The Frontier in James Fenimore Cooper's *Leatherstocking Tales*

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ABSTRAKT

Tato bakalářská práce je zaměřena na to, jak James Fenimore Cooper vyobrazil pojetí hranic v jeho stěžejním díle americké literatury *Příběhy Kožené Punčochy*. Nejdříve je popsán původ samotného slova „frontier" a jeho postupný vývoj. Poté je nastíněno, jakou roli hrálo „frontier" v rámci amerických dějin a vzniku americké kultury. A nakonec následuje rozbor stylu psaní Jamese Fenimore Coopera a jeho role v rámci vzniku americké kultury, literatury, a identity.

Klíčová slova: Identita, společnost, mýty, James Fenimore Cooper, hranice, *Příběhy Kožené punčochy*, adaptace, kolonizace, kultura, kmeny, *Poslední Mohykán*, Domorodí obyvatelé Spojených států amerických

ABSTRACT

This thesis analyses the role of James Fenimore Cooper in the American literature and his depiction of the American frontier in his *The Leatherstocking Tales*. The first chapter starts by defining the meaning of the word frontier and tracing its origin. Then it interprets the role the frontier had in a formation of the American culture and identity. And lastly, it analyses James Fenimore Cooper's background, writing style and his depiction of the American frontier.

Keywords: Frontier, American identity, settlement, James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, Nathaniel Bumppo, Native Americans, society, tribes, colonization, adaptation

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I hereby declare that the print version of my bachelor's thesis and the electronic version of my thesis deposited in the IS/STAG system are identical.

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

The American frontier is a historical phenomenon that played a key role in the development of the American culture, society and most importantly, the American identity.[1] It is generally agreed by majority of scholars that a constant presence of an uncharted land within the reach, providing a plenty of opportunities and enormous potential for growth and expansion, enabled the American society to repeatedly evolve from the rudimentary stage of a society, into more complex structures. This is what made the evolution of the American society unparalleled.

However, the history of the American western frontier is not only about the abundance of opportunities and its influence on the American evolution, but also about a contest between two distinctive cultures and the eventual annihilation of one of the competing sides for good. The example of the cultural competition in North America is of the most extreme and unparalleled in history. Nevertheless, due to its extremity it provides a perfect case for a determination of a paradigm in the society. This example of a clash between two cultures that were in their fundamentals so similar and yet so distinctive in their customs and culture, that the competition between them was inevitable, serves as a precedent for any two distinctive groups in a human society that differ in their ideology, point of view, religion, etc. Therefore, it provides a parallel for today's world when the polarization of the society is one of the most discussed topics.

This bachelor's thesis will start by tracing the origins of the word frontier that is tightly connected to the colonization of North America and a subsequent American westward expansion. Then, before analysing James Fenimore Cooper's perspective of the frontier and his renowned literary work *The Leatherstocking Tales*, the thesis will provide a brief historical background of the American frontier all the way from the British arrival at the shores of North America to the period of the infamous "Indian Removal," which is right during the time when Cooper started to publish his first novels. Afterwards, for the purpose of this work it is also important to provide a relevant comparison. Therefore, the second and the third chapters will provide a summary of the westward frontier influence on the evolution of the U.S. according to the eminent historian Frederick Jackson Turner and others. And finally, the last chapter will be focused on the James Fenimore Cooper's

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[1] Frederick Jackson Turner, *The Frontier in American History* (New York: Henry Holt and Co, 1920), 1-3.

background, style of writing, career, and particularly on his *The Leatherstocking Tales* and its depiction of the frontier.

1 AMERICAN FRONTIER

The American frontier is a construct, meaning it is a human concept that has repeatedly changed over time. This chapter provides a general introduction to the background of the American frontier, starting with the earliest definitions of the term, then focusing on historian Frederick Jackson Turner's 1893 definition, before touching on the latest opinions. The several phases of westward expansion will also be identified and characterized.

1.1 Definitions of the Frontier

In general, the term "frontier" has evolved since it first entered the English lexicon in the seventeenth century, then defined as the "bounds or limits of a country." In 1755, lexicographer Samuel Johnson, augmented the definition as "the border: properly that which terminates not at the sea, but fronts another country."[2] Then, in 1806, *Webster's Dictionary* declared the frontier to be "a limit, boundary, border on another country, furthest settlements," thereby giving credence to the idea that beyond the frontier is an unsettled and uncivilized place.[3]

The historical perspective on the native inhabitants of the frontier as uncivilized, combined with the nineteenth century belief in American exceptionalism, have been exploited in the past as the justification for the conquest of North America, from "sea to shining sea."[4] This supposedly righteous conquest of the continent was portrayed by Frances Palmer in his 1868 painting, *Across the Continent: Westward the Course of Empire Takes Its Way*, which idealizes white American expansion; white pioneers are portrayed "civilizing the land," while Native Americans are seen to be trodden under the foot of an advancing "civilization."[5] The pioneers sought the supposedly righteous enlightenment principles of "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness," and the natives simply could not stand in their way.[6]

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[2] Fulmer Mood, "Notes on the History of the Word 'Frontier'," *Agricultural History* 22, no. 2 (1948): 78-79, https://www.jstor.org/stable/3739265.

[3] Fulmer, "Notes on the History of the Word 'Frontier'," 79.

[4] Matthew J. Flynn, *Settle and Conquer: Militarism on the Frontier of North America, 1607 – 1890* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland and Co., 2016), 34-37; Katharine Lee Bates, "America the Beautiful," Your Daily Poem, http://www.yourdailypoem.com/listpoem.jsp?poem_id=1274.

[5] Shane Mountjoy, *Manifest Destiny: Westward Expansion* (New York: Chelsea House, 2009), 11.

