

THE PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF ALGERIA
MINISTRY OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH
ABDERRAHMANE MIRA UNIVERSITY OF BEJAIA
FACULTY OF LETTERS AND LANGUAGES
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH



**Identity and Cultural Hybridity in Charles Eastman's
Autobiography *From the Deep Woods to Civilization* (1916)**

A Dissertation Submitted to the Department of English in Partial Fulfilment of
the Requirement for a **Master's Degree in English Literature and
Civilization**

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Academic Year: 2023 / 2024

Abstract

The present research undertakes a study of identity and cultural hybridity in the context of Native Americans, through analyzing the autobiography of Charles Alexander Eastman *From the Deep Woods to Civilization*. His autobiography narrates his long journey from a primitive Sioux boy who faced forced assimilation, to an integrated intellectual man, blending his indigenous culture with the dominant white civilization, creating a hybrid identity. This study employs a qualitative method to analyze Eastman's process of identity creation, exploring concepts such as cultural identity, cultural hybridity, assimilation, and integration.

Keywords: Native Americans, Charles Alexander Eastman, Cultural hybridity, Assimilation, Integration, European Colonization.

Dedication

Thanks to Allah, I have overcome all circumstances to achieve success and reach this level. I dedicate this work to:

- My warrior mother, who gave me life and stayed up nights teaching me how to be a successful person.
- My father, a hero who has struggled a lot to secure a future for me and my brother, even though he had everything except studies. He strongly believed that one day, through us, he would attain the education he longed for.
- My Aunt Dr. Noura, who showered me with her love, encouraged me at all stages of my education, and believed in my abilities.
- My brother, my eternal friend and support. Further, without forgetting my grandfather, who always prays for my goodness and success.
- Special thanks for Kenza, my lovely companion, who believed in this work since the beginning.

Ines Ouhammad

Dedication

- Special thanks are due to my dear classmate Ines, who has been my devoted companion throughout this project.
- I thank my parents for their trust and belief in my abilities.
- I'm grateful to my close friends for their positive encouragement.
- I express my deepest gratitude to R, who holds a special place in my heart, for always being proud of me.
- Lastly, I dedicate this work to myself, who have tirelessly worked hard to achieve my dreams.

Kenza Meddourene

Acknowledgments

First and foremost, we wish to express gratitude to our supervisor Dr. Nouara Touche-Kharouni, for her great support, encouragement, and patience. We appreciate her modesty and kindness. Her extensive knowledge guided us in the right direction.

We would like to thank the examiners for accepting to read and evaluate our dissertation.

We are grateful to the teachers of our department for their support throughout our studies.

List of Figures

Figure 1: The assimilation of young Native Americans in the American boarding schools.

Figure 2: Charles Eastman's integration and pride in his origins.

Figure 3: Native Americans in the Pine Ridge reservation today.

Table of Contents

AbstractI

Dedication..... II

AcknowledgmentsIV

List of Figures V

Table of Contents VI

General Introduction 1

Chapter I: Historical and Theoretical Background: Native Americans as an Oppressed Minority 9

1. Native Americans and the Discovery of America 9

2. European Colonization and the White Missionaries 10

2.1. The Spanish Conquest and Occupation 11

2.2. French Colonial Invaders 12

2.3. Native Americans during the British Colonial Rule 13

3. American Westward Expansion and Relocation Policies 14

3.1 Forced Relocation Policies and their impact on Native Americans..... 15

 3.1.1. The Indian Removal Act of 1830 and the Trail of Tears15

 3.1.2. Land Seizure and Treaties16

 3.1.3. Homestead Act (1862) and Dawes Act (1887)17

4. The Indian American Wars (1860 - 1890) 18

4.1. The Dakota War of 1862 18

4.2. Wounded Knee Massacre in 1890 19

5. Policies of Assimilation..... 20

5.1. Marriage and Cultural Assimilation..... 20

5.2. Educational Assimilation..... 21

6. Consequences of Assimilation and Relocation on Native Americans 23

7. Native Americans’ Resistance 24

8. Twentieth Century and Contemporary issues	25
9. Definition of Concepts	26
9.1. Cultural Identity	26
9.2. Otherness	27
9.3. Assimilation	28
9.4. Integration.....	29
9.5. Acculturation	29
9.6. Cultural Hybridity and Bhabha's Third Space	30
Chapter II: Analysis of <i>From the Deep Woods to Civilization: From Forced Assimilation to Cultural Hybridity</i>	33
1. Indigenous Autobiographies and Cultural Identity	33
2. Summary of <i>From the Deep Woods to Civilization</i>	34
3. Analysis of <i>From the Deep Woods to Civilization</i>	36
3.1. Assimilation in <i>From the Deep Woods to Civilization</i>	37
3.2. Integration of Charles Eastman.....	40
3.3. Education in <i>From the Deep Woods to Civilization</i>	42
3.4 Eastman's Cultural Hybridity in <i>From the Deep Woods to Civilization</i>	44
General Conclusion.....	48
Works Cited.....	50
Appendices	61
Abstract in French (Resumé).....	64
Abstract in Arabic (ملخص)	64

General Introduction

General Introduction

Native Americans, also known as American Indians, First Americans, and Indigenous people, were the earliest human settlers in the Americas. They were hunter-gatherers who lived in small groups and developed unique means of communication. This community lived in close harmony with nature, worshipping elements such as wind, lightning, and thunder. They had been in North America for thousands of years before the arrival of Christopher Columbus and European settlers. However, European colonization devastated the Amerindians and their way of life by imposing Christianity and education as means of civilization. Furthermore, the American westward expansion from 1801 to 1862 disrupted the traditional tribal groupings of Native Americans and displaced many, rendering them homeless. Their tumultuous history has significantly shaped modern America.

The Native American community suffered greatly from oppression. Some resisted their oppressors using force, while others chose to integrate into white culture, seeking intellectual benefits by learning about the new culture while preserving their own. One iconic figure is Charles Alexander Eastman, a Native American writer, physician, and social reformer. Eastman shared his experiences from childhood to adulthood in various works, emerging as a significant figure at the end of the nineteenth century. With bravery, he discussed his integration into American society and his fascination with its culture and beliefs. His autobiography, *From the Deep Woods to Civilization* (1916), represents different facets of his life and his journey from his Native culture to American civilization. Eastman's narrative illuminates the hybrid culture he developed by adopting American customs while preserving his native heritage.

Charles Eastman was born on February 19, 1858, near Redwood Falls, Minnesota. His mother, Wakantankwin (also known as Mary Nancy Eastman), was the daughter of Seth Eastman, a well-respected painter and US military officer. Initially named Hakadah, meaning

General Introduction

“the pitiful last” due to his mother's passing a few months after his birth, he was raised by his grandmother in Minnesota. Following the US-Dakota War of 1862, his family fled to Canada for safety. He was renamed Ohiyesa, meaning “the winner,” after his band’s victory in a game, and was instructed in the traditional Dakota lifestyle by his uncle and grandmother. In 1873, his father Ite Wakandi, later known as Jacob Eastman, returned to take his son to the Flandreau colony after the family mistakenly believed he had died during the war. Eastman agreed to follow his father, giving up traditional Dakota ways and adopting white customs, subsequently taking the name Charles Alexander Eastman. He became one of the most highly educated Native Americans of his time, earning a medical degree from Boston Medical School in 1890. Through his writings and public speeches, Eastman gained respect as an influential American Indian in the early twentieth century.

Review of Literature

Charles Eastman was subjected to criticism and analysis. One of the recent studies is introduced by Jessica Vilks, titled “Charles Eastman and the Limits of his Advocacy” (2022), she offers a critical perspective and highlights the limitations of Eastman’s advocacy. Vilks argues that despite dedicating his life to resisting assimilation, Eastman failed to adequately address the issues and injustices faced by Native Americans in his works. She contends that his advocacy is significantly constrained by his belief that native culture needed to merge with the Western culture which she finds disheartening. Vilks suggests that Eastman could have served his community by acknowledging the traumas of the Native Americans and attempting to heal them through his advocacy rather than advocating for assimilation. This critique adds depth to the discussion on Eastman's contributions and their limitations, highlighting the complexities of his position.

General Introduction

Another significant work is Christopher Pexa's article "Citizen Kin: Charles Eastman's Reworking of US Citizenship" (2017). Pexa explores Eastman's role in representing North American Indians in Congress, particularly during his collaboration with W.E.B. Du Bois in 1911 in London. Pexa's research reveals the contemporary debates surrounding tribal citizenship and indigenous people. He asserts that Native Americans continue to struggle to establish internal standards for belonging and Eastman's political writings complicate these debates. His perspective on citizenship and belonging challenges colonial discourses, providing a complex understanding of indigenous identity and sovereignty.

Gretchen Eick's work in "Dakota/Lakota Progressive Writers: Charles Eastman, Standing Bear, and Zitkala" (2005) explores the experiences of leading American Indian writers including Eastman. Eick emphasizes his traumatic journey from Dakota to Canada and his encounter with The Dance Ghost War. She highlights the preservation of traditional culture through autobiographies, portraying writers like Eastman as resilient figures. Eick's analysis sheds light on the marginalized positions of Native American writers and their efforts to challenge their readers' preconceptions of the meaning of being civilized.

