports. His confrontation with a superior power that does not support these claims allows Holly insight into their contingent nature: wholly dependent upon the particularities of his culture, these conventions are ultimately unsupported by the other, stronger conventions of logic which guarantee their safety from precisely this sort of assault.

Holly's moral sense will ultimately be stripped away through an even more terrifying encounter which Ayesha facilitates. She leads Holly and Vincey through the ruins of an ancient city, Kôr, which she tells them was the seat of a great empire. Their drive to archaeologize is frustrated by the terrifying impact of the desolation of this city. Holly cannot avoid taking the failure of this past empire, greater and longer-lived than his own, as a sign of personal significance. Ayesha translates an inscription on the wall of the city's tomb for Holly's benefit:

I, Junis, a priest of the Great Temple of Kôr, write this upon the rock of the burying-place in the year four thousand eight hundred and three from the founding

of Kôr. Kôr is fallen!...Twenty and five moons ago did a cloud settle upon Kôr, and the hundred cities of Kôr, and out of the cloud came a pestilence that slew her people.... One with another they turned black and died—the young, and the old, the rich and the poor, the man and the woman, the prince and the slave.... Now am I...who write this, the last man left alive of this great city of men, but whether there be any yet left in the other cities I know not. This I do write in misery of heart before I die, because Kôr the Imperial is no more, and because there are none to worship in her temple, and all her palaces are empty, and her princes and captains and her traders and her fair women have passed off the face of the earth.

(Haggard 120-121)

Beyond the questionable racial implications of a people “turning black” before the death that disassembles their entire culture, the inscription emphasizes both the great age of this elder empire, and the accident of pestilence that destroyed it. Even Holly’s great intellect cannot encompass this discovery. This new knowledge pushes him beyond the ability to articulate a response. He writes, “I gave a sigh of astonishment—the utter desolation depicted in this rude scrawl was so overpowering. It was terrible to think of” (Haggard 121). To underscore the apocalyptic message underwriting this encounter with the text of imperial failure, Etherington notes the echoes of Revelation 18:2 in the priest’s record: “And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, ‘Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils” (Etherington 229). The priest’s record and the physical evidence of the plague confront Holly with the bad news that all empires, and even life itself, must eventually succumb to entropy. In light of this confrontation, the terrors of ravaging imperialism embodied by Ayesha herself will become less threatening.

Perhaps ironically, Ayesha herself, who has personally avoided the fate which has befallen Kôr, seems to enjoy demonstrating the fragility of the work of nations to Holly. Her perspective is more balanced; her two thousand year lifespan has allowed her to accept the truth of empire, that “Time after time have nations, ay, and rich and strong nations,

learned in the arts, been and passed away and been forgotten, so that no memory of them remains. This is but one of several; for Time eats up the works of man, unless, indeed, he digs in caves like the people of Kôr, and then mayhap the sea swallows them, or the earthquake shakes them in" (Haggard 121). As Etherington notes, Ayesha's philosophy in this speech recapitulates physical science's discovery of the law of entropy (Etherington 230). It also echoes the words of the elder Vincey's letter, in his statement of belief in "the Power who rules all things, and who says, "thus far shalt thou go, and thus much shalt thou learn" (Haggard 21). Although her intentions are not clear, Ayesha continues to terrorize Holly with the knowledge of the fragility of life. She takes him on a morbid exploration of Kôr's tombs. In a moment of contemplation, she offers Holly an explanation of the process of fate. She tells him,

Behold the lot of man...to the tomb, and to the forgetfulness that hides the tomb, must we all come at last! Ay, even I who live so long.... Thousands of years after thou hast gone through the gate and been lost in the mists, a day will dawn whereon I shall die, and be even as thou art and these are.

And then what will it avail that I have lived a little longer, holding off death by the knowledge I have wrung from Nature, since at last too I must die?... Behold the lot of man! Certainly it shall overtake us, and we shall sleep, and so on and on, through periods, spaces, and times, from aeon unto aeon, till the world is dead, and the worlds beyond the world are dead.

(Haggard 121)

Holly cannot stand the impact of this encounter with universal law. Desiring to avoid its implications, he begs Ayesha to take him away: "I have seen enough, my Queen," he says, "my heart is overwhelmed by the power of this present death. Mortality is weak, and easily broken down by a sense of the companionship that waits upon its end. Take me hence, O Ayesha!" (Haggard 126). This moment signals the limits of Holly's empiricism. As Caruth argues, mortality is a fact that repudiates its inclusion in the empiricist system.

Holly's claim to have "seen enough" is really a plea to remove this eccentric data from his view. His claim to be on the verge of moral collapse is also significant: his fear of the death that surrounds him in the tombs drives him almost literally into Ayesha's arms. Ayesha's own conceptual mastery of the death that surrounds her arguably facilitates her own harsh imperial intentions. In her full understanding of the alternative to imperial conquest, she enables herself to ruthlessly employ the full benefits of her power. For Haggard's protagonists, the terror of a totalizing imperial gaze such as Ayesha's will prove to be not as horrible as its alternative.

The final test of Holly's and Vincey's loyalties to their own particular empire—as opposed to empire writ large, embodied by Ayesha—lies in their willingness to entertain the possibility of their own country's destruction. Ayesha arranges to take both Holly and Vincey to the source of life, the fountain of fire in which she herself has bathed, and which she promises will endow them with the same power she possesses. Planning their future together, Ayesha asks them to tell her of the state of the modern world: "And now tell me of thy country," she invites Vincey,

"'tis a great people, is it not? With an empire like that of Rome! Surely thou wilt return thither....when once thou art even as I am, we will go hence—fear not but that I shall find a path—and then shall we journey to this England of thine, and live as it becometh us to live.... For thou shalt rule this England—"

"But we have a queen already," broke in Leo, hastily.

"It is naught, it is naught," said Ayesha; "she can be overthrown."

(Haggard 168-169)

After this shocking statement, Holly and Vincey interject with a comment as suggestive as it is argumentative: "At this we both broke out into an exclamation of dismay, and explained that we should as soon think of overthrowing ourselves" (Haggard 169). Shortly

after this scene, it becomes evident that for Holly, at least, this *coup* has already occurred.

Holly's meditation on Ayesha's plan reveals that his fear of Ayesha's immoral outlook has become partially replaced by that key imperial element, ambition:

it made me absolutely shudder to think what would be the result of her arrival there. What her powers were I knew, and I could not doubt but that she would exercise them to the full. It might be possible to control her for a while, but her proud ambitious spirit would be certain to break loose and avenge itself for the long centuries of its solitude. She would, if necessary, and if the unaided power of her beauty did not prove equal to the occasion, blast her way to an end she set before her, and, as she could not die, and for aught I knew could not even be killed, what was there to stop her? In the end she would, I had little doubt, assume absolute rule over the British dominions, and probably over the whole earth, and, though I was sure that she would speedily make ours the most glorious and prosperous empire that the world had ever seen, it would be at the cost of a terrible sacrifice of life.

(Haggard 169-170)

Holly's vision of Ayesha enacting a one-woman assault against the Queen of England signals his hope for an alternative ending to the lesson he learns in the tombs of imperial Kôr. His reasoning in this passage suggests that while a particular empire might fall, it might be replaced by one even more powerful. This possibility offers the enticement of the avoidance of apocalypse in favour of something more attractive: catastrophic change, at the head of which Holly and Vincey are offered key positions. This transition in Holly's outlook allows the entrance of that other chimera of empire, that which its rhetoric guarantees beyond the purview of logic: hope. Holly concludes,

The story sounded like a dream of some extraordinary invention of a speculative brain, and yet it was a fact—a wonderful fact—of which the whole world would soon be called on to take notice. What was the meaning of it all? After much thinking I could only conclude that this marvellous creature...was now about to be used by Providence as a means to change the order of the world, and possibly, by the building up of a power that could no more be rebelled against or questioned than the decrees of Fate, to change it materially for the better.

(Haggard 170)

Under the pressure of Ayesha's superior imperial demands, Holly's definition of fact and speculation collide and annihilate each other; he is left in the dream state of imperial zeal. In Haggard's text, the allegiances of his good British subjects are won over by the logical and powerful promises of the empire that offers to replace it.

Although Holly's narrative downplays the erotic story of Ayesha's seduction of Vincey in favour of Holly's more intellectual experience, an examination of Vincey's entrance into Ayesha's imperial plans confirms the requirement that the men abandon their British notions of morality. Having unveiled her face to Vincey, Ayesha is able to secure his loyalties directly, even over the body of Ustane, whom she has just killed. Vincey's shock is the shock of the imperial faithful, having suddenly found reason to change loyalties:

I let [Ustane] be killed," Vincey tells Holly, "—not that I could help that, but within five minutes I was kissing her murderess over her body. I am a degraded brute, but...I know I shall do it again tomorrow; I know that I am in her power for always.... I must follow her as a needle follows a magnet; I would not go away now if I might;...I am sold into bondage, old fellow, and she will take my soul as the price of herself.

(Haggard 160)

In contrast to Holly's intellectualized struggle with Ayesha's ideology, which seems to take precedence in the narrative over his claim that seeing her unveiled face has caused him to fall in love with her also, Vincey's reaction to the effects of Ayesha's seductive power is instantaneous. His reaction, like Holly's, is aesthetic and sexual, with an important difference: given that Ayesha reciprocates Vincey's love, Vincey is truly helpless to resist. Unlike Holly, willing to discuss the relative moral implications of aligning himself with Ayesha, Vincey feels his moral sense tossed away in the moment he embraces her. Vincey

thus recognizes in this moment the truth that Holly has avoided: that Ayesha, the embodiment of a foreign, more powerful mode of empire, will strip away the particularities of the men's home culture as she recruits them. In her imperial plans, a soul—in all the moral and religious implications of that term—is not a necessary item. In exchange for Holly's and Vincey's morality, she promises hope for the men's future on earth, and will equip them only with the techniques necessary to the exercise of absolute power.

Holly's prior entrance into Ayesha's logical universe, however, serves her well, as he is able to justify the swift transition Vincey has undergone. The role of the intellectual in the projects of empire is here made clear, as Holly justifies not only Vincey's behaviour but Ayesha's as well, in a long footnote following this incident. Although he concedes that *prima facie* Ayesha appears to be evil,

it must be remembered that she looked on [the murder] as an execution for disobedience under a system which made the slightest disobedience punishable by death. Putting aside this question of the murder, her evil-doing resolves itself into the expression of views and the acknowledgment of motives which are contrary to our preaching if not our practice. Now at first sight this might be fairly taken as a proof of an evil nature, but when we come to consider the great antiquity of the individual it becomes doubtful if it was anything more than the possession of extraordinary powers of observation.

