Chapter 3

INTERFIGURALITY

3.1 The Concept of Interfigurality

Let me begin this chapter by recapitulating the concept of interfigurality, and its theoretical delineations. The term Interfigurality refers to the relationship between literary characters. Theodore Ziolkowski discusses a special form of interfigurality in his German article („figuren auf pump“ 1983), namely the transfer of a figure from one fictional work to another fictional work, for which phenomenon he coins the term “figure on loan” (qtd. in H F. Plett, Intertextuality 102). The changes in a figure of an author’s works may be due to the new intention or an aesthetic vision of the author’s. According to Ivan Pasternak, on the one hand, the interrelationships that exist between the figures of different texts are one of the most important means of expression of intertextuality. On the other hand the amount of research dealing with this problem is quite limited. In the opinion of German literary critic Wolfgang G. Muller, it is caused by two factors. The first one is the ideological prejudice of such investigation, and the second factor is the absence of a proper term for denomination of this interrelationship. To keep away from the ideological prejudice involved here, I, as a scholar, prefer studying the figures as structural and functional textual elements and use of the term figure which is less suspicious than the term character. In order to distinguish the character layer of the text in studying novelistic intertextuality in general, the German scholar suggests the term “interfigurality”, which he defines as the interrelationships between literary characters. The phenomenon of interfigurality is to be considered as the interrelationships between
the figure of different literary texts and as the expression of the figure’s character through the different means of nomination.

In a study of interdependence of literary figures, Wolfgang G. Muller considers different forms of interfigurality. According to him, the most obvious one is using the name of the character from a pretext to his or her version or avatar in the original or transformed mode. The scholar states that this form of interfigural interrelationship is a superficial one as the usage of the figure’s name does not signal the transfer of its character. But unlike Wolfgang G. Muller, he thinks that the notion of interfigurality should be considered in the semiotic context as it is necessary for the understanding of any literary text. Another form of interfigurality is the subsequent use of the figure in sequels. Here Wolfgang G. Muller differentiates between the autographic sequels (that is, those written by the same author) and allographic sequels (written by different authors). In the former case it goes about the author’s use of his own figures where as in the second one it is about the situations when the writer in his work continues the plot from another writer’s work using the system of figures from it.

The most extensive form of Interfigural interrelationships is the so-called “figure on loan,” which has been introduced by Theodore Ziolkowski. In this form of interfigurality, writer uses both name and the character of the figure from the pretext. However, theoretical comprehensions of this form of interfigurality are connected with certain problems, including the problems of terminological character. American philologist, Germanist, and the Specialist in comparative literary criticism Theodore Zeolosky in his article („Figuren auf pump” 1983) suggested the term “figure on loan” the introduction of this term by the American philologist Made it possible to study the
specificity of functioning of literary figure transferred from one literary text into the other literary text.

Theodore Ziolkowski’s position drew the criticism from Wolfgang G. Muller. The objection was the result of the fact that in the German scholar’s opinion the term “figure on loan” suggests that after being used in the posttext the borrowed figure has to be returned to the pretext. Additionally, the term presupposes the full identity of figure from the pretext and the posttext. This, according Muller, is possible only if we treat a figure as a sum of traits of character, but not as an artistic whole: Ontologically and aesthetically it is yet not possible to present a completely identical character in literary works by different authors. If we do not regard a fictional character as a mere cluster of qualities we realize that it cannot come back in its identical form in another writer’s work. Such circumstances are caused by the fact that the quoted name has almost the same qualities as a quotation. According to H. Plett, it means that there appears a conflict between it and the context of the posttext. That is why the figure that is being transferred from one text into another is inevitably transferred. To avoid the inaccuracy of the term given by Theodore Ziolkowski, Muller suggests changing the term “figure on loan” into a newly coined term “re-used figures” It stipulates that the author borrow any figure and use it in his own way and transform it according to the needs of his work. The aim of my study here is to study the occurrence of interfigurality as one of the forms of intertextuality. It is also my intention to study the functions of interfigural elements in James Fenimore Cooper’s *The Leatherstocking Tales*.

The topicality of interfigural investigation is related to the fact that its exposure and critical investigation help us make a first-hand overview of the figures’ behavior. It
helps us understand the possibility of integral relations, and such an understanding comes today with the reader’s actualization of the background knowledge. The background Knowledge in this case consists of four components: 1) knowledge of the figure; 2) knowledge of the narrative situation; 3) knowledge of the genre; and 4) knowledge of the intertextual information. We may also consider: 1) presentation of two images of mythological figures on the basis of descriptive nominations; 2) presentation of two images of mythological figures on the basis of direct selection; 3) the combination of two mythological figures in one image;. I search for the integral system of expressing intertextuality as one of the key mechanisms of building the artistic world and formation of the reader expectations in the novel. In The Leatherstocking Tales the character Natty Bumppo changes from novel to novel. I intend to explain why there is a change in the character across the volumes of The Leatherstocking Tales.

