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An Américain in Africa: The Transatlantic Creations of Paul Belloni du Chaillu

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The most popular American writer the year the Civil War began was not, perhaps, American. A nation on the verge of splitting asunder enthusiastically consumed stories of its national identity being consolidated in Africa in a book by Paul Belloni du Chaillu, a young man of ambiguous origins and spectacular credibility issues. His 1861 bestseller *Explorations and Adventures in Equatorial Africa* about his pith-helmeted exploits marked him as an intrepid scientist or armchair fantasist or, possibly, both. Regardless, his rise from anonymity to transatlantic sensation in a moment of acute national crisis suggests that something important was created and perceived in the shifting identitarian signs of his person and his work. David Kazanjian has argued that the early United States' "domestic scene is constitutively related to the global because of its deep integration in geopolitical systems such as trans-Atlantic labor flows, Euro-American political economy, imperial ventures in North America and Africa, pan-American racial formations, and North American transnational capital."¹ Kazanjian ends his study in the mid-nineteenth century, about the time Du Chaillu first arrived in New York, but the youth from either Paris, New Orleans, Gabon, or an island near Madagascar incarnates virtually all the phenomena of which Kazanjian writes. Du Chaillu was not simply a European adventurer or American journalist or African homesteader, all of which he became, for capital of all sorts moved through him in multinational and continental forms even before he emerged as a celebrity in the United States, Great Britain, and France. As a result, Du Chaillu deserves a space of prominence in any configuration of a nineteenth-century transatlantic canon. He also merits attention as the author of the last great antebellum American narrative. The fact that the qualifier "American" in that statement is utterly debatable is entirely, given 1861, the point.

About the same time as Kazanjian, Peter Hulme and Tim Youngs noted the “absence within the academy of a tradition of critical attention to travel writing” and posited that any such scholarly endeavor “has to bring its subject into focus in order to ‘accompany’ it.”² The quests of Du Chaillu, both on the ground and on the page, warrant such a focus because of the seemingly endless refractions that result. As Du Chaillu crisscrossed the Atlantic from the 1850s onward, he claimed himself to be American, but the elusiveness of his identity and of the truth claims of his principal text is impossible to resolve definitively. Although Du Chaillu today is regarded, if at all, as a derivative figure of his era, a sort of second-rate David Livingstone or Henry Morton Stanley, the man and the corpus converged then and now as a polysemic flow in which North America, Western Europe, and Western Africa are inseparable. As the first foreigner to visit a variety of spaces in Africa that today form part of Gabon and Equatorial Guinea, Du Chaillu figured notably in the trajectories of countries on three continents. And as an individual of uncertain transatlantic roots, he challenges normative notions about the exclusionary nature of national identities. Many other people, of course, whether willingly or unwillingly, also underwent oceanic passages that led to refashionings of individual and collective selves, but only Du Chaillu did so with the production of an African travelogue of an Americanized continent the same year that disagreement over the destiny of African descendants imploded into internecine war. Amid the bloodshed of the Civil War, he offered an enticing projection of an alternative and expanding America in a foreign and future land. Travel writing remains a genre that generally ranks low in academic attention, but Du Chaillu shows the mistake of that. The narratives of transatlantic voyagers, particularly those that gain great currency at critical historical moments, are constituent clues to the evolving projections of the national identities of countries on various oceanic shores.

By the measure of commercial success, Du Chaillu was acknowledged in his day as a major author of the nineteenth-century Atlantic. In the United States, *Explorations and Adventures in Equatorial Africa* was possibly the fifth bestselling text of 1861 (and certainly one of the top eleven), positioned just behind Charles Dickens’s *Great Expectations*, George Eliot’s *Silas Marner*, the Grimm Brothers’ *Household Tales*, and Mrs. Henry Wood’s *East Lynne*.³ If Du Chaillu is considered to be an American and if the higher ranking is accurate, then he was the most popular American author of the year the Civil War began. Two London editions came out shortly after the inaugural version in New York and were published by John Murray,⁴ the same house that had printed Livingstone’s seminal account of his own African adventures, *Missionary Travels and Researches in South Africa*, four years earlier and would release the sequel, *Narrative of an Expedition to the Zambesi and Its Tributaries*, four years later.⁵ This testifies to Du Chaillu’s importance in the United Kingdom as well as the United States. As Roy Bridges points out, “Among the publishers who fed the enormous public interest in popular travel works, John Murray was probably the leader.”⁶ When a revised edition in French of *Explorations and Adventures in*

Equatorial Africa was published in Paris in 1863, Du Chaillu's transatlantic audience grew in linguistic as well as geographic reach.

By that point, Du Chaillu was embroiled in a highly public and international scientific row centered in London regarding the accuracy of his depictions of gorillas. His reports had made him a luminary and a laughingstock on both sides of the Atlantic. Yet despite the accusations against him as a fabricator of great ape encounters, he ultimately achieved canonization as a science writer. Indeed, as Stuart McCook observes, "for more than fifty years after the *Explorations* were written, people who worked with primates often felt obliged to address du Chaillu and his discoveries. This is a telling indication of the extent of his impact."⁷ The footsteps that Du Chaillu left behind also remain to this day in Gabon, whose primary mountain range is named after him and whose written literature concerning certain regions begins with him. In short, Du Chaillu and his text stand where the nineteenth-century Atlantic joined Africa with Europe and America, science with literature, and stardom with scorn. This influential and hybrid legacy notwithstanding, he and his work have languished in relative obscurity behind the fame of other adventurers in Africa, principally Livingstone and Stanley. But Du Chaillu was a precursor of the latter in more ways than one, not a successor. Long before Stanley did the same, Du Chaillu traveled in Africa as a reporter for a New York newspaper and, in terms of style, melded purportedly objective journalism with a dramatic literary sensibility.

Prevailing academic notions of the transatlantic as a category or qualifier seem either to concentrate on connections between Europe and North America or to include Africa predominantly within the context of the slave trade and the resulting dynamics of diaspora. Analysis of Du Chaillu and his oeuvre allows the opportunity to reconsider the transatlantic by linking many sides of the ocean without either leaving Africa out of the picture or limiting its significance to the slave trade and its consequences. As an intellectual framework, the turn to the transatlantic accelerated after the 1993 publication of *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness* by Paul Gilroy. Still an influential text, its emphasis on African American figures such as W. E. B. Du Bois and Richard Wright was taken up subsequently by scholars employed mostly in English and American Studies departments. The result of such institutionalization has been a general slanting of transatlantic paradigms as chiefly anglophone and northern in orientation. Researchers working out of Spanish and Portuguese departments are long accustomed to more southerly foci, as Columbus and the construction of Latin America are seminally transatlantic phenomena, but that tends to be to the exclusion of northern subjects and remains to this day virtually uninformed by the transatlantic studies that have come out of anglophone departments in recent years. For example, Julio Ortega's *Transatlantic Translations: Dialogues in Latin American Literature* of 2006 reveals little connection to the work on northern Europe and North America done since Gilroy.