(Haggard 161)

If there is any doubt as to the shift in Holly's allegiance, this passage on the moral implications of murder is a clear indicator of his increasing ability to justify Ayesha's actions. In describing Ayesha's actions as being taken "under a system which made the slightest disobedience punishable by death," Holly neglects the fact that Ayesha herself devised this system. Managing to reduce the difference in understandings of the implications of murder between his own culture and Ayesha's down to a bit of moral

relativism, Holly also implies that British culture itself slips in this regard: although we might preach against the crime of murder, he argues, our practice is another matter. Finally, Holly once more evokes that quality in Ayesha that subsumes all his doubts and evokes his hopes: her superior empiricism. Having seen more, the argument goes, Ayesha must know more, as if the repetitious nature of history and human behaviour would not at some point cease to offer new information. The dual recruitment of Holly and Vincey into Ayesha's imperial schema reveals a dual requirement of empire: for the unthinking, emotional loyalty evoked by love, and also for the intellectual, self-justifying loyalty that transforms power into logic, lending credibility to empire's projects.

Before they can become proper tools of Ayesha's empire, however, Holly and Vincey must undergo a final transformation: that of their bodies. By bathing them in the fire of immortality, Ayesha plans to equip them with the power that she herself possesses. As they approach "the great flame," they find that they are infused with not only greater vigour, but also those twin imperial/empirical qualities, ambition and increased sensory awareness:

we became sensible of a wild and splendid exhilaration, of a glorious sense of such a fierce intensity of life that the most buoyant moments of our strengths seemed flat and tame and feeble beside it. It was the merest effluvium of the flame, the subtle ether that it cast off as it passed, working on us, and making us feel strong as giants and swift as eagles.... I know that I felt as though all the varied genius of which the human intellect is capable had descended upon me. I could have spoken in blank verse of Shakespearian beauty, all sorts of ideas flashed through my mind; it was as though the bonds of my flesh had been loosened, and left the spirit free to soar to the empyrean of its native power. The sensations that poured in upon me are indescribable. I seemed to live more keenly, to reach a higher joy, and sip the goblet of a subtler thought than ever it had been my lot to do before. I was another and most glorified self, and all the avenues of the Possible were for a space laid open to the footsteps of the Real.

(Haggard 190)

It is noteworthy that, unlike Fenwick's opening of the senses under the influence of Derval's powder, the presence of the flame is figured as an entirely positive experience by Holly. In his description, the flame has the power to stretch the limits of empiricism and practical science through the marriage of the realm of speculation with the realm of fact. As we have seen, Haggard's text invites the reader to transform the cataclysmic change Ayesha threatens to enact, from an evil into a potential good. Likewise, the acquisition of her supreme power is figured as entirely positive, for it is proof against what the text holds to be imperialism's opposite, apocalyptic dissolution and death. Forcing empire and death into this false dichotomy, Haggard's text leaves his protagonists little choice. When Holly announces his decision to bathe in the fire, his reason is driven by the desire to avoid this dissolution: "there is that in my heart that calleth to me to taste of the flame, and live" (Haggard 191), as if that were not what he was doing already.

Ultimately, however, the men's hope for their glorious imperial future is shattered. Bathing in the flame for a second time, Ayesha withers and falls down, apparently dead. Grief-stricken, Holly and Vincey leave the cave. His own empirical stance once more in place, Holly attempts to work from the data to an acceptable conclusion:

But who can tell what happened? There was the fact. Often since that awful hour I have reflected that it requires no great stretch of the imagination to see the finger of Providence in the matter. Ayesha locked up in her living tomb waiting from age to age for the coming of her lover worked but a small change in the order of the world. But Ayesha strong and happy in her love, clothed in immortal youth, goddess-like beauty, and the wisdom of the centuries, would have revolutionised society, and even perchance have changed the destiny of Mankind. Thus she opposed herself to the eternal law, and strong though she was, by it was swept back to nothingness—swept back with shame and hideous mockery!

(Haggard 195)

Holly's "eternal law" echoes Ayesha's own observations on the fall of Kôr: that all empires eventually fall away, and that all human projects are subject to entropy. Carefully avoiding moral judgment in his conclusions, Holly adds the argument that some change is too catastrophic for the universe to bear. In this surprise ending, Haggard's text capitulates a model of empire which must accept that it operates within certain limits.

This more moderate position offers some resolution of the text's dichotomy between death and dissolution and the absolute exercise of absolute power. It proposes that empire must avoid violating certain limits in order to achieve success. Evidence of this proposition is found in late Victorian and Edwardian justifications of imperial activity, where it manifests as the argument that Britain's political action only effects change which operates within the limits of the natural, the acceptable. This change is often configured as required not only by the colonial power, but also by the colonies themselves. Arthur James Balfour's 1910 speech to the House of Commons on the British government of Egypt employs this rhetoric. Balfour argues that "through the whole history of the Orientals in what is called, broadly speaking, the East,...you never find traces of self-government.... That is a fact" (qtd. Said 33). Thus, Balfour is free to extol the benefits of the English government of Egypt, concluding that "it is a good thing," and that "experience shows that they have got under it far better government than in the whole history of the world they ever had before" (qtd. Said 33). Ayesha's last-minute failure to enact her imperial plans, rather than merely revealing the "eternal law" that all empires must eventually fail, reinforces the necessity for cautious action on the part of imperial forces. In this moment, Haggard's text appears to argue with British imperial rhetoric that change should be effected where the need for change is perceived.

That Haggard regretted the intervention of the “eternal law” in his story of empire personified is made clear in the Introduction to its sequel, in which he called it “an imaginative tragedy” (*Ayesha* 1). Holly’s conversion and Vincey’s seduction by Ayesha in *She* transform the terrifying threat of her plans for catastrophic change from the nightmare of empire into one of its dreams: that it can attain absolute power, and exercise that power to the full. As the men witness Ayesha’s collapse, however, they must reconcile themselves to the fact that a more moderate approach to imperial power is more likely to be tolerated by what Holly calls “Providence.” It is noteworthy, however, that even this proof of the necessity of a more moderate approach is unable to completely erase the effects of Ayesha’s influence. In her last words to the men, Ayesha claims, “I shall come again” (Haggard 194). This statement enables the text to leave a residual of the dream of absolute power to which its protagonists have aligned themselves, through the suggestion that despite her own argument that everything eventually succumbs to entropy, Ayesha’s superior knowledge has allowed her to find a loophole. Although its physical traces are gone, the dream of power remains in the minds of its sometime subjects. Holly ends his narrative with a hope disguised as a certainty: he tells us that he has no doubt that the “*final* development...must and will occur” in this “great drama” in which he and Vincey have played starring roles (Haggard 209). In this certainty, the impulse underlying empire, to evoke catastrophic change in order to avoid apocalypse, once again emerges. The guarantees empire offers are here falsely represented as dramatic narrative: despite the evidence of his experience, Holly believes there will be a moment to freeze all moments, in which the outcome will not only be known, but in which he hopes the victory will be won, and Ayesha’s empire will be secured. While empire evokes hope through the

promise of security, in Haggard's explorations of empire unveiled, this promise drives its subjects toward the hope for change beyond their ability to imagine the outcome. This residual hope reinforces the lesson that Holly and Vincey have already learned under Ayesha's tutelage: that their own empire, in its constitution of them as men of logic and science, has already prepared them to embrace power, and to seek to exercise it in the world at large.

Chapter Three

Roman and Teuton:

Racial Discourse and The Threat from Within in Bram Stoker's *Dracula* and *Lair of the White Worm*

Toward the close of the nineteenth century, British empire gained a new tool in its construction of white British identity. The increasing temptation on the part of scientists to apply Darwin's laws of inheritance to human beings resulted in the emergence of the new field of eugenics, a term coined by Francis Galton in 1883 (Galton 75). Eugenics promoted the manipulation of human populations to produce a stronger British race. The possibilities that this new field promised took hold, in Galton's words, like "a brisk fire, burning freely by itself" (Galton 75). In their enthusiasm to promote the benefits of the implementation of a national eugenics program, scientists such as Galton and Karl Pearson argued that such a plan would move British subjects "towards the evolution of the mind, body, and character in increasing energy and co-adaptation" (Galton 75).

Matching this enthusiasm was an underlying fear that a lack of vigilance with regard to the development of the British race would lead to degeneration. In a letter published in the *Times* of August 25, 1905, Pearson declared that “the birth-rate of the abler and more intellectual classes in this country is falling, relatively to that of the poorer stocks” (Pearson 72). Significantly, Pearson legitimates his argument for the driving out of weaker “stocks” through an analogy with the activities of colonization. Arguing that history confirms the proliferation of the strong, he states, “The Australian nation is another case of a great civilization supplanting a lower race unable to work to the full the land and its resources” (Pearson 25). Pearson implicitly associates the weaker members of British society with Britain’s racial others.

Eugenics’ division of the British populace into the binary of stronger and weaker has two major theoretical implications for the constitution of British whiteness at the turn of the century. First, it rendered some types of whiteness inadequate. In order to qualify as a good British citizen, one now had to embody some additional qualities—Pearson’s strength or “brain-power,” Galton’s “energy.” Second, it facilitated a division of white Britishness itself into two groups: “authentic whiteness” and a weaker whiteness, which amounted to a new category of racial otherness.

The mania to discern the strong and weak qualities in the British race spawned a desire to look back to the strong and weak “races” that formed the British nation. This desire is the basis for Charles Kingsley’s series of lectures on *The Roman and the Teuton*, collected and published in 1889. Kingsley argued that the Teutonic influence in the British racial character was that which “fitted it to become, at least for many centuries henceforth, the ruling race of the world” (Kingsley 5). The Teutonic race is characterized by “noble

simplicity” (Kingsley 13); and Kingsley makes it clear that for him, the English race is identical with that Teutonic lineage. “Happy for us Englishmen,” he states, “that we were forced to seek our adventures here, in this lonely isle; to turn aside from the great stream of Teutonic immigration; and settle here, each man in his forest-clearing, to till the ground in comparative peace, keeping unbroken the old Teutonic laws, unstained the old Teutonic faith and virtue” (Kingsley 15).