3.2 Types of Interfigurality:

3.2. a. Names as Interfigural Diplomacy

The names of characters are an important device by which literary texts manifest a mutual relation. In this phenomenon names are shifted to a fictional character whether in its identical or in a changed form. In this type of intertextuality the idea of shifting names from one text to another is comparable to a quotation. Quotations can be taken over from one text to another, and the context of the used quotation can be different from the “pretext to the post text”(Plett, Intertextuality,103). The change of the context of the quotation can give different meanings. The similarity between re-used names and
quotations is a significant one. Names are given to a literary character to represent him in a category of his or her own. In literary studies the names of the characters are attached to the literary characters to identify them, but do not depend upon their qualities. The names do not mean anything in themselves, that is, before they are attached to individuals and their contexts.

3.2. b. Literary Revenants and Re-Used Figures

It is one of the types of interfigurality which is introduced by W. G. Muller in which a figure is extricated from its original fictional context and inserted into a new one. Theodore Ziolkowski coined the term “figure on loan” in his article “Figuren auf Pump”, which was originally written in German (H F. Plett 07). In this article Ziolkowski remarks that a figure is borrowed from its source and returned to the source again. He asserts that there is an identity of the original figure and the figure transplanted into a new context.

3.2. c. Re-Used Figures in Allographic Sequels

The reappearance of the same figure in other writers’ work is considered in the context of allographic sequels. We have already discussed this in some detail. Sequels are generally about interfigural elements and are centered on one or more figures from their pre-text.

3.2. d. Re-Used Figure in Autographic Sequels and Series

In this category we shall discuss the protagonists (characters) which are re-used as in autobiographical sequels and series. According to W. G. Muller, figures from an earlier work by an author that reappear in a subsequent work by the same can be
identical. Muller says that when a subsequent text written by the same author as a pre-text then it could be more complex and problematic than it seems at first sight. By this transformation of figure from the anterior to the posterior text there will be a complete identity, especially in the stereotyped heroes of popular literature. For instance, in the Sherlock Holmes narratives of Arthur Conan Doyle’s the character remains the same all through the series. There are some writers such as William Faulkner, John Galsworthy, and James Fenimore Cooper who wrote series novels and re-used the characters. John Galsworthy was a Nobel-Prize winning English writer who had great faith in the continuity of his writing. He was a happy man in his childhood. He collected his childhood experiences. He had studied for a law degree at New College, Oxford. Just because he had a degree of law, he did not practise law but went on a voyage around the world. He wrote his first volume in 1898 under the pseudonym of John Sinjohn. The title of the volume is “From the Four Winds”. Galsworthy called it “My First Sin” as it contained immature tales of adventure. In the setting of the tales, he chose from his travel experiences. After this work he wrote many other works. He went on to write a saga named “Forsyte Saga.” Series novels narrate the fate of a family or a group of families over several generations. As far as Homer’s *Odyssey* is concerned, Odysseus is reused in the subsequent text as it was in the pretext and in an aesthetically different manner from the pretext to the posterior text. Changes in a figure that reappears in autobiographic sequels and series of an author’s works may be due to the new aesthetic intention of the author. In James Fenimore Cooper’s *The Leatherstocking Tales* Natty Bumppo functions as the unifying figural link.

3.2. e. Interfigural Combinations and Contaminations
Interfigural combinations and contaminations are one of the several types of interfigurality. According to Wolfgang G. Muller (114), figures from different literary texts can be brought together in a new context. Gathering of characters from one or more pre-texts can be changed or even inverted in the subsequent text. This phenomenon is known as interfigural combinations or configurations. The combinations of two different literary figures in one person is an extremely subtle intertextual phenomenon which occurs in the diary of the seducer. It is obvious in Alphonse Daudet’s Tartarin de Tarascon, who has the soul of Spanish hidalgo and the body of his servant. The pattern of the pre-text in the subsequent text can be subjected to various kinds of inversion. For instance, we have imitation, replacing of figures, and exchanges between the protagonist and the antagonist.

3.2. f. Literary Figures Identifying with or Imitating Other Literary Figures: Quixotism and Related Phenomena

This is one of the important types of interfigural relations that is constituted by those literary figures who as a result of powerful reading experiences forget the boundary between life and fiction. Such figures tend to empathize so much with the heroes or heroines of the works which they have read and use them as the model for their work. Salman Rushdie’s recirculation of received literary figures in his own works is a case in point.
3.2. g. Intratextual Interfigurality: A Postmodern Form of Intertextuality

According to Wolfgang G. Muller (qtd. in H. F. Plett, *The Intertextuality*. 117), interfigurality which is realized as intratextuality within a text may seem to be an inconsistency in terms. But it is an important modern literary-textual occurrence which has only a few precedents in earlier literature. However, when literary works combine two or more fictional contexts, a special form of interfigurality can be recognized.

