

Racial Others to Cultural Brethren: Thomas Jefferson's Indians and the Politics of Sympathy

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Monticello, once home of Thomas Jefferson, houses a collection of portraits of notable Native American chieftains as well as relics from their past collected by the expedition of Merriwether Lewis and William Clark in 1804-5. The massive presence of these cultural artifacts in the private sphere of the third president of the United States, writer of the Declaration of Independence indicates a peculiar interest in the culture of a people that he and many of his contemporaries thought to be on the brink of extinction. Perhaps nothing captures such a state of mind better than Jefferson's reproduction of the last speech of Native American (Mingo) chief Logan in his *Notes on the State of Virginia* (written in 1781, published in 1785). Mourning over his closest relatives massacred by whites, Logan makes testimony to his courage swearing to defy his enemies, on the one hand, as well as to his willingness to suffer a violent death, on the other. The last of his kin, bereft of his loved ones, he has nobody and nothing to lose: "There runs not a drop of my blood in the veins of any living creature," Logan says reported by Jefferson. "This called on me for revenge. I have sought it; I have killed many: I have fully glutted my vengeance. For my country, I rejoice at the beams of peace. But do not harbour a thought that mine is the joy of fear. Logan never felt fear. He will not turn on his heel to save his life. Who is there to mourn for Logan?—Not one" (Jefferson, *Portable* 100).

Logan, or Tachnedorus by his Native American name, supposedly made this speech after a military defeat, as a gesture of accepting and signing a peace treaty with the English in 1774. Although Jefferson intended Logan's mourning to demonstrate the oratorical capabilities of Native Americans in an attempt to refute charges against their inferiority as inhabitants of the New World, it is the previously mentioned dimension of the speech concerning their doomed future that especially appealed to readers of his *Notes*. Jefferson's contemporaries as well as later generations of Americans understood Logan's case as one exemplifying the fate of those Indians who were unwilling to follow white ways and hence were doomed to extinction (Wallace 1-2).¹ At the same time, "Logan's Lament" also offers a starting point to discuss another issue, namely the concept of sympathy, which has emerged in Jefferson scholarship in the past decade or so. By positioning himself as one bereft of all kin, no longer possessing familial ties, Logan also refers to the problem of sociability, more particularly, to sympathy and affection that he can no longer expect from anyone of his own blood.

Students of Jefferson have identified this important general theme of sentimental affection and benevolence in his thought, pointing out its fundamental role in his moral philosophy and socio-cultural ideals.² The focus of these works usually involves the problem of race, and historians concentrate on how interracial benevolence informed

Jefferson's view of Native Americans or blacks. However, what they tend to ignore in this regard is the other side of the coin, that is, how, in the eyes of Jefferson, these racial others approached the problem of interracial affection.

Jefferson had a strong sense of racial and cultural boundaries dividing the people of the North American continent, whites, blacks, and Native Americans. He also held the view that races other than white should develop a sense of benevolence among themselves as well as toward whites. For Native Americans, he proposed the erasure of such racial boundary lines by assimilation, claiming that this would be beneficial to them, furthering their survival. Below I will attempt to answer the question how Jefferson assessed the capability of Indians to deal with the boundaries separating white and red, as well as what exactly Jefferson's plans for the assimilation of Native Americans consisted in. I will explore how Jefferson conceived the notion of interracial benevolence that he expected his Indians to exhibit toward whites.

The lynchpin of the process of transformation was, in fact, his implied requirement for adult Indian males to comply with Jefferson's ubiquitous norm of developing affectionate relationship to their female counterparts in a civilized manner in addition to adopting white ways of living. As part of their effort to achieve this, Jefferson expected Native American men as hunters to close the cultural gap existing not only between themselves and Indian women, who traditionally assumed the duty of agricultural activity, but also between themselves and Jefferson's ideal of a white society being engaged in agricultural production. For Jefferson, in this way, racial differences between whites and Native Americans appeared as cultural differences that could be eliminated by means of cultural transformation. Furthermore, blurring gender boundaries became identical, in his mind, with erasing cultural boundaries. Such was the strategy through which he intended to prepare the ground for interracial benevolence between Indians and whites and, ultimately, for amalgamation.