Consequently, a major advantage of studying Du Chaillu is how he bursts beyond the architectures of academic transatlanticism as currently constructed. He

first crosses the Atlantic from Gabon to New York, yet he is not black (or perhaps he is); he first speaks in French and so requires researchers able and willing to engage francophone texts, yet he wrote his most important book in English (or maybe he did not write it at all); he was slotted by his British publisher and no doubt by the British public as a neat fit among Livingstone and Stanley, but he was either French or American (or possibly neither). Many transatlantic studies take a cultural artifact or phenomenon that originates on one side of the ocean and engages in evolutions on the other side. The goal then is to follow the metamorphoses, plumb them, hazard explanations as to why the changes occurred as they did and what the impact of those changes were. The challenge of Du Chaillu as a subject per se and as a heuristic case for transatlantic studies in general is that his creations of self and country surge forth at once on multiple coasts and in a nonlinear and protean fashion. The customary borders of disciplines and languages must be transcended, not traced, in following Du Chaillu through *Explorations and Adventures in Equatorial Africa* and through the resulting kerfuffles of his celebrity. The impossibility of pinning him down permanently in any territory, whether national or academic or generic or linguistic, is the profound possibility offered by transatlantic studies in the first place.

The identitarian elusiveness of Du Chaillu is particularly resonant when national flags fly in his 1861 tome, the first instance of which is at the commencement of one of Du Chaillu's many journeys into the African hinterland. "When all was ready for a start," he writes, "Makondai fired a gun, and then I swung out the American flag to the breeze, the first time that it or any other flag of a civilized nation had floated over these waters. The people shouted, and we were off."⁸ This scene, symbolically so powerful, is as deliberately literary as it is ostensibly journalistic. A second hoisting of the standard, taking place on the last day of his final inland push, is even more dramatic. At the climax of the book on January 1, 1859, Du Chaillu reaches the end of his explorations. His shoes give out and, as he recounts, "at every step my bleeding feet were more and more torn, till at last the agony grew too great, and I could not set a step forward without almost an accompanying scream" (512). He wakes up the next day unable to proceed any further and so, he writes, "I took out from a little sack, in which it had long been laid away, an American flag, which I had meant to plant upon my farthest point" (513). He is disappointed that the time has come to end his journeys but "then, finding it impossible to advance farther, I sent two men to climb the highest tree in sight, and fasten the American flag at its top. When it floated out on the breeze, I made my men give three cheers for the star-spangled banner" (513). The American flag planted on the African frontier, he drinks "a glass of wine to the health of friends at home," bandages his feet with his shirtsleeves, and starts staggering back toward the coast (514). Here, then, at the end point of one man's explorations, he raises a pennant at the highest possible spot and thereby metaphorically subsumes all lands beneath it to the country it represents. This act of Americanization is both a projection of a future collective identity for Africa and a consolidation of a present individual identity. That is, Du Chaillu, a

francophone man whose provenance was unknown, produces both Africa and himself as American. To read this in 1861, however, deepens the import beyond the desires of one man in print and in person. Just at the moment when the United States standard is in bitter dispute, readers up and down America could witness here “the star-spangled banner” aloft in African winds.

Curiously, the first biography of Du Chaillu, written by Michel Vaucaire seventy years later, alters the same scene considerably. In this version, there is instead a dual raising of flags. As Vaucaire wrote of the climactic moment, “They would surely have to turn back. Du Chaillu had brought two flags with him, an American and a French, to leave flying at the farthest point to which he could penetrate. Now he had reached that point. A negro climbed to the top of the tallest tree and there made fast the flags. Three cheers saluted the colors.”⁹ The existence of a French pennant, however, is nowhere mentioned in the original edition of *Explorations and Adventures in Equatorial Africa*. Raising two distinct flags, even if both of red, white, and blue, obviously evokes nationhood in a rather different way than does merely raising one. A plurality of possible collective identities is suddenly available to Du Chaillu and his readers rather than a single American identification. At the same time, the authority of Du Chaillu recedes significantly as the commanding oral tone of the original rendition—“I sent two men to climb the highest tree. . . . I made my men give three cheers”—changes in Vaucaire to a single “negro” who seemingly scales the trunk on his own volition. Moreover, the subsequent hurrahs, which do not distinguish between the American and French flags, also appear spontaneous instead of issuing from the orders of the explorer. The rationale for these changes and the truths behind them, like much about Du Chaillu, is unclear. The reception of these revisions likewise is uncertain, though clearly the planting of American and French pennants on African soil would have read rather differently in 1930, the year of the publication of Vaucaire’s biography, than that of a lone American standard in 1861. In addition, the foregrounding of the blackness of the sole flag raiser in Vaucaire effectively underlines the whiteness of Du Chaillu, a racial projection that was frequently suspect during the life of the explorer.¹⁰ In short, the national and phenotypical associations of Du Chaillu differ considerably in the two versions, but the importance of the flag-hoisting itself remains evident. Vaucaire also wrote biographies of Simón Bolívar and Toussaint L’Ouverture, so he sustained an interest in historical figures of national mythological proportions and major transatlantic consequences. In fact, his text on Du Chaillu is a transatlantic ambiguity in its own right, for the original biography, written in French, does not seem to have appeared in print. Posterity relies on an anglophone translation by Emily Pepper Watts that was published in New York by Harper, the same company that had published Du Chaillu there in 1861.