3.3. Interfigurality in *The Leatherstocking Tales*

James Fenimore Cooper presents to the reader several characters in *The Leatherstocking Tales*. As already pointed out, the series consists of five novels, namely *The Pioneers, The Last of the Mohicans, The Pathfinder, The Prairies*, and *The Deerslayer*. The five novels of the series form the biography of Natty Bumppo. Besides, Cooper re-uses many characters, and prominent among these include Natty Bumppo himself and Chingachgook. He de-chronologizes or reverses the chronology of the life of the protagonist. He introduces the hero as being near to old age in *The Pioneers* but discusses the protagonist’s young age at the end of the series. This may appear a little strange as temporal sequence is a prerequisite in making sense of narratives in general. It is precisely on account of such expectations that Cooper’s de-chronologized fictional presentation deserves our critical attention.

Cooper was an early nineteenth-century American writer. In a case of temporal recapture common to literary writing, he attempts to recreate his childhood experiences in his works. In his childhood he saw one Daniel Boon, who often used to come to his
father. It is said that there was this person named Daniel Boon had the qualities similar to those of Natty Bumppo. Cooper might have taken him as a role model for his series, which has Natty Bumppo as the protagonist. Thus, Cooper created a fictional character, Natty Bumppo, which is based on a personality from American history, who also represents the currents of this history. Cooper narrates the life of Natty Bumppo in the series novels. The first novel in the series is *The Deerslayer*, in which he describes the protagonist. The protagonist is introduced to us as being around twenty years old, when he appears with a long rifle; he is an expert in hunting, and he learns the art of hunting from Delaware. But he does not kill anything without reason. He thinks of killing as the only source of survival in his life. He gives equal importance to both the ethnic communities. The other motivation for his approach to life is religious. He gives importance to both the Indian and the Christian cultures. Though he lived for ten years in Delaware he is not fully aware of the native American tribes. The collaborations of different tribes with the British and the French settlers and armies is too well known to discuss here. It is also beyond the scope of this dissertation.

Cooper was influenced by Wordsworth and Wordsworthian ideas of looking at nature as an inspirational source of writing poetry. He was also influenced by the events which occurred in Cooperstown. In Cooperstown there were struggles between federalists and republicans, between Anglicans and Presbyterians, and between resident New Yorkers and itinerant Yankees (1962; 3). Cooper was a significant novelist who recreated America in his fiction. *The Leatherstocking Tales* illustrate Natty”s identification with Indian thoughts in various stages of American history as well as the significance of the
American setting along with the native Indians’ shifting role on the American frontier (Walker 1961).

According to Richer Walker, these tales are obviously more than melodrama, and they are a saga of the roughhewing of America. Cooper was serving as the mythmaker for this process. There is little doubt now that much of his appeal in the nineteenth century derived from this mythopoeic faculty. His romantic images of the frontier, with its steadily advancing white settlers, and its forever retreating red man both of whom shaped the thinking of readers both at home and abroad, not only directly, through the novels themselves but indirectly as well through the writings of those historians of American revolution as a nation. Among these Francis Parkman was perhaps the most influential, and who came under Cooper’s spell. So inextricably was the leather-stocking myth woven into the American design that when General John Pershing’s troops landed in France in 1917 one of the French readers purportedly observed: “The spirit of the leather-stocking is awake”

In The Leatherstocking Tales Cooper delineated the Americans’ redemptive destiny, providing a message for satisfying a psychic need. The need was to prepare the people mentally for the formation of a nation. There were struggles among the races. There were more destructions than actually needed. In the figure of Natty Bumppo Cooper gave America its first messiah image. In The Deerslayer Natty confirms his oath of allegiance to a young Delaware chief Chingachgook by risking his life in a seemingly hopeless battle to rescue his friend’s beloved Wah-ta-wah. In The Last of the Mohicans, which pick up the story of Chingachgook and Natty Bumppo some fourteen year later,
the setting has shifted north to Glens Falls and the Lake George region where the plot turns on a real event, the surrender of port William Henry to the French in 1757, with the subsequent Indian massacre of its British defender despite Montcam’s assurance of a safe conduct southward. But the introduction of the historical facts does not eliminate melodrama. In fact there is more of it as Natty, whose infallible shooting aim has now given him the title of Hawkeye, is called upon to effect several rescues just in the nick of time. Natty says: “I wish a juster-minded Indian had been your guide said the pathfinder I am no lover of the Tuscarora who have traveled so far from their fore fathers’ graves and always remember the Great Spirit” (Cooper, *The Pathfinder* 14).