Before discussing Jefferson's notions about Native Americans and their capacity for interracial benevolence it is necessary to define the major contours of the general moral philosophical context that served as a backdrop to those. This is what I now turn to.

To a considerable extent, Jefferson's writing and speaking about Indians was influenced by the culture of sentimentalism that, to a considerable extent, underlay the world of the early Republic. Affection, benevolence, sensibility, sociability or sympathy were stock idioms that Americans of Jefferson's time employed to describe the bonds that tied human beings together in society. Derived from the moral philosophy of eighteenth-century Scottish Enlightenment, the culture of sentimentalism emphasized the ability of humans to sympathize with the emotions of other fellow beings. Sympathetic benevolence was rooted in the moral sense, which contemporaries, in turn, located in the heart, and benevolence was also understood in a political sense, as a prerequisite for human society to function properly. It was the very force that created cohesion among individuals, overcoming selfish passions, providing the fundamentals for Americans to establish and sustain their "sentimental democracy," to use

historian Andrew Burstein's phrase.³

Jefferson, however, did not address the situation of Native Americans in the abstract sense, isolated from the American context; instead, he considered the problem of Indian assimilation within the more general framework of his conception of the USA as a sentimental political entity. As Peter S. Onuf has capably demonstrated, Jefferson had a vision of his country as a coalition of free and equal republics bound together through the bonds of mutual affection. This relationship, in Jefferson's eyes, distinguished America from European powers, where coercion tended to hold political entities together through the control of a metropolitan center. Jefferson's republics, by contrast, based on the principle of federalism, were capable of co-operating within an ideal federal framework of divided authorities where they could remain independent with regard to their own affairs and would be ready for mutual action in relation to foreign nations (see See Onuf 2, 16, 53-54, 107, 120).

These were the general theoretical foundations informing Jefferson's understanding of benevolence concerning Native Americans. Yet, such a vision of a nation based on the sentimental bonds of equal state-republics presumed a strong element of cultural and political homogeneity, which had far-reaching consequences for Jefferson's positioning Native Americans in this system. In his vision of the future of Native Americans, in the name of sentimental homogeneity, he advocated their assimilation, the need for the elimination of cultural differences that separated them from whites.

Jefferson's plans about the assimilation of Indians into white society was largely influenced by their situation in his native Virginia. Born and raised in Albemarle County, he was exposed to a frontier culture that basically lacked a massive presence of Native Americans. Saponi Indians, belonging to the Sioux had once inhabited the region but were gone by Jefferson's time (Peterson 5). They had been driven out of the area by hostile Iroquois war parties. The Iroquois laid claim to the land from the Great Lakes down to the northern borders of North Carolina, restricting the right of existing tribes to land tenure, a constraint that the latter refused to accept. The noted Powhatan Confederacy consisting of Algonkian-speaking tribes, ruling tidewater Virginia, had been shattered in the previous century, leaving behind only a thousand inhabitants existing in Jefferson's time (Wallace 87, 88, 79, 83). The lack of a sizeable Native American community in his native Virginia undoubtedly reinforced Jefferson's view about the doomed fate of the indigenous inhabitants of the land.

In addition to his own experience, Jefferson's knowledge about America's indigenous inhabitants was also derived from other sources, and his general epistemology of Native Americans ultimately rested on contemporary scientific views about the natural world and the history of human development. Of these, mainly those ideas served to inform his thought that pertained to the problem of stability and change with regard to different living beings. In the first place, Jefferson shared the tenets of Swedish natural philosopher Carolus Linnaeus about the stability of species of the Earth: living organisms can be categorized according to certain unchanging qualities, and in this way the human mind is capable of identifying the species, which have

another stable feature: they did not change after creation. In addition to this, the still popular doctrine of the Great Chain of Being also informed Jefferson's understanding of the natural world, emphasizing the hierarchy of unchanging living and non-living organisms.