In a related study also by Eick, titled "U.S. Indian Policy, 1865-1890 As Illuminated Through the Lives of Charles A. Eastman and Elaine Goodale Eastman" (2008). She studies the post-Civil War US Indian policies in the Great Plains. She provides detailed insights into concepts such as reservations and assimilation, highlighting Eastman's experiences within these contexts. Eick clarifies also the impact of government policies on Native communities and their struggle for cultural preservation.

Scott L. Pratt's article "Wounded Knee and the Prospect of Pluralism" (2005), shifts focus on The Wounded Knee Massacre of 1890 and its philosophical implications. He

General Introduction

explores the massacre and the Ghost Dance Movement, connecting them to Eastman's perspective on pluralism. By examining these events through a philosophical lens, he offers observations into the complexities of Eastman's experiences and his views on cultural diversity.

In a similar context, Drew Lopenzina's article "Good Indian: Charles Eastman and the Warrior as Civil Servant" (2003) analyzes the Lakota Ghost Dance phenomenon and its portrayal in Eastman's literary works. Lopenzina starts by introducing the topic in general and then narrows it down to specific details, highlighting interlinked events such as the Sioux outbreak and the Wounded Knee Massacre. Lopenzina explores the religious and cultural dimensions of the Ghost Dance movement, challenging conventional interpretations. His analysis highlights the complexity of Native American spirituality and its intersection with colonial narratives.

Additionally, seminal studies have been made on Indian assimilation and relocation. Emma R. Gross's article "Native American Family Continuity as Resistance: The Indian Child Welfare Act as Legitimation for an Effective Social Work Practice" (2003) explores the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) and its implications for Native American families. Gross argues that the main purpose behind the ICWA was to assimilate native Americans into white Christian identity by sending Indian children to white boarding schools and families. She views the ICWA as a failed technique that resulted in devastating consequences for native tribes. She also highlights the importance of acknowledging multi-generational trauma in understanding Native American resistance to assimilation.

David J. Carlson's article "Indian for a While: Charles Eastman's *Indian Boyhood* and the Discourse of Allotment" (2001), explores Eastman's role in shaping paternalistic attitudes towards Native Americans through his autobiographical writings, particularly in *Indian*

General Introduction

Boyhood. Carlson argues that Eastman supported Indian assimilation into mainstream American society while advocating for autonomy and political equality. He suggests that Eastman's works provide good inceptions into the colonial discourse of his time and the complexities of Native American identity

From another lens, Anna Lee Stensland challenged the historical accuracy of Eastman's writings in the article "Charles Alexander Eastman: Sioux Storyteller and Historian" (1977). She questions Eastman's role as a historian and judges his dual identity as a medical doctor and Sioux storyteller. She calls readers to critically assess the reliability of Eastman's narratives and his incorporation of Native Indian legends and myths. Stensland argues that the first issue arose because Eastman was an Indian-thinking author writing for white readers. The second related problem is the occasional failure to distinguish between historical incidents and stories recounted within the Sioux tribe and his own stories. The third problem lies in his conversion to conservative Protestantism, a transformation significantly influenced by his experiences from the age of fifteen until his marriage at thirty-three.

Significance of the Study

From the review of the literature, we deduce that various studies have examined Charles Eastman's writings from different perspectives. Our research contributes to this field of study by investigating Eastman's personal and professional journey, focusing on his choice to create his own cultural identity. We also examine the difficulties faced by the Amerindian community in their efforts to survive and preserve their native culture.

Research Problem

The archives of Native Americans bear witness to enduring struggles, persisting from the era of European colonization to the present day. At the heart of this study is cultural identity, with Native Americans struggling between maintaining their heritage and adopting

General Introduction

the white culture to survive. Charles Eastman challenged these circumstances by keeping his Native culture alive while integrating American culture into his life.

Thesis Statement

Charles Alexander Eastman incorporated elements of his Native heritage and the white culture to construct his unique hybrid identity. This study analyzes his autobiography *From the Deep Woods to Civilization*, using concepts of cultural identity, otherness, assimilation, integration, and cultural hybridity, to show the process of his identity construction.

Aim of the Study

This study aims to shed light on the struggles of Native Americans to preserve their cultural identity, as depicted in Charles Eastman's autobiography. It explores the historical context of Native American cultural resistance, including the impact of European colonization, American westward expansion, forced relocation, and assimilation efforts. Furthermore, it examines Eastman's cultural identity through his personal and professional experiences, highlighting his transition from an Indian child to a figure representing the Amerindian community.

Research Questions

The following questions will be the major signposts of the research:

1- How are power dynamics (identity, cultural assimilation, and integration) portrayed within Charles Eastman's narrative, and how do they shape his cultural identity?

2- What role does Eastman's narrative play in the story of Native American resistance to cultural assimilation?

3- How does the cultural identity of Charles Eastman reflect and respond to the historical and socio-cultural context of the late 19th and early 20th centuries?

Research Methods and Materials

This qualitative study is based on reading and interpreting the primary source *From the Deep Woods to Civilization*, along with secondary sources related to the research. Key concepts such as cultural identity, assimilation, integration, otherness and cultural hybridity are defined and explained to illustrate the long struggle faced by Native Americans.

Structure of the Research Paper

The research paper is divided into two chapters. The first chapter explores the historical background of Native Americans as a minority group and presents key theoretical concepts, including cultural identity, otherness, assimilation, integration, and cultural hybridity. The second chapter provides an analysis of Eastman's autobiography *From the Deep Woods to Civilization*, using these concepts.

Chapter I

Historical and Theoretical Background: Native Americans as an Oppressed Minority

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Introduction

This chapter covers the history of Native Americans from European colonization to the contemporary era. It examines the motivations behind westward expansion and Manifest Destiny, analyzing the impact of American policies on Indigenous culture. Key concepts discussed include cultural identity, otherness, assimilation, integration, acculturation, and cultural hybridity.

1. Native Americans and the Discovery of America

Native Americans are the original inhabitants of the Americas, living on the continent before its discovery by Christopher Columbus in the 15th century. They were deeply connected to their land and natural environment, leading a peaceful lifestyle, and developing skills that are still relevant today in fields such as farming, sailing, healing, and crafting. However, their flourishing life conditions drastically changed after the arrival of Columbus in 1492, eager to find a way from the Atlantic Ocean to Asia, marking the beginning of an era of persecution, land dispossession, slavery, and resulting in the marginalization of the natives of the land (Walters).

On his first voyage, accompanied by his crew, Columbus first landed on an island in the Bahamas which he mistook for the Asian Indies. Their first encounter in this new land was with the Arawak Indians. Driven by greed for natural resources, Columbus enslaved them, setting a pattern of exploitation that continued throughout his journey to other Caribbean islands, including Cuba and Hispaniola, looking for more gold and slaves. Alternatively, the indigenous inhabitants fled upon hearing of the European's intentions and abandoned the villages (Zinn).

Chapter I: Historical and Theoretical Background: Native Americans as an Oppressed Minority

Howard Zinn, in *A People's History of the United States* (1980), critically reviews traditional narratives of Columbus as a heroic figure, highlighting his role in initiating the transatlantic slave trade and perpetrating atrocities against indigenous tribes. His arrival in the Caribbean consequently launched a wave of European colonization that led to the exploitation and decrease of Native populations across the Americas. Zinn holds that Columbus's exploration aligned with Spain's goal of wealth acquisition, as he sought to discover new territories rich in resources for exploitation (10).

Consequently, the discovery of America had profound impacts on Native communities. Karina Walters affirms that after their first contact with Europeans, diseases like measles, smallpox, and scarlet fever spread in the Caribbean. In Puerto Rico alone, tens of thousands are believed to have perished (7).

Although Native Americans contributed significantly to the history of American civilization in many aspects, including culture, agriculture, and medicine, they were intentionally marginalized, dispossessed and exterminated due to the greed of white-dominated populations, particularly the Spanish, French, and British (Mauk and Oakland).

2. European Colonization and the White Missionaries

By the beginning of the 16th Century, European colonial powers aimed to take control over lands and wealth in America. Concurrently, white missionaries aimed to spread the light of civilization through the words of God, claiming to save Native Americans from what they perceived as darkness. Margarete Hamm explains that the French and Spanish missionaries competed to “save souls”, unlike the French fur traders and Spanish conquistadors who had profit-driven motives (1). The introduction of Christianity to native populations often served as a pretext for manipulation, land appropriation, and the exploitation of natural resources.

Chapter I: Historical and Theoretical Background: Native Americans as an Oppressed Minority

Despite their efforts, the white missionaries' attempts to distance Native communities from their traditional ways were not enough to make them fully civilized in the eyes of Europeans. Willard W Beatty argues that Amerindians continue to be perceived by white people as belonging to a sub-human category, even in contemporary times (2).

As a matter of fact, the diversity within Native Indian culture, which includes a variety of languages, religions, and family structures among different tribes, posed a challenge for white settlers to understand their customs. Frank W. Blackmar addresses this idea in his article "The Social Assimilation of the American Indian ", arguing that faced with such diversity, white settlers sought to impose their cultural norms and practices, aiming to replace indigenous traditions with their own. For him, "The whole process was not to reform, but to rebuild" (9), ensuring the real goal of the whites, which was to erase the native culture by glorifying the white civilization and imposing it as the superior one.

Blackmar further claims that initially, the colonists aimed to respect the rights of Native Americans by showing them kindness, educating them, and introducing them to the ways of the white man without fear. However, a shift in attitude occurred later due to Native Indians' persistence in their own culture and civilization, which led to wars launched by members of the white community (Blackmar 10).