[6] Patricia Nelson Limerick, *Legacy of Conquest: The Unbroken Past of the American West* (New York: WW Norton and Co., 1987)*,* 36.

Another and probably more recognizable illustration of the conquering of the West is John Gast's *American Progress*.[7] This 1872 painting depicts an angelic white woman flying west across the continent, carrying a book, and laying a telegraph wire, both symbols of progress. In the painting, the towns and factories of the east are illuminated, while the untamed nature of the west, where the Native Americans live, is in darkness.[8]

Such paintings were meant to illustrate "manifest destiny," a term coined in 1845 by journalist John O'Sullivan,[9] that expressed the belief that the United States was predestined by God to spread across the whole continent, enlightening and saving those it conquered.[10] This term and the ideology that it represented was more than convenient at that time, especially for American politicians, who used it as a justification for invading and conquering Mexico in the 1840s,[11] and taking from Mexico its northernmost territories, including California.[12]

Even as manifest destiny was fulfilled, the definition of the frontier continued to evolve. In 1890, *Webster's International Dictionary* defined the frontier as "that part of a country which fronts or faces another country or an unsettled region; …or extreme part of a country; the border of the settled or civilized part of a country; as the frontier of civilization."[13] Three years later, speaking at the Columbian Exposition, a celebration of white civilization, historian Frederick Jackson Turner described it as "the outer edge of the wave – the meeting point between savagery and civilization," which shows that he still viewed and characterized Native Americans as "uncivilized savages." Moreover, Turner characterized the frontier as an area of low population density, or as an "unsettled" free land.[14]

Despite the fact that manifest destiny was achieved by the 1890s, the justifications for it continued well into the twentieth century.[15] In the 1909 edition of *Webster's Dictionary,*

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[7] Stephen Aron, *The American West: A Very Short Introduction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), 127.
[8] Mountjoy, *Manifest Destiny,* 19.
[9] Mountjoy, *Manifest Destiny,* 9-10.
[10] Robert J. Miller, *Native America, Discovered and Conquered: Thomas Jefferson, Lewis & Clark, and Manifest Destiny* (Westport: Praeger, 2006), 83.
[11] Mountjoy, *Manifest Destiny,* 9-12.
[12] Flynn, *Settle and Conquer,* 119-120.
[13] William Torrey Harris, *Webster′s New International Dictionary of the English Language* (Springfield, MA: G. and C. Merriam, 1923), 870.
[14] Turner, *The Frontier in American History*, 3.
[15] Mountjoy, *Manifest Destiny,* 20.

the frontier was defined as "the border or advance region of settlement and civilization." This paradigm appears in later editions as well.[16]

Since the 1950s, scholars have tended to uphold Turner's characterization of the frontier as an unsettled area, suggesting that the frontier contained fewer than 2 people per square mile. However, the same scholars have attacked Turner for characterizing the Native Americans as uncivilized, preferring instead to classify the frontier as a "zone where cultures clashed,"[17] or a place where "competing sides" fought over the control and identity of the land.[18]

1.2 History of the American Frontier

Historically, the frontier is a border constantly pushed west by pioneers. Hence, it is defined by the "westward movement" of European settlers from the Atlantic coast all the way to the "Far West," which took place between the seventeenth and nineteenth century. The history of the frontier, in other words the conquest of the West, is the history of America, and helps explain not only American development but the American character.[19] For Turner, Americans are different from Europeans, and they are exceptional exactly for they had a frontier to conquer.[20]

1.2.1 The First English Frontier

For the Europeans the original North American frontier was the Atlantic coastline, which was, for them, the undiscovered and unknown west.[21] This period lasted nearly the whole seventeenth century and was concluded by the foundation of permanent settlements along the coast.[22] It was here, along the Atlantic seaboard, that European colonists first met and competed with Native Americans.[23]

Europeans were initially far outnumbered in North America, and therefore capable of just establishing and defending their positions, at best. In 1607, Jamestown became the first permanent English colony in North America. There, relations between the Native

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[16] Fulmer, "Notes on the History of the Word Frontier," 81-83.
[17] Ray Allen Billington, Henry E. Huntington and Martin Ridge, *Westward Expansion: A History of the American Frontier* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2001), 3.
[18] Flynn, *Settle and Conquer*, 26-27.
[19] Turner, *The Frontier in American History,* 1-9.
[20] Billington, Huntington and Ridge, *Westward Expansion*, 1.
[21] Turner, *The Frontier in American History,* 3-4.
[22] Richard Slotkin, *The Fatal Environment: The Myth of the Frontier in the Age of Industrialization, 1800 – 1890* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1985), 37.
[23] Flynn, *Settle and Conquer,* 27.

Americans and English colonists were generally friendly.[24] In 1608, the French established Quebec,[25] and a good relationship with the natives as well. Then in 1620, well north of Virginia, in what came to be known as Massachusetts, English Pilgrims founded a settlement called Plymouth. Eventually the colonists started to increase in numbers, and so did tensions between them and the Native Americans. As early as the 1630s, the colonists were killing the Native Americans in the Pequot War,[26] most notoriously in the Mystic Massacre of 1637. In 1675-1678, the two sides waged total war in the American northeast over land ownership, ending in a colonial victory by attrition,[27] in a conflict that became known as King Philip's War. By 1680, English colonists had obtained stable home territory on the coasts of today's New England, gained considerable demographic advantage over the natives (whom by that time were outnumbered approximately three to one), and were expanding westward, pushing the frontier before them.[28]