Despite the emphasis on stability in this system, within each category, different elements of the chain were seen as capable of undergoing a process through which they would turn into other elements, thereby possibly rising in the scale. Such a conception of change within the system was largely due to Jefferson's acceptance of the French naturalist, Comte de Buffon's thesis about the specificity and individuality of living beings, emphasizing, at the same time, the similarities between disparate items as well as changes in species as a result of the transformation of the climate and environment (see Sheehan 16, 23-24; Boulton 477; and Wallace 95).

As far as Native Americans were concerned, in this system of natural philosophy, Jefferson regarded them as belonging to the same species as whites, yet saw them as a people occupying a place lower in the chain. Indians, thus, simply represented a downgraded variety of whites, at the same time having the chance to rise in the scale and occupy the same slot as their white counterparts, because they belonged there by nature (Sheehan 19; and Boulton 482).⁴ This process, therefore, also implied the possibility of the "cultural evolution" of Native Americans by adopting the whites' way of life. What this evolution involved was development from the stage of savagery through barbarism to civilization (Sheehan 24, 25; Wallace 95).

Jefferson's vision of Native Americans as a race bound to undergo the process of civilization fitted in with his general conception of historical development in the north American continent. Such a development involved the geographical as well as chronological succession of different cultures across the land, superseding one another, each representing a particular stage in the process. Jefferson, at the same time, also understood them as representing diverse elements of a hierarchical order of stages, expressing their relative position in a system of gradation, defined in terms of their distance from the natural state. He expressed his pertaining views to William Ludlow: "Let a philosophic observer commence a journey from the savages of the Rocky Mountains, eastwardly towards our seacoast [. . .]. There he would observe in the earliest stage of association living under no law but that of nature, subsisting and covering themselves with the flesh and skins of wild beasts" (Jefferson, *Portable* 583).

For him, then, both geographically and chronologically, Native Americans represented the first and thus the least developed cultural stage in this advancement of civilization, and hence their fate was to be replaced by later and more advanced representatives of civilizational development. As Jefferson maintained: "Barbarism has [. . .] been receding before the steady step of amelioration; and will in time, I trust, disappear from the earth" (583). Consequently Indians, as defined through their "savage" or "barbarian" culture, were to go as long as their remained attached to and thus defined through it. In Jefferson's eyes, they could only hope to survive by choosing the path of advancement.

What were the specific attributes of Native Americans, according to Jefferson, that drove him to devise such a theory of development for them? In order to be able to answer this question, one needs to turn to his pertaining anthropological views.

Jefferson offers a comprehensive treatment of Native Americans in his *Notes on the State of Virginia* within the context of offering an overview of his native state. The relevant passages of the book are not meant to be simple descriptions of their habits, culture, and society, but are intended to prove that, contrary to Buffon's argument, the New World is not to be seen as a place that is inferior to the old one, yielding inferior creatures by nature.

Peculiarly enough, Buffon attributed the alleged inferiority of North American Indians to physiological factors. According to him, the ultimate cause of their culture's inferiority is the deficiency of the sexual drive in the male members of the community. In Jefferson's rendition: "they lack ardor for their females, and consequently have no love for their fellow men: [. . .] they love their parents and children but little" (Jefferson, *Portable* 93-94). In this way, Buffon makes the sexual capacity a prerequisite for social organization. Native Americans are deficient in strong intra-, and inter-familial bonds, and, consequently, they lack properly developed societies. According to Jefferson, this deficiency as identified by Buffon, in turn, is to be seen as critical in assessing Native American males in terms of their relation to the rest of creation. "Nature, by refusing him the power of love, has treated him [i.e., male Indians] worse and lowered him deeper than any animal," Jefferson quotes Buffon (*Portable* 94).