2.1. The Spanish Conquest and Occupation

The Spanish Empire, which lasted from 1492 to 1976, was the first to establish its presence in the New World during the 16th century. Its primary objective was to gain power in the Americas through the exploitation of their resources, particularly silver and gold. Kathleen Deagan argues that the expansion of the empire involved many different efforts; invasion of lands, social experiments, religious movements, and organized economic plans (1).

Chapter I: Historical and Theoretical Background: Native Americans as an Oppressed Minority

From the early days of Spanish colonization, there were conflicts between Spanish Colonial powers on one side, and the Spanish colonists on the other side. The Crown and the Catholic Church believed that Native Americans were their subjects who deserved rights and protection. The goals behind this attitude were to win their support, convert them to Christianity, and assimilate them into Spanish culture. In contrast, the Spanish colonists often considered the native Americans as non-human and only useful for labor (Daegan). Later, in 1500, the Spanish Crown officially declared that Indians were human because they possessed souls, enacting laws, such as the Laws of Burgos in 1512 to protect them from slavery. Despite these laws, Indians were relocated to towns designed for labor exploitation and were obliged to follow Christian and Spanish cultural practices (Daegan 3).

Additionally, Spain and The United States of America were engaged in a conflict called the Spanish-American War which began on April 21, 1889, and lasted until December 10, 1889, marking the end of Spain's Colonial Empire in the Americas. As a result, the U.S. government gained territories in the Western Pacific and Latin America (History Editors).

On the whole, Spain lost its control over American territories. However, the direct contact between the Spanish and natives was a clear effort of assimilation into Spanish culture. This is evident in the widespread use of the Spanish language, an important legacy that continues to be significant in countries like Mexico, Colombia, and Argentina even after their independence. In contrast, France managed its Indian territories differently and enjoyed supremacy.

2.2. French Colonial Invaders

The French established their presence in the American continent from the founding of Quebec in 1608 until 1763. Unlike the British, who focused on dominating the eastern seaboard, the French extended their influence across half of the continent through their fur

Chapter I: Historical and Theoretical Background: Native Americans as an Oppressed Minority

traders, explorers, and missionaries (Stueck). During their interactions with Native Americans, the French explored the indigenous customs and culture. Stueck maintains that French officials and settlers often depicted Native practices as torture, barbaric, and demonic practices (19). In fact, this description has always been attached to them due to their strangeness and lack of understanding from European settlers.

Tensions between the British and French increased as both competed to expand their fur trade and farming settlements in the New World, which led to many fights and partnerships with different Native American tribes. This conflict resulted in the Seven Years' War, also known as The French Indian War in North America (1756 - 1763). It was a major historical event that contributed to Britain's rise to greater power in the world. Notably, Native Americans played important roles as allies in this war, choosing to support either the British or the French. Stueck argues that even during periods of temporary peace, Native Americans were used to create damage on the enemy frontiers and to protect their borders (9). Ultimately, French control in America came to an end in 1763 with their defeat by British forces, paving the way for the expansion of the British Empire through its thirteen colonies.

2.3. Native Americans During the British Colonial Rule

The era of another dominant empire started, famously known as “The Empire on which the Sun never Sets”. The British Empire established an invincible realm, controlling lands on every continent and extending a set of colonies in Cairo, Canada and Asia. Its primary goal was to acquire a significant number of territories in The Americas to settle there. Indeed, by the early 1600s, the British colonies began to emerge in America, forming the 13 British colonies such as Massachusetts, Georgia, Virginia, and Maryland by the 1700s.

As the British pushed westward in the 1750s, they encountered Native Americans who resided near the Ohio River Valley. This contact between the two sides led to conflicts

Chapter I: Historical and Theoretical Background: Native Americans as an Oppressed Minority

over land. To prevent further clashes, the British Crown issued the Proclamation of 1763, which forbade settlement west of the Appalachian Mountains. King George III aimed to reduce tensions by organizing new areas where settlement in Native territories was prohibited (Britannica).

After the decline of the British Colonial Era on July 2, 1776, Native tribes, particularly in Virginia and Massachusetts found themselves dispossessed of their land. Stuart Banner in *How the Indians Lost Their Land: Law and Power on the Frontier* (2005), notes that the decline of some tribes was due to diseases and poverty in the East, while other tribes were forcibly relocated westward beyond the English settlement border. Consequently, the Amerindians lost their lands and became poorer after selling off the eastern part of North America (49). European colonists gradually destroyed their sovereignty and territorial rights, marking the beginning of an era of forced assimilation by the American government.

3. American Westward Expansion and Relocation Policies

After the independence of the thirteen British colonies in America in 1776, the American Government aimed to expand its territory from the Atlantic to the Pacific Oceans. This period, known as the Westward Expansion (1801 – 1861) was driven by the idea of Manifest Destiny.

The Manifest Destiny was a belief that the United States had a divine mission to spread democracy across the continent. John Louis O’Sullivan, an editor and columnist, coined this term in 1845. This belief was used as a pretext by the U.S. government to take control over lands in the West. As stated by Darren Dobson: “Underlying Manifest Destiny was the promise that in the West, Americans could realize their democratic independence via land ownership” (51).

Chapter I: Historical and Theoretical Background: Native Americans as an Oppressed Minority

Dobson argues that American expansion into Western lands led to many conflicts and violent confrontations with Native American tribes. To gain control over their lands, the American government used various strategies, including negotiating treaties that aimed to enforce peace and prevent conflicts with settlers. Once these treaties were signed, Native American territories were officially opened to white settlers. Despite fierce resistance from Native Americans, treaty councils forced them to give up their lands, restricted their hunting grounds, and confined them to distant areas (55).

3.1 Forced Relocation Policies and their Impact on Native Americans

The U.S. government implemented an alternative plan to seize Indian lands and exploit them for its interests, which involved exiling Native Americans to distant areas. This policy was known as the Indian Removal, which profoundly affected the lifestyle of Native Americans, leaving many of them homeless and without access to food or shelter.

3.1.1. The Indian Removal Act of 1830 and the Trail of Tears

The idea of Indian Removal was supported by Thomas Jefferson in 1803, proposing the purchase of land from the Mississippi to the Rocky Mountains from France. Mauk and Oakland argue that even supporters of the removal contended that the policy offered an opportunity for Indigenous people to develop socially and politically for assimilation away from white settlers (92). The American authorities primarily aimed to control the land, even if it meant taking it from Indigenous people.

The Indian Removal Act of 1830 was introduced through a series of treaties, starting with the Five Civilized Tribes, whose lands were east of the Mississippi River. In September 1830, John Eaton, the Secretary of War, went to the Mississippi to persuade the Choctaw to move to a reservation in Oklahoma. He warned them of drastic consequences if they resisted, suggesting that settlers might take over without government intervention. The Choctaw

Chapter I: Historical and Theoretical Background: Native Americans as an Oppressed Minority

Nation, seeking protection from white settlers, agreed to the Treaty of Dancing Rabbit Creek that was signed in 1830, ceding all their land in hopes of receiving support and benefits from the government that otherwise could not be provided (Black 4).

Hence, during the same period, President Andrew Jackson signed the Indian Removal Act into law. He viewed Native Americans as savages who needed to be removed from their land and considered the removal an opportunity for white businessmen to develop their economic interests westward. Mauk and Oakland add that the U.S government pressured and terrorized southern tribes to accept the removal (92). For Native Americans, removal was not a choice but a forced reality they had to accept.

Consequently, the resistance efforts led to the tragedy known as the Trail of Tears. This term describes the long, suffering journey of Native tribes who were forcibly removed from their lands to the west of the Mississippi River between 1830 and 1850. During this forced displacement, they faced hunger, disease, and death, with approximately 4,000 dying as a result. Black claims that some proponents of the U.S. government argued that relocating Native Americans to distant territories was necessary to protect the white race (1).

3.1.2. Land Seizure and Treaties

The American authorities sought temporary stability by recognizing Native American land rights and negotiating separate treaties with each tribe. However, over two thousand of these treaties were never fulfilled. According to Rascingo, Restifo, Cantzel, and Guetzkow, these treaties were viewed as genuine promises between sovereign nations, guaranteeing tribal self-governance, control over land and resources, and the practice of indigenous culture (4).

Native Americans came to understand the Western concept of treaties and eventually recognized the worth and importance of their land, leading them to ask for higher compensation in exchange for selling pieces of land. As argued by Blackmar, Amerindians

Chapter I: Historical and Theoretical Background: Native Americans as an Oppressed Minority

were aware of the true intentions behind the treaties as the federal government continued its westward expansion, purchasing their lands and relocating them to reservations under government control (10).

In particular, the Fort Laramie Treaty of 1868 can be mentioned as an example, which involved the US government and tribes such as the Sioux, Cheyennes, Arapahos, Assiniboines, Crows, Gros Ventre, Arikaras, and Shoshonis. Dobson clarifies that this treaty aimed to compensate Native Americans for past and potential damages in exchange for their agreement to relocate (16). The Fort Laramie Treaty represents a crucial moment in the history of Native American displacement and land acquisition, illustrating the complexities of westward expansion and the clash of cultures between Indigenous peoples and American settlers.