In contrast, while admitting the Roman presence in Britain prior to the arrival of the Teutons, Kingsley depicts the Romans as utterly debauched: “The only powers really recognized were force and cunning. The only aim was personal enjoyment” (Kingsley 17). In its attempts to rally itself in its last days, Kingsley argues, the Roman empire “found [that] dream a dream, owing to the dead heap of frivolity, sensuality, [and] brutality” which Roman culture had become (Kingsley 27). Kingsley equates the beginning of British history with the capitulation of the degenerate Roman to the vigorous Teuton. What his historical study shares with the concerns of eugenics is the desire to render the weak distinct and separable from the bulk of British society. In *The Roman and the Teuton*, Kingsley displaces this desire onto what he perceives as two separate bloodlines, enabling the conceptual if not literal elimination of weakness from the British race through the disavowal of its Roman roots.

In Bram Stoker’s *Dracula* (1897) and *Lair of the White Worm* (1911), contemporary fears of the deterioration of the British race are similarly displaced onto the occult others that threaten Stoker’s protagonists. In these texts, Stoker employs the notion of the Roman and Teutonic roots of the British race to constitute the villainous racial others that threaten his protagonists’ security. In *Dracula*, the Roman and Teutonic traits

are represented by two monolithic European characters: Dracula himself and Van Helsing. While the debauched and Roman-identified Dracula threatens to taint British bloodlines and disrupt the healthy continuation of the British race, Van Helsing's Teutonic iron resolution rallies a group of British characters to rise to the challenge of destroying this monster. In *Lair of the White Worm*, Edgar Caswall, a nobleman of the "Roman type" colludes with his African servant and Lady Arabella March—who, as it turns out, is the "worm" of the novel's title—to threaten an English neighbourhood. In this novel, the Roman bloodline is conceived as a threat which invites occult knowledge onto English soil, and therefore must be purged. Both of these novels share eugenics' concerns with the threat to British racial purity from within. In them, Stoker attempts to purge that threat by depicting it as distinct from authentic Britishness, and finally eradicating it.

The Teutonic Warrior Spirit: Abraham Van Helsing's Rallying Influence in *Dracula*

In Bram Stoker's *Dracula* (1897), perhaps the most surprising aspect of Stoker's vampire is his veneer of civilization. Before Jonathan Harker has come to realize the dangers that Castle Dracula holds for him, he steps into Dracula's library, where he finds a remarkable collection of reading material:

a vast number of English books, whole shelves full of them, and bound volumes of magazines and newspapers.... The books were of the most varied kind—history, botany, geology, law—all relating to England and English life and manners. There were even such books of reference as the London Directory, the "Red" and "Blue" books, Whitaker's Almanack, the Army and Navy lists, and—it somehow gladdened my heart to see it—the Law List.

(*Dracula* 27-28)

The juxtaposition of the banal printed minutiae of English life and the musty, decrepit castle might strike the reader as merely idiosyncratic. However, the Count himself enthuses about the books' helpfulness in his preparations for his move to England. "These friends," he tells Harker, "have been good friends to me.... Through them I have come to know your great England; and to know her is to love her" (*Dracula* 28). Stephen D. Arata argues that this attitude—what he calls Dracula's "epistemophilia"—is what renders him an especially imposing threat to the English characters who will engage him in battle. Arata writes that "Dracula is what we might call an incipient 'Occidental' scholar.... The Count's Occidentalism both mimics and reverses the more familiar Orientalism underwriting Western imperial practices" (Arata 634).

As the force that threatens to invade England and transform its citizens into "a new and ever-widening circle of semi-demons to batten on the helpless" (*Dracula* 67), Dracula is more than, as Carol Senf suggests, "the threat of the primitive trying to colonize the civilized world" (qtd. Arata 626). He also threatens through his ability to be, in Arata's words, "the most 'Western' character in the novel.... No one is more rational, more intelligent, more organized, or even more punctual than the Count. No one plans more carefully or researches more thoroughly. No one is more learned within his own spheres of expertise or more receptive to new knowledge" (Arata 637). Perhaps it is the Count's formidable combination of bloodlust and knowledge that requires an entire team of good characters to battle him. Whatever the case, while Jonathan Harker narrates both the novel's opening and the initial shock to British hegemony the Count presents, it is Abraham Van Helsing who becomes the group's intellectual and martial leader. The inclusion of this other foreign scholar—Van Helsing is from Amsterdam—in Stoker's text

signals a racial discourse that goes beyond that noted by previous scholars who have attempted to define the racial other the Count represents. Although many scholars have argued with Senf and Bratlinger, for example, that Dracula signifies “an invasion of civilization by the forces of barbarism or demonism” (Bratlinger 230), this argument must disregard the English camp’s own increasing descent into barbarism, as evidenced through their heavy reliance on folklore and superstition, and their use of barbaric weapons (knives, stakes and hammers) to combat the vampires. This descent is perhaps most clearly seen in Van Helsing’s character, who transforms himself in the text from learned scholar (he has at least three degrees to his name) to Teutonic warrior. Although the group relies heavily on the techniques of empiricism and science throughout the novel, the introduction of Van Helsing as leader of the English group signals the entrance of Teutonic values into the text which enable the defense of the English characters against the Roman-identified Dracula. Van Helsing serves a double function in the text, as both man of innate logic worthy of Balfour’s characterization of the British race, and as Teutonic leader. Stoker thus displaces an important issue of his day, the source of vitality of white Britishness, onto his two foreign characters.

In order to understand the significance of Dracula’s racial othering, we must also examine the positive valuation given to the text’s other scholarly old man, Van Helsing. In what follows, I will argue that contemporary fears of the deterioration of the British race are evoked in the form of the ancient conflict between Roman and Teuton, a battle waged in Stoker’s text between the two monolithic figures of Van Helsing and Dracula, who are equally matched in the techniques of Western knowledge, and who strive ultimately for success through the primordial forces of blood and valour that drive imperial projects.

As I have argued, different valuations of the Roman and Teutonic roots of the British race became increasingly important toward the end of the nineteenth century. Kingsley's narrative of the Teutonic character is united by the themes of the Teuton's restless desire to conquer, by his boldness and valiance (Kingsley 65). These are traits that Van Helsing will increasingly display in *Dracula*. In contrast, deploying perhaps the most powerful apocalyptic imagery in his arsenal, Kingsley compares the Roman Empire to the book of Revelation, the terminology of which invites comparison to Stoker's vampire Count:

You may see, if you have spiritual eyes wherewith to see, the Dragon, the serpent, symbol of political craft and the devilish wisdom of the Roman, giving authority to the Beast, the symbol of brute power.... You may see the nations of the world gnawing their tongues for pain, and blaspheming God, but not repenting of their deeds.... You may see Babylon the great fallen, and all the kings and merchants of the earth bewailing her afar off, and watching the smoke of her torrent.

You may see, as St. John warns you, that—after her fall, mind—if men would go on worshipping the beast, and much more his image—the phantom and the shadow of brute force, after the reality had passed away—they should drink of the wine of the wrath of God, and be tormented for ever.

(Kingsley 60-61)

The connection between Kingsley's degenerate worshippers of the beast of Roman rule and *Dracula* himself is manifold: like them, *Dracula* recalls the past glories of his own race. There is the culinary connection between drinking "the wine of the wrath of God" and drinking the blood of humanity. In terms of historical context, there was a direct connection in the Victorian mind between Romans and Romanians. Emily Gerard's *The Land Beyond the Forest* (1888), which Leonard Wolf identifies as "probably the richest single source of folklore information" for Stoker in his researches on Transylvania (Wolf

xiii), depicts Romania as a kind of cultural creche for Roman strength, which might breed a new, stronger race of imperialists. Gerard writes

It is scarcely hazardous to prophesy that this people have a great future before them, and that a day will come when, other nations having degenerated and spent their strength, these descendants of the ancient Romans, rising phoenix-like from their ashes, will step forward with a whole fund of latent power and virgin material, to rule as masters where formerly they have crouched as slaves.

(Gerard I: 211)

Gerard's prophecy of a glorious future for the Romanian people certainly would have appeared threatening to such thinkers as Kingsley and Karl Pearson. Their belief in the "subtle factors of national degeneration" (Pearson 66) at work in Britain raised the spectre of the conflict between superior and inferior blood that ran in British veins.

Before the English characters enlist Van Helsing's help in the battle against Dracula, however, they must undergo that shock to their presumption of white culture's supremacy that characterizes imperial Gothic. Rather than opening with the common-sense eye of empiricism, Stoker's text begins with another of the familiarizing tropes of imperialism: the travel narrative. As we have already noted, the initial shock to the British imperial outlook in *Dracula* occurs through Harker's encounter with the Count. Both Arata and Cannon Schmitt note Harker's Orientalist perspective on his travels through Transylvania. Arata argues that "Harker's first two acts—noting that his train is late, and then traversing a boundary he considers symbolic [the Danube river]—function as a kind of shorthand, alerting the readers that Harker's journal is to be set against the background of late-Victorian travel narratives" (Arata 636). Arata further notes that "Harker is so adept an imitator of travel narratives in part because he has been such an assiduous reader of them. Like Stoker himself, Harker 'had visited the British Museum, and made search

among the books and maps in the library regarding Transylvania' in order to gain 'some foreknowledge of the country'" (Arata 636). Harker's travel-narrative techniques allow him to make sense of his new surroundings; not only is he able to see and absorb new information, but he is also afforded the comforts of fitting that information into an acceptable cultural template. Although neither a scientist nor an academic, Harker shares the support of his culture's Orientalizing project, which scripts his journey for him, and which, as Arata writes, "structures what he sees and what he misses as he travels through the Carpathians" (Arata 635).

Harker's position as a traveller also unfortunately places him in the key position as first among Stoker's protagonists to encounter Dracula himself. The first chapters of the novel are the most protracted encounter with Dracula; following this section, Dracula will "go underground," leaving the characters only with the second-hand evidence of his movements. In his discussions with Harker, however, his plans are made ominously clear. In his own words, he desires to move to England "to share its life, its change, its death, and all that makes it what it is" (*Dracula* 28). Dracula is a covert one-man invasion force. In addition to those critics who have identified him with the forces of barbarism, various particular ethnic identities have been applied to him. H. L. Malchow effectively likens him to "the most tangible alien immigration threat of the time, the eastern European Jew" (Malchow 162). Arguing from Stoker's own Anglo-Irish identity, Schmitt reads Dracula as a symbol of "the creole's fear of racial absorption" by "the enduring vitality of the Gaelic 'race'" (Schmitt 148-149). Perhaps more significant for this study, however, is Dracula's longevity. As we have seen, the potential immortality of empire's others in imperial Gothic texts offers them the practical advantage of avoiding the racial degradation

so feared by contemporary eugenics theorists. As Schmitt points out, Stoker's immortal also embodies a racial pride which engages with

a social form that Foucault in *History of Sexuality* calls 'blood relations,' a feudal/aristocratic organization of society in which blood 'owed its high value at the same time to its instrumental role (the ability to shed blood), to the way it functioned in the order of signs (to have a certain blood, to be of the same blood, to be prepared to risk one's blood), and also to its precariousness (easily spilled, subject to drying up, too readily mixed, capable of being quickly corrupted)' (I.197). The vampire's diet and his long historical memory concretizes this thematics of blood: Dracula, noble because of the blood, convinced of the rightness and efficacy of shedding blood, must live by [consuming] blood as well.