1.2.2 Native Americans Failures and Colonial Successes

The Native American tribes had been in constant war against each other long before the English colonists arrived. However, it was a war of another kind, the main difference being such wars were not about annihilation but about population control. This may explain why the Native Americans were unprepared to fend off Europeans.[29] Further hindering their self-defence was the germ genocide unwittingly unleashed upon the natives by the colonists. Between 1617 and 1619, an estimated eighty percent of the natives in New England succumbed to various European diseases.[30] Finally, the natives seem to have underestimated the threat posed by the English colonists. Used to dealing with French traders at small waterfront outposts, they expected more of the same with the English.[31]

1.2.3 The Second Frontier Line

With the Atlantic coastline secured and with the English colonists demanding "elbow room," competition over territories between France and England resulted in two colonial

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[24] Flynn, *Settle and Conquer,* 26-40.
[25] James Axtell, *The Invasion Within: The Contest of Cultures in Colonial North America* (NY: Oxford University Press, 1985), 32.
[26] Flynn, *Settle and Conquer,* 26-40.
[27] John Grenier, *The First Way of War: American War Making on the Frontier, 1607 – 1814* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005) 26-34.
[28] Flynn, *Settle and Conquer,* 40-41.
[29] Flynn, *Settle and Conquer,* 29-32.
[30] Grenier, *The First Way of War*, 25-26.
[31] Flynn, *Settle and Conquer,* 33-34.

conflicts - King William's War (1688 – 1697) and Queen Anne's War (1702 – 1713).[32] Thus, at the turn of the eighteen century, the English colonists found themselves fighting on two frontiers: The "Indian frontier" and the New France frontier.[33]

1.2.4 Competing Sides in North America

During the first half of the eighteenth century, as the clash between Great Britain and France continued, both sides wooed the natives, trying to make allies out of them.[34] In this effort, the French had the advantage, because they were traders, not settlers, and therefore less of a threat than the British, who clearly wanted the land.[35] Moreover, it was less convenient for the settlers to ally and trade with the natives, because this would give the natives access to European weaponry, which could in turn be used to undermine European settlement efforts.[36]

The power struggles in North America climaxed with a declaration of war in 1757, a war known alternatively as the French and Indian War or the Seven Year's War.[37] This conflict had arisen due to British encroachment into the Ohio Valley. The French fought to keep the Ohio territory, and the natives and Spanish, also frustrated by the British expansion, allied with them.[38]

At the beginning of the war, Britain was losing,[39] but in1758, the scales tipped in her favour. By 1759, the French were in retreat, losing hold of Quebec, and then a year later, Montreal.[40] Meanwhile in 1762, the British Navy captured Havana, the crown jewel of Spain's Caribbean empire.[41] Ultimately, the French and Spanish sued for peace, which was ratified by the Treaty of Paris in 1763. Britain gained the Ohio Valley and eastern Canada from the French, as well as Florida from Spain in exchange "for the return of its Caribbean and Pacific colonies," including Havana.[42]

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[32] Sue Manchester, "Elbow Room," Schoolhouse Rock, 1976, https://www.schoolhouserock.tv/Elbow.html; Billington, Huntington and Ridge, *Westward Expansion*, 22-23.

[33] Flynn, *Settle and Conquer,* 48-51.

[34] Billington, Huntington and Ridge, *Westward Expansion,* 28-31.; Great Britain was formed in 1706 by the union of England and Scotland.

[35] Turner, The *Frontier in American History,* 13-14.

[36] Flynn, *Settle and Conquer*, 49-50.

[37] Billington, Huntington and Ridge, *Westward Expansion,* 24-25.

[38] John Mack Faragher and Robert V. Hine, *Frontiers: A Short History of the American West* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008) 31-32.

[39] Billington, Huntington and Ridge, *Westward Expansion*, 24-25.

[40] Billington, Huntington and Ridge, *Westward Expansion*, 25-26.

[41] Walter R. Borneman, *The French and Indian War: Deciding the Fate of North America* (New York: HarperCollins, 2007), 273-274.

[42] Faragher and Hine, *Frontiers,* 32-33.

As a result of the Treaty of Paris, the Native American inhabitants of the Ohio Valley found themselves alienated and unprotected.[43] In response, Chief Pontiac of the Ottawas declared war on the British. Although temporarily stalling British expansion into the Great Lakes area, Pontiac's War was a largely rear-guard action that was suppressed by 1766.[44]

In 1763, King George III established the Proclamation Line, a line stretching along the Appalachian Mountains that American colonists were not to cross,[45] marking a territory that was considered by the British Crown as sustainable. The main point of this somewhat arbitrary boundary between the British colonists and the natives was to decrease the number of armed conflicts, thereby lowering the defence costs.[46] It also declared that the Native Americans were "under the protection" of the British Empire, designating lands west of the Mississippi River for them. Lands in this "Indian territory" were not to be granted to anybody, or purchased, without the permission of the British Crown.[47] However, many British colonists, enticed by good lands to the west, ignored the line, and began meeting and competing with the Native Americans again.[48]

1.2.5 Consequences of the French and Indian War

The British success in the French and Indian War came at a considerable financial cost. To pay the debts, the British Parliament imposed a series of new taxes and trade regulations on their North American colonists, which later led to the American Revolution.[49]

The "Sugar Act" of 1764 actually reduced the tax on sugar in British colonies, but it increased emphasis on the collection of the tax, and established legal penalties for non-payment. The parliament also legally prohibited the North American colonies from either coining or printing their own money. Such legislation naturally led to discontent, the colonist arguing that they did not have representatives in parliament, and therefore, should not be taxed by parliament,[50] an objection that would later coalesce under the slogan, "taxation without a representation."[51]

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[43] Billington, Huntington and Ridge, *Westward Expansion*, 26-27.
[44] Flynn, *Settle and Conquer,* 52-56.
[45] Miller, *Native America, Discovered and Conquered,* 31-32.
[46] Flynn, *Settle and Conquer*, 57.
[47] Miller, *Native America, Discovered and Conquered*, 32-33.
[48] Flynn, *Settle and Conquer,* 57-59.
[49] Borneman, *The French and Indian War,* 307.
[50] Robert J. Allison, *The American Revolution: A Very Short Introduction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), 32-33.
[51] Borneman, *The French and Indian War,* 307.