Jefferson, at the same time, counters certain parts of this Buffonian argument by pointing out that the Native American male "is neither more defective in ardor, nor more impotent with his female, than the white reduced to the same diet and exercise" (*Portable* 94-95). In other words, Jefferson does not refute Buffon's claims about the sexual inferiority of Native American males, but he puts it down to environmental factors, hence denying its fixed nature. Furthermore, he denies the connection, established by Buffon, between the sexual drive and social cohesion within Native American communities. Instead, as will be seen below, it is the moral sense that Jefferson identifies as a factor to be investigated in that regard.

As has been seen above, with Jefferson, the moral sense is a ubiquitous human faculty and is indispensable to any kind of social existence. It should come as no surprise, then, that he also identifies the "moral sense of right and wrong" in Native Americans. At the same time, this moral sense is both similar to and different from the one that characterizes the white race, according to him. In the first place, Jefferson denies Buffon's contention that the Indian of the New World feels no affection for his offspring. On the contrary, he says, "he is affectionate to his children, careful of them, and indulgent in the extreme" (*Portable* 134, 96). For Jefferson, then, intergenerational benevolence is a trait that characterizes the Native American, both male and female.

In the second place, according to him, Native Americans also exhibit the universal thesis about benevolence being disproportionate to distance between persons; in other

words, Indians, similarly to whites, exhibit diminishing affection for those that are at a greater distance from them culturally or racially: "his affections," Jefferson claims, referring to Indian males, "comprehend his other connection, weakening, as with us, from circle to circle, as they recede from the center" (*Portable* 96). In this way, Native Americans have supposedly strong family ties (male members excluded), but moving outside that social unit social affections get considerably weaker.

This notion on Jefferson's part is a projection of the "gravitational model of human relations," adopted from Scottish moral philosophy. Eighteenth-century Enlightenment thinkers such as David Hume, Adam Smith, or Francis Hutcheson held that social affection and benevolence lessen with the distance growing between subject and the other (see Wills 287-88). They regarded the family as the basic social unit where social affections were strongest. Such a conception of Native American benevolence, as will be seen below, has far-reaching consequences for their co-existence with whites, in Jefferson's vision.

Having seen the major features of Native American sociability as envisaged by Jefferson, it is now time to point out that scholars have failed to take note of a tension that can be observed between Jefferson's general claims about Indian males' familial benevolence toward their offspring and his thesis about troubled gender relations within their communities (see Wills 286-87; and Burstein, "Political Character" 623).⁵

Despite his general assertion of familial affection among human beings, Jefferson denies the existence of intimate ties of affection between Native American males and their spouses, agreeing with Buffon in this respect. Indian women, in his mind, are subdued by males, who are physically superior and by using force compel them to fulfill various tasks necessary for their daily subsistence. This is why Jefferson feels justified to claim: "The women are submitted to unjust drudgery" (Jefferson, *Portable* 96). In other words, sociability and benevolence fail to work in Native American gender relations, and the boundaries between the sexes cannot be surpassed by means of affection: Indian men engage themselves in employing force to subdue their women. What makes Jefferson's evaluation of Native American gender relations even more interesting from the perspective of benevolence is his explanation for such a state of affairs. He attributes the lack of males' social affection to their supposed existence in the state of "barbarism." For Jefferson, such a state is characterized by the fact that selfishness predominates human behavior, and force rules; it can only happen through the civilization of such barbarian nations that they abandon their selfish nature. In the same vein, then, it is only the process of civilization, aimed at turning selfishness into benevolence, through which Indian males can develop affection for their spouses (*Portable* 96-97).