3.1.3. Homestead Act (1862) and Dawes Act (1887)

The American Congress imposed various legislations on the Dakota people of the Great Plains to control their lands, with one of the most significant being the Homestead Act of 1862. This act allowed any head of family who was twenty years old and a U.S citizen to claim 160 acres (one-quarter section) of surveyed government land. Alan L. Neville and Alyssa Kaye Anderson explain that as this act became progressively important and each person got his part, the remaining surplus reservation lands were sold to the government at a reduced amount. Sequentially, these lands were sold to homesteaders, leading to the phenomenon of “checker boarding,” which created an isolated homeland for the Dakota tribe (3).

Another significant law is the Allotment Act of 1887, also known as the Dawes Act. It was introduced by the American Congress on February 8, 1887, and was considered one of the most essential land transfers from the Amerindian lands to white authorities, also a clear

Chapter I: Historical and Theoretical Background: Native Americans as an Oppressed Minority

plan for assimilation. Neville and Anderson describe it as an effort to shift Indian lifestyles from hunting to farming and integrate them with non-Native Americans (5). Homestead and Allotment Acts served the interests of the US government. Many Native American chiefs were illiterate and the government exploited this situation to trick them into seizing their lands.

4. The Indian American Wars (1860 - 1890)

As white settlers continued their westward expansion into territories like Arizona and Texas during the 2nd half of the 19th century, they encountered Native American tribes such as the Sioux, who had long inhabited those lands. This period from 1860 to 1890 witnessed a series of bloody conflicts, often referred to as the Indian American Wars.

4.1. The Dakota War of 1862

The Dakota War of 1862, also known as the Sioux Revolt, was a conflict between the U.S. government and the Santee Sioux. This war was described as one of the most devastating conflicts in Western America, which started on the morning of August 18 and ended on September 23 with the battle of Wood Lake (Shannon). Gretchen Cassel Eick claims that some Native Americans saw military resistance as the only means of retaining their land, while others judged such resistance as futile and harmful, potentially worsening the suffering inflicted upon a population already devastated by the retribution imposed by the US Army and settlers in the aftermath of the Dakota uprising (4).

The Dakota War was a great tragedy for the Sioux who struggled to survive. Shannon states that the number of victims was higher than those of the massacre of Wounded Knee in 1890, resulting in the deaths of several hundred white men, women, and children, the displacement of over 30 000 Minnesotas, the arrest or imprisonment of 300 Sioux individuals, and the removal of the Sioux population from the State (2).

Chapter I: Historical and Theoretical Background: Native Americans as an Oppressed Minority

4.2. Wounded Knee Massacre in 1890

The U.S. authorities continued their westward expansion without mercy, leading to inhumane massacres such as the Wounded Knee massacre in South Dakota on December 29, 1890. This event is considered one of the most painful historical memories for Native Americans. It resulted in the deaths of approximately two hundred Sioux and attracted the media's attention, exposing the colonization and racism directed towards Native Americans in the United States (Roscigno and Cantzler).

According to V.J. Roscigno, Salvatore J. Restifo, Julia Cantzler, and Joshua Guetzkow, the decades leading up to 1890 marked the decline of both the Anglo-American interests and the political and military independence of Native Americans in Western American territories (4). After the Civil War, the westward settlement brought together the Indigenous people and white settlers in direct contact. As already mentioned, Manifest Destiny was their impetus to settle and seek resources such as gold and silver in California, Colorado, and South Dakota. The authors further point out that the federal government intensified its efforts to overcome Native resistance through direct military conflict, aiming to integrate the western territories and their populations into the expanding American nation (4).

By 1890, Native Americans had been defeated and were subsequently forced by the U.S government to reside on reservations. Eick notes that after the Wounded Knee Massacre, American soldiers either returned home or were assigned to the South for reconstruction or to the Great Plains region, situated between the Mississippi River and the Rocky Mountains (2). In the Great Plains, the U.S authorities devised a plan to impose American culture as the superior one through the assimilation program.

Native tribes did not cease resistance, choosing instead to passively fight by preserving their cultures. According to Emma R. Gross, Amerindians faced repercussions for

Chapter I: Historical and Theoretical Background: Native Americans as an Oppressed Minority

maintaining their resistance, including delays in receiving assistance for economic development projects that could help them achieve self-sufficiency (4). These measures aimed to create dependency on the U.S. government while preventing Indigenous advancement in any field. This strategy sought to weaken Native Americans and eliminate aspects of their cultural heritage.

Evidently, the Wounded Knee Massacre was a crime against innocent people, driven by the greed for expanding territories and exploiting raw materials, despite the oppressors' claims to defend human rights. This tragedy helped the government to silence the Natives, bind them with fear, and weaken their resistance.

5. Policies of Assimilation

As mentioned in a previous section, the process of assimilation had already started during the period of Indian Removal. After the Indian Wars, by the end of the 19th century, American authorities shifted focus from military force and land seizures, to the cultural assimilation of Native Americans residing on reservations. This was done through policies that changed tribal-owned reservation lands into individually-owned allotments (Fyre and Dippel). In fact, the aim of assimilation was to eliminate Indigenous traditions and lifestyles and replace them with the dominant white civilization. To achieve this, the American government adopted several methods, such as intermarriages, cultural and physical assimilation.

5.1. Marriage and Cultural Assimilation

During the nineteenth century, the American government encouraged marriages between Native Americans and the white population as a way of fostering integration. Beatty asserts that post-Civil War intermarriages were significantly influenced by the wealth of certain Indian tribes, particularly the Cherokee and Choctaw women. Women from these

Chapter I: Historical and Theoretical Background: Native Americans as an Oppressed Minority

tribes often married early white settlers, facilitated by factors such as lighter skin color and physical features aligning with the beauty standards of white settlers. Beatty also explains that white men strategically married Indian women to gain acceptance from the tribe, which allowed them to access the tribe's resources (2). An illustration of these dynamics can be seen in the 2023 movie *Killers of the Flower Moon*, which depicts the tragic exploitation of the Osage Nation in the 1920s. It highlights how white men married Osage women to gain access to the wealth generated from oil discovered on their native land.

It is worth mentioning that intermarriages also occurred between the Native American women and Spanish men during the Spanish colonization of America. Kathleen Deagan points out that these intermarriages created a unique dynamic that helped to balance the social milieu of the Spanish American colonies (6).

As a matter of fact, intermarriages between Native Americans and Europeans brought the two societies and cultures closer, proving to be an effective method for integrating and assimilating Indigenous people into white cultures. For example, the Native American intellectual Charles Alexander Eastman married the Euro-American teacher Elaine Goodale in 1891. They believed that assimilation was a solution to the “Indian problem”, viewing their union as a means to address issues of poverty and cultural backwardness among Native Americans (Jacobs 2).

5.2. Educational Assimilation

Boarding schools for Native American children in the United States represent a dark chapter in American history. The first boarding schools were established on reservations in 1819 with the release of the Civilization Fund Act by the U.S. Congress, which provided funds for the education in these schools (Britannica).

Chapter I: Historical and Theoretical Background: Native Americans as an Oppressed Minority

The primary aim of these schools was to assimilate Native American children into mainstream American culture. Children were targeted in this process due to their perceived innocence and ease of manipulation (See Appendix 1). This involved separating them from their families, prohibiting the use of their native languages, and forcing them to adopt western customs and beliefs. While they received education in subjects like reading, writing, and arithmetic, they were also taught to speak English and fit white cultural norms (National Native American Boarding School Healing Coalition).

The impact of the Indian boarding school system on Native American communities was profound and enduring. The most notable of these schools was the Carlisle Indian Industrial School, founded in Pennsylvania in 1879 by Richard Henry Pratt. Christine McCleave, director of the National Native American Boarding School Healing Coalition Organization, notes that Pratt's assimilation experiments began with Native prisoners. He taught them English, literacy, and work skills, and dressed them in military clothes (Vox 1:44). After presenting his findings to the government and claiming that these people could be civilized, he received funding for his project. In 1879, the government acknowledged Pratt's initiative, establishing the Carlisle school. with the motto "Kill the Indian and save the man". His principle aimed to recreate society through Indian children, introducing a new generation to American culture. (Vox 2:30). In fact, the motto of the School reflects its controversial mission of cultural assimilation, intending to erase indigenous culture and identity and replace it with white ways of life and thinking.

A significant turning point came with the release of the Meriam Report in 1928, conducted by a group of researchers from the Brookings Institution. This report investigated the bad conditions of boarding schools, revealing issues such as overcrowding, malnourishment, poor education, overwork, and harsh discipline, leading to the closure of

Chapter I: Historical and Theoretical Background: Native Americans as an Oppressed Minority

many boarding schools (Vox 6: 10). However, the legacy of assimilation continued with the emergence of adoption programs. As documented by Vox, these programs aimed to integrate Native American children into non-Indian households. This approach also provided a financial advantage to the government, as adoption was cheaper than running boarding schools (6:40).

Despite the destructive effects, some Native Americans believed that boarding schools had a positive impact on their tribes. Gross claims that many Native Americans acknowledged the importance of the education provided in boarding schools. She explains that the valuable knowledge acquired from white society equipped them with tools to navigate the complexities of the dominant society and assert their rights in the face of the assimilation pressure (7).

6. Consequences of Assimilation and Relocation on Native Americans

The policies of assimilation and relocation imposed on Native Americans had profound and lasting consequences on their communities. The European colonial period and American expansion not only resulted in widespread displacement and exploitation, but also led to epidemics that wiped out entire native cultures and significantly reduced the North American Indigenous population (Mauk and Oakland).