The same year, another tax known as the "Stamp Act," was imposed on the British North American colonies,[52] taxing all sorts of documents such as "newspapers, college diplomas, marriage licenses, etc." In response, the colonists petitioned and protested, resulting in the act's annulment. In exchange, parliament passed the "Declaratory Act", which said that the Crown had absolute control over all matters in her American colonies. As long as the British did not enforce the Declaratory Act, colonists did not object.[53]

However, when in 1767 Charles Townshend, the British chancellor of exchequer, introduced a new series of taxes on colonies, putting a tax on "lead, glass, paint, and a tea," new riots and protests began. American colonists boycotted British goods as a manifestation of their disapproval. In 1770, riots escalated into an armed conflict between British soldiers sent to guard the Boston customs house, and colonists angered at having to pay taxes, this conflict became known as the Boston Massacre. As the outcome of this conflict, the British Parliament abolished most of Townshend's taxes. Nevertheless, the tea tax remained as a symbol of British superiority.[54] American merchants avoided paying the tea tax by selling smuggled tea. Therefore, the British Parliament responded by introducing a Tea Act in 1773, which gave an advantage to the East India Company by relieving it of the export tax burden on tea. It also gave the company a monopoly on all tea imported into the North American colonies. The East India Company was delivering and selling their tea without a middleman, which enabled them to undercut the prices of the colonial merchants. This led to the Boston Tea Party of 16 December 1773, during which several American colonists dressed in Native American garbs boarded three East India Company ships loaded with tea and dumped their cargo of 342 tea chests over the board.[55]

As a consequence of this unlawful act committed by Bostonians, the British Parliament took several precautions called "the Coercive Acts" to maintain order in the British Empire and to punish North American colonists. Due to their punitive character, they would become known as "the Intolerable Acts" in the American colonies. First of these "Intolerable Acts" was the Boston Port Bill,"[56] which demanded that Boston harbour remains closed until Bostonians paid for the monetary damages suffered by the East India Company during the Boston Tea Party. Another measure disbanded the Massachusetts

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[52] Miller, *Native America, Discovered and Conquered*, 31.
[53] Allison, *The American Revolution,* 34-38.
[54] Allison, *The American Revolution*, 38-39.
[55] Jeff Wallendfeldt, *The American Revolutionary War and the War of 1812: People, Politics and Power* (Chicago: Rosen Education Service, 2010), 29-30.
[56] Wallendfeldt, *The American Revolutionary War and the War of 1812,* 30-31.

government and appointed a new governor, British General Thomas Gage.[57] The third measure taken by parliament was the Administration of Justice Act, allowing "British officials" charged for crimes connected to the fulfilment of their duties to face trial in Britain or any other American colony besides Massachusetts. The last of the four Coercive Acts allowed Governor Gage to house British soldiers in private homes of American colonists. In addition, the British parliament introduced the Quebec Act, stripping all colonies of their jurisdiction over the Northwest Territory and the fur trade taking place within it, transferring the jurisdiction over to Upper Canada.[58] British regulations as such, along with attempts to enforce the Proclamation Line, led to widespread rebellion that later escalated into the American Revolutionary War.[59]

1.2.6 American Revolutionary War

At that time, the British Empire was the most powerful force on the North American continent, while the American army was mainly recruited from militia, led by inexperienced generals. Thus, the British were generally expected to win.[60] Furthermore, the American colonists were about to fight on multiple fronts. The Native Americans had probably one last chance to push the American colonists back by joining their former adversary, the British. However, not all tribes participated. Natives in the Ohio Valley, along with many other tribes in the south, declared their neutrality.[61] But the Iroquois Confederacy decided to enter the war, albeit in a divided nature. The Oneida and Tuscarora tribes sided with the Americans, while the Mohawk, Seneca and Cayuga supported the British.[62]

The first battle of the war occurred early in 1775. General Thomas Gage, who had received orders from London to crush the rebelling colonists, sent his forces to destroy American military supplies in Concord. These forces were confronted by American militia which overwhelmed the British and forced them to retreat. As the British soldiers were withdrawing back to Boston, they were repeatedly ambushed and fired upon by Americans hiding behind trees, and in the terrain they knew so well. This triumph at Lexington and

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[57] Allison, *The American Revolution*, 44-47.
[58] Wallendfeldt, *The American Revolutionary War and the War of 1812*, 29-33.
[59] Miller, *Native America, Discovered and Conquered*, 33.
[60] Wallendfeldt, *The American Revolutionary War and the War of 1812,* 61.
[61] Flynn, *Settle and Conquer*, 56-58.
[62] Allison, *The American Revolution*, 76.