Perhaps the most that can be affirmed of the Vaucaire version of the flag-raising event is that it resonates somewhat with the translated and expanded edition of *Explorations and Adventures in Equatorial Africa* that came out in Paris in 1863, two

years after the New York and London editions. There, Du Chaillu himself amends the scene as follows:

puis je tirai d'un sac, où je les tenais depuis longtemps en réserve, deux petits drapeaux que j'avais dessein de planter sur le point le plus reulé où il me serait donné de parvenir. . . . Voyant décidément qu'il m'était impossible de pousser mon voyage plus loin, je dis à deux de mes hommes de grimper sur l'arbre le plus haut que je pus découvrir, et d'attacher à son sommet le pavillon américain et le pavillon français. Quand je les vis se déployer au vent, je fis pousser trois acclamations par ma troupe en l'honneur de la bannière étoilée et du drapeau tricolore.¹¹

[then I pulled out from a sack, where I had kept them for a long time in reserve, two small flags that I had desired to plant on the farthest point that it would be given to me to reach. . . . Seeing that it was decidedly impossible for me to continue my voyage further, I told two of my men to climb up the highest tree that I could discover and attach to its top the American flag and the French flag. When I saw them unfurl in the wind, I made my troop give three cheers in honor of the star-spangled banner and the tricolored flag.]

In this rendition, Du Chaillu evidently attempts to consolidate a different authorial identity for a different national readership. His portrayal of a decision to hail two flags instead of one appeals to a French market, though it is notable that he does not elide the United States altogether. Rather than substitute “la bannière étoilée” with the “drapeau tricolore,” he has them fly side by side. This acknowledges a transatlantic identity rather than the exclusively American one implied in the same passage in the New York edition. Unlike in *Vaucaire*, however, there are two men who climb the tree and their racial identity is not stressed. Whatever the commercial or other reasons for the disparate English and French renditions of the scene, the cumulative result is the figurative fluidity of Du Chaillu himself. Raising a foreign flag at the limit of an imperial adventure is hardly unique in travel literature, but doing so is almost always to expand the reach of a given national identity. That identity is never given for Du Chaillu because in each of the texts by or about him, he (that is, his persona) creates it as such.

The spaces available for diverse narrative inventions of the persona of Du Chaillu exist by virtue of the uncertainty about details of his life. A 1903 obituary in *National Geographic* declares, incorrectly if most other sources are to be believed, that he was born in New Orleans in 1835.¹² The significance of this claim is that it would grant Du Chaillu automatic American citizenship and allow him to acquire the

symbolic capital of his more renowned (though later) contemporary: “His birthplace was thus the same city to which Stanley nearly twenty years later drifted as a cabinboy, to be befriended and adopted by the merchant Stanley” (282). The obituary adds that Du Chaillu’s father, allegedly of French Huguenot extraction from Louisiana, owned a “trading depot” on the shores of Gabon; that Du Chaillu spent a few teenage years on that coast; and that “about 1853 his father took him back to the United States,” when he would have been 18 (282).

The biography by Vaucaire emphasizes the unreliability of all proposed information about Du Chaillu’s birth and early years. Vaucaire concludes that he was actually born in France, probably Paris, in 1831 rather than 1835; that his French father went to Gabon in 1845 and sent for him three years later; and that the father died in 1851, at which point Du Chaillu, about twenty years old, decided to cross the Atlantic Ocean for the first time, attracted by “the fairy-tale pictures of the United States so ardently drawn by the American sea-captains and missionaries. Why not, indeed, go there, to that marvelous western country . . . ?”¹³ According to a comprehensive 1979 essay by Henry Bucher that reviews historiography on Du Chaillu, Vaucaire’s account is erroneous in places—Du Chaillu’s father actually died in 1856—and dubious in others.¹⁴ Bucher notes that South Carolina, Senegal, and Réunion island in the southwestern Indian Ocean also have been given as birthplaces, with the Réunion version awarding him a “mulatto” mother.¹⁵ According to McCook, some contemporaries supposed instead that his mother “was Italian, apparently because of the Italian ring of ‘Belloni,’ du Chaillu’s middle name.”¹⁶ Whatever his origins, numerous contemporaries were convinced that they were racially ambiguous. As McCook adds, “Even du Chaillu’s *friends* suspected he was of mixed parentage. Du Chaillu’s ‘diminutive stature, his negroid face, and his swarthy complexion,’ wrote one of his friends, ‘made him look somewhat akin to our simian relatives’” (190). Hinted here in charged terms is an African heritage for an explorer of Africa. This would be no minor issue for an American public at war with itself over slavery. Even the “simian” charge carried a particular resonance in that moment. Charles Darwin published *The Origin of Species* just months after Du Chaillu returned from Africa in 1859. The definition of humanity itself was at stake both within slavery debates and without.

Whether Du Chaillu was white or American depends on who represents him in any given moment—he is a leading purveyor of his persona but scarcely the only one—and, of course, how “white” and “American” are chosen to be delineated in the first place. The Gabonese scholar Annie Merlet indicates that Du Chaillu indeed probably was born “à la Réunion . . . ou ailleurs” (on Réunion . . . or elsewhere) in 1831 or 1832 but unquestionably arrived in Gabon in 1848 and traveled to the United States in 1852.¹⁷ Merlet suggests that the various pulls of the United States were matched by a repulsion that Du Chaillu felt toward France. She writes that Du Chaillu was a student in Paris during the 1848 revolution and was present at and appalled by a bloody shooting that left forty dead on city streets on February 23 of that year (157).

When Du Chaillu left for Gabon a few months later, according to Merlet, he was “un jeune révolté” (a young man in revolt) against his country; and when an American missionary in Gabon saved him from drowning and took him in, “il ne caresse plus qu’un seul rêve: embrasser la nationalité, la culture et la religion de ses bienfaiteurs. Toute la vie du futur explorateur s’ordonnera désormais autour de trois constantes: fuir ses origines, se couper de ses racines, devenir américain” (he cherished only one dream: to embrace the nationality, culture and religion of his benefactors. The whole life of the future explorer will be ordered henceforth around three constants: to flee his origins, to cut himself off from his roots, and to become American) (157). If so, this was a man who was transatlantic by force of imagination before he even had crossed the ocean. His past was French, his present Gabonese, his future American. Those descriptions, however, can exchange places in different sources. When he raises both a French and an American flag in his 1863 edition in Paris, he seems transatlantically quite French again. When he goes back time and again to Africa, both physically and textually—over the next forty years, he kept publishing reworkings of his voyages, often for children—that Gabonese present never does recede into the past.