The Indian Removal and forced relocation also had severe psychological effects on Native Americans, resulting in fear and trauma. This trauma, however, is also a testament to their resilience. As stated by Gross, multi-generational trauma and poverty are evidence of Native American communities' successful resistance to assimilation (4). She further argues that the trauma had led to issues like self-destructive behavior, and also strengthened their determination to preserve their Native identity through spiritual beliefs (4). The profound psychological, physical, and spiritual traumas endured by Native Americans remain in their

Chapter I: Historical and Theoretical Background: Native Americans as an Oppressed Minority

collective memory and continue to be transmitted to new generations in the United States (Walters).

7. Native Americans' Resistance

Native American resistance to preserve their identity was marked by waves of both failure and success. Sometimes it led to massacres, exiles, reservations and forced relocations, while at other times it resulted in notable victories. Examples of successful resistance include military victories in the Great Plains, such as the defeat of General Custer in 1876 and the resistance led by Chiricahua Apache under Geronimo in the early 1880s (Rascingo and Cantzel).

In spite of these victories, the American Army was much stronger and better equipped in the 1880s, which led to a decline in Native American political and military power and a shift in the balance of power. Rascingo, Restifo, Cantzel and Guetzkow argue that white settlers' interest in the American West grew rapidly as they believed it was their right to expand westward, especially after the discovery of valuable resources such as gold and silver in California, Colorado, and South Dakota. Consequently, the government sought to control Native American resistance through the use of military force (4).

Despite ongoing struggles, some Native American innovations, such as irrigation systems developed in the Southwest, notably around Phoenix, Arizona, are still in use today. This is considered a testament to their enduring legacy and contributions to humanity. In addition, Native Americans adapted to the changing circumstances while fiercely preserving their traditions and heritage (Joshua).

Chapter I: Historical and Theoretical Background: Native Americans as an Oppressed Minority

8. Twentieth Century and Contemporary issues

In 1961, Native Americans, like other minorities, had the opportunity to participate in the Civil Rights Movement. Over 400 members from 67 tribes gathered in Chicago, protesting for their rights to choose their way of life and preserve their culture. Subsequently, in 1968, a group of young militant Indians created the American Indian movement (AIM), which gained support from urban areas and reservations. AIM was established in Minneapolis and Minnesota, to address systemic issues affecting Native Americans, including poverty, police harassment, and treaty rights (History Editors).

Moreover, the Native American activists occupied Alcatraz Island in San Francisco Bay from November 20, 1969 to June 11, 1971, to protest federal policies regarding Native American lands and rights. This occupation, lasting for over a year, brought national attention to Native American issues. In July 1971, while Native activists were still protesting, President Richard Nixon gave a speech stating: "The time has come...for a new era in which the Indian future is determined by Indian acts and Indian decisions" (Andrews). As a result, the U.S. government returned millions of acres of Indian ancestral land and passed more than 50 legislative proposals that support tribal self- rule.

Furthermore, the Red Power movement emerged in the 1960s, led by the Native youth. It called for Native American self- determination and tribal sovereignty, emphasizing cultural pride, political activism, and assertion of treaty rights. In 1975, the U.S. government granted Indian tribes the ability to control their own affairs through the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistant Act, and also ended the assimilation process and focused on Native American Education and healthcare (Blackmore). Another significant achievement was the Indian Civil Rights Act of 1968 (ICRA), a federal legislation that

Chapter I: Historical and Theoretical Background: Native Americans as an Oppressed Minority

provided protections to Native Americans on reservations, guaranteeing them certain civil rights such as the freedom of speech, religion, and assembly.

Despite these achievements, contemporary Native Americans continue to face challenges in living conditions and gaining respect in the United States. Those living on reservations confront issues such as unemployment, poverty, and disease. Racism also remains frequent within Indigenous communities (See Appendix 3). Lyn asserted that the result of the past five centuries of oppressive history is evident in current society, particularly on reservations, through extreme poverty and high school dropout rates (quoted in Luis).

9. Definition of Concepts

The complex dynamics of cultural formation requires an understanding of several key concepts. These include cultural identity, otherness, assimilation, integration, acculturation, cultural hybridity, and Bhabha's Third Space. Each concept sheds light on different aspects of how cultures interact, merge, and evolve.

9.1. Cultural Identity

Cultural identity is an integral part of a person's identity, representing him as a unique member of a society. Young Yun Kim emphasizes the importance of this concept in social sciences, particularly in communication and social psychology. He suggests that cultural identity is interconnected with related concepts such as subcultural, national, ethnolinguistic, and racial identity (1).

Cultural identity and racism are connected. For example, when an individual from a white background works with someone from a different background, racism, and discrimination could be a result. In the context of the USA, Roger Sanjek, an American anthropologist, argues that ideologies including racial groups and skin color, were not

Chapter I: Historical and Theoretical Background: Native Americans as an Oppressed Minority

interconnected before the 1400s. This race consciousness emerged during the European expansion which involved resource exploitation and colonization (Tourse, Hamilton-Mase, and Wewiroski). Scientific justification during this era supported the notion of biological inferiority among other racial groups because of their phenotypic characteristics such as hair, nose, lips, and pigmentation (Tourse, Hamilton- Mase, and Wewiroski 61).

Tourse, Hamilton-Mason, and Wewiorski further point out that this racist mindset drove the European expansion, rationalization, intolerance, and disparaging of the physical characteristics of racial groups, exceeding the social phenomenon to become an internalized psychological construct. This idea was adopted in Europe and America throughout the twentieth century (62). This racist prejudice impacts individuals, forcing them to live in isolation from society, affecting their psychology, and occasionally leading to suicide.

9.2. Otherness

Otherness refers to the state of being different or foreign in relation to another individual or group. Individuals who experience otherness often face oppression in society, especially in conservative environments where their feelings and experiences are misunderstood and judged based on factors such as their physical appearance, religion, language, and culture, which are perceived as different from societal standards.

Ewa Kocoj describes otherness as terrifying, asserting that for many centuries, individuals with different behaviors or physical appearances horrified European societies, treating them as monsters or half-animals. Hence, this perception led to negative behaviors such as condemnation, prosecution, physical and psychological violence, and even murder (02). For example, tattoos and body piercings are common in many indigenous cultures, representing its diversity and aesthetic side. However, Europeans saw these practices as strange behaviors indicative of uncivilized people.

Chapter I: Historical and Theoretical Background: Native Americans as an Oppressed Minority

In colonial contexts, the concept of otherness refers to the idea that the colonizers and the colonized are very different from each other, often portraying the native inhabitants as inferior and strange. This concept is used to justify the domination and exploitation of the colonized, making it seem like they need to be civilized or assimilated into the colonizers' culture (Dallas Baptist University).

9.3. Assimilation

Assimilation is the act of introducing a particular group to another foreign culture to adopt the lifestyle, language, religion, and physical appearance as if it were their native culture. It is defined in the Cambridge Dictionary as the process by which individuals or groups of different ethnic origins are integrated into a group, country, or society (Cambridge University Press).

In the social context, Susan K. Brown and Frank D.Bean, assert that assimilation involves ethnic or cultural minorities gradually abandoning their traditions and ways of life to achieve full integration into the host society. This process can occur over several generations and involves various aspects such as language, customs, beliefs, and lifestyle (Migration Policy Institute).

In the context of our study, as already detailed in a previous section, the Carlisle School founded by Richard Henry Pratt in 1879, marked the first effort to assimilate American Indians into mainstream American society. For example, Pratt surrounded Native American children by Anglo-American ways, making them change their physical appearance such as cutting their long hair and replacing their moccasins with American shoes. Yet, Kaytlyn R. Lowhorn claims that Zitkala-Ša, the Native American female writer, resisted the efforts that were made to erase her indigenous heritage, even when the school exerted pressure, she never wanted to forget her native roots (4). As a matter of fact, the process of

Chapter I: Historical and Theoretical Background: Native Americans as an Oppressed Minority

assimilation depends on erasing the native culture of individuals and imposing the cultural values, norms, and practices of the dominant society to achieve uniformity without diversity.

9.4. Integration

Integration involves the process of bringing together two distinct things such as cultures. It is explained in the Cambridge dictionary as “the action or process of successfully joining or mixing with a different group of people: racial/cultural integration” (Cambridge University Press).

Regarding the integration of Native Americans, J. Milton Yinger, and George Eaton Simpson hold that the majority of Indians who seek to embrace modern life prefer to be integrated but resist cultural assimilation. They aim to preserve their native culture while selectively adopting aspects of white culture (10). Notably, integration emphasizes mutual respect, and tolerance, creates diversity, and offers equal opportunities for all the members of society in order to live in harmony.

9.5. Acculturation

Acculturation refers to the process of cultural change that occurs when individuals or groups interact with a different culture, resulting in the adoption of the new culture’s aspects while also maintaining elements of the native one, contributing to cultural diversity and the mixing of identities. Austrian anthropologist Richard Thurnwald defines acculturation as “a process of adaptation to new conditions of life”, while scholars like Melville Herskovits, Bernard Siegal, and George D. Spindler makes a point by describing it as a dynamic process rather than a simple procedure (Nelson and Teske).