(Schmitt 140)

Many critics of *Dracula* have noted the sexual/reproductive implications of Dracula's bloodlust as well: through the exchange of blood with his victims, Dracula transforms them into vampires. Blood thus stands in for semen, or for the vector of disease. The total effect of Dracula's commingling of these "blood relations" is his ability to pollute the British race with the taint of his foreign blood. That this blood is deeply associated with Dracula's racial identity is a fact that he returns to repeatedly in his conversations with Harker. He tells him "of things and people, and especially of battles...as if he had been present at them all" (*Dracula* 38). Although Dracula dissembles in his accounts of these events, telling Jonathan that "to a *boyar* the pride of his house and name is his own pride, that their glory is his glory, that their fate is his fate" (*Dracula* 39), we will soon learn that Dracula's identification with his racial heritage approaches the literal. He really was engaged in the battles of which he speaks, and his vampiric longevity means that he is, in effect, his own race. However, it is important to note that readings such as Malchow's and Schmitt's, which emphasize Dracula's metaphorical racial identity, risk downplaying his

own intense identification with his literal racial heritage, and thus risk the loss of the Victorian association between Romanians and their Roman ancestors.

The significance of Dracula's Roman/Romanian heritage becomes more clear with the introduction of the Teutonic Van Helsing into Stoker's texts. The transmutation of Dracula from imposing gothic figure to covert foreign threat on English soil is among the suspense-building techniques of Stoker's text. After the initial Harker episode, Stoker returns his readers to more familiar territory: England, and the domestic scene of the Westenra household. Lucy Westenra, best friend to Harker's fiancée Mina, has fallen prey to a strange disease, the primary symptoms of which are anemia and a return to her old habit of sleepwalking. Frustrated and confused in his attempts to establish the cause of Lucy's illness, Jack Seward, her former suitor and present doctor, informs her fiancé, Arthur Holmwood, that he has called for help from his former medical teacher: "I have written to my old friend and master, Professor Van Helsing, of Amsterdam, who knows as much about obscure diseases as anyone in the world" (*Dracula* 147). Seward's description of Van Helsing endows him with all the stoic qualities the befuddled Englishmen have thus far lacked. These qualities stem in part from Van Helsing's vast knowledge, but are well supplemented by his personal characteristics. Seward invests Van Helsing with an almost mystical authority:

He is a seemingly arbitrary man, but this is because he knows what he is talking about better than anyone else. He is a philosopher and a metaphysician, and one of the most advanced scientists of his day; and he has, I believe, an absolutely open mind. This, with an iron nerve, a temper of the ice-brook, an indomitable resolution, self-command, and toleration exalted from virtues to blessings, and the kindest and truest heart that beats—these form his equipment for the noble work that he is doing for mankind—work both in theory and in practice, for his views are as wide as his all-embracing sympathy. I tell you these facts that you may know why I have such confidence in him.

(*Dracula* 147)

Van Helsing's knowledge extends beyond the hardened empiricism of a Fenwick or the "fossilised academia" of a Holly or Vincey. His "equipment"—a term evoking the laboratory—is conflated with his racial identity, insofar as he embodies that ineffable "spirit" that Dyer associates with the snowy mountains of the mythical origins of the white race. Van Helsing is both elemental ("iron nerve") and undoubtedly northern ("temper of the ice-brook"). In order to combat Dracula, an enemy who possesses both calculating logic and a ravening desire to pollute British blood, Stoker requires a hero who combines the hard science of the laboratory with the imaginative qualities of a professor of literature and philosophy—Van Helsing holds degrees in both these areas.

Stoker further emphasizes the balancing qualities of Van Helsing against Dracula in his characterization of the relationship between Seward and his former professor. Seward tells Holmwood that "Van Helsing would, I know, do anything for me for a personal reason" (*Dracula* 147). In his response to Seward's plea for help, expressed in his idiosyncratic English, Van Helsing reveals that reason, making reference to "that time you [Seward] suck from my wound so swiftly the poison of the gangrene from that knife that our other friend, too nervous, let slip" (*Dracula* 148). Wolf thus notes that "blood sucking is the basis of their bond of friendship" (Wolf 147n.). Seward's blood-drinking act forms a connection between the two men that is a debt of honour, offering a valourous blood relation that stands in sharp contrast to Dracula's baser relationships with his victims. In Stoker's England, the catastrophic threat posed by Dracula's colonizing intentions is balanced by the equally fantastic powers of knowledge and courage embodied by Van Helsing, which he imparts to the Englishmen through his blood bond with Seward.

The parallels between Van Helsing and Dracula continue in the action that follows Van Helsing's arrival in England. Just as Dracula haunts the edges of Stoker's text after his initial appearance, leaving only the evidence of his nocturnal visits to Lucy, so Van Helsing's implementation of the techniques of authority forces the English protagonists who have called upon his assistance to wander through Stoker's plot, as it were, in the dark regarding the terrible truth. During this time, Van Helsing's actions evoke the spectre of ghoulish behaviour that popular Victorian thought associated with the medical man, thus threatening to taint Van Helsing himself with an appearance as frightening as Dracula's. Although Van Helsing uses the techniques of medical science in the effort to save Lucy—most notably in the infamous transfusion sequence, in which the blood of all four of the men is poured into her—he refuses to disclose his motives for his more controversial later approach to the problem. True to Seward's characterization of Van Helsing, his apparent arbitrariness reaches a disturbing pitch when he asks Seward to bring him a set of post-mortem knives. The hapless Seward asks Van Helsing, "Must we make an autopsy?" (*Dracula* 208). Van Helsing's response shocks Seward:

Yes and no. I want to operate, but not as you think. Let me tell you now, but not a word to another. I want to cut off her head and take out her heart. Ah! You a surgeon, and so shocked! You, whom I have seen with no tremble of hand or heart, do operations of life and death that make the rest shudder. Oh, but I must not forget, my dear friend John, that you loved her; and I have not forgotten it, for it is that I shall operate, and you must only help. I would like to do it to-night, but for Arthur I must not;...he will want to see her—to see *it*. Then, when she is confined and ready for the next day, you and I shall come when all sleep. We shall unscrew the coffin-lid, and shall do our operation; and then replace all, so that none know, save we alone.

(*Dracula* 208)

Van Helsing's plan evokes the popular terror of the medical profession, which, as Malchow notes, "was well established in the popular Victorian mind," and "sensationalized by...gothic fiction" (Malchow 111). Certainly, Van Helsing's demand that the operation on Lucy's corpse be nocturnal and secret does nothing to quell the associations of medical men with ghoulish, occult behaviour. Malchow observes that the surgeon and anatomist were not only popularly associated with the terrors of the charnel-house, but were often constituted as a breed of "sadistic cannibal."

from outside the profession, there was that [representation] of the humanitarian opponents of practices that appeared to subordinate the patient, alive or dead, to the research interests of the scientist, to substitute self-interest and necrophilia for benevolence. Second, from within, there was that self-imposed hardening of the heart, the cultivation in medical schools of "clinical detachment"—leading inevitably among young male students to the irreverence of the practical joke and an abusive handling of the dead, which had both sexual and cannibalistic overtones. These two [representations] are roughly paralleled in the discourse on "real" man-eating by the missionary image of cannibalism as depravity and abomination on the one hand and the detached raconteur's deployment of sometimes obscene cannibal humour on the other.

(Malchow 111)

Van Helsing's disturbing exercise of medical authority is rendered threatening by the cavalier attitude Malchow mentions. For Stoker's popular audiences, this hardening of the heart would probably have suggested slippage into Malchow's first category, sadistic necrophilia. The short and easy transition from these associations to cannibalism places Van Helsing's medical authority in a similar category of repugnance to Dracula's own nocturnal predation. At this point in the text, the only factor differentiating Van Helsing from Dracula himself is the characters' belief that his intentions are good and his reasons sound.

Van Helsing himself lays claim to the privilege of true knowledge of the situation at hand, which he characterizes as a burden. In his true role, not a scientist, but as rallying authority, Van Helsing does not require understanding from Seward, but rather that constant demand of imperialism, faith. He tells Seward,

there are things that you know not, but that you shall know, and bless me for knowing, though they are not pleasant things. John, my child, you have been my friend now many years, and yet did you ever know me to do any without great cause? I may err—I am but man; but I believe in all I do.... Believe me yet a little, friend John. If you trust me not, then I must tell what I think; and that is not perhaps well. And if I work—as work I shall, no matter trust or not trust—without my friend trust in me, I work with heavy heart and feel, oh! so lonely when I want all help and courage that may be!... Friend John, there are strange and terrible days before us. Let us not be two, but one, that so we work to a good end. Will you not have faith in me?

(Dracula 208-209)

Van Helsing's impassioned speech evokes the dual bonds of friendship and paternity, while simultaneously hinting at the double discourse of empire, that its work will continue despite human failings ("as work I shall, no matter trust or not trust"), and that simultaneously it is greatly helped by faith and trust in its projects.

The effects of Van Helsing's authoritative techniques are disorienting. Under his control, Seward is transformed from man of science into, in his own words, a madman. In what he claims is an attempt to lead Seward toward the truth without revealing it wholesale, Van Helsing teases Seward with stories of nature's prodigies. He asks Seward to explain "that one great spider [that] lived for centuries in the tower of the old Spanish church," or the "bats that come at night and open the veins of cattle and horses" (*Dracula* 236). Seward begs Van Helsing to "Tell me the thesis, so that I may apply your knowledge as you go on. At present I am going in my mind from point to point as a

madman, lumbering through a bog in a mist, jumping from one tussock to another in the mere blind effort to move on without knowing where I am going” (*Dracula* 237). Van Helsing agrees to the effect of his secrecy without disclosing more information. His reason, he tells Seward, is protective: “Madness were easy to bear compared with truth like this. Oh, my friend, why, think you, did I go so far round, why take so long to tell you so simple a thing?... I wished to be gentle in the breaking to you. It is so hard to accept at once any abstract truth, that we may doubt such to be possible when we have always believed the ‘no’ of it; it is more hard still to accept so sad a concrete truth, and of such a one as Miss Lucy” (*Dracula* 239). Like Fenwick and Holly, Seward will learn that the truth is terrible, defying belief. In Stoker’s text, Van Helsing adopts a paternalistic role, protecting the group from information that operates in excess of science’s normalizing projects. Through the rest of the novel, Van Helsing will increasingly adopt the role of protective authority as he continues to dole out information on a “need-to-know” basis.