Despite the difficulty of proving details and motivations, it seems reasonable to conclude that Du Chaillu was raised in one or more francophone environments, spent a few late teenage and early adulthood years on the Gabonese coast, and then in 1852 arrived in the United States for the first time. Thanks to his American missionary friends in western Africa, he landed already having secured a job as a French tutor at an elite New York school for young girls. At that point, Du Chaillu quickly identified himself with America. As one significant move, he anglicized the pronunciation of his surname.¹⁸ In his several years on the East Coast, he also applied for American citizenship and came to believe that he had secured the support of both the venerable Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia and the *New York Tribune* for his return to Africa, the result of which would be his 1861 tome. By way of comparison, Stanley, in his famous journey ten years later to find Livingstone, traveled as a journalist for the *New York Herald* and was “a brilliant reporter who knew how to frame his stories for best dramatic appeal.”¹⁹ Based in New York and anticipating that his own African adventure would bring international fame, Stanley in all likelihood read Du Chaillu. Certainly, he would have known of the controversies surrounding his predecessor throughout the 1860s. Quite possibly he found in Du Chaillu a transatlantic model as well. Stanley too had fled his origins across the ocean, in his case as an illegitimate child in Wales, and remade himself an American by strength of imagination and will before striking out for Africa. He too Americanized his patronym (literally, as he took on the name of a New Orleans merchant); he too claimed biographical details of dubious factuality; and he too tended to protean alignments, fighting, for instance, on both sides of the American Civil War. Stanley arrived in the United States from across the Atlantic in 1859, the same year in which Du Chaillu also returned at the end of his experiences in Equatorial Africa that would be the fodder for his bestseller.²⁰

In October 1855, professing to be an American citizen, Du Chaillu had boarded a ship in New York intent on returning to western Africa and striking out for its equatorial interior.²¹ He was determined to learn more about its peoples, explore its geography, and obtain specimens of flora and fauna for Western scientific consumption. This passage to Africa, however, did not consist of a nostalgic rapprochement with his francophone past but instead an attempt to consolidate by deed and word his American persona. At least, that is what Merlet suggests: “Revenir au Gabon? Pourquoi pas? Mais pour mieux asseoir l’avenir et non pour retrouver un passé aboli. Que nul ne s’y trompe: ce n’est pas le petit Paul DuChaillu qui retourne chez son père, mais l’explorateur américain Paul Belloni du Chaillu, correspondant du ‘New-York Tribune’” (Return to Gabon? Why not? But in order to better establish the future and not to reencounter an abolished past. Let there be no mistake: this is not the little Paul du Chaillu who is returning to his father’s home but the American explorer Paul Belloni du Chaillu, correspondent of the *New York Tribune*).²² In his return to Africa, writes Bonaventure Mvé-Ondo, “En quête d’un savoir envers les autres, Paul du Chaillu est donc tout aussi bien à la recherche d’une filiation” (In quest of knowledge about others, Paul du Chaillu is therefore just as much in search of a filiation).²³

The self-identified American arrived at the familiar Gabonese coast in December 1855 and spent the next four years traveling in the African hinterland. In June 1859, he headed back to New York to publish the results of his time among “the people of this region [who have not] yet attained the primitive step in the upward march of civilization, the possession of beasts of burden.”²⁴ His general analysis of western Africa was that it was a fertile territory where much economic and religious profit could be reaped if only the locals were not so set on sloth and superstition. The frontispiece from the 1863 Paris edition of his book (see *figure on following page*) succinctly represents his point of view.²⁵ The indolence of the African figure sets off the virile vigor evoked by the title and subtitle above it. Whereas the pages ahead promise to resound with Du Chaillu on the hunt for gorillas, crocodiles, leopards, elephants, hippopotami, “etc., etc.,” the Africans seem likely to be engaged in the curiously challenging activity of no activity at all. There is something almost postcoital about this local who apparently has downed a bottle of alcohol and now smokes it off, having misappropriated local natural resources by turning them into nothing better than a rudimentary chaise lounge. Du Chaillu, clearly, will not make the mistake of such blissful leisure.

The most resonant passage of *Explorations and Adventures in Equatorial Africa* takes place early in the book, when Du Chaillu reaches an elevation and has a remarkable epiphany:

On all sides stretched the immense virgin forests, with here and there the sheen of a watercourse. . . . as I strained my eyes toward those distant mountains which I hoped to reach,

I began to think how this wilderness would look if only the light of Christian civilization could once be fairly introduced among the black children of Africa. I dreamed of forests giving way to plantations of coffee, cotton, and spices; of peaceful negroes going to their contented daily tasks; of farming and manufacturers; of churches and schools; and, luckily raising my eyes heavenward at this stage of my thoughts, saw pendent from the branch of a tree beneath which I was sitting an immense serpent, evidently preparing to gobble up this dreaming intruder on his domains. My dreams of future civilization vanished in a moment. Luckily, my gun lay at hand. I rushed out so as to “stand him from under,” and, taking good aim, shot my black friend through the head.²⁶

VOYAGES ET AVENTURES
DANS
L'AFRIQUE
ÉQUATORIALE

MŒURS ET COUTUMES DES HABITANTS; CHASSES AU GORILLE,
AU CROCODILE, AU LÉOPARD,
A L'ÉLÉPHANT, A L'HIPPOTAME, ETC., ETC.

PAR
PAUL DU CHAILLU
MEMBRE CORRESPONDANT DE LA SOCIÉTÉ GÉOGRAPHIQUE DE NEW-YORK,
DE LA SOCIÉTÉ D'HISTOIRE NATURELLE DE BOSTON,
ET DE LA SOCIÉTÉ ETHNOGRAPHIQUE AMÉRICAINE

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1863

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Frontispiece from the
1863 Paris edition of
Du Chaillu's *Voyages et
aventures dans l'Afrique
équatoriale*

The literary layers of this passage are multiple and intertwined. Africa is effectively a Garden of Eden in need of development. The “virgin” forests virtually call for penetration, while the “wilderness” is beautiful but shrouded in the spiritual darkness of a land bereft of “the light of Christian civilization” and the corporeal darkness of “the black children of Africa.” This Garden even has a tree in the middle with an “immense serpent” on it, threatening to “gobble up” not so much Du Chaillu as his “dreams of future civilization.” Fortunately, he has raised his eyes “heavenward” and detected the snake that competes for his virginal Africa, so he whips out his gun and shoots his “black friend through the head.” The execution complete, the Garden saved from its own darknesses, Du Chaillu now can stride forward into the wilderness and the future at once. As a pioneer visionary of “forests giving way to plantations,” he acts as both Moses and Adam, for he sights the land and its dreamy potential atop an elevation from which, unlike Moses, he then is allowed to descend. This is a once and future Promised Land, an Eden and Canaan merged with a particularly American sense of Manifest Destiny, Southern plantation style.