Accordingly, Jefferson did not deem the moral sense of Native American males developed enough to enable them to behave in an affectionate way toward their women. Furthermore, he considered their barbarian way of life the greatest obstacle to such a development. The implication is obvious: it can happen only through "civilization"

that Native American males acquire the capability for affection for their spouses as well as whites, substituting it for force and violence as the principle governing their current relationship with them.⁶

We can argue, then, that for Jefferson, the civilization of Native Americans, first and foremost, consisted in their becoming benevolent. At the same time, the process, in theory as well as in practice, entailed their integration into white society through assimilation because, to Jefferson's mind, benevolence could work only between persons of the same culture, with minimal cultural distance between them. The gravitational model of human relations assumed proximity as a prerequisite for social affection. The other alternative was doom for indigenous Americans. Only assimilation could bring love and affection for them in a white-dominated society.

Such a vision of Native American relations on Jefferson's part had further repercussions as to his Indian policy. Conceiving of the racial boundary between Native Americans and whites mainly in terms of moral and cultural difference, Jefferson believed that the indigenous population of the land could be saved from extinction only by making them adopt white ways, a prerequisite for them to be able to close the cultural gap between the two races and become integrated into his sentimental republic. Most important of all, this process contained the element of cajoling western hunter tribes into adopting a sedentary way of life, based on agriculture. In his Second Inaugural Address (March 4, 1805), for instance, Jefferson made clear that choosing the option of survival Natives were to abandon the hunter stage of development and learn from whites how to become agricultural producers and perform "the domestic arts" (Jefferson, *Portable* 318). The same attitude informed Jefferson's appeal to Seneca Chief Handsome Lake in 1802, when he formulated his vision of the process of this transformation eloquently: "Persuade our red brethren to be sober and to cultivate their lands, and their women to spin and weave for their families. You will soon see your women and children well fed and clothed, your men living happily in peace and plenty, and your numbers increasing from year to year" (Jefferson, *Portable* 307).

Jefferson, at the same time, also wished the Seneca chief to understand that adopting white ways could only happen without any compromise and doing agriculture also meant adopting an appropriate land policy, based on the sanctity of private property replacing tribal claims to the land. By white cultural standards, buying and selling land was an appropriate way of accumulating capital for improving agricultural production. Accordingly, Jefferson made a point of arguing that the traffic of land should not be restricted for the Seneca Indian. "Nor do I think," he continued addressing Handsome Lake, "that the sale of lands is, under all circumstances, injurious to your people. While they depended on hunting, the more extensive the forests around them, the more game they would yield. But, going into a state of agriculture, it may be advantageous to a society [. . .] to sell a part and lay the money in stocks and implements of agriculture for the better improvement of the residue. A little land, well stocked and improved, will yield more than a great deal without stock or improvement" (*Portable* 306-07).

Having lands in tribal possession indicated the state of savagery to Jefferson, hence abandoning this kind of ownership meant an important step toward civilization, not to mention the fact that the fresh supply of land could hopefully satisfy white settlers' hunger for land. Bernard W. Sheehan succinctly explains the rationale behind Jeffersonian land policy toward the Natives: "Civilization required a direct relation between the individual and the soil. It marked off the bounds of earthly endeavor by limiting the Indian's property to the amount he could cultivate with the work habits acquired from the white man" (167, 169).

Jefferson launched a program to achieve exactly that, intending to prove the inter-racial benevolence of the white man toward the Indian. Acceptance of this program on the part of Native Americans was a prerequisite for blurring the lines separating them from whites. Jefferson intended to have this program of civilization implemented among tribal communities, organized by the federal government through its agents.⁷ South of the Ohio River Benjamin Hawkins, while north of it William Henry Harrison acted as agents of this policy of civilization. Their duty was to make Indian tribes cede land to the US government, providing them with tools necessary to start agriculture as well as to protect them from the evils of the hard liquor trade and to educate them in the adaptation and implementation of necessary agricultural technology (Wallace 278, 282, 285-97). Southern tribes such as the Cherokees or the Creeks had made great progress in adopting white ways, while of the northern tribes the Iroquois were the ones who were ready to follow suit.⁸