Concord enticed more American patriots to join the militia forces, which led to the American conquest of Boston in March of the same year.[63]

By 1776, the British had completely lost political influence over the colonies, culminating in the July 4th *Declaration of Independence*.[64]Afterwards, France and Spain allied with the American colonies in a global war against Great Britain.[65] Their assistance, along with the "guerrilla tactics" used by the Americans and the fact that the Americans had the advantage of fighting at home while the British had to feed and supply an army from a great distance, led to the surrender of the British forces at Yorktown, Virginia in 1781.[66] The subsequent Treaty of Paris of 1783 officially ended the American Revolution, resulting in the formation of a new nation, the United States.[67]

The Iroquois Confederacy, which was formed long before Europeans entered the American continent, had fallen apart as a consequence of the American Revolutionary War.[68] Furthermore, those Native Americans who had sided with the British during the war were summarily abandoned by them afterwards. The Treaty of Paris negated the Proclamation Line, giving Americans rights to "trans-Appalachian" lands by "right of conquest." The Americans then forced the Native Americans, allies and foes alike, to cede these lands to the newly formed United States.[69]

At the end of the eighteenth century, Americans quickly moved into trans-Appalachian territories. However, they soon encountered Native American resistance in the form of a new Native American confederation in the Northwest Territory, which held off American expansionism for three years before finally succumbing to the American forces at the Battle of Fallen Timbers.[70] In the subsequent Treaty of Greenville of 1795, the defeated natives were forced to cede the Great Lakes Region to the United States.[71] Despite of this, the natives had shown the Americans that they could and would resist American encroachment on their territory.[72]

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[63] Wallendfeldt, *The American Revolutionary War and the War of 1812,* 61-62.
[64] Allison, *The American Revolution*, 59-62.
[65] Allison, *The American Revolution*, 72. 82.
[66] Wallenfeldt, *The American Revolutionary War and the War of 1812,* 61.
[67] Billington, Huntington and Ridge, *Westward Expansion,* 32; Miller, *Native American, Discovered and Conquered*, 61.
[68] Allison, *The American Revolution*, 84.
[69] Hive and Faragher, *Frontiers*, 39-40; Flynn, *Settle and Conquer*, 48-49.
[70] Flynn, *Settle and Conquer*, 13-15.
[71] Turner, *The Frontier in American History*, 133-134.
[72] Billington, Huntington and Ridge, *Westward Expansion*, 34-36.

1.2.7   The Third Frontier Line

Leaving the Atlantic coast behind, another ambition arose for the newly-minted Americans. The third phase of the advancement had moved the frontier line all the way behind the Alleghenies, and further into the centre of the North American continent. When the American pioneers finally succeeded in removing the European nations from the continent's mid-section, the Native Americans, who now became the only obstacle for American expansion, found themselves completely isolated and without any support in their endeavour to stop, or at least, to slow down American expansionism.[73]

Before the year 1800, Kentucky, Tennessee and Ohio had become U.S. states.[74] As the distance between the frontier and the eastern states grew, the difference between the east and the west started to become more profound. Their differences led to many conflicts about political representation, taxes, religion, and internal improvements. For instance, one of these conflicts was the 1791-1794 Whiskey Rebellion in western Pennsylvania, or the Virginia and Kentucky Resolutions of the 1790s.[75] Then, in 1803, the Louisiana Purchase doubled the size of the United States,[76] when The United States acquired over 800,000 square miles from France at a price of 4 cents per acre.[77]

With the advancement of the American settlements, also grew the tension among the natives which escalated in a new attempt to stop American expansion. Tecumseh, a chief of the Shawnee tribe, being aware of the American military superiority, knew that the natives could not face the Americans without an ally. Therefore, he sought help from the British, which he eventually gained in 1812 when the British declared war on the United States again. However, the natives once again lacked a sense of unity as only a few tribes joined Tecumseh. This, and an inefficient cooperation between the natives and the British resulted in their defeat in 1814. The British retreated to Canada and accepted their inability to control the situation in the United States, leaving the Native Americans completely isolated and without any potential help in stopping the American expansion.[78]

The subsequent *U.S. census of 1820* confirmed that Ohio, southern Indiana, Illinois, South-eastern Missouri and half of the Louisiana Territory had been settled by American

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[73] Flynn, *Settle and Conquer*, 48-49.

[74] Turner, *The Frontier in American History,* 5-6

[75] Thomas P. Slaughter, "The Whiskey Rebellion: Frontier Epilogue to the American Revolution, "*Journal of American History* 74, no. 1 (June 1987): 158, http://www.jstor.org/stable/1908533.

[76] Flynn, *Settle and Conquer*, 83.

[77] Robert Lee, "Accounting for Conquest: The Price of the Louisiana Purchase of Indian Country," *Journal of American History* 103, no. 4 (March 2017): 921-923. https://doi.org/10.1093/jahist/jaw504.

[78] Flynn, *Settle and Conquer*, 59-64.

whites.[79] It only took one generation to populate the whole lower South along the Gulf of Mexico, all the way to the Mississippi River and up to the Red River. As a cotton empire was created in the South, the Native Americans were once again pushed west.[80]

1.2.8   Andrew Jackson and the South

Jackson, a Tennessee planter, first gained his popularity for military successes during the Creek War of 1813 and 1814,[81] after which Jackson forced on the Creeks a treaty that took their lands.[82] As the result of being stripped of their lands, some Creeks moved west, while others sought refuge in Spanish Florida where they allied with the Seminoles.[83]

In 1814, a year after defeating the Creeks, American troops under Jackson's command overwhelmed a British force at the Battle of New Orleans.[84] In response, President Madison named Jackson commander of the U. S. army´s Southern Department, which enabled Jackson to continue in his fight for "Indian removal."[85]

As Spanish Florida had become a place from which European nations could supply and support natives in their skirmishes with Americans, it posed a significant threat to the United States. Due to this, American southerners began pressuring the U.S. government to take actions against the Florida Seminoles and the Spanish government that harboured them.[86]

Thus, in 1818, determined to end the southern threat to the United States, Jackson marched into Florida[87] where he destroyed several Seminole villages and Spanish forts.[88] Although Jackson's actions received widespread international condemnation, Secretary of State John Quincy Adams defended them on the grounds that Spain's benign neglect of Florida had created a dangerous situation for the United States.[89] Spain initially responded by providing the Seminoles with arms and supplies but was ultimately forced to realize that its position in Florida was untenable.[90] As a result of "The Transcontinental Treaty" of

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[79] Turner, *The Frontier in American History,* 6-7.