The above statement means that Natty does not like the tribes because they do not stay at any permanent place. They are nomadic. Here Natty makes a pertinent observation on the nomadic people and their culture: “Distrusting the power of God is a wrong thing. If the tribe does not follow the white there is no harm in it. They have their own notion and we have our own. What the tribes do is right in their ideology. All are equal under providence of god whether you are white or red” (Cooper, *The Pathfinder*, 20).

Pathfinder (the protagonist) asserts that we should not doubt the power of God. If any one does not follow the other it may not be harmful as all are equal in front of God. Here the pathfinder talks about ethnicity, liberty, and freedom for everyone to believe in God. He also articulates, perhaps inadvertently, a doctrine of pluralism. He gives equal important to all races: “Every skin has its own nature and every nature has its own laws as well as its own skin. For redskin, knowledge does not come as easy to white skin as
what I suppose is intended to be white skin knowledge though I have little of the latter having passed mass of my time in the wilderness” (Cooper, *The Pathfinder* 22).

Natty studies the nature of the people. He says that every community has its own identity as well as its nature. In *The Pathfinder* his ultimate temptation to join civilization is overcome when he renounces all claims to the hands of Mabel Dunham (Walker 33). He explains:

I have endeavored to worship garrison-fashion but never could raise within me solemn feelings and true affection that I feel when alone with god in the forest there I stand face to face with my master; all around me is fresh and beautiful, as it come from his hand; and there is no nicety of doctrine to chill the feeling, no, no; the woods are the true temples, a”ter all ,for there the thought are free to mount higher even then the cloud. (Cooper, *The Pathfinder* 83)

Natty communes daily in the true temple most of his life, until the axe of the settlers desecrates its sanctity and moves on to the plains. The love of money he has discovered is the root of at least some of the evils of the world as he states in *The Pathfinder*: “I trouble myself but little with dollars or half Joes but I can easily believe by what I have seen of mankind, that if a man has chest filled with either, he may be said to lock up his heart in the same box” (Cooper, *The Pathfinder* 401). Moreover, “Cooper deliberately takes creative and productive liberties with representation of characters across the series as a way of factoring in historical indeterminacies and accommodating his own changing historical and aesthetic vision” By the time of *The Pioneers* Natty has lived for so long under the laws of nature that Natty is not only uncomfortable but completely bewildered
by man-made laws that he encounters. In the cultural journey that he makes Natty is neither willing nor able to compromise with the new laws. The figure that evolves is of a white man committed to white ethics but one who rejected white society. This evaluation is the basis of interfigural transformations – in a racial and textual fusion.

Natty Bumppo is a white man furthermore devoid of all the traditional prejudices, assumed pros and cons about Indians, and hence left free to form his own opinions about them from the unique point at which circumstances have placed him. Natty is able to view both aboriginal civilized groups with such unprecedented detachment that brings him to espouse a crude theory of cultural relativity which evaluates all human action in terms of its social context conceding that men are in the main much the same in feeling. In this respect, whatever the later evaluations concerning him might have been, Cooper is far ahead of his contemporary ethos. Natty ascribes their differences to cultural traits which he calls “gifts.” He explains his theory in *The Deerslayer*:

God made us all white, black and red and no doubt had his wise intentions in coloring us differently. I will not deny that he gave each race its gifts. White man’s gifts are Christianized while a red skin’s are more for wilderness. Thus it would be a great defense for white man to scalp the dead whereas it is a signal virtue for an Indian. Then again a white man cannot ambush women and children in war while a red skin may. It’s cruel work I will allow but for them it is lawful work while for us it would be grievous work. (Cooper, *The Deerslayer*,35).
Natty”s faces rejection in *The Pathfinder* by a girl who prefers to be with an educated white man than an illiterate man (37). In the opening pages of *The Prairies* Cooper prepares for Natty”s entrance by making a direct reference to the patriarch of Kentucky. This adventurous and venerable patriarch was now seen making his last move; placing the river between him and the multitude his own success had drawn around him, and seeking for the renewal of enjoyments which were rendered in his eyes when trameled by the forms of human institutions. Between the symbolic values embodied in the figure of Natty Bumppo stands the man himself. We may wonder: What manner of a man is he? This question asked is of the young gentleman Middleton in *The Prairie*, and his answer furnishes a brief but accurate appraisal of the hunter:

“The man I spoke was of great simplicity of mind but of sterling worth. Unlike most of those who live a border life he united the better instead of worst qualities of the two people (Indian and white). He was a man endowed with the choicest and perhaps rarest gift of nature that of distinguishing well from evil. His virtues were those of simplicity because such were the fruits of his habits as were indeed his very prejudices. In courage he was the equal of his red associates in warlike skill being better instructed than their superior.”(Cooper.*The Prairie*)