As has been seen, an important component of Jefferson's Native American policy was his concern with land as the basis of agricultural activity, which he regarded as necessary to promote among tribes. Accompanied by household manufactures, it was, in part, aimed at providing them with the necessities of subsistence, replacing hunting. Yet, at the same time, Jefferson also pointed out the importance of land traffic in this process: Native Americans would soon be compelled to start selling land in order to have access to cash in order to acquire the necessary means of production. He was clear on this in a letter to Andrew Jackson: "When [Indians] shall cultivate small spots of earth, and see how useless their extensive forests are, they will sell, from time to time, to help out their personal labor in stocking their farms, and procuring clothes and comforts from our trading houses."⁹ In other words, the pressure to sell landed property to whites was hopefully to engage Native Americans in a new trade relationship with them, making them dependent on the former.

This dependence of Native American tribes on land sales, in turn, was also to have another aspect in Jefferson's mind: it was believed to facilitate easier acquisition of land by whites, catering to their land hunger. Jefferson explained the significance of such an effort to Indian agent Benjamin Hawkins, "While [Indians] are learning to do better on less land, our increasing numbers will be calling for more land, and thus a coincidence of interests will be produced between those who have lands to spare, and want other necessities, and those who have such necessities to spare, and want lands."¹⁰ The laws of supply and demand, then, Jefferson hoped, would take care of

Native American reluctance to get involved in land traffic and would ultimately benefit the landless white population of the nation.

In this way, Jefferson's land policy toward Native Americans was not only geared toward the final goal of civilization, but also toward acquiring Indian land for whites. This was also to be served by cajoling their tribal leaders into debt so that they would be more willing to sell land to whites.¹¹

The assimilation of Native Americans, however, would not finish with the adoption of the private ownership of land. Indian women, once relieved from agricultural production, Jefferson hoped, would have the opportunity to engage themselves in the production of household manufactures. Furthermore, laws of inheritance, regulating the control over property of the deceased father will have to be introduced and legal institution in protection of private property will need to be established, as Jefferson explained to representatives of the Cherokee Nation in 1806 (*Writings* 561).

As Anthony F. C. Wallace has pointed out, making the transition to a sedentary way of life posed serious problems to Native Americans: subsistence agriculture proved impossible to provide former hunters with the cash that they had had access to before through fur trade. Furthermore, Native American males were resistant to giving up their previous sex roles as hunters, and they also resented the adoption of a new ideal of leadership that no longer centered upon kinship and traditional values but was based on material wealth (Wallace 298-99).

For all the resistance on the part of Native Americans, Jefferson hoped that their assimilation would take place eventually, also meaning their integration into white society not only culturally but also racially. As he desired, amalgamation of the two races would finally happen through intermarriage. Having adopted white ways of existence, Native Americans then would be suitable for assimilation into American society. "In truth," Jefferson wrote to Hawkins, "the ultimate point of rest and happiness for them is to let our settlement and theirs meet and blend together, to intermix, and become one people. Incorporating themselves with us as citizens of the United States, this is what the natural progress of things will, of course, bring on, and it will be better to promote than to retard it."¹² The "intermixing" of red and white, then, was a preordained process, in Jefferson's eyes governed by nature, which could be "promoted" and was futile to hinder.¹³

Those resisting and deciding to continue their merciless attacks upon white advancement were to be removed over the Mississippi River, at a safe distance from civilization, Jefferson suggested. In making Native Americans assimilate to white ways, he found affection as an important factor, yet, he also found threat a viable means of coercion. He had no scruples over showing force to Indians when advising William Harrison: "As to their fear, we presume that our strength and their weakness is now so visible that they must see we have only to shut our hand to crush them, and that all our liberalities to them proceed from natives of pure humanity only."¹⁴

Jefferson's emphasis on the stick over the carrot in his instructions to his Indian agent indicates that his benevolence for Native Americans as they were in their cur-

rent state was far from being unconditioned. Furthermore, it also indicated that making Native Americans civilized in the fashion of whites and thus benevolent required the threat of force as he believed. For him, those refusing to assimilate, giving up tribal habits, were really doomed to extinction or to be removed beyond the Mississippi to prolong their long agonies as members of a doomed culture.