Implicitly, the United States is being imagined here in Africa even as it is disintegrating back home. That is, the Civil War erupts the same year that Du Chaillu publishes this travel fantasy of “peaceful negroes going to their contented daily tasks.” Mary Louise Pratt, in discussing this passage, notes that the allegorical transformation of Africa here is “unabashedly colonialist (and American) in character,” but she also refers to Du Chaillu as “an American in the aftermath of the Civil War.”²⁷ It would be more accurate to say, however, that with this passage Du Chaillu actually consolidates his Americanness through an allegorical speech act: he solidifies his new national identity by restaging both it and himself in Africa. After all, this passage is published not “in the aftermath of the Civil War” but in 1861, on its very eve. In fact, the preface to the initial London edition is dated April 30 of that year, just eighteen days after shots were first fired at Fort Sumter. It is as if the projection of peaceful plantations somehow realizes in Africa that which is in jeopardy in America. The passage suggests that the American plantation, like the American Du Chaillu, can arise on either side of the Atlantic. *Explorations and Adventures in Equatorial Africa* thus becomes a compensatory document that sustains the American potential of both Africa and its African-raised author.

The American identity of Du Chaillu, however, also can be read as part of a larger dynamic that might be termed transatlantic colonialism. Inherent in the deliberate act of constructing a utopian American vision in 1861, arguably the most dystopian of American years, is the very consciousness of that effort by a man who manifestly came from other shores. Du Chaillu’s understanding of the concept of “plantations of coffee, cotton, and spices,” of manufacturing and evangelization and the imperial institutionalization of education, was surely informed by francophone experiences of all the same, whether by dint of his personal experiences in Gabon or by his general awareness of the epiphenomena of colonialism in the French

Caribbean and perhaps elsewhere in Africa and the Americas. Neither “the United States” nor “America” is indicated explicitly in the Garden scene above, so at the transatlantic level the passage can be interpreted as broadly evocative of a pan-Western “future civilization” in which white (or, as in his case, whiter) people direct the envisioned farms and churches and schools while ably eliminating any “black friend” who appears in their way. The archetypal scene of a serpent in a tree could thwart any adventurer, not only the American kind; Genesis, of course, is a story in no sense exclusively national. The polyvalence of such passages of transatlantic colonialism, their ability to be read within the frames of disparate identitarian projections, is common in *Explorations and Adventures in Equatorial Africa* and a key to the wild receptions of Du Chaillu in discrete circles in the United States, Great Britain, and France.

With regard to actual Africans, they serve Du Chaillu as both slaves and indigenes, real as well as potential, depending on the context in which he interacts with them. The model of America is occasionally explicit, such as when Du Chaillu notes that a local weapon, a type of pointed axe, “is thrown from a distance, as American Indians are said to use the tomahawk.”²⁸ In another description of regional warfare tactics, Du Chaillu laments the lack of open combat and writes, “No rude or barbarous people seems fairly brave. Even the North American Indians dealt in surprises, fought, like these negroes, from behind trees, and were cruel rather than brave; so that my ideas of a fair fight were not understood or appreciated by the negroes” (132). These references reveal no particular understanding of American Indian ways of life, but that is not surprising, given Du Chaillu’s lack of actual experience in North America beyond his few years on the eastern seaboard. As usual, however, his grasp of actual facts matters less than his grasp for analogous fictions. The frontier for him is located in the West of Africa as well as America, its existence confirmed by the continuing sway of any “rude or barbarous people,” and so symbolically he stands as a pioneer on both sides of the Atlantic at once. The flexibility of his transatlantic persona allows him unusual leeway in this sense. At the same time, the evocation together of unrelated indigenous societies creates a common counterpoint to the various versions, apocryphal or not, of his own provenance. Regardless of where Du Chaillu may have come from, both biologically and nationally, he is incarnated again here as white and Western by virtue of his opposition to the behavior of the locals (that is, locals on either side of the ocean) who are so clueless and uncivilized that they do not even know what a “fair fight” is. The allusive dynamics at hand are far more complex than, say, a simple invocation of anthropomorphic tropes such as noble savages. Du Chaillu is not an archetypal loner who strikes out in one direction past the last settlement and encounters familiar metaphors guised as indigenes. He moves in multiple directions simultaneously and whole societies and nations are rearranged with his every step.

The tenuousness of his national identity causes Du Chaillu to rely on allegory whenever he tries to paint himself as an American. For example, upon the construction of a building complex he announces,

I took possession of my new place, which, being quite a village, I have called Washington. It consists of my own house, which has five rooms, is forty-five feet long by twenty-five wide, and cost fifty dollars; my kitchen, four dollars; fowl-house, containing a hundred chickens and a dozen ducks; the goat-house, with eighteen goats; a powder-house; two other tolerably-sized houses for stores, etc., and a dozen huts for my men. This is Washington in Africa. Back of me is a wide extent of prairie. In front is the River Npoulounai winding along; and I can see miles on the way which I shall soon explore. (230)

This “Washington in Africa” appears to be an American homestead by a prairie with a river to explore up ahead. It is a mythical projection of a particular national identity from a man who could claim several. At a time when the United States is verging on a bloodbath, this is Du Chaillu’s assured recreation of the American capital superimposed upon a Western frontier, itself superimposed on Africa. Lysle E. Meyer suggests that the base was named “probably to honor his newly adopted homeland’s greatest hero” and notes that, in Africa, “Du Chaillu spent almost two years hunting and traveling out of Washington.”²⁹ The explorer bridges an ocean by rhetoric alone.

If Washington serves as the improbable home base in Africa for a francophone explorer, New York functions as the paragon of civilization whose existence can materialize in the most unlikely of moments. The following passage is representative:

When we got to Obindji’s, I found a man who had come all the way from Biagano with a package of eight letters and a file of New York papers, which had been forwarded to me by my friends the missionaries at the Gaboon. I had now been many months in utter ignorance of the doings of the great civilized world. . . . So I sat down to read. The people were much astonished—and so was I at many things I read. It was a singular intermingling of two lives. In the body I was yet in the rude town of poor old Obindji, far enough from civilization to make civilized life seem improbable. But in the spirit I was walking New York streets, with a friend at my side revealing to me at every step all that had occurred in these many months.³⁰