[80] Billington, Huntington and Ridge, *Westward Expansion,* 107-113.

[81] Flynn, *Settle and Conquer,* 64.

[82] Lynn Hudson Parsons, *The Birth of Modern Politics: Andrew Jackson, John Quincy Adams, and the Election of 1828* (New York: Offord University Press, 2011), 47.

[83] Flynn, *Settle and Conquer,* 64.

[84] Flynn, *Settle and Conquer*, 64-65.

[85] Parsons, *The Birth of Modern Politics*, 47.

[86] Parsons, *The Birth of Modern Politics*, 47-48.

[87] Flynn, *Settle and Conquer*, 66.

[88] Parsons, *The Birth of Modern Politics*, 47-50.

[89] Parsons, *The Birth of Modern Politics*, 49-52.

[90] Flynn, *Settle and Conquer*, 67-68.

1819, Spain sold Florida to the United States for $5 million.[91] With this purchase, the United States had completed its land "conquest east of the Mississippi River."[92]

In 1828, in large part due to his military successes, Jackson, whom the Cherokee called "Indian Killer" and the Creek "Sharp Knife," became president of the United States.[93] This newly appointed president viewed Native Americans as "savages" that posed a sincere threat to the "American way of life,"[94] and as part of his campaign, he had promised to end the threat.[95]

1.2.9 Indian Removal

As a result of skirmishes between the settlers and Native Americans throughout the centuries, multiple treaties had been signed.[96] In most of these contracts, the Native Americans were guaranteed the possession of their lands and recognized as independent nations.[97] However, Americans repeatedly chose to augment or negate these treaties,[98] mostly via a clause in the contracts that stated that the tribes were "under the protection of the United States".[99]

As the United States expanded, moving Native Americans out of the way became a persistent goal.[100] Without European assistance, the natives found themselves at a serious disadvantage.[101] American settlers scorned any efforts at native assimilation and rather intended to eradicate them. As a result, the government began to view Native American removal west of the Mississippi River "as the most humane option."[102] In his 1828 presidential campaign, Andrew Jackson made removal part of his platform.[103]

Americans were divided by the question of "Indian removal." While the U.S. Supreme Court opposed the president's efforts at their removal,[104] residents of Southern states

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[91] Parsons, *The Birth of Modern Politics*, 54.

[92] Flynn, *Settle and Conquer*, 68.

[93] Brown L. DeNeen, "Trump Called Andrew Jackson a 'Swashbuckler.' The Cherokees Called Him 'Indian Killer'," *Washington Post*, 3 (May 2017):
https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/retropolis/wp/2017/05/03/trump-called-andrew-jackson-a-swashbuckler-the-cherokee-called-him-indian-killer/.

[94] Parsons, *The Birth of Modern Politics*, 9-10.

[95] Alfred A. Cave, *Sharp Knife: Andrew Jackson and the American Indians* (Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger Publishers Inc, 2017), 8.

[96] Flynn, *Settle and Conquer,* 11-23.

[97] Flynn, *Settle and Conquer,* 92-94.

[98] Flynn, *Settle and Conquer*, 92-98.

[99] Miller, *Native America, Discovered and Conquered,* 42-43.

[100] Miller, *Native America, Discovered and Conquered,* 90-91.

[101] Flynn, *Settle and Conquer,63-64.*

[102] Flynn, *Settle and Conquer,* 92-93.

[103] Cave, *Sharp Knife,* 8.

[104] Aron, *The American West,* 68.

generally supported the president. With an eye towards re-election, the president ignored court decisions and forced removal west of the Mississippi on the "Five Civilized Tribes" of the U.S. South: Cherokee, Choctaw, Creek, Seminole, and Chickasaw.[105] This removal led to the 1838 "Trail of Tears," during which thousands of Native Americans were forced, often under armed guard, to walk up to 800 miles to their appointed western reservations. During this "death march," more than one quarter of the Native Americans perished due to harsh winter conditions and lack of supplies.[106] Only certain factions of the Seminoles of Florida resisted militarily, engaging the American military in a drawn-out guerrilla-style conflict which came to be known as the Second Seminole War of 1837 to 1842.[107]

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[105] Billington, Huntington and Ridge, *Westward Expansion,* 40-41.
[106] Flynn, *Settle and Conquer*, 99-100.
[107] Flynn, *Settle and Conquer*, 104-111.

2 INFLUENCE OF THE FRONTIER ON THE AMERICAN IDENTITY

According to Turner, in facing and conquering a common enemy on the frontier, the colonists began to develop an American identity inseparable from their experiences. The new environment of the frontier forced adaptations. In conquering the frontier, the colonists transformed this new environment not into a "new Europe" but into a completely new product. Once the British colonists had successfully adapted to the new environment, their numbers greatly increased. The American colonies began to expand, gradually pushing the frontier further and further to the west. Therefore, the frontier line became the place "of the most rapid Americanization."[108]

2.1 Frontier Shaping the American Identity

Historian Patricia Nelson Limerick claims that, for Turner, the "frontier was a process, not a place," a process during which "savagery" was vanquished by "civilization."[109] In other words, society evolved from primitive forms into sophisticated and complex structures. Here, Turner repeatedly uses and stresses the word "primitive."[110] Turner also argued that the environment, which was the frontier, was a key aspect for the evolution.[111] This constant presence of an uncharted land within reach, into which pioneers repeatedly ventured in order to start over the whole process of social evolution from basic to complex, distinguishes the American development, and therefore, its identity as well.[112]