In the context of minority groups in the United States, Leonard Broom and John I. Kitsuse clarify in “The Validation of Acculturation: A Condition to Ethnic Assimilation” that

Chapter I: Historical and Theoretical Background: Native Americans as an Oppressed Minority

individuals from ethnic groups have the choice to choose their position in the society after successfully being integrated in the new culture, after validating their acculturation. The authors define validation as “the empirical test of the individual's achieved acculturation” (2). In essence, acculturation can create issues like conflicts, identity crises, and power imbalances between different cultural groups as in the superior white dominance and inferior minority groups such as the Native Americans.

9.6. Cultural Hybridity and Bhabha's Third Space

Cultural hybridity is a concept popularized by scholars like Homi K. Bhabha and Stuart Hall. It describes how different cultural elements blend, creating new cultural expressions, identities, and practices. According to Jennifer Hasty, David G. Lewis, and Marjorie M. Snipes, it also involves the exchange and innovation of ideas between cultures driven by migration and globalization (Social sciences libre texts).

Cultural hybridity is particularly considered a key concept in globalization and postcolonial contexts. For example, as far as our study is concerned within the context of Native Americans, the European colonization and American westward expansion resulted in a decline of Indigenous practices due to the forced assimilation and relocations. Indigenous minorities either resist the change, or integrate to the dominant white culture, or blend the two cultures and create a hybrid identity.

Bhabha's concept of the "third space" refers to an in-between space where different cultures emerge, creating new meanings. It is neither purely one culture nor the other but a hybrid, allowing people to reshape their identities. Additionally, Bhabha situated the concept of Third Space between the colonizer and the colonized, particularly concerning the case of cultural identity, suggesting that human history could advance and go beyond the traditional limits through this concept (Naglaa Abou-Agag 5). In our analysis we attempt to show how

Chapter I: Historical and Theoretical Background: Native Americans as an Oppressed Minority

this concept sheds light on the process of hybrid identity formation within the context of colonization given to specific contexts.

Conclusion

This chapter has explored the struggles of Native Americans' from the discovery of America to the contemporary era. It also examines American expansionism on Amerindian lands as well as their forced relocation during the period 1802 to 1861. It has been shown that the Native Americans did not surrender easily; they were engaged in battles and manipulative treaty negotiations, suffering greatly from the impacts of land expansion. They were forcibly removed, as seen in the tragedy of the Trail of Tears, which resulted in the deaths of 4,000 indigenous individuals, especially from the Cherokee tribe. Others faced assimilation through educational programs and intermarriages. Yet, this assimilation did not uniformly succeed, often leading to poverty, homelessness, and higher rates of alcoholism. Nonetheless, amidst these challenges, there were examples of successful cultural integration, as seen in the case of Charles Alexander Eastman.

Chapter Two:

**Analysis of *From the Deep Woods to
Civilization*: From Forced
Assimilation to Cultural Hybridity**

Chapter II: Analysis of *From the Deep Woods to Civilization: From Forced Assimilation to Cultural Hybridity*

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Introduction

This chapter analyzes Eastman's journey of cultural assimilation and the formation of his hybrid identity through his autobiography *From the Deep Woods to Civilization*. It investigates the evolution of Indigenous education and social practices in the United States and their impact on Native Americans, highlighting the process of identity formation within the context of colonization.

1. Indigenous Autobiographies and Cultural Identity

Autobiography is a literary genre that serves to highlight the experiences, beliefs, customs, and emotions of the author within the context of culture. Through the narration of life stories, the writers show how their cultural background supported and influenced their development and formation of their cultural identity. It is defined in the Cambridge Dictionary as: "a book about a person's life, written by that person" and also refers to the area of literature relating to autobiographies (Cambridge University Press).

In "What Are We Reading When We Read Autobiography?", Paul John Eakin claims that autobiography is not something fictional, but it is related directly to reality and daily experiences. He writes: "If this picture of narrative identity I have sketched is correct, autobiography is not merely something we read in a book; rather, as a discourse of identity, delivered bit by bit in the stories we tell about ourselves day in and day out, autobiography structures our living" (3).

Notably, autobiographies are considered significant sources into the concept of cultural identity, offering personal narratives that reflect real experiences and giving voice to marginalized communities within a cultural context. Antonio C. Marquez holds that

Chapter II: Analysis of *From the Deep Woods to Civilization: From Forced Assimilation to Cultural Hybridity*

autobiographies are common in modern American literature, particularly within Jewish American, Black American, Native American, and Chicano literature (2).

Within the context of Native American literature, writers have depicted cultural identity in their autobiographies using different approaches. For example, Zitkala Sa explored the emotional and psychological traumas resulting from cultural assimilation in *The School Days of an Indian Girl* (1900), whereas Eastman focused on his childhood memories in *Indian Boyhood* (1902). Jesse Morrow suggests that Zitkala Sa followed a traditional slave narrative structure (2), while David J Carlson describes Eastman's first autobiography *Indian Boyhood* as a “generic coming of age story” which is a contemporary American literary genre (4). Additionally, Carlson contends that both Eastman and Zitkala-Sa aimed to interpret Indian culture for white readers in their autobiographies, resulting in complex narratives rich with ethnographic material (2). These contributions are crucial for preserving what remains of Indigenous culture, as they document and share cultural practices and beliefs with a broader audience.

2. Summary of *From the Deep Woods to Civilization*

The autobiography of Charles Eastman *From the Deep Woods to Civilization*, published in 1916, recorded the different stages of his life from his childhood as a fifteen-year-old Sioux boy in 1873 to his integration into the Anglo-American culture as a mature man. His journey was not easy as he navigated the world of American civilization without speaking any English or understanding its customs.

His father, who came back from Canada with an admiration for the foreign civilization, played an influential role in changing Eastman's mindset, pushing him towards knowledge and success. Eastman always respected his father and never doubted the path he encouraged him to follow. In a passage of his book, he mentions his father's speech at a

Chapter II: Analysis of *From the Deep Woods to Civilization: From Forced Assimilation to Cultural Hybridity*

family gathering after the first day of school: “Here is one Sioux who will sacrifice everything to win the wisdom of the white man! We have now entered upon his life, and there is no going back. Besides, one would be like a hobbled pony without learning to live like those among whom we must live” (25). This quote represents the themes of cultural assimilation and resilience. It reflects a significant moment of transition and adaptation for Eastman as he moves from being a Sioux boy to embracing the dominant white culture. It also portrays the challenges he faced in navigating between his native heritage and white society.

Eastman pursued his education in many schools, starting Santee Agency School in Nebraska, where he was introduced to white customs like the ‘holy day’, when the white Christians pray to their God in the church. He also attended other schools in the East and West such as Beloit and Dartmouth to get a medical degree from Boston Medical School in 1890. Throughout his school days, Eastman made many Christian friends and had a good relationship with his teachers. He was a model boy and studied harder than most of the students, and also worked hard during summer to earn money. He was motivated, and always immersed to learn the English language and Christian religion far from the influence of reservation life. Despite his admiration for Anglo-American culture, Eastman never gave up on his origins, as the reason behind pursuing medicine was his desire to serve his indigenous community (See Appendix 2).

After obtaining his medical degree, Eastman returned to the west at Pine Ridge Indian Agency in South Dakota to practice medicine among his people on the reservation and work for the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA). It was there that he met his wife Elaine Goodale, and together they worked to help the Dakota population, particularly during the massacre of Wounded Knee in 1890 and the emergence of the Dance Ghost War which was a religious conflict in Amerindian tribes from 1890 to 1891.

Chapter II: Analysis of *From the Deep Woods to Civilization: From Forced Assimilation to Cultural Hybridity*

3. Analysis of *From the Deep Woods to Civilization*

From the Deep Woods to Civilization is divided into twelve chapters, each chapter presents a different phase of his life. The book's title itself is significant and meaningful. It helps the reader understand the long process of Eastman to learn the Civilization of the white men.

In his autobiography, the writing style of Eastman is characterized by its smooth and clear prose. He employs simple English to narrate the events and vivid descriptions to attract the reader. Through his words, we can get an authentic image of the rituals of Native Americans and the customs of the white population. For example, Eastman describes American clothing style of his schoolmates in distinctive detail:

They all had on some apology for white man's clothing, but their pantaloons belonged neither to the order short nor to the long. Their coats, some of them, met only half-way by the help of long strings. Others were lapped over in front, and held on by a string of some sort fastened round the body. Some of their hats were brimless and others without crowns, while most were fantastically painted. The hair of all the boys was cut short, and, in spite of the evidences of great effort to keep it down, it stood erect like porcupine quills. I thought, as I stood on one side and took a careful observation of the motley gathering, that if I had to look like these boys in order to obtain something of the white man's learning, it was time for me to rebel. (21 - 22)

Despite his initial reaction, Eastman did not rebel. Instead, he successfully integrated into the new culture. His detailed descriptions reflect on his observational skills and his ability to adapt while keeping his native culture. By taking advantage of educational opportunities

Chapter II: Analysis of *From the Deep Woods to Civilization: From Forced Assimilation to Cultural Hybridity*

and navigating between different cultural expectations, Eastman showed resilience and adaptability. His journey illustrates the challenges of cultural integration and the personal growth that can arise from it.

Moreover, we notice that Eastman frequently repeated the term of “Great Mystery”, which is used to display his strong spiritual beliefs as a Sioux boy before integrating himself into American culture. He writes: “I had been taught to seek the Great Mystery in silence, in the deep forest or on the height of the mountains” (26). It was also used when Eastman was introduced to Christianity during the prayers of the school principal; he says: “I understood that he was praying to the Great Mystery that the work of the day might be blessed and their labor be faithful” (40 - 41).