At first glance, this passage seems to depict a typical experience of any traveler who feels nostalgic upon reading newspapers from home after a long stretch abroad; similar passages abound in other African travel narratives of the era. What is unusual here, however, is the peculiarly protean biography of Du Chaillu that contextualizes his mental voyaging as a will to national identity rather than a reproduction thereof. The incessant association of New York with “the great civilized world,” “civilization,” and “civilized life” makes it evident that although Du Chaillu finds himself in “the rude town of poor old Obindji,” in his heart he is a New Yorker. Amid this transatlantic projection, erased entirely is Paris, Du Chaillu’s probable birthplace whose claim to being the center of “civilization” was centuries older than New York’s. Yet Du Chaillu’s self-identification with New York represents more imagination than experience, since it rests only on a few years of his traveling up and down the East Coast in the early 1850s after what was likely a lifetime spent in Europe and Africa. Of course, he was traveling in Gabon as a reporter for the *New York Tribune* and perhaps felt a corresponding need to plug the transformative powers of New York journalism—the writing is so marvelous that it can make Africa disappear—but beyond that corporate and commercial desire lies a palpable insistence that his own American identity is at stake. To the extent that Du Chaillu can ignore Obindji’s “rude town” while mentally strolling through New York, he can do the same to his own origins and his own sense of self. The simultaneous acts of writing and erasing construct New York as civilized and Du Chaillu as a New Yorker, clearing the way for the existence of both in Africa to be justified.

Another New York newspaper scene underlines the racial issues that accompanied the explorer. As Du Chaillu writes of one experience, “I gave the old chief my knife and fork, and afterward, at his own special request, covered the walls of his hut inside with some New York papers which I had received on my way to the Ashira. . . . He was very proud of this, and promised to preserve them till the next white spirit came to see him” (515). The invocation of “the next white spirit” bolsters anew Du Chaillu’s identity claims, given the loaded questions that persisted about his phenotypical ambiguities. The implicit affirmation of his whiteness was no doubt crucial for the American readership that consumed *Explorations and Adventures in Equatorial Africa* amid the Civil War. In this book and its successors, Du Chaillu openly invited his readers to fuse their identities and perspectives entirely with that of the plucky narrator. In a nation riven by a race-based war, so smooth an alignment would have been impossible had there been a profound worry that the adventurer was himself of African descent. The whiteness that Du Chaillu establishes for himself via phrases like “the next white spirit” goes hand in hand with the different regions of the United States that he evokes in various passages: the plantation South, the Western frontier, the national capital that is Washington, the metropole that is New York. These twin maneuvers of inclusion paper over any sense of a divided country. In the 1860s, Americans might not have been able to find a racially and geographically coherent United States in the actual United States, but they certainly could in the

Equatorial Africa of Du Chaillu. Manifest Destiny, it turns out, could be a successful phenomenon of *eastward* expansion. Bloodshed in Mexico and Kansas and Nebraska had accompanied the westward version all too vividly. Perhaps Africa promised otherwise.

The unresolved elements of Du Chaillu's biography are a common concern to those historians intent on establishing as factual a record as possible. Yet maybe the man and his most important book are fundamentally metaphoric in nature. In a very real sense, Du Chaillu's Americanness is created by performative acts in both his life and written work. Transatlantic in thought and deed, Du Chaillu resituated frontiers inside and outside Africa and thereby invented his own self as an American. Such a process is essentially subjective and literary rather than objective and scientific. And accuracy was never Du Chaillu's forte anyway. Although *Explorations and Adventures in Equatorial Africa* features cartographic data, ethnographic sketches, phrenological pseudoknowledge, appendices on local languages and species, etc., and was touted by its publishers as a wealth of new information brought back by a learned man from hitherto unexplored regions, many naturalists and lay readers were quick to accuse Du Chaillu of exuberant fabrication, hyperbole, and outright plagiarism.³¹ The disbelief centered on the portrayals of gorillas, which Du Chaillu was the first Westerner to see. As the *National Geographic* obituary notes, "The book was greeted with shouts of laughter and derision from one end of the American continent to the other. Mr and Mrs and Miss Gorilla was the common jest, and the name Du Chaillu became a byword for a fanciful storyteller."³² The biographer Vaucaire cites a German critic who "claimed that the supposed voyage into the interior was a fiction which could deceive no real explorer. In his opinion, Du Chaillu could never have left the coast for more than a few miles. His map was entirely imaginary, with invented rivers and mountains."³³ This debate over the veracity of Du Chaillu's text, both in his era and in much subsequent historiography (where it is repeatedly recounted), is both interesting and entirely beside the point. The accuracy of *Explorations and Adventures in Equatorial Africa* is in some sense irrelevant because, fundamentally, the book is not about explorations and adventures in equatorial Africa. Despite the five-hundred-plus pages proclaiming otherwise, it is a fable of how one man, among his protean transatlantic personae, becomes American by writing of a space that is African superficially but not symbolically.

In her 1996 introduction to a reprinting of Du Chaillu's Paris edition, Mvé-Ondo writes, "à force de sortir de soi, l'auteur nous révèle à lui-même dans sa quête d'identité" (by dint of leaving himself behind, the author reveals himself in his quest for identity).³⁴ This may be true, but such quests and identities are more metaphoric than scientific. One contemporary journal, in fact, found Du Chaillu's colorful passages "too entertaining" to be taken seriously as an objective study and indeed reminiscent of *Robinson Crusoe*.³⁵ Other readers accused Du Chaillu of misrepresentation in various forms, from plagiarism to prevarication to the alleged employment of an anglophone ghost writer to compensate for Du Chaillu's limited

skills in English. As McCook summarizes, “Du Chaillu had clearly faked parts of his book or allowed them to be faked.”³⁶ In large part to rebut the critics, Du Chaillu set out on a second excursion to western Africa and produced in its aftermath *A Journey to Ashango-Land: And Further Penetration into Equatorial Africa*, an 1867 text also of more than five-hundred pages. The entirety of its lengthy preface is a spirited response to his earlier “narrative being held up to scorn and ridicule, as a tissue of figments. It was my lot, on the publication of my first volume of travels in Equatorial Africa, to meet with a reception of that sort from many persons in England and Germany. . . . my journey into the interior itself was pronounced a fiction.”³⁷ As Du Chaillu takes his naysayers to task, he clearly delights whenever he or another authority “shows that my critic was wrong, and I was right” (viii). Nonetheless, no clean reputation ever quite emerged to dislodge his general standing with the public as an author with predilections for invention. The assumption, however, that the factual truth concerning Du Chaillu and his African experience is of paramount importance seems a limited frame within which to view the man and his corpus.