In *The Prairie* the aged Natty earns his living by hunting, and he is reduced to the level of a trapper, somewhere on the fringes of the great plain. There he encounters roving bands of plain Indians and finds a place among them. It is the Pawnees and Sioux who live on that part of *The Prairie*. 
Cooper changes his protagonist substantially in each novel. The writer changes the name of the protagonist from Deerslayer to Hawkeye, Hawkeye to Pathfinder, Pathfinder to Leatherstocking, and, in the last novel, to just trapper. As he changes the name of the protagonist we notice that there are changes in the character too. *The Pioneers* is the first written novel of the series, in which the hero makes his appearance. He is understood by his way of speaking and way of doing things in comparing with other characters in the novel. He does not believe in man-made laws. He feels difficult to live in normal community where the other frontiersmen do not. In *The Pioneers* the writer gives the meaning of settlement in the American context. Cooper uses the protagonist to represent the frontier society and the unfashionable use of the land.

Cooper sets his protagonist as a different person in the group to show the characteristics of Natty Bumppo in all his distinctiveness. Natty is perfect at skills whereas the others remain mute spectators. The writer’s intention was to show the actual conditions at the frontier. In chapter twenty-seven of *The Pioneers*, when a buck was swimming before him, Natty says: “strike out, john! let her go. The creature’s a fool to tempt a man in this way” (Cooper, *The Pioneers* 229). He prepares to yield to temptation and everyone in the community can understand what Natty is. Natty is different from and better than the others. True to the ethos and disposition typical of those who live in harmony with wilderness, when he feels hungry he kills what he needs. He does not like to destroy things unnecessarily. He says that things are to use but not to waste. That is why he kills what only he needs. He selects his food like fish, pigeon, and buck. He uses such weapons which do not make any noise, such as a knife. The difference between Natty’s killing and the settler’s killing is the difference between art and butchery. Natty
judges his ability not on the social standard but on artistic perfection. In chapter twenty-eight of *The Pioneers* Natty express his opinion as follows: “I wonder if I had aimed at the varmint’s eye, if I shouldn’t have touched the life sooner than the forehead; but they are hard-lived animals, it was a good shot, consid’ring that I could see nothing but the head and the peak of its tail” (Cooper, *The Pioneers* 239).

Thus he forms his opinion of himself by juxtaposing performance, possibility, and perfection. Scenes such as the one described earlier establish the independence and place of his mind, and place him among those who use the ability to kill as a test of themselves as a manifestation of man’s quest for excellence. Natty has a sense of personal obligation that has nothing to do with law. Whenever he is unable to apply the principles of the Christian which were thought by the Moravian, Natty falls back in order to show the humanistic design which can be found in Epicurean thought. Natty’s principle in *The Pioneers* is: “use but don’t waste” (236). He follows it just because he wants to provide for the forthcoming generations. This farsighted concern for posterity is the very antithesis of modern Western acquisitiveness. His intention is to use the things keeping in mind that others also get opportunity like him. He desires to help others. He feels responsible for the welfare of the community. Natty is dedicated to individual self-reliance. In *The Pioneers* there is an argument about the government, law, and natural justice. One of the most important events surrounding Natty Bumppo in *The Pioneers* is burning of his hut, which indicates the end of the era.
After the burning of his hut he ends his old era and start to enjoy the life and property. With the burning of the hut Natty breaks off the connection with a part of his personal history. At the time of the arrest Natty expresses his bitterness:

“What would have with an old and helpless man?” he said. “You have driven gods creature from the wilderness, where his providence had put them for his own pleasure; and you have brought in the troubles and divilities of the law where no man was ever known to disturb others. You have driven me, that I have lived forty long years of my appointed of time in this very spot from my home and shelter of my head, lest you should put your wicked feet and wasty ways of my cabin. You’ve driven me to burn these logs, under which I’ve eaten and drunk the first of Heaven’s gifts, and other of the pure spring for the half of the hundred years; and to mourn the ashes under my feet, as a man would weep and mourn for the children of his body. You have rankled the heart of an old man that have never harmed you or your’n with bitter feelings towards his kind at a time when his thoughts should be on a better world; and you have driven him to wish that the beasts of the forest, who never feast on the blood of their own families, was his kindred and race; and now, when he has come to see the last brand of his hut, before it is melted into ashes, you follow him up at midnight, like hungry hounds on the track of a worn-out and dying deer. What more would ye have? I am here one to many. I came to mourn, not to fight; and if it is god’s pleasure work your will on me” (Cooper, The Pioneers, 274-275).
There is an argument between Judge Temple and the protagonist regarding the court, the law, and punishment. Judge Temple discusses the dignity of law, and Natty talks about the dignity of man. Law requires the exhibition of the consequences of the crime: “There was a peculiarity in the manner of the hunter” (Cooper, *The Pioneers* 9). Natty Bumppo is peculiar in appearance and was brought into the mysterious condition of the settlement. He is called the Leatherstocking in *The Pioneers*, and it is apparent that Cooper wrote this novel rather carelessly.