Van Helsing’s alternative role as a resource of Teutonic vitality is first made manifest in his leadership of the group of men in their destruction of vampire Lucy. Having demonstrated that Lucy is indeed an Un-Dead creature to the group, Van Helsing donates his strength of nerve to Holmwood, who he decides must perform the ugly task of staking Lucy and thus “restore Lucy to us as a holy, and not an unholy, memory” (*Dracula* 262). Van Helsing tells the group that this deed is done under the aegis of God as he instructs Arthur in the specifics of staking technique: “Take this stake in your left hand, ready to place the point over the heart, and the hammer in your right. Then when we begin our prayer for the dead—I shall read him, I have here the book, and the others shall follow—strike in God’s name, that so all may be well with the dead that we love, and that

the Un-Dead pass away” (*Dracula* 262). However, as Arthur strikes, the image of an altogether different deity enters into the narrative: “Arthur never faltered. He looked like a figure of Thor as his untrembling arm rose and fell, driving deeper and deeper the mercy-bearing stake, whilst the blood from the pierced heart welled and spurted up around it. His face was set, and high duty seemed to shine through it; the sight of it gave us courage, so that our voices seemed to ring through the little vault” (*Dracula* 262). Wolf notes that “Thor is, of course, the name of the Norse god of thunder whose weapon was a hammer, and consequently a symbol of great strength. When we remember how shadowy a character Godalming has been, this sudden access of power as he destroys the woman he loves gives one pause” (Wolf 263 n.). But the introduction of the image of Thor at this point is no coincidence; rather, it is evidence of the superiority of the Norse courage with which Van Helsing invests his group of vampire-hunters. The disturbing power with which Holmwood strikes is invested with the masculinizing force of the men’s Teutonic heritage, to which in this moment they are given access. It is important to note that this new force affects the entire group. In this scene, Van Helsing unleashes the Teutonic might which he will increasingly embody in the rest of the narrative.

Van Helsing also reintroduces Mina and Jonathan Harker to the group. Alerted to Mina’s knowledge of Lucy’s decline through a letter he finds among Lucy’s papers, Van Helsing contacts her to inquire after Harker’s travel journal. In his contact with the Harkers, Van Helsing adopts a different authoritative stance than he has thus far. Having arranged with Mina to read Harker’s travel journal, he writes to her, “Strange and terrible as it is, it is *true*” (*Dracula* 231). If Harker, like Fenwick, has fallen through a gap in imperialism’s and empiricism’s guarantees of the transparency of reality, then he benefits

from Van Helsing's authority. He tells Van Helsing, "I was in doubt, and then everything took a hue of unreality, and I did not know what to trust, even the evidence of my own senses. Not knowing what to trust, I did not know what to do, and so had only to keep on working in what had hitherto been the groove of my life. The groove ceased to avail me, and I mistrusted myself" (*Dracula* 232). Unable to come to the conclusion that his experiences were real on his own, Harker benefits from Van Helsing's verification, which operates as a cure for his symptoms of stress. This function resembles the ability of science Edward Said describes, to employ "a sort of leverage by which even the totally unusual occurrence can be seen as natural and known scientifically" (Said 145). In Van Helsing's role as authority, he performs the double function of denying eccentric evidence, while also enabling the verification of data that cannot be ignored any longer.

The re-introduction into the action of Mina and Jonathan Harker enables a greater organizational capacity on the part of the protagonists. Mina's secretarial skills, and Harker's methodical mind combine to enable the compiling of the group's various notes and letters, including Seward's phonograph recordings. Mina and Jonathan go to work on the typewriter, "knitting together in chronological order every scrap of evidence they have" (*Dracula* 273). However extensive this information, the group requires Van Helsing's extensive background knowledge before the manuscript takes on significance. In Seward's study, Van Helsing reveals the combination of objective proof and superstitious folklore that has allowed him to learn the truth of Dracula's nature and the techniques necessary to combat him. Contrary to his previous secrecy, he boldly announces,

There are such things as vampires; some of us have evidence that they exist. Even had we not the proof of our own unhappy experience, the teachings and the records of the past give proof enough for sane peoples. I admit that at the first I was sceptic. Were it not that through long years I have train myself to keep an open

mind, I could not have believe until such time as the fact thunder on my ear, 'See! see! I prove; I prove.'

(Dracula 287)

Van Helsing's final statement in this speech nicely captures the effects of eccentric knowledge upon even his most open of open minds: it intrudes through the senses, demanding both aural and visual acknowledgment, and proclaiming its own status as proof. This is a beginning point to the group's abandonment of the need for proof and evidence, signalled by both the reification of their experience in the manuscript, and by Van Helsing's naming of the phenomenon which has troubled them. From this point forward, their knowledge will be transformed into action. Like Dracula's own efforts, Van Helsing's investigations and his deployment of empirical techniques have taken place offstage; his role as leader will now adopt a new importance as he rallies the group in their systematic efforts to destroy the cases of dirt in which Dracula rests during the day.

Before the climax in which the group finally destroys Dracula himself, Van Helsing displays more fully the Teutonic warrior-spirit that promises to conquer the dark forces of the Roman race which Dracula embodies. Van Helsing begins by acknowledging Dracula's dark inheritance. As in other imperial Gothic texts, this racial threat is configured as access to the supernatural: "all the forces of Nature that are occult and deep and strong must have worked together in some wondrous way" to make Dracula what he is. Van Helsing speculates that "the very place, where he have been alive, Un-Dead for all these centuries, is full of strangeness of the geologic and chemical world" (*Dracula* 378). With even the occult forces of nature working in Dracula's favour, Van Helsing argues that the group's recourse must be to brute force: "we go out as the old knights of the

Cross to redeem more. Like them we shall travel towards the sunrise; and like them, if we fall, we fall in a good cause" (*Dracula* 379). As they approach Dracula's castle, Van Helsing increasingly acquires the appearance of the Teutonic warrior. Watching him sleep, Mina notes that "his mouth is set as firmly as a conqueror's; even in his sleep he is instinct with resolution" (*Dracula* 428). As Van Helsing approaches perhaps the bloodiest task of the book—the destruction of Dracula's three wives—he struggles to maintain the empirical stance that overlays his Teutonic spirit. He writes in his record, addressed to Seward, "Let me be accurate in everything, for though you and I have seen some strange things together, you may at the first think that I, Van Helsing, am mad—that the many horrors and the so long strain on nerves has at the last turn my brain" (*Dracula* 437). This statement is an unlikely explanation for Van Helsing's inability to think and write accurately; even in his graveyard encounter with vampire Lucy, his iron resolution has not failed him before. It is more likely that Van Helsing is on the verge of "going native," of enacting the barbarism with which his Teutonic heritage invests him. Employing a blacksmith hammer, which recalls the image of Arthur as "a figure of Thor" staking Lucy (*Dracula* 262), Van Helsing stakes Dracula's brides. In his description of this act, Van Helsing is clearly at odds with the barbaric nature of his acts. He writes to Seward,

Oh, my friend John, but it was butcher work; had I not been nerved by thoughts of the other dead, and of the living over whom hung such a pall of fear, I could not have gone on.... Had I not seen the repose in the first face, and the gladness that stole over it just ere the final dissolution came, as realisation that the soul had been won, I could not have gone further with my butchery.... Friend John, hardly had my knife severed the head of each, before the whole body began to melt away and crumble into its native dust, as though the death that should have come centuries ago had at last assert himself and say at once and loud "I am here!"

(*Dracula* 438)

Van Helsing's contact with the dark forces of his own identity enables the group's success. As he destroys Dracula's household, he displays the same attitude toward death which the Victorian imagination associated with Teutonic might. Kingsley expresses these values in his work on the Teutonic character: "Bloodshed is a bad thing, certainly," he states, "but...I sometimes am tempted to think...that our old forefathers may have been right, and that death in battle may be a not unenviable method of passing out of this troublesome world.... No, there are more pitiful tragedies than any battlefield can shew; and first among them, surely, is the disappointment of young hopes, the degradation of young souls" (Kingsley 14). In Kingsley's imagination, the Teutonic worldview offered two choices: lashing out against enemies or suffering degradation. Stoker's text dramatizes this choice: in his positive valuation of Van Helsing, he highlights the positive features of brute force.

Once Dracula and his brides are defeated, the group's terrible experiences retreat into the background of the everyday. The manuscript itself becomes something to wonder at, as Harker explains in his note: "We were struck with the fact, that in all the mass of material of which the record is composed, there is hardly one authentic document.... We could hardly ask any one, even did we wish to, to accept these as proofs of so wild a story" (*Dracula* 444-445). The eccentric threat of Dracula's plans eliminated, the text ends with an impulse to erase and forget the experiences it records. But the irrelevant information contained in the manuscript is troubled by Stoker's ambivalent ending. He gives the last words of the novel to Van Helsing, who is supposed to have "summed up" the story: "We want no proofs; we ask none to believe us!" (*Dracula* 445). Arata argues that Van Helsing's words "sound remarkably like a plea" to the reader to forget the extraordinary events that have threatened the characters (*Dracula* 445). In light of the transformations

Van Helsing has enacted in the characters' lives, however, we must consider another possibility, that these are the self-confident words of the Teutonic authority who has revitalized the English spirit of the group he has rallied to their nation's defense. Balancing the Harkers' young son on his knee—himself proof of the English group's increased vitality—Van Helsing embodies a secure male subject position in which the Teutonic spirit is preserved. In Stoker's dark England, scientific proof takes a secondary role to the North European spirit Van Helsing embodies. That spirit demands no proof. It abides outside of the realm of science, and rests secure in the knowledge that its dark other, the Roman heritage that Stoker's text configures as ravaging demonism, has been destroyed.