3.1. Assimilation in *From the Deep Woods to Civilization*

Before the European occupation, as explored in the first chapter, North America was a peaceful land inhabited by its Indigenous people who glorified nature. During his childhood, Eastman led a soothing, traditional lifestyle alongside his Sioux tribe, engaging in activities such as roaming rivers, hunting buffalo, woodworking, and farming. The natives of the Great Plains had never known or heard of any lifestyle other than their own, as Eastman writes: “I was a skilled rider and archer, alert to everything around me. I had never known, nor expected to know, any life but this” (5). When Eastman was a child, he was deeply connected to his traditional lifestyle and had no desire to change his situation, but his father pushed him to learn the ways of white civilization.

Yet, this tranquility was soon disrupted. During the Dakota War of 1862, Ohiyesa found himself among those who suffered its consequences. He became a refugee in Canada at the age of four, where he lived with his grandmother and uncle under poor conditions for eleven years (Eick 3). In 1873, at fifteen, Ohiyesa returned to Dakota, reuniting with his father

Chapter II: Analysis of *From the Deep Woods to Civilization: From Forced Assimilation to Cultural Hybridity*

who had served time in prison (Eick 6). His father, who had converted to Christianity through the influence of white missionaries, wanted to integrate his son into the white American civilization. Eastman reflects on his father's discussions about the white man's religion with a mixture of emotions, both respect and dissatisfaction: "There was a mingling of admiration and indignation in my mind as I listened" (8).

As mentioned in the first chapter, the American government assimilated the Amerindians into the dominant culture, using educational programs, forcing them to abandon their traditional ways and adopt what was considered a civilized lifestyle. Eastman faced challenges during his early days in boarding schools, particularly due to his physical appearance and his struggle to conform to the school's rules. Despite this, his father encouraged him to embrace the white civilization. As a result, Eastman was obliged to cut his long hair to appear more civilized and gain acceptance, he states: "I didn't want to go to that place again, but father's logic was too strong for me, and the next morning I had my long hair cut and started into school in earnest" (25). Despite his young age, Eastman was a boy with pride, refusing to disappoint his father and moving ahead even with the assimilation difficulties he faced in the white-dominated environment. He desperately writes:

I thought for a moment of turning back to Canada, there to regain my freedom and wildlife. Still, I had sent word to my father that this war path should be completed, and I remembered how he had said that if I did not return, he would shed proud tears. About this time, I did some of the hardest thinking that I have ever done in my life. (34)

Eastman remained deeply attached to his origins since childhood, wanting to make his father proud by becoming an educated Sioux man.

Chapter II: Analysis of *From the Deep Woods to Civilization: From Forced Assimilation to Cultural Hybridity*

Nevertheless, Eastman met different people during his journey of chasing knowledge. In Missouri for example, he was invited by a white family to stay at their home, where he was impressed by their hospitality, generously providing him with food and shelter, and introducing him to aspects of their lifestyle, such as singing Christian songs during prayer. Eastman was amazed by the culture, he says: “Then and here I loved Civilization and renounced my wild life” (39). The positive treatment gave him a good impression of the White civilization.

In spite of being a new student in Santee school, Eastman received encouragement from white teachers like Dr. Riggs, who spoke Sioux language and helped him adopt the right manners in the school. These experiences helped young Eastman accept his fate and start learning English, economics, maths and religion. He says: “At times I felt something of the fascination of the new life, and again there would arise in me a dogged resistance, and a voice seemed to be saying, ‘It is cowardly to depart from the old things’!” (46 - 47).

Eastman progresses from feeling insecure about his Sioux identity to belonging and gratitude toward the professors who taught him knowledge. This transition helped become a mature, passionate learner, deeply immersed in the books of white authors, he shares:

Next to my own father, this man did more than perhaps any other to make it possible for me to grasp the principles of true civilization. He also strengthened and developed in me that native strong ambition to win out, by sticking to whatever I might undertake. Associated with him was another man who influenced me powerfully toward Christian living. This was the Rev. Dr. John P. Williamson, the pioneer Presbyterian missionary. The world seemed gradually to unfold before me, and the desire to know all that the white man

Chapter II: Analysis of *From the Deep Woods to Civilization: From Forced Assimilation to Cultural Hybridity*

knew was the tremendous and prevailing thought in me, and was constantly growing upon me more and more. (48)

In this quote, Eastman expressed his desire to acquire the knowledge introduced by white intellectuals, highlighting the value he placed on education. This desire was a significant force in his life, driving him to achieve personal and intellectual growth.

3.2. Integration of Charles Eastman

Eastman's experiences in college were exceptional. He went on a journey of self-development, gaining more skills in English, practicing physical exercises, and working on a farm during summer vacations. Despite receiving assistance from the President of Beloit College, who provided him with a letter of recommendation, Eastman encountered discrimination while seeking employment. For example, he was once rejected by a farmer because of his origins, and the farmer offensively expressed his disdain for Native Indians: "Get off from my farm just as quick as you can! I had a cousin killed by your people only last summer" (57). This mistreatment highlights the rejection of "the other" as a stranger, seen as dangerous, and inferior.

Furthermore, during a summer vacation, Eastman was informed by his teacher Dr. Riggs about a new college in the East particularly for Indian students in New Hampshire, yet he was hesitant. In his book, Eastman admits that being surrounded by people of his tribe would disturb his education as he was determined to not go back to his hometown until he accomplishes his goals. He expresses this as follows: "I dreaded to cut myself off from my people, and in my heart I knew that if I went, I should not return until I had accomplished my purpose. It was a critical moment in my life, but the decision could be only one way" (61).

Chapter II: Analysis of *From the Deep Woods to Civilization: From Forced Assimilation to Cultural Hybridity*

Eastman acknowledged the captivating white civilization, wanting young native Indians to join it before it is too late. This shows Eastman's full integration into the world he was called to embrace by his father, keeping aside his native identity. He conveys: "This was my ambition – that the Sioux should accept civilization before it was too late! I wished that our young men might at once take up the white man's way, and prepare themselves to hold office and wield influence in their native states" (65). After his college experiences in the West and East, and after the passing of his father, Eastman carries the next stage, a more serious one, pursuing medicine as a profession to serve his people.

In 1887, Eastman graduated and enrolled at Boston University to study medicine as he wished. He states: "A high ideal of duty was placed before me, and I was doubly armed in my original purpose to make my education of service to my race" (71). Eastman attended churches and lived close to Mr and Mrs. Frank Wood whom he considered to be his white family. He was a sociable native Sioux among white Christians, loved and respected by them and was given many social opportunities such as presenting classes. He graduated from medical school in 1890 and he was finally ready to use all the knowledge he acquired for the benefit of his Dakota community after being appointed as a government physician at Pine Ridge agency.

Jessika Vilks asserts that despite experiencing trauma during the Wounded Knee massacre in 1890 and witnessing unfair treaty dealings concerning Natives, Eastman never hesitated to help his people (9). He received Indian refugees and provided medical examinations, as he recounts: "Many women and children were coming into the agency for refuge, evidently fearing that the dreaded soldiers might attack their villages by mistake" (101).

3.3. Education in *From the Deep Woods to Civilization*

After obtaining his medical degree, Eastman became an important representative of his community and was a dedicated advocate for their rights. In this context, Vilk argues that the colonial society in which Eastman lived, forced him to focus his advocacy on education and integration rather than addressing the traumas experienced by Native Americans (12). Eastman's commitment to education led him to visit mission stations among Native communities in Canada, where he encouraged the adoption of Christianity and emphasized the importance of educating young Indians for improved living conditions. Reflecting on this, Eastman recalls: "I was kindly received at their village, and made, as I thought, a pretty good speech, emphasizing the necessity of educating their children, and urging their acceptance of the Christian religion" (148). He viewed education as important for Native Americans to secure a better future and to promote an understanding of white culture.

In March 1891, Eastman was invited to the Congregational Club of Chicago, where he met General Morgan of Indiana, the Commissioner of Indian Affairs. Eastman notes: "He was a lover of fair play, and throughout my fight for justice he gave me all the support within his power" (119). This intellectual advocated for the rights and education of Native Americans, considering it the salvation for his people.

Eastman's influence extended to organizing summer camps, inspired by his experiences with the Boy Scouts. He describes his efforts in this passage:

My work for the Boys Scouts, whose program appeals to me strongly, has given me a good deal of practice in camp management, finally leading to organization of summer camps for both boys and girls on charming Granite Lake in the hills of southern New Hampshire, where my whole family are enthusiastic helpers in the

Chapter II: Analysis of *From the Deep Woods to Civilization: From Forced Assimilation to Cultural Hybridity*

development of this form of open-air education patterned largely upon my own early training. (193)

Eastman believed in the benefits of learning in nature to improve the learners' skills. Nature is considered an integral part of Native American beliefs, demonstrating that Eastman has not abandoned his native beliefs.