Cooper’s second novel is *The Last of the Mohicans*. Here the author changes his character from old age to young age. In this novel Natty Bumppo is at his young age. In chapter three of *The Prairie* Natty Bumppo says that if he could choose his “time and place again” he would speak for “twenty and the wilderness” (Cooper, *The Prairie* 32). This is proved by the letter which Cooper had written in October 1826 to Henry Colburn. The letter reads: “These (*The Pioneers* and *The Last of the Mohicans*) two books with *The Prairie* will form a complete series of tales, descriptive of American life, of themselves” (*Letters and Journals of James Fenimore Cooper*, vol. 1: 167).

Though Cooper talks about the resurrection of Natty Bumppo in *The Pathfinder*, it is nothing but breaking the meaning of death. His thought was that *The Prairie* would be concluding the series of three novels but *The Prairie* would bring other novels formally. For instance, Duncan Middleton reminds us of *The Last of the Mohican* once again in *The Prairie*. It is understood when the conversation takes place between Natty and Duncan Uncas Middleton in Chapter Ten of *The Prairie*. 
Natty Bumppo’s power and persuasion make him great in the society. He won the wilderness superiority. By the time of *The Prairie* he wanted to complete the series but on the demand of the readers Cooper thought to resurrect the protagonist. Thus the writer resurrects Natty Bumppo in *The Pathfinder*. In chapter three of *The Prairie* Natty Bumppo himself says:

Ay, ay; you have a long and a happy-ay and an honest life afore you! I am old and I Suppose I might also, worn out and useless; but, if it was given me to choose my time And place again-as such things are not and ought not ever to be given to the will of man – though if such a gift was to be given to me, I would say, twenty and the wilderness” (Cooper, *The Prairie*, 32)

Kay Seymour House observes:

It was perhaps, a too hazardous experience to recall to life, in this manner, after so long an interval [seventeen years] a character that was somewhat a favorite with the reading world, and which had been regularly consigned to his grave any living man. It is probably owing to this sever ordeal that the work like its successor *The Deerslayer* has been so little noticed. (306)

*The Pathfinder* was set in between *The Pioneers* and *The Last of the Mohicans*. In *The Pathfinder* the protagonist is at an age latter than the time of *The Last of the Mohicans* and before *The Pioneers*. In this novel he is on the Lake Ontario as a scout who helps the British. He works out of the fort. Natty has a friend who works within the fort. In this novel the character of Natty Bumppo seems derivative. According to Charles Brady, Hawkeye stands somewhere between the picaro of the eighteenth-century
narrative and the possessed irrational hero of gothic romance (qtd. in Kay Seymour House 307).

Natty’s solitude is not – it turns out – entirely by choice; he has simply not encountered a suitable woman. Like other creatures, he feels a natural desire to mate. The women that he has guided through the forest – Natty explains – “were always too much above him to make him think of them as more than so many feeble ones he was bound to protect and defend” (130). Not so Mabel Dunham. She is of his own class, and her father Sergeant Dunham assures Natty the Pathfinder that his daughter will perceive and appreciate the scout’s merits.

The prospect of marriage works remarkable effects on Natty, who is a man of nearly forty years in this novel. Once he had been as proud of his skill as a marksman as he was cognizant of his limitations. But now Natty comes to doubt his own value entirely. He says: “I’m afeared I’m too rude and too old and too wild like to suit the fancy of such a young girl. . . . I never knew my own worthlessness, perhaps, until I saw Mabel” (130). To remain in her company, he withdraws from going out on forward patrols. As a result, a French spy escapes, and Natty reflects:

I'm sometimes afeared that it isn’t wholesome for one who is much occupied in a very manly calling, like that of a guide or scout, or a soldier even, to form friendships for women–young women in particular–as they seem to me to lessen the love of enterprise, and to turn the feelings away from their gifts and natural occupations. (Cooper, *The Pathfinder*, 189)

Even more remarkable is the fact that the man who never cared for distinctions except those clearly based on personal merit (for example, bravery, ability, and honesty) now
wishes above all to find favor in the eyes of a young woman: “I have often thought myself happy, Mabel, when ranging the woods on a successful hunt... filled with vigor and health; but I now know that it has all been idleness and vanity compared with the delight it would give me to know that you thought better of me than you think of most others” (Cooper *The Pathfinder*, 270).