The Delineation of Authentic Whiteness in *Lair of the White Worm*

Stoker would return to the theme of the degenerate Roman influence in his later novel, *Lair of the White Worm* (1911). In that text, two contestatory forms of science—configured as occult knowledge and natural history respectively—clash in a desperate battle to save an English neighbourhood from the threat of an ancient monster who has adopted human form. However, the conflict between science and the occult in this text stands in quite different relation to the disciplinary techniques of empire than that we have seen in earlier imperial Gothic texts. Whereas Bulwer-Lytton used this conflict as a substitute for the larger racial and disciplinary concerns of empire, in Stoker's later text, it merely serves as an extension of the text's unabashed racism. Like Van Helsing, Stoker's heroes in *Lair of*

the White Worm have no trouble contorting their scientific knowledge to incorporate the bizarre data they encounter; they are ever-vigilant, and thus incapable of being truly shocked by the monsters they find in their neighbourhood. Rather than displacing the threat of the Roman influence onto a foreign character, Stoker relocates it in this text on British soil, in the figure of Edgar Caswall. Caswall is an unwelcome prodigal son, whose return from Africa signals the introduction into the neighbourhood of another unwelcome intruder from the colonies, his black servant, Oolanga. Stoker's English neighbourhood becomes a microcosm for English race politics, in which the bad colonial son (Caswall) competes with the good (Adam Salton, returned from Australia) in a vague psychic war. The homegrown nature of the threat to white Englishness in Stoker's later novel is emphasized by the very landscape's ability to spawn and protect monsters. Lady Arabella, who is also the white worm of the title, incites the men of the novel to vigilantism. Fortunately for Stoker's protagonists, his villains have a penchant for revealing their degenerate nature, a quality that eventually results in their own annihilation. Stoker's text achieves the racial othering of Caswall through his association with a full range of racially other villains. While Caswall is rendered different from the central whiteness of Stoker's protagonists by his bloodlines, he colludes with the African Oolanga, whose race is defined by his skin colour, and the inhuman Lady Arabella, who is not even part of the human race. This association enables Stoker to conflate Caswall's Roman heritage with these other, *prima facie* more threatening forms of otherness. By the end of the text, these racial categories are collapsed into an amorphous and threatening otherness, even as their representatives are literally exploded in the novel's climax. In this section, I will trace the process through which Stoker's protagonists employ the rhetoric of science to define and

secure an authentically white identity within the imperiled microcosm of their English neighbourhood.

The mixed character of British racial history is declared early on in Stoker's text, as Richard Salton tells his grand-nephew, Adam, that the "old kingdom of Mercia" holds "traces of all the various nationalities which made up the conglomerate which became Britain" (*Lair* 10). The task of the racial subtext of the novel will largely be to separate out the good from the bad influences in that conglomerate. Mercia will also be the site of the return of Britain's colonial subjects to their English roots. The novel opens with Adam Salton's emigration to England from Australia, where he has left behind his successful horse ranch at his uncle's request. Stoker alerts the reader to the salience of genealogy from the text's first page. Richard Salton has written to Adam, "I am in hopes that you will make your permanent home here. You see, my dear boy, that you and I are all that remain of our race, and it is but fitting that you should succeed me when the time comes, which cannot be long now" (*Lair* 1-2). Upon Adam's arrival, the two men form an immediate bond which solidifies Richard Salton's decision to pass his property on to Adam. The fresh new opportunity for development the colonies offer in Bulwer's *A Strange Story* takes second place to the passing on of the Salton family's English property in Stoker's text. For Adam Salton, who is both a vital young man willing to accept change and a scholar of British Roman history, relocation to the old Roman kingdom of Mercia is a proposition he is only too happy to accept.

In *Lair of the White Worm*, the mystification of the processes of scientific practices by Van Helsing adopts the additional characteristic of a feverish vigilance that borders on the paranoid. The protagonists' awareness of history enables them to digest the

full import of the neighbourhood in which Adam has chosen to settle. With the assistance of his uncle's friend, Sir Nathaniel de Salis, Adam learns the history of Mercia. Sir Nathaniel brings Adam to a ridge, from which their perspective is curiously doubled. Sir Nathaniel tells him, "You have now in front of you almost the whole of the ancient kingdom of Mercia. In fact, we see, theoretically if not practically, the whole of it except that farthest part which is covered by the Welsh Marshes.... We can see—again theoretically if not practically—the whole of the eastern bound of the kingdom which ran South from the Humber to the Wash" (*Lair* 22-23). Sir Nathaniel's formulation—that the viewpoint of history is theoretical first, and only perhaps practical—establishes a template for scientific thinking that will dominate the rest of the text. In this formulation, the penetrating gaze of the natural historian sees through or around evidence—and often despite its lack—directly into the truth. For Sir Nathaniel, this theoretical if not practical viewpoint brings an astonishing array of "facts" into the field of science. Throughout the novel, he will display understanding of "the *rationale*" of ancient superstitions and traditions; the racial traits of virtually everyone in the neighbourhood, including some people he has yet to meet; and his favourite topics, geology and the evolutionary capabilities of prehistoric animals. Wielding theories like weapons, Sir Nathaniel will virtually pull the explanation for the evil that plagues the neighbourhood out of his back pocket. Like Van Helsing, he will thus enable the men to take action.

Included in Sir Nathaniel's knowledge of local history is his store of information regarding the Caswall family. Mirroring Adam's return from Australia to receive his English inheritance, Edgar Caswall's arrival in England signals his reclamation of the Caswall family home, an imposing castle called *Castra Regis*. After explaining Caswall's

descent from a great line of “absentees,” Sir Nathaniel informs Adam of the family’s racial traits:

Now, it will be well for you to bear in mind the prevailing characteristics of this race. These were well preserved and unchanging; one and all are the same: cold, selfish, dominant, reckless of consequences in pursuit of their own will.... Part of this was due to their dominant, masterful nature.... The pictures and the effigies of them all show their adherence to the early Roman type. Their eyes were full; their hair, of raven blackness, grew thick and close and curly.

(Lair 17-18)

Having identified the genealogy of the Caswall family as pure Roman, Sir Nathaniel continues to discuss their more esoteric qualities:

the most remarkable characteristic is the eyes. Black, piercing, almost unendurable, they seem to contain in themselves a remarkable willpower which there is no gainsaying. It is a power that is partly racial and partly individual: a power impregnated with some mysterious quality, partly hypnotic, partly mesmeric, which seems to take away from eyes that meet them all power of resistance, nay, deeper, all power of wishing to resist.

(Lair 18)

Stoker’s demonization of the Roman type is here performed through the double function of clear separation of descent and the association with occult powers: the characteristics of the Caswall “race” are well preserved, unchanging; simultaneously, its physiology leads inevitably to mesmeric abilities. With his combination of theory and his self-assured knowledge of the neighbourhood, Sir Nathaniel has no trouble in assuring Adam of the truth of his wild claims:

You may think, Adam, that all this is imagination on my part, especially as I have never seen any belonging to the generation I have spoken of. So it is. But imagination based on deep study. I have made use of all I know or can surmise logically regarding this strange race. And with this data, however received, I have thought out logical results, correcting, amending, intensifying accepted conclusions, till at times I see as though various members of the race had always been under my observation—that they are even under it still.

(*Lair* 18-19)

In Sir Nathaniel's construction, the right relation between speculation and proof preferred by Fenwick—and dictated by scientific methodology—is upended. His ever-vigilant mind employs the powers of his imagination to penetrate realms beyond verifiability. In Stoker's text, the pressure on scientific thought to demonize of Caswall that the plot will warp that science into a form that borders on the parodic. In Sir Nathaniel's understanding, proof through sense data is rendered almost irrelevant, and virtually any rumour will stand in the place of fact. As if to prove his wild claims, he tells Adam, "is it any wonder that there is abroad an idea that in the race there is some demoniac possession, which tends to a more definite belief that certain individuals have in the past sold themselves to the Devil?" (*Lair* 19). In this construction, race theory, physiognomy, and the occult mix to produce the knowledge of the Caswall family line as evil prior to Caswall's entry into the text.

No understanding of even the most demonic features of Edgar Caswall's race or physiognomy could prepare the Saltons and Sir Nathaniel for what they find upon meeting Caswall's ship at Liverpool. Although Adam finds Caswall distasteful, thinking as he shakes the man's hand that "he could not avoid a feeling of repugnance at the man's face," a greater shock awaits him as he catches sight of Caswall's African servant:

by comparison with [the servant, Oolanga] his face seemed to have a certain nobility hitherto lacking. Caswall looked indeed a savage—but a cultured savage. In him were traces of the softening civilisation of ages—of some of the higher instincts and education of man, no matter how rudimentary these might be. But the face of Oolanga, as his master at once called him, was pure, pristine, unsoftened savage, with inherent in it all the hideous possibilities of a lost, devil-ridden child of the forest and the swamp—the lowest and most loathsome of all created things which were in some form ostensibly human.

(*Lair* 34-35)

In Stoker's hierarchy of race, Caswall's repellant qualities are superseded by those of his black manservant. At once demonized and infantilized by Adam, Oolanga's racial purity, his "unsoftened" savagery, only serve to condemn him. Among his shocking qualities is his clothing. In his "evening dress of ill cut, an abnormally efflorescent white shirt with exaggerated cuffs and collar...he looked like a horrible distortion of a gentleman's servant" (*Lair* 37). The image of the black man in European formal wear would have resonated for Stoker's audiences with the popular entertainment of the "nigger minstrel" show, in which white performers in blackface makeup sang and danced for domestic audiences. In an attempt to defuse the shocking impact of this African in Mercia, Adam himself will dub Oolanga "the Christy Minstrel." This moniker reflects the cultural function of the minstrel show, which, Malchow notes, shifted the popular representation of blacks from figures with the full powers of cannibal predation to "entertaining theatrical substitutes created by and for a white audience" (Malchow 217). Although Adam attempts to perform this conceptual transformation on Oolanga, it is largely a failure: Oolanga's dangerous qualities, configured as his occult powers, will become part of a web of intrigue that will threaten the Mercian neighbourhood.

The increased demonization of Caswall through his association with Oolanga allows us to map Stoker's racial hierarchy in terms of Chambers's notion of whiteness. Chambers argues that whiteness "has the touchstone quality of the normal, against which the members of marked categories are measured, and, of course, found deviant.... Whiteness is not itself compared to anything" (Chambers 142). In keeping with this characterization of whiteness, Adam Salton, Richard Salton, and Nathaniel de Salis enjoy

the privilege of occupying an “unmarked” category: in this novel rife with racial distinctions, the three men neglect to discuss their own lineage or characteristics. Their genealogy is established firmly as not requiring examination early on, as the elder Salton simply refers to “our race,” a category which presumably requires no explication. The group of villains, on the other hand—Caswall and Oolanga, who will soon be joined by Lady Arabella—are identified in terms of their racial characteristics, inevitably more faulty or sinister than “ours.” Chambers notes that “the trick of othering” involves a double function: “as the production of forms of disconnectedness that correspond, on the one hand, to the homogenized other’s status as familiar and already known, and on the other to the pluralized other’s status as exotic”(Chambers 149). Caswall’s characterization shows signs of both aspects of this double function. Caswall’s family history “is coeval [albeit not identical] with that of England,” (*Lair* 15) and Sir Nathaniel’s knowledge of the family renders Caswall all too familiar. Simultaneously, the association of Caswall with the occult, and his doubly damning employment of Oolanga, function to exoticize him. As we have seen, Oolanga’s appearance at once suggests the savage child of the forest and the familiar minstrel show player. In the muddled action of the rest of the novel, the protagonists will gradually perform a similar racial othering of Lady Arabella. Appearing to be a “girl of the Caucasian type, beautiful, Saxon blonde, with a complexion of milk and roses” (*Lair* 36), Lady Arabella’s association with Caswall and Oolanga will alert the men to her deep racial rottenness, her identity as not really human at all. In their efforts to reveal Lady Arabella as only passing for human, Stoker’s protagonists will deploy an increasingly wide range of scientific theories. Science thus accommodates itself to the defense of English territory and authentic white identity. The racial hierarchy in

Lair of the White Worm confirms the status of its villains by constituting evil as part of their racial inheritance, and by failing to differentiate between the different forms of that racial otherness in the attribution of evil.