In discussing civilization, Eastman reflects:

Yet even in deep jungles God's own sunlight penetrates, and I stand before my own people still as an advocate of civilization. Why? First, because there is no chance for our former simple life anymore; and second, because I realize that the white man's religion is not responsible for his mistakes. There is every evidence that God has given him all the light necessary by which to live in peace and good-will with his brother; and we also know that many brilliant civilizations have collapsed in physical and moral decadence. It is for us to avoid their fate if we can. (194 - 195)

This quote discusses important themes such as the separation of religion from human errors and the call for societal change. Eastman acknowledges that the traditional way of life has become impossible due to the impact of colonization and globalization, particularly affecting Native Americans. He believes that the religion introduced by white colonizers holds good values, but any mistakes or moral failings result from individuals, not the religion itself. This reflects his respect and admiration for the religion's values while examining the behaviors of some followers. Eastman also referred to the rise and the fall of "brilliant civilizations" due to physical and moral decadence, emphasizing that the survival of civilization depends not only on technological advancements but also on moral integrity.

Chapter II: Analysis of *From the Deep Woods to Civilization: From Forced Assimilation to Cultural Hybridity*

3.4 Eastman's Cultural Hybridity in *From the Deep Woods to Civilization*

Charles Eastman was a complex figure in terms of his cultural identity, which makes us question his position after being integrated into American culture. During his early stages of his life, Eastman struggled with the expectations imposed by his father to assimilate into white society. This pressure led to inner conflicts and confusion as he tried to preserve his native culture from erasure while fulfilling the desires of white men, as advocated by his father. Despite the tough challenges, Eastman came to recognize the value of both cultures and gradually grasped the potential of embracing multiple cultural identities.

Throughout the process from forced assimilation to integration, Eastman developed a hybrid identity, allowing him to bridge the two cultural groups with the support of his white wife. As mentioned in the first chapter, Charles Eastman married Elaine Goodale; they knew each other when she worked as a volunteer nurse during the Wounded Knee massacre. Indeed, the well-educated couple has chosen to cross cultural barriers and link the two populations through their marriage (Clark 3). Eastman writes:

On June 18, 1891, I was married to Elaine Goodale in the Church of the Ascension, New York City, by the Rev. Dr. Donald. Her two sisters were bridesmaids, and I had my chum in the medical school for best man, and two Dartmouth classmates as ushers. Many well-known people were present. After the wedding breakfast in her father's apartments, we went to Sky Farm, my wife's birth-place in the beautiful Berkshire hills, where she and her sister Dora, as little girls, wrote the *Apple Blossoms* and other poems. A reception was given for us at Dorchester by Mr. and Mrs. Wood, and after attending the Wellesley College commencement, and spending a few days with my wife's family, we returned to the West by way of Montreal. (125 - 126)

Chapter II: Analysis of *From the Deep Woods to Civilization: From Forced Assimilation to Cultural Hybridity*

In this quote Eastman describes his wedding's ceremony in the Church, following white cultural traditions. Their union was also embraced by Eastman's family and the Flandreau Sioux band. This dual celebration illustrates a respectful blending of both white and Native American cultures.

Elaine Goodale was a strong supporter and inspiration for her husband, as he expresses: "My wife accompanied me on many of my trips now that I had a carriage, and was always prepared with clean clothing, badges, and nourishing food for my needy patients" (127). Through these words, Eastman highlights his wife's role as a companion who supported him in every step to serve his native population.

At the end of his autobiography, Eastman describes his cultural identity as a blend between the two cultures, creating his hybrid identity which preserves his native heritage while adopting few aspects from the American civilization. This concept of blending cultures and forming a unique identity is similar to Homi Bhabha's theory of "The Third Space" which suggests that individuals exist in a space between the culture of the colonizer and the colonized. Eastman declares:

I am an Indian; and while I have learned much from civilization, for which I am grateful, I have never lost my Indian sense of right and justice. I am for development and progress along social and spiritual lines, rather than those of commerce, nationalism, or material efficiency. Nevertheless, so long as I live, I am an American. (195)

Charles Eastman expressed his cultural hybridity of being an Indian and American. He adopted beneficial aspects from the white culture such as education and religion while

Chapter II: Analysis of *From the Deep Woods to Civilization: From Forced Assimilation to Cultural Hybridity*

preserving his Indian heritage. His declaration is a powerful affirmation of his Native identity, values, and the possibility of coexistence and integration without losing one's cultural identity.

Conclusion

Through a detailed analysis of Charles Eastman's autobiography *From the Deep Woods to Civilization*, we explore the complexities of navigating cultural identities of the colonizer and the colonized throughout the life journey of Eastman. His narrative sheds light on the process of assimilation, revealing the challenges and consequences faced by Indigenous people due to colonial pressures. However, it also highlights their resilience in preserving native culture. Despite these struggles, Charles Eastman's integration shaped his intellectual personality, leading him to return and serve his people by providing medical assistance during wars and beyond. Furthermore, he advocated for indigenous education and encouraged embracing certain elements of the white civilization such as Christianity.

All in all, Eastman's experiences reflect a progression from forced assimilation to integration, and ultimately to acculturation, where he embraced both of his Indigenous culture and the American civilization. The conclusion reached in this chapter is that cultural hybridity is a result of both colonization and resistance. His autobiography serves as a memory of their enduring spirit and ongoing struggle to preserve and adapt their culture in a dominant white world.

General Conclusion

General Conclusion

This study examines cultural hybridity in *From the Deep Woods to Civilization*, focusing on the struggles of Native Americans as a marginalized minority in the United States, and their efforts to preserve their native heritage to the present day. It relies on the concepts of cultural identity, assimilation, integration, otherness, and cultural hybridity.

In order to reach the objectives of this study, we divided our work into two chapters. In the first chapter entitled “Historical and Theoretical Background: Native Americans as an Oppressed Minority”, we have provided a historical background of Native American struggle and resistance from the discovery of America to the contemporary era, exploring European occupations, American westward expansion, and forced relocation. These events created an ongoing process of assimilation and integration, leading to hybrid identities and the emergence of influential native figures like Charles Eastman, who preserved his native culture while integrating himself into the American civilization, proving it to be an enriching and successful experience.

The second chapter entitled “Analysis of *From the Deep Woods to Civilization*: From Forced Assimilation to Cultural Hybridity” presents autobiography as a literary genre. We introduce Eastman’s autobiography by providing a summary and a detailed analysis to understand his journey as a Sioux boy who overcame many obstacles to become an important figure serving his people as a physician and social activist. His narrative illustrates the profound impact of familial influence on cultural identity. Additionally, his ability to navigate between the two cultures is evidence that individuals can embrace multiple cultural identities and still advocate for unity between the different cultural hybrid groups.

In conclusion, our paper addresses the important topic of cultural dynamics and identity creation in the context of colonization, focusing particularly on Native Americans in

General conclusion

particular due to their long-lasting struggle and resilience. Through the study of Eastman's narrative, we gain a clear idea of the different challenges faced by the Native Americans in the United States and the strategies they employed to protect their unique cultural heritage under the government pressures.

However, despite the available literature on the Indigenous communities, there remains a notable gap in research concerning their contemporary situations in American reservations and the recent efforts made toward cultural rebirth. Future researchers could explore the cultural identity of Indigenous Americans in the modern context, such as exploring political and media representations. This research would not only contribute to academic knowledge, but also guide advocacy efforts to promote Native Americans' rights and cultural preservation in the 21st century and beyond.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: The assimilation of young Native Americans in the American boarding schools.



Source: “American Indian Boarding Schools: A Legacy of Discrimination, Forced Assimilation and (near) Annihilation”. Medium.

Appendix 2: Charles Eastman’s integration and pride in his origins.



Source: “Charles Eastman”. Britannica Kids.

Appendix 3: Native Americans in the Pine Ridge reservation today.



Source: "What Life On a Native American Reservation Really Looks Like" Huckmag.

Abstract in French (Résumé)

La présente recherche entreprend une étude de l'identité et de l'hybridité culturelle dans le contexte des Amérindiens, en analysant l'autobiographie de Charles Alexander Eastman, *From the Deep Woods to Civilization*. Son autobiographie raconte son long voyage d'un garçon Sioux primitif qui a subi une assimilation forcée, à un intellectuel intégré, fusionnant sa culture indigène avec la culture occidentale dominante, créant ainsi une identité hybride. Cette étude utilise une méthode qualitative pour analyser le processus de création d'identité d'Eastman, explorant des concepts tels que l'identité culturelle, l'hybridité culturelle, l'assimilation et l'intégration.

Mots clés : Natifs Américains, Charles Alexander Eastman, hybridité culturelle, Assimilation, Intégration, Colonisation Européenne.

Abstract in Arabic (ملخص)

يقوم هذا البحث بدراسة الهوية والتلاقي الثقافي في سياق السكان الأصليين الأمريكيين، من خلال تحليل سيرة حياة تشارلز ألكسندر إيستمان "من الغابات العميقة إلى الحضارة". تروي سيرة حياته رحلته الطويلة من كونه صبي بدائي تعرض للاستيعاب القسري، إلى أن أصبح رجل متكامل مثقف، يدمج ثقافته الأصلية مع الثقافة الغربية السائدة، مما أدى إلى إنشاء هوية متمازجة. تستخدم هذه الدراسة أسلوبًا نوعيًا لتحليل عملية إنشاء الهوية لإيستمان، مستكشفة مفاهيم مثل الهوية الثقافية، والتلاقي الثقافي، والاستيعاب، والاندماج.

الكلمات الرئيسية: السكان الأصليين الأمريكيين، تشارلز ألكسندر إيستمان، التلاقي الثقافي، الاستيعاب، الاندماج، الاستعمار الأوروبي.