This process of Americanization started with European pioneers who landed on the shores of the New World, left with no other option than to go through fundamental changes to adapt to a completely new and distinctive environment, or perish. Here, the British colonists, who arrived in North America, found themselves without the certainties they had previously. To prevail, and to bend the new environment to their will, they had to grow accustomed to the new conditions.[113] Initially, they were depended on the indigenous people of this New World,[114] learning from them how to plant crops, hunt, move around, and build dwellings. As they adapted to these new conditions,[115] they were slowly

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[108] Turner, *The Frontier in American History*, 4; For Turner the term "New England" was a misnomer.
[109] Limerick, *Legacy of Conquest,* 26.
[110] Turner, *The Frontier in American History,* 1-2.
[111] Billington, Huntington and Ridge, *Westward Expansion,* 1.
[112] Turner, *The Frontier in American History*, 1.
[113] Turner, *The Frontier in American History*, 1-5.
[114] Flynn, *Settle and Conquer*, 33.
[115] Billington, Huntington and Ridge, *Westward Expansion*, 2.

transforming the environment in their image. Therefore, the outcome was not identical to their previous way of life, but was entirely new, and distinctive.[116]

2.2 Evolution of the American Society

The foundation of American society occurred simultaneously with the creation of the very first frontier, the "Atlantic coast." Originally it was a European frontier, and these people were coming from a complex structures and established societies, bringing with them customs that were essential and required in their original cultures.[117] However, as the pioneers ventured further into the continent with a vision for a better future or in a search of adventure, each successive phase of the frontier advancement removed traces of their European roots.[118]

In this completely different environment on the "hither edge of the wilderness," the previous sophisticated structures were not applicable. This forced the pioneers to acquire new customs and habits, or adjust the old ones, to fit to these new conditions. This led to constant "innovation and adaptation," which became elementary aspects of the frontier.[119] Therefore, a gradual shift away from European habits and customs became inevitable.[120]

2.2.1 The Trader as a Pioneer of Civilization

As a consequence of the "Indian trade," the trader was the one to advance most rapidly. Natives were left with no other choice but to welcome traders with open arms. Those who refused to trade were exposed to a severe disadvantage against tribes which, as a result of trade, possessed guns and other advantages.[121] Thus, the rapid advance of the trader became the most efficient process by which civilization penetrated the wilderness. When the farmer arrived at the frontier, which was long ago influenced by the trader, the wilderness, and especially the so-called "primitive life," was already gone.[122] The Native Americans encountered by the trader were significantly different to those met by the farmer subsequently. While initially the natives had been completely dependent on the white trader, it was this dependence that provided them afterwards with an independence

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[116] Turner, *The Frontier in American History*, 1-5.
[117] Billington, Huntington and Ridge, *Westward Expansion*, 1-2.
[118] Turner, *The Frontier in American History*, 3-4.
[119] Billington, Huntington and Ridge, *Westward Expansion*, 2.
[120] Turner, *The Frontier in American History*, 4.
[121] Flynn, *Settle and Conquer,* 33-34.
[122] Billington, Huntington and Ridge, *Westward Expansion,* 4.

and the ability to resist the farming phase. In a way, the trader prepared the natives for the advanced civilization which followed.[123]

2.2.2 Various Waves of Settlers

Typically, there were several waves of settlers coming gradually one after another. After the traders came the pioneers, who were depended mainly on the flora and fauna to provide for their families.[124] They were the initial founders of communities in the newly discovered western territories. Pioneers would come into these unsettled lands with a vision of new opportunities, freedom, peace, lawlessness, and in pursuit of happiness.[125]

However, when the place became too crowded for them, they left and ventured further west to start the whole process again, on a completely new frontier line. Then the subsequent wave was the immigrants who purchased the lands from pioneers with the intention to cultivate them. These started to create simple city structures such as bridges, roads, houses, mills, schools, and courthouses, creating a completely new "civilized life."[126] Right after this phase, the last wave of settlers entered the frontier, these were the men of capital. During this phase were created edifices made of brick, vast fields, orchards, universities, and churches. Eventually, small villages were transformed into thriving towns and cities.[127] Take for instance Pittsburgh, which was Iroquois Indian land, then a French trading post, then a British fort, then an American village, and ultimately a thriving American city centred on steel production.[128]

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[123] Turner, *The Frontier in American History,* 12-15.
[124] Turner, *The Frontier in American History*, 19-20.
[125] Billington, Huntington and Ridge, *Westward Expansion,* 6.
[126] Billington, Huntington and Ridge, *Westward Expansion,* 5-7.
[127] Turner, *The Frontier in American History,* 20-21.
[128] Pittsburghbeautiful, "History of Pittsburgh Part 1: In the Beginning," Accessed 18 April 2021, https://www.pittsburghbeautiful.com/2018/03/07/history-pittsburgh-part-1-beginning/#:~:text=In%20fact%2C%20by%201748%2C%20tribes,%2C%20Wyandot%2C%20Mohican%20and%20Tisagechroami.