Stoker's commitment to this racial hierarchy, and the dangers posed by the dark Roman influence on British soil, is reinforced by the novel's superficial dedication to the clash of science and the occult that Bratlinger identifies as the heart of imperial Gothic. The arrival of Caswall initiates a dispute over Mimi and Lilla, two eligible farmgirls. While Adam falls in love with Mimi, Caswall expresses interest in Lilla. Adam arrives at Mercy farm, the girls' home, to find Caswall and Oolanga in the midst of what appears to be a psychic battle with Mimi and Lilla. Adam believes it is an attempt to bring Lilla under Caswall's mesmeric influence. Oddly, Mimi's racial identity seems to slip past the protagonists' hierarchical eye. Old Salton and Sir Nathaniel, noticing Adam's interest in Mimi, explain her origins to him: Mimi is

the daughter of Watford's second son. He went for a soldier when he was just over twenty, and was drafted abroad. He was not a good correspondent, though he was a good enough son. A few letters came, and then his father heard from the colonel of his regiment that he had been killed by dacoits in Burmah. He heard from the same source that his boy had been married to a Burmese, and that there was a daughter only a year old. Watford had the child brought home, and she grew up beside Lilla.... Strange how different they are! Lilla all fair, like the old Saxon stock she is sprung from; Mimi almost as dark as the darkest of her mother's race.... Mimi's black eyes can glow whenever she is upset. The only thing that upsets her is when anything happens to injure or threaten or annoy Lilla.

(*Lair* 42-43)

From this point forward, little is made of Mimi's racial identity, a fact which is surprising in light of what Malchow characterizes as late-Victorian attitudes to Eurasians. In 1899, the *Lancet* published a report that summarized "the biological inadequacy of the Eurasian:

‘...the cross between East Indian and the European is less satisfactory than that of the European with the negro’” (Malchow 205). Several factors might be responsible for Mimi’s escape from the men’s demonizing racial judgments. Mimi’s gender might override her racial identity. Furthermore, the early death of her parents and her transportation at a young age to England might have served to rescue her from the taint of miscegenation enacted by her parents. It is likely, however, that Stoker is reaching back to an earlier form of British relations with Eurasians, a popular representation, largely fictional, in which “the brave half-caste boy” performs acts of unusual courage through which British interests are preserved. Malchow cites the case of George Brendish, “a mixed-race youth who valiantly stood by his telegraph key in Delhi sending out news of the Sepoy rebellion while chaos erupted around him” (Malchow 206). Stoker may have been thinking of this story in his construction of Mimi, whose psychic abilities will serve to defend her white cousin Lilla in the psychic battles waged against them by Caswall. Although Lilla is ultimately killed by Caswall, Mimi continues to be useful as Adam’s wife. In the rest of the narrative, her race is forgotten as she becomes the object of Adam’s love.

The fact that Mimi is allowed to “pass” in the racial hierarchy of Stoker’s novel may be due to the greater disturbance revealed through Adam’s continued investigations into Oolanga’s past, which uncover an imperial nightmare through its revelation of Oolanga’s status within his home culture. Deploying a network of white informants—his manservant Davenport, and a ship’s steward “who gets on well with niggers” (*Lair* 68) — Adam gathers the facts about Oolanga’s origins. Adam’s new information reveals both

Oolanga's powers and a frightening insight into his Africa, a dark region of danger as demonic as traditional ideas about the netherworld. Adam tells Sir Nathaniel,

It seems that this Oolanga is quite a great person in the nigger world of the African West Coast.... They are always ready to trumpet his greatness.... He was originally a witch-finder—about as low an occupation as exists amongst even aboriginal savages.... Then he got it up in the world and become an Obi-man, which gives an opportunity to wealth *via* blackmail. Finally, he reached the highest honour in hellish service. He became a user of Voodoo, which seems to be a source of the utmost baseness and cruelty.

(*Lair* 69)

Oolanga stands in Stoker's text not only as racial other, but as representative of a demonic culture that supports the worst in occult knowledge. The image of him as European Other is complete as Adam describes his other hobby. Oolanga is a "collector," but not of specimens for scientific study: "Such collections! All that was potent for evil in bird or beast, or even in fish. Beaks that could break and rend and tear. All the birds represented were of a predatory kind. Even the fishes are those which are born to destroy, to wound, to torture. The collection, I assure you, was an object lesson in human malignity. This being has enough evil in his face to frighten even a strong man" (*Lair* 69-70). Oolanga's evil is not only evidence of his own degenerate nature, but also of the dark intentions nascent in the natural world. In *Lair of the White Worm*, the same world that regularly spawns such animal monsters is fully capable of spawning not only Oolanga in all his evil, but an entire society to support and worship him. Through the example of Oolanga and his "collections," the text establishes the likelihood of evil springing up out of nature, as Lady Arabella will later be proven to have done. The role of white culture in this nightmarish landscape is to recognize and eradicate this threat. After his researches, Adam declares, "If that other savage [Caswall] intends to keep [Oolanga] round here they may

build a new prison at once; for there won't be a decent man or woman in his neighbourhood that won't be a criminal at the very start, if indeed it be a crime to destroy such a thing" (*Lair* 70).

Edgar Caswall's own suspect racial heritage is underlined by two factors: his occult inheritance and his continued associations with Oolanga. The threat he poses is configured as both his innate mesmeric abilities, already used in his attempts to win Lilla, and in a literal inheritance from his ancestors. Like Oolanga, Caswall's family has collected a wide range of objects: "all sorts of strange anthropological specimens...and, above all, a vast collection of lethal weapons of every kind and from every place" (*Lair* 109). Caswall's collection evokes, in material culture, that same evidence of brutality that Oolanga's beaks and claws draw from the natural world. Caswall's collection includes "machines which could produce pain of any kind and degree, and the only mercy of which was the power of producing speedy death" (*Lair* 110). Caswall's sadistic character draws him to these objects: "he found a constant amusement and interest in them" (*Lair* 110). Chief among these objects is a chest, rumoured to have been passed down to a previous Edgar Caswall from Mesmer himself. The chest, an old servant warns, holds the secrets that confirm the evil of the Caswall line. The old man tells Caswall that the chest "probably contains secrets which Dr Mesmer told my master. Told them to his ruin!... He it was who, men said, sold his soul to the Evil One" (*Lair* 112-113). Only able to open the chest in his dreams, Caswall's fascination with the collection marks another milestone in his descent into madness. In pseudo-scientific prose, Stoker insists that

Caswall's mental disturbance was not hard to identify. Every asylum is full of such cases—men and women who, naturally selfish and egotistical, so appraise to themselves their own importance that every other circumstance in life becomes subservient to it.... When the same decadence attacks a nature naturally proud and

selfish and vain, and lacking both the aptitude and habits of self-restraint, the development of the disease is more swift, and ranges to further limits.

(*Lair* 287)

The text's racial determinism thus reveals Caswall as particularly susceptible to mental disintegration. Mental disease, like bad blood, is the enemy within.

Stoker's insistence on the correlations between physical and mental fitness, however, demands a final transformation of Caswall's flesh. The ever-vigilant protagonists are quick to note this new change, and to associate it with Oolanga's influence: "Strangely, as he unconsciously yielded to this demoralising process, [Caswall] seemed to be achieving a new likeness to Oolanga. Sometimes as Adam—ever on the watch—noticed the growing change, he began to wonder whether the body was answering to the mind or the mind to the body. Oolanga preserved all his original brutal decadence, while Caswall slowly deteriorated" (*Lair* 106). The fear of miscegenation that haunted the turn of the century may be responsible for Stoker's formulation of the change to Caswall which leaves Oolanga unaffected. Malchow notes that among the "popular lessons to be drawn from evolutionary debate (if not legitimately from Darwin's own careful speculations)" was that the "mixture of races would tend not to the elevation of the black, but to the degradation of the white man" (Malchow 185). Caswall's willing psychic alliance with Oolanga results in his own deterioration. In the totalizing view of white Englishness, racial degradation is configured in terms of individual moral and physical change, where the site of contention is Caswall's own body, and the time of degradation compressed into a few short weeks.

Perhaps the most gymnastic deployment of race theory in Stoker's text is in the explanation of the real origin of Lady Arabella, who is not the Anglo-Saxon woman that she seems, but a cold-blooded snake who is merely "passing." Adam first suspects her evil nature when she shoots and kills his pet mongoose, an animal he has purchased to help combat the overabundance of snakes in his Mercian neighbourhood. On one of his morning snake-hunts, Adam and his mongoose encounter Lady Arabella. The animal becomes furious and attacks her; she pulls out a revolver and shoots him. She does not stop at killing the animal: "Not satisfied with this, she poured shot after shot into him till the magazine was exhausted" (*Lair* 72). Back home, Adam discusses this encounter with Sir Nathaniel. The older man employs his deductive logic, complete with his usual presumptions about the innate qualities of the natural world, to suggest a shocking conclusion: "If for centuries in all parts of the world this particular animal is known to attack only one kind of other animal, are we not justified in assuming that when a case strange to us comes before us, if one of the first class attacks a hitherto unclassed animal, he recognizes in that animal some quality which it has in common with the hitherto classed animal?" (*Lair* 75). Adam's reply unknowingly describes almost all of the logic employed in the narrative: "if we followed [this argument] out with pure logic it would lead us to believe that Lady Arabella is a snake" (*Lair* 76). Indeed, this position is exactly the one the men will eventually accept. First, however, they must wander in a realm of cautious inquiry that, Adam warns, "may get [us] into even moral entanglements; before we know it we may even be in the midst of a bedrock struggle between good and evil" (*Lair* 77). Sir Nathaniel agrees; in an attempt to calm Adam, he outlines his understanding of the progress of knowledge:

As to whether any moral change accompanies a physical one, I can only say that I have met no argument or proof or even no assertion of the fact. At the same time, we must remember that 'good' and 'evil' are terms so wide as to take in the whole scheme of creation and all that is implied by them and by their mutual action and reaction.... So long as the inherent forces or tendencies of any one thing are veiled from us we must expect mystery. This hides from us more than we at first conceive, and as time goes on and *some* light gets into the darker places, we are able to understand that there are other darknesses.