Literary truths can exist as well. Perhaps that is what the turn to the transatlantic is rooted in anyway: the creation of new metaphors to replace others that have ceased to be satisfying. And at the end of the day, Du Chaillu and his first book may be more compelling as a flow of transatlantic signs than anything else. For example, a relatively recent, albeit nonacademic book by Sarkis Atamian suggests that Edgar Rice Burroughs had been familiar with Du Chaillu’s oeuvre and consequently fashioned the figure of Tarzan just a few years after the explorer’s death.³⁸ Whether this genealogy is credible or not, Tarzan studies occupy a worthwhile place in investigations of transatlantic imaginaries, and Du Chaillu’s own creation of a character in Africa (i.e., himself) surely merits a place in those discussions. Whoever Du Chaillu was, wherever he was born, whatever he saw, and however he traveled, these are details that no one could clarify definitively, either in the nineteenth century or since. The lifework of Du Chaillu is an open text of multiple displacements. It is a story of a Frenchman (perhaps) who becomes American (arguably) by way of Africa, both biographically and textually. He may follow upon Livingstone in the public imagination of his day, but he prefigures Stanley and Theodore Roosevelt and Ernest Hemingway and many others. He may be a liar, but he is without doubt an original. He may not be a scientist, but then that simply makes him a novelist. All phrenologists were in any case. Regardless, Du Chaillu is a transatlanticist *avant la lettre* and can be read as such by scholars in just about any academic discipline. He certainly warrants attention by Americanists. There is nothing more American, arguably, than remaking oneself on the road. If only in this sense, Du Chaillu is as American as anyone else.

If scientists are loath to take Du Chaillu seriously for his quackery, anthropologists for his charlatanry, sociologists for his fabrications, and historians for his fictionalizations—and all these dismissives can be applied to his person (or, rather, *personae*) as well as his principal text and his putative nationhood(s)—then

let literary scholars at least take him up for the remarkable writer that he is. *Explorations and Adventures in Equatorial Africa* contains any number of elements that, when foregrounded in lieu of the text's pseudoscientific discourses, merit manifestly literary readings. One example is the repeated occasions of giant snakes and serpents that suddenly appear and frighten Du Chaillu. Psychoanalytic interpretations surely would be compelling on this question, such as when Du Chaillu discovers an "enormous serpent" under his bed, shoots it, dubs it his "pretty sleeping companion," and acknowledges, "I must confess that I dreamed more than once of serpents that night, for they are my horror."³⁹ The snake motif interweaves with the ongoing religious subtexts of the book. For instance, one sketch that features an enormous serpent in a tree baring its fangs at Du Chaillu and his African porters is immediately followed by a second sketch of what appears to be a horn for making sounds.⁴⁰ The caption and page title (every page in the book carries a different headline) of this second sketch are "TO KEEP THE DEVIL OUT" (149). There is no explanation given for the juxtaposition of the two drawings, but the visual proximity of a vicious snake in a tree (technically, a mangrove) to a defense against the diabolical offers numerous possibilities for literary exegesis. Indeed, serpents consistently appear coiled on or by trees (83, 207, 319, etc.). Genesis, not to mention Freud, is inescapable throughout the book. Future histories of nineteenth-century American and/or transatlantic fiction would do well to include Du Chaillu. The *National Geographic* obituary notes with cause still valid that "the name Du Chaillu none the less still remains to most Americans that of a romance. In a certain sense Du Chaillu is himself responsible for this feeling, for all his descriptions are so vivid and are so thrillingly told that the reader feels he is reading a work of pure invention, rather than a narrative of actual experience."⁴¹

However much Du Chaillu did or did not invent about his travels, *Explorations and Adventures in Equatorial Africa* remains a travel narrative. And as Hulme and Youngs suggest, "Travel writing is best considered as a broad and ever-shifting genre, with a complex history which has yet to be properly studied."⁴² For all the applause and guffaws that greeted Du Chaillu during the 1860s, his first narrative and the many that followed have been overshadowed since by the writings of Livingstone and Stanley and others. The transatlantic interweavings of Du Chaillu as a conjoined phenomenon of text and author remain "to be properly studied." What were the truths that he passed off as such, and how do they reconfigure his own personae and the nations and continents they are meant to reveal? The significance of looking anew at Du Chaillu, at his challenges and slippages, is that it forces not only a reimagining of the literary, scientific, popular, and intellectual histories of countries on three continents but also a reframing of such national constructs in the first place. Benedict Anderson has written of how many people will "willingly die for such limited imaginings."⁴³ Paul Belloni Du Chaillu chose instead to live for them, and they were anything but limited.

Notes

¹ David Kazanjian, *The Colonizing Trick: National Culture and Imperial Citizenship in Early America* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003), 34.

² Peter Hulme and Tim Youngs, introduction to *The Cambridge Companion to Travel Writing*, ed. Peter Hulme and Tim Youngs (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 1.

³ These figures are based on Frank Luther Mott's *Golden Multitudes: The Story of Best Sellers in the United States* (New York: R. R. Bowker, 1947). Mott uses a sale of at least 300,000 copies to determine a bestseller for 1861, a cut-off point reached only by Dickens, Eliot, the Grimm Brothers, and Wood (308–9). Mott also lists texts that were “Better Sellers,” which he defines as “the runners-up believed not to have reached the total sales required for the over-all best sellers” (315). In 1861, six books qualified in this category, with Du Chaillu's heading the list (320). Whether that placement atop the “Better Sellers” implies a sales ranking is not possible to determine, although the fact that the authors are not listed in alphabetical order suggests that some other organizing principle is at work.

⁴ See Paul Belloni du Chaillu, *Explorations and Adventures in Equatorial Africa* (London: John Murray, 1861).

⁵ According to Peter Raby, Murray published the second London edition only two months after the first in order to include “a rough chronology, since ‘discrepancies’ in the dates had been pointed out to the author.” See Peter Raby, *Bright Paradise: Victorian Scientific Travellers* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997), 185. Raby writes that Murray exerted editorial pressure on Du Chaillu in terms of content as well (189).

⁶ Roy Bridges, “Exploration and Travel Outside Europe (1720–1914),” in Hulme and Youngs, *Cambridge Companion to Travel Writing*, 62.

⁷ Stuart McCook, “‘It May Be Truth, But It Is Not Evidence’: Paul du Chaillu and the Legitimation of Evidence in the Field Sciences,” *Osiris* 2, no. 11 (1996): 195. McCook adds that the reliance on Du Chaillu by other travelers to West Africa began almost immediately: “The *Explorations* were also a motivating force behind Richard F. Burton's expedition to the area a few years later” (195). Burton carried the book with him, a pattern that would be repeated by others; as McCook observes, “For the next sixty years most people who did field work on the gorilla took the *Explorations* as their starting point” (195).