Natty never cared for gold or property: “I can easily believe, by what I've seen of mankind,” he reflects, “that if a man has a chest filled with either, he may be said to lock his heart up in the same box”. Nevertheless, he admits that, during the last peace when he collected so many pelts, he found his “right feelings giving way to a craving after property; and if I have concern in marrying Mabel, it is that I may get to love such things too well, in order to make her comfortable (432-33). Natty definitely plans to build a home and furnish it; he would join the settlers on the edge of the wilderness when he married.

In *The Pathfinder*, Cooper thus demonstrates that he regards the desire to mate to be natural, and that this natural desire is at the foundation of society (or “the settlements”) as well as of its problematic effects. When Mabel responds to Natty’s first advance by observing, “I believe that you are happier alone, Pathfinder, than when mingling with your fellow creatures,” Natty counters saying: “I have seen the time when I have thought that God was sufficient for me in the forest, and that I have craved no more than His bounty and His care. But other feelings have got uppermost, and I suppose nature will have its way. All other creatures mate, Mabel, and it was intended man should do so too” (266).
Natty loses Mabel with great pain, therefore, to the younger, hand-somer, and more articulate Jasper Western – a friend of Natty and otherwise very much like the older scout. He respects both Mabel’s right to choose and the power of nature too greatly to hold her to the promise of marriage that her father extracted before his death. When he discovers that Jasper loves Mabel just as well as he does, Natty in fact forces Mabel to choose. He would be her guardian – not her tyrant. He had always suspected that Jasper would make a more appropriate mate for the lovely young girl: “Like loves like,” he thinks; this is the reason – he tells Mabel – that he never sought an Indian squaw. His reason and his judgment tell him: “I wasn’t fit for her; that I was too old, too ignorant, and too wild-like.” But “the Sergeant would have it otherwise” (457). Natty also reflects that our desires allow us – like him – to be persuaded of what we want to believe, against our better judgment. Although Natty’s lonely life is not desirable in itself – Cooper shows us – his solitude has enabled the scout to preserve certain pristine virtues that most human beings lose when they enter civil society. The narrative informs us:

In short, it was said of the Pathfinder, by one accustomed to study his fellows, that he was a fair example of what a just-minded and pure man might be, while untempted by unruly or ambitious desires, and left to follow his feelings, amid the solitary grandeur and ennobling influences of a sublime nature; neither led aside by the inducements which influence all to do evil amid the incentives of civilization, nor forgetful of the Almighty Being whose spirit pervades the wilderness as well as the towns” (Cooper, The Pathfinder 135)

The first of these virtues “was the entire indifference with which he regarded all
distinctions which did not depend on personal merit”” (Cooper, *The Pathfinder* 135).

Living all by himself in the woods, Natty has no reason to concern himself about what others think – of him or anything else. He is therefore free to judge the people that he meets for himself; and when he does, he does so, on the basis not of class, but of character:

A disbeliever in the ability of man to distinguish between good and evil without the aid of instruction would have been staggered by the character of this extraordinary inhabitant of the frontier. His feelings appeared to possess the freshness and nature of the forest in which he passed so much of his time; and no casuist could have made clearer decisions in matters relating to right and wrong. (Cooper 134)

Since he listens so immediately and directly to his own natural impulses and sentiments, Natty is not deceived by appearances or impressed by conventional distinctions. He neither resents authority, therefore, nor slavishly obeys: “He was respectful to his superiors from habit; but had often been known to correct their mistakes and to reprove their vices with a fearlessness that proved how essentially he regarded the more material points, and with a natural discrimination that appeared to set education at defiance”(Cooper 135-36). Natty thus represents the ideal citizen of a democracy. He is able to recognize differences of ability, and obey orders without sacrificing his own self-respect, independence of thought, or sense of right. Natty’s virtues could not be maintained in their pristine, relatively unself-conscious form in civil society, however. Even Natty begins to lose his indifference to the opinions of others when his natural desire to mate has been strongly aroused. If his natural virtues are to be recaptured by the
citizens of a “civilized: nation – Cooper indicates – they would have to be recaptured on the basis of intelligent understanding.