(*Lair* 78)

Sir Nathaniel's attempt to understand the mystery of Lady Arabella reveals the natural world as inherently mysterious, a place in which discovery only leads to further mystery. Like Oolanga's Africa, the world is depicted as a series of darknesses that threaten to swallow up the meagre light that knowledge can shed on it. Perhaps this understanding is responsible for the modification to the scientific method that Sir Nathaniel recommends. He tells Adam, "To listen and remember should be our guiding principle" (*Lair* 78). This formula constitutes a shift in both the physical sense and principle of cognition employed in Karl Pearson's recommendation for national success, "keep your eyes open and apply common-sense" (Pearson 38). Sir Nathaniel's construction suggests the "blindness" of the scientific inquirer: left "in the dark" by the world of bewildering mystery that surrounds him, his most useful tool becomes not consensus, but rather personal testimony. In the dark England of Stoker's later novel, the embattled empiricist has no recourse to a broader community of thinkers with which he can compare his results. Sir Nathaniel has "met no argument or proof" that might substantiate his guess as to Lady Arabella's true nature in the discourses of science. Thus he and Adam must forge new a scientific territory using only the raw materials of rumours and memories. Their chief tool, logic, is in this context tellingly described by both Adam and Sir Nathaniel as "blind."

As in *Dracula*, the protagonists' ability to push through to the logical conclusions suggested by the data is valorized, particularly in light of the fact that, in Van Helsing's words, "we have always believed the 'no' of it" (*Dracula* 239). In the service of coming to their final conclusion regarding Lady Arabella, Sir Nathaniel and Adam must employ the full range of their scientific and historical knowledge. Sir Nathaniel grumbles about this

affair of gloom and mystery which has no bottom and no end—with magic and demonology, and even with forces of the most unnerving kind, which had their origin in an age when the world was different from the world which we know. We are going back to the origin of superstition—to the age when dragons of the prime tore each other in their slime.... We must fear nothing—no conclusion, however improbable, almost impossible it may be.

(*Lair* 191-192)

As in *Dracula*, Stoker does not allow the reader to forget what is at stake in this inquiry: "Life and death is at the present hanging on our judgment," Sir Nathaniel declares (*Lair* 192). His argument, which will lead to the identification of Lady Arabella as the white worm itself, engages with the scientific discourse of the prodigy that Said argues is capable of controlling eccentric data. Sir Nathaniel relates the possibility of Lady Arabella's evolution from a snake in terms of his geological knowledge of the neighbourhood:

In many of the caverns in the Peak I am convinced that some of the smaller passages were used in primeval times as the lairs of some of the great serpents of legend and tradition.... This brings us to another point more difficult to accept and understand than any other requiring belief in a base not usually accepted or indeed entered on: whether such abnormal growths, as must have been in the case of the earlier inhabitants, could have ever changed in their nature. Some day the study of metabolism may enable us to accept structural changes proceeding from an intellectual or moral base. If such ever be probable, we may lean towards a belief that great animal strength may be a sound base for changes of all sorts. If this be so, what could be a more fitting subject than the primeval monsters whose strength was such as to allow a survival of thousands of years?

(Lair 195)

From this precarious position in the realm of extreme scientific speculation, in which mythology and folklore are completely undifferentiated from fact, it is only a short step to the theory of evolution, applied, as is all the evolutionary and racial rhetoric of Stoker's text, to an individual creature:

It is only the natural process of evolution; not taken from genii and species, but from individual instances.... Take, for instance, monsters tradition has accepted, such as the Worm of Lambton.... If such a one were, by its own process of metabolism, to change much of its bulk for a little intellectual growth, we should at once arrive at a new class of creature, more dangerous, perhaps, than the world has ever had any experience of—a force which can think, which has no soul and no moral, and therefore no acceptance of morality.

(Lair 198-199)

Thus Sir Nathaniel completes the demonization of Lady Arabella, a race unto herself, an immensely long-lived creature who appears to be human, but instead is cold-blooded. Again, the conflation of physical constitution with religious rhetoric contributes to Sir Nathaniel's judgment of the condition of Lady Arabella's psyche. As this creature, she is the very embodiment of the racial other who passes for Anglo-Saxon purity. From this point on, the narrative, like that of *Dracula*, takes on the burden of eradicating this racial abomination. This step is also a short one for the men; although they quibble over the legal ramifications of appearing to kill a woman, their knowledge, like Van Helsing's, is readily transferred into action.

The resolution to *Lair of the White Worm* involves an action sequence of almost unmitigated strangeness. Alerted to the threat that Lady Arabella embodies, Adam purchases her house and immediately begins stockpiling dynamite in its well-hole, presumed to be the worm's hiding place. It is unclear whether the giant serpent that

pursues the protagonists through the last third of the novel is Lady Arabella herself or her prehistoric relative; any evidence to the truth is obliterated in the explosion of the dynamite. Conveniently, that catastrophe results in the destruction of the novel's two remaining villains. At this point, Lady Arabella herself has already murdered Oolanga, dragging him down with her into the well-hole. Edgar Caswall, thoroughly mad, has become fascinated with a giant kite which he flies from his castle tower. Lady Arabella spontaneously and inexplicably ties a wire to the kite's base, and leads it to her home, where she drops the other end of the wire down the well. A massive lightning strike hits the kite, blowing up the castle and Lady Arabella's home. The explosion blows a hole in the nearby cliffside. This series of events, in addition to killing the villains, results in a revelation which is particularly significant in light of the novel's rigid racial distinctions. Surveying the damage, Adam notices "a shining mass of white, which looked strangely out of place in the wreckage" (*Lair* 323). Sir Nathaniel tells him that it is "the vast bed of china clay through which the worm found its way down to its lair" (*Lair* 324). In addition to the gory and swiftly-rotting remains of the worm itself, the protagonists are assured that the "white worm" of the novel's title is not white after all, but merely took on the appearance of whiteness from the English land itself. In the highly racialized world of Stoker's novel, so concerned with drawing distinctions between invisible whiteness and its others, even the worm's monstrous white identity is ultimately denied.

In *Lair of the White Worm*, Stoker's interest in the distinction between Britain's Roman and Teutonic racial heritages results in the creation of a strictly hierarchized microcosm, in which the pseudo-whites and non-whites that threaten its heroes collude to reveal their own essentially wicked natures. Through its vigilance and its willingness to

equate bold conclusions with action, white Britishness need only make the conditions right in order to allow pseudo-whiteness and its dark racial associates to eliminate themselves.

In Stoker's text, while whiteness might be feigned, true whiteness is constituted as an essence; the requirements of success, unlike in previous imperial Gothic texts, do not include a transformation of white male positionality. Labouring in a hostile world, in which both human culture and nature itself produce threatening monstrosity, Stoker's heroes deploy a scientific rhetoric that is stunning in its scope. This inquiry, however, does not pursue truth itself, but rather is always used in the context of self-defense.

Stoker's England is dystopic, threatening not the catastrophic change offered even as recently as his own *Dracula*, but rather the ongoing entrenchment of white male positionality in an increasingly small circle of epistemological certainty and white racial purity.

Conclusion

Imperial Gothic and the Imperative of Vigilance

Operating under the nightmare imperatives of the horror genre, the texts of imperial Gothic function as narratives of crisis that ultimately constitute the white male British subject as ever-vigilant, ready to the task of embodying the traits of strength and faith required by empire's defense. The transformations of the individual subject we witness in these texts are evidence of the larger mechanisms of imperial control. *A Strange Story*, for example, establishes a competitive relation between the pursuit of scientific knowledge and empire's requirement for settler subjects. A solitary scientist working toward the construction of his own empire of thought, Allen Fenwick becomes a more direct participant in the British empire's pursuit of colonization through his work as a settler. *She* reveals the role of logic and its exclusion of moral ideals in the raw power dynamics at play in imperial conquest. In *Dracula* and *Lair of the White Worm*, science in the form of eugenics is itself removed from the aegis of the individual, and co-opted in the defense of the British race as a whole.

In these two texts, the individual becomes a representative of the discourses of racial purity, rather than a lone scientific practitioner. Ironically, science and empiricism, which operate to prioritize and construct individual subjectivity, ultimately become more significant in their support of British empire and the British race as a collective. Like the individual protagonists of the texts of imperial Gothic, the rhetorics they engage in operate only under empire's agreement to support them. The crises evoked in these texts require obedience to a larger set of techniques, belonging to empire itself.

Despite their appearance as nightmares, the texts of imperial Gothic ultimately operate as cathartic dreams. Through the defeat of their otherworldly foes, they enable the constitution of their white male protagonists as already armed and prepared to meet the task of imperial defense. The manifestation of the enemy—as the monstrous foreign and as the 'enemy within' of racial contamination—justifies the concentration of British forces in preparation for more earthly conflicts. In *National Life from the Standpoint of Science*, Karl Pearson articulates this desire for and fear of imminent conflict:

A crisis may come in which we may want all the brain and all the muscle we can possibly lay our hands on, and we may find that there is a dearth of ability and a dearth of physique, because we have allowed inferior stock to multiply at the expense of the better. There are occasions when a nation wants a reserve of strong men, and when it must draw brain and muscle from classes and from forms of work wherein they are not exercised to the full. And in that day woe to the nation which has recruited itself from the weaker and not from the stronger stocks!

(Pearson 31)

The texts I have examined rehearse precisely this catastrophic scenario, while simultaneously reassuring their audiences that the outcome of conflict with even the most powerful monsters will end in the triumph of the British subject. In addition to the constitution of the white male subject as equal to the task of imperial defense, then, these

texts also operate as reminders of the need to continue the armament of British subjects in anticipation of such conflicts. The fortress of the individual intellect constructed through science and empiricism thus becomes an equally strong means of British political control, offering security on two fronts: on the level of individual subjectivity, and on the level of cultural defense. Through the playing-out of these worst case scenarios, imperial Gothic provides a narrative rationale for the armament and vigilance of its subjects, through which it offers the guarantee of continued security.

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