Jefferson also made clear to Harrison that the painful consequences of the process of assimilation should be kept hidden from Native Americans—and in their own “interest”: “For their interest and their tranquillity (*sic*),” as he argued, “it is best they should see only the present age of their history.”¹⁵ Jefferson, then, admitted that Indian assimilation was a process that implied a transition against the will of the subjects suffering it. Yet, he was determined in his effort to use federal policy in order to effect that transition, to the benefit of Native Americans and especially to that of whites.¹⁶ Cultural adaptation served as a prerequisite to racial assimilation in his eyes.

Finally, it is instructive to see that Jefferson regarded his own role as instrumental in making his Indians over to benevolent brethren. He regarded it as that of a patriarchal superior. He emphasized the relationship between the indigenous people of the land and himself as one based on dependence. With the Spanish, the French, and the English having withdrawn from the North American territories to be controlled by the Americans the “red children” were adopted by a new white father. As Jefferson explained to delegates of the Wolf and Mandan nations: “And remember the words I now speak to you, my children, they are never to return again. We are now your fathers [. . .]” (Jefferson, *Writings* 564). He was ready to assure his native visitors that his intentions with them were sincere, wishing them well. He addressed them taking the position of a superior leader, professing responsibility for them. As he assured the Cherokee delegates in 1806: “Tell all your chiefs, your men, women and children, that I take them by the hand and hold it fast. That I am their father, wish their happiness and well-being, and am always ready to promote their good” (Jefferson, *Writings* 562). The notion of “taking” Native Americans “by the hand” as children in a paternalistic manner, besides suggesting their subordination, also expressed Jefferson’s determination to lead them through the process of civilization as an inferior race.

Andrew Burstein has emphasized that, in Jefferson’s reading, Logan’s speech exemplifies the Native American’s capability of sympathetic eloquence, the power of their speech to raise sympathetic emotions in the white audience in general as well as to make them share Logan’s pain over having lost his kindred in particular.¹⁷ At the same time, and perhaps more interestingly, the speech also offered the white audience another position that they could occupy to attest to their own sympathetic benevolence: first, the speech asserted Logan’s friendship with whites, that is, he could be interpreted as one having natural ties of affection with the white audience.

In the light of my argument developed above, nonetheless, Logan’s story also offers still another reading. The sympathy of the white audience as a moment of interracial benevolence was aimed at an Indian, once a practitioner of the same kind of sympathy that was not returned by merciless whites. He was someone that managed

to exhibit benevolence toward whites without being civilized, that is, becoming one of them. However, Logan's story, in fact, suggested the futility of having it both ways. As Wallace maintains, "[t]he Jeffersonian vision of the destiny of the Americas had no place for Indians as Indians" (11). Being Indians, they could not develop the ability of benevolence toward whites, one should add. Hence Logan's parable, ironically, reinforces Jefferson's project of earning benevolence through acculturation: Native American benevolence, shown toward whites could not function to protect their identity—they had to lose it in order to win the affection of whites. The very moment of winning benevolence thus also implied physical survival at the price of cultural annihilation.