Although Natty himself is as emphatically “unl”arned” and common as he is natural, Cooper shows that Natty’s virtues are recognized more by military officers and by gentlemen like Judge Temple than they are by rough settlers or more ordinary citizens such as Ishmael Bush and Hiram Doolittle. Since his virtues are matters of internal motivation and judgment rather than externally visible skills or achievements, they are not apparent to most of the people that Natty encounters on the frontier. In *The Leatherstocking Tales*, all the whites who come to honor and love the old woodsman are the likes of Sergeant Dunham, Benjamin Pump, and Elizabeth Edwards – whose lives he had saved. The Indians honor him as “La Longue Carabine” for his prowess as a hunter and warrior – that is, insofar as he matches their standards of human excellence. They do not respect his distinctive character nearly so much. It requires the very civilized art of the novelist to bring out Natty’s inner beauty – and educated readers, to appreciate it. In *The Pathfinder* Cooper writes more about Natty Bumppo than in his other novels of *The Leatherstocking Tales*. In this novel Natty Bumppo speaks about himself and says instead of that: “I am but a poor ignorant woodsman after all, and perhaps I am not in truth, as good as even you and I may think me” (117). He does not like himself, and says: “I”m too rude too old and too wild like suit the fancy of such a young and delicate girl” (117). Natty tells the sergeant that he never knew his own worthlessness until he saw Mabel. He wants to settle in his life with wife and children. When he speaks to his companion, he similarly says: “I should quit some of my wandering ways and try to humanize my mind down to a wife and children.”(116). Here Natty Bumppo thinks about his personal life.
He gets to realize his loneliness, and observes that “the man that lives altogether in the woods, and in company with his enemies, or his prey, gets to lose some of his feelin’ of kind, in kind, in the end” (82). Cooper considers Natty Bumppo to be the type of what Adam might have been supposed to be before the fall. This was a myth attached to America. In The Pathfinder he states:

The most striking feature about the moral organization of pathfinder was his beautiful unerring sense of justice. This noble trait and without it no man can be truly great, with it no man other than respectable—probably had its unseen influence on all who associated with him; for the common and unprincipled brawler of the camp had been known to return from an expedition made in his company rebuked by his sentiment softened by his language and improved by his example...he was a fair example of what a just-minded and pure man might be, while untempted by unruly or ambitious desires and left to follow the bias of his feelings aimed the solitary grandeur and ennobling influence of a sublime nature; neither led aside by the inducements which influence all to do evil amid the incentives of civilization, nor forgetful of the almighty Being whose spirit pervades the wilderness as well as the towns. (121-122)

Here Natty Bumppo is described as a peculiar combination of Adamic innocence, respectability, child-like nature, and model influence. Natty Bumppo is presented as an iconic idol of the American sort in The Pathfinder and The Deerslayer. Chronologically, The Deerslayer is the first novel of The Leatherstocking Tales, but in order of the publication it is the last of the series. It is one of the best and interesting novels of James Fenimore Cooper. In this novel he describes the scenes of Otsego Lake where he lived
and died. Cooper includes his childhood experiences in his works. According to his chronological order *The Deerslayer* is the first novel, and one cannot fail to notice the first appearance of the protagonist in this novel as a young maintainer of pristine simplicity. *The Deerslayer* was written after one year of the completion of *The Pathfinder*. Cooper takes the narrative backward to give the picture of the past and the protagonist of the preceding novel. In *The Deerslayer*, he is on his first war-path, and the setting of *The Deerslayer* is at the same place where *The Pioneers* was set. The beautiful scenes of the Glimmerglass become the way of testing the character. Good natured Natty Bumppo responds to the aesthetic appeal of the lake while the crude and insensitive characters like Henry March and Tomas Hutter cannot.

In *The Deerslayer* Natty Bumppo kills an Indian for the first time. The intention of the protagonist was not to take the life of any creature but the circumstances compelled him to kill. He got the name Hawkeye for his quick watch of everything. In this novel Natty is in his adult age. There was a custom of naming the people among the Native Americans according to their achievements, and it is significant to Natty Bumppo because he was named Hawkeye at first in this book. At first he is Nathaniel Bumppo. When his parents died, he went to Delaware to live with the Delaware and became the “straight-tongue, lap-ear and the pigeon”. He gets all these names because of his performance and ability in finding the game. *The Deerslayer* has the same setting as *The Pioneers*. Both novels discuss the Otsego lake scene from where the protagonist was driven in the earlier novel, *The Pioneers*. Otsego Lake stands as a testing tool for the character. According to Marius Bewley,
... the most of fragrant adventures are intrinsic parts of a developing moral theme, the whole of which becomes the form of the completed tale. Neither the characters nor their acts are extraneous to this theme, nor is the theme independent of the physical components of the story. For Cooper at his best, an action is the most intensified motion of life in which spiritual and moral faculties of men are no less engaged than their physical slaves. (qtd. in Kay Seymour House: 316)

In *The Deerslayer* Natty kills a human being for the first time and by this he is testified as to his shot. Both Natty Bumppo and the Indian’s shots were discharged at the same time that the mountains indeed gave back but a single echo (55). In *The Deerslayer* Natty begins to discover himself as an adult.

### 3.4 The narrative significance of interfigurality in *The Leatherstocking Tales*

The narrative significance of interfigurality in *The Leatherstocking Tales* is hard to miss. Its significance lies in the fact that it serves to show the difference in the character of the protagonist across the five novels of the series. In this chapter I have demonstrated with ample textual instances the narrative significance of interfigurality. Here I have also come up with a detailed study of the figure of Natty Bumppo and Chingachgook.