⁸ Paul Belloni du Chaillu, *Explorations and Adventures in Equatorial Africa* (New York: Harper, 1861), 357.

⁹ Michel Vaucaire, *Paul du Chaillu: Gorilla Hunter*, trans. Emily Pepper Watts (New York: Harper, 1930), 122.

¹⁰ The two men who climbed the tree in the original version were surely African, but that is left implicit.

¹¹ Paul Belloni du Chaillu, *Voyages et aventures dans l'Afrique équatoriale* (Paris: Michel Lévy, 1863), 519.

¹² "Paul du Chaillu," *National Geographic Magazine* XIV, no. 7, July 1903, 282.

¹³ Vaucaire, *Paul du Chaillu*, 8–9.

¹⁴ Henry H. Bucher, Jr., "Canonization by Repetition: Paul du Chaillu in Historiography," *Revue française d'histoire d'outre-mer* LXVI, nos. 242–43 (1979): 19.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 16. Formerly known as Bourbon island, Réunion is located east of Madagascar and southwest of Mauritius.

¹⁶ McCook, "It May Be Truth," 180.

¹⁷ Annie Merlet, *Autour du Loango (XIVe–XIXe siècle): Histoire des peuples du sud-ouest du Gabon au temps du Royaume de Loango et du "Congo française"* (Libreville, Gabon: Sépia, 1991), 156, 167, 157, 158.

¹⁸ Vaucaire, *Paul du Chaillu*, 10.

¹⁹ Tim Youngs, "Africa/The Congo: The Politics of Darkness," in Hulme and Youngs, *Cambridge Companion to Travel Writing*, 161.

²⁰ Whatever the influence of Du Chaillu on Stanley, the careers of the two men became contemporary and so beg for comparison. In 1890, Du Chaillu even commented on "the heroic exploits of Mr. Stanley and of his followers. . . . my methods of exploration were, from the necessity of the case, entirely different from those of Mr. Stanley." See P. B. Du Chaillu, "The Great Equatorial Forest of Africa," *Littell's Living Age* 2401, July 5, 1890, 3. Reprinted from *The Fortnightly Review* and available on Google Books.

²¹ Bucher says that the departure took place the following autumn: "In 1855, he filed a petition to become a naturalized American citizen, which was not granted. Since passports were not required for foreign travel in the mid-1800s, Paul sailed from New York on a three-masted schooner in the fall of 1856 claiming to be American" (Bucher, "Canonization by Repetition," 18). According to Bucher, Du Chaillu made ongoing and fruitless attempts to gain American citizenship and his unsuccessful last hearing was held on June 26, 1860. Bucher "found no record of naturalization nor of Du Chaillu's request for an American passport in the National Archives in Washington" and theorized that "his lack of a birth certificate or his unwillingness to provide it denied him the American citizenship that he had so earnestly desired" (23).

²² Merlet, *Autour du Loango*, 159.

²³ Bonaventure Mvé-Ondo, “Paul du Chaillu: un explorateur entre ses fantasmes, l’idéologie coloniale et la réalité africaine,” in *Voyages et aventures en Afrique équatoriale*, ed. Paul Belloni du Chaillu, ed. Bonaventure Mvé-Ondo (Paris: Sépia, 1996), 19.

²⁴ Du Chaillu, *Explorations and Adventures*, vi.

²⁵ Du Chaillu, *Voyages et aventures dans l’Afrique équatoriale* (1863), frontispiece. Reprinted in *Voyages et aventures en Afrique équatoriale* (1996). The frontispiece and other illustrations in Du Chaillu’s texts can be seen in greater detail via the magnifying function of Google Books.

²⁶ Du Chaillu, *Explorations and Adventures*, 83.

²⁷ Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (London: Routledge, 1992), 209.

²⁸ Du Chaillu, *Explorations and Adventures*, 109.

²⁹ Lysle E. Meyer, *The Farther Frontier: Six Case Studies of Americans and Africa, 1848–1936* (London: Associated University Presses, 1992), 42.

³⁰ Du Chaillu, *Explorations and Adventures*, 336–37.

³¹ The phrenology carries racial content that also helped construct Du Chaillu as white. On one page, he offers four sketches of crania for readers to compare: a “Negro skull,” a “Caucasian skull,” “Side view of skull of female gorilla,” and “Side view of skull of male gorilla” (422). The shape of the “Negro skull” appears to be midway between that of the “Caucasian skull” and the two gorilla skulls. Du Chaillu subsequently explains that “the average capacity of the adult Caucasian brain is 92 cubic inches. . . . The average capacity of the adult negro and Australian brain is 75 cubic inches. The average capacity of thirteen adult gorillas was but 28.85 cubic inches. This is an incontestable proof of the great ascendancy of the intellectual life of the human species, even in the lower orders of the human family” (424). The reader can assume safely that it would take an “adult Caucasian brain” to come up with these numbers, thereby confirming the whiteness of Du Chaillu.

³² *National Geographic Magazine*, “Paul Du Chaillu,” 283.

³³ Vaucaire, *Paul du Chaillu*, 137.

³⁴ Bonaventure Mvé-Ondo, introduction to Du Chaillu, *Voyages et aventures en Afrique équatoriale* (1996), 5.

³⁵ Mary K. Edmonds, “Paul Belloni Du Chaillu,” in *American Travel Writers, 1850–1915*, ed. Donald Ross and James J. Schramer (Detroit, MI: Gale Research, 1998), 113. This exact comparison still arises today. Peter Raby, for example, summarizes Du Chaillu’s finding of gorilla footprints as “the Robinson Crusoe moment” (Raby, *Bright Paradise*, 187).

³⁶ McCook, “It May Be Truth,” 190.

- ³⁷ Paul Belloni du Chaillu, *A Journey to Ashango-Land: And Further Penetration into Equatorial Africa* (New York: D. Appleton, 1867), v.
- ³⁸ Sarkis Atamian, *The Origin of Tarzan: The Mystery of Tarzan's Creation Solved* (Anchorage, AK: Publication Consultants, 1997), 22.
- ³⁹ Du Chaillu, *Explorations and Adventures*, 179–80.
- ⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 147, 149. See Google Books for the two sketches (note that page 148 in the original is blank and not reproduced in Google Books).
- ⁴¹ *National Geographic Magazine*, “Paul Du Chaillu,” 284.
- ⁴² Hulme and Youngs, introduction, 10.
- ⁴³ See Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1991), 7.

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