In a recent book on antebellum American benevolence, Susan Ryan has maintained that when writers of the period addressed the problem of social benevolence, they were keenly aware of the peculiar mixture of identity and difference structuring the relationship between benevolent helper and recipient. In some ways, the latter had to differ from the former to claim its appropriate status, yet commonality between them was also a requirement for sympathy to arise in the helper (Ryan 18-19). Such a state of mind can be contrasted to Jefferson's attitude toward Native Americans: rooted in the conviction that in order for them to be saved from extinction Indian males were to assimilate to white culture, Jefferson's philanthropy toward them expressed a desire to eliminate the cultural difference existing between whites and Native Americans in order for the latter to make themselves suitable to white benevolence. Jefferson had no scruples over the limits of this interracial benevolence, since he had no fear of the white race losing identity—on the contrary, the doomed race of Native Americans were to adopt a new one. Since only civilized people were capable of benevolence in Jefferson's reasoning, Native American tribal and cultural identity was surely to be replaced by another, preparing the way to their assimilation: the moment that they had learnt to others (racial and of their own kind) through civilization was identical with the moment of their cultural extinction.

NOTES

¹ On the historical background of Logan's story and Jefferson's relation to it, see Wallace 2-13.

² These works include Onuf; Burstein *The Inner Jefferson; Sentimental Democracy* and "Political Character"; Yarbrough; Wood, *Radicalism* and "Trials and Tribulations"; and Saillant.

³ See Burstein, *Sentimental Democracy*; Wood, *Radicalism* 215-225; Burstein, *The Inner Jefferson*; and Halttunen 51.

⁴ Thus wrote Jefferson on this: "I am safe in affirming, that the proofs of genius given by the Indians of North America, place them on a level with whites in the same uncultured state. [. . .] I believe the Indian, then, to be, in body and mind, equal to the white man" (Jefferson to Chastelleux, June 7, 1785, Jefferson, *Writings* 801).

⁵ Even Peter S. Onuf, who otherwise proffers a judicious treatment of Jefferson's

views about Indian relations, slips over the significance of this tension (see Onuf 24, 26, 30).

⁶ Onuf argues that the lack of sociability in Native Americans, in Jefferson's mind, was associated with a process of civilization leading to the corruption of their natural virtue when making a pact with the British to fight against Patriots during the War of Independence, strengthening the principle of force in them (see Onuf 27). However, as seen above, Jefferson is clear on the inherence of this quality in Native American males. It is not the result of a corrupt way of civilization (i.e., exposure to the British): for him, they were deficient in social affection due to their barbarian status.

⁷ On the administration of Indian affairs by the federal government during the Jeffersonian era see White 496-512.

⁸ On the activities of Harrison as an agent of Jeffersonian civilization among Indians, see Owens. Owens focuses on land cessions on the part of Native Americans besides their protection by agents from ill-willed whites and liquor.

⁹ February 16, 1803, Jefferson 1903-4, vol. 10, 358; see also Jefferson to William H. Harrison, February 27, 1803, Jefferson 1903-4, vol. 10, 370.

¹⁰ February 18, 1803, Jefferson 1903-4, vol. 10, 362.

¹¹ Jefferson to William H. Harrison, February 27, 1803, Jefferson 1903-4, vol. 10, 370.

¹² February 18, 1803, Jefferson 1903-4, vol. 10, 363.

¹³ On the problem of intermarriage between Indians and whites see also Sheehan 174; and Grinde 197.

¹⁴ February 27, 1803, Jefferson 1903-4, vol. 10, 370-371; see also Sheehan 244, 246.

¹⁵ February 27, 1803, Jefferson 1903-4, vol. 10, 373.

¹⁶ Therefore, as Donald A. Grinde, Jr. points out, as to his attitude toward Native Americans, Jefferson exhibited obvious ambiguity. On the one hand, he looked upon them in a positive manner, pointing out their virtues mainly as a proof against the inferiority argument concerning the New World. On the other hand, when it came to his evaluation of Natives' resistance to white expansion, civilization, and progress, Jefferson used harsh terms to denounce their behavior (Grinde 195-97).

¹⁷ Burstein, "Political Character" 622; and *Sentimental Democracy* xii. On the claim that Jefferson's contemporaries regarded Logan's speech as a fine example of Native American eloquence see also Onuf 23.

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