3 ORIGINS OF THE AMERICAN MILITARY TRADITION

According to Turner, "the Indian frontier," which was the area at the margins of the European colonies, where Native Americans lived, and which was constantly pushed further west as the colonists increased in numbers and expanded their territories little by little by winning in wars with the natives, was the place where Americans acquired a sense of unification, military training, and where the frontiersmen were forged.[129] In other words, the encounter with Native Americans is tightly connected to the creation of the American identity.[130]

As mentioned, Native Americans had a distinctive approach to the warfare. Tribes never endeavored a complete annihilation of their adversary but rather attacked in a way that would be from a present point of view called guerrilla tactics. However, there was a slight difference between guerrilla tactics as we know it and the way the natives waged war with their enemies. Here, the distinctive element is that natives rather sought coexistence with their foes by just restraining their power and showing them the boundaries. In early stages of colonization, natives were sending small raiding parties that would kill a considerable number of settlers in pursuit of diminishing their power, but never struck a fatal blow. This lack of destructive blow in their warfare was the main distinctive aspect of the "Indian way of war."[131]

At the beginning of the seventeenth century, during the early days of the British colonization of the North America, the colonists were, in comparison to Native Americans significantly inferior in numbers.[132] Furthermore, settlers were not a match to the cunningness of the natives, who held the advantage of familiarity with the terrain which they used to stealthily ambush the colonists and then deftly disappear in depths of woods.[133] Also, besides the disadvantage in numbers and unfamiliarity with surroundings, the colonists were initially greatly dependent on the natives for the food they would get from them by trading weapons, goods, etc.[134] This provided the natives with a huge competitive advantage against other tribes. Therefore, due to the mutual benefits, both sides were initially trying to reach a middle ground rather than to seek a complete

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[129] Turner, *The Frontier in American History,* 15.
[130] May, "The Romance of America," 170-172.
[131] Flynn*, Settle and Conquer*, 29-38.
[132] Grenier, *The First Way of War,* 2.
[133] Grenier, *The First Way of War,* 21-22.
[134] Grenier, *The First Way of War,* 22.

destruction of their adversary.[135] Therefore, at that time, the British colonists had become part of the power struggle in the "tribal zone."[136]

3.1.1 The American Way of War in Jamestown

After a failure by John Smith, the head of the Jamestown's defences, he attempted to train the settlers to fight in woods and to adjust to the "Indian way of war." However, this did not go well. Therefore, the British colonists, since they could not match the natives in the battle, started to adopt the so called "unlimited way of war." At first, they tried to lead a "feedfight" against the natives, which was based on razing their fields and villages to deplete them of the food supplies. However, as already said, the colonists were initially reliant on the food of natives as well, so this strategy alone, was a terrible risk. Thus, Smith threatened the chief of the Powhatan tribe with a slaughter of their "wives and children" in attempt to force them to stop launching raids against them.[137] Then, the situation between the British colonists and the natives escalated in 1609, when the chief of Powhatans tried to force the colonists to acknowledge him as a superior power, and supporting him in the "tribal power struggle." The colonists refused, being condemned to starvation. This resulted in less than a hundred colonists remaining in Jamestown, when Sir Thomas Gates arrived with a supplies and reinforcements during the summer of the same year. This convenient arrival saved the colonists from the disaster and a collapse of the whole colony. However, in 1610, when Gates was leaving, more ships with supplies and newcomers landed at Jamestown, and so the stalemate between the colonists and natives went on.[138]

In 1622, the Powhatan Confederacy launched another attack to dimmish the power of the British colonists. Notwithstanding being warned of the upcoming assault, thirty percent of the colonists perished during the attack. The survivors were resentful and were calling for a vengeance, so the colonists continued in a systematic "feedfight." Hence, the power struggle of which the colonists were part, continued.[139] However, this constant harassment of Jamestown's settlers did not succeed in subjugating them, but on the contrary, it thoroughly changed the way they would deal with the natives, releasing them of any moral

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[135] Flynn, *Settle and Conquer*, 33-34.
[136] Flynn, *Settle and Conquer*, 37-38.
[137] Grenier, *The First Way of War,* 21-22.
[138] Flynn, *Settle and Conquer*, 34-35.
[139] Grenier, *The First Way of War, 21-26.*

restrains whatsoever.[140] Therefore, the "extirpative war," also known as "unlimited war,"[141] became a part of the American identity and culture.[142]

3.1.2 The "Unlimited Way of War" in New England

Unlike the Jamestown colony, the Puritans in Massachusetts were able to establish relatively peaceful relationships with most of the Native Americans around them.[143] However, this ostensible middle ground was soon disturbed. The Mohegans, who were at that time allied with Puritans, accused the Pequot tribe of plotting against their ally in attempt to create a conflict. Decreasing the power of the Pequots would naturally an mean increase of their power. However, they did not expect what was about to happen. When the colonists and their Mohegan allies attacked the Pequot tribe at Mystic River on May 26, 1637, the Mohegans were shocked by the manifestation of colonist´s destructive military power when they massacred over 400 Pequots, "including women and children." This brutality had nothing to do with the way of the "Indian warfare." Notwithstanding the strong disapproval expressed by their native allies, the British colonists celebrated a triumph over the enemy.[144]

The Pequot War of 1637-1638 was one of the first bigger conflicts between the colonists and the natives, determining a pattern in upcoming encounters between them for next three hundred years. The other two clashes where the British colonists manifested their destructive power, were the King Philip's War of 1675-1678 and the French and Indian War of 1754-1763. These three major conflicts had the same form, extreme brutality with no restraint.[145]

It was during the Pequot War where the natives of New England, for the first time, faced the "unlimited way of war," when the British Puritans annihilated and subjugated the whole Pequot tribe. This warfare had nothing to do with the way the natives fought their wars, which were, as mentioned earlier, rather a "limited way of wars" waged to gain honour and to maintain balance of power among the Native American tribes.[146] Since then, it was clear that the British colonists not only adapted to the "Indian Way of War," but

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[140] Flynn, *Settle and Conquer*, 36-37.

[141] Grenier, *The First Way of War*, 25-26.

[142] Flynn, *Settle and Conquer*, 36-37.

[143] Grenier, *The First Way of War*, 26.

[144] Flynn, *Settle and Conquer,* 39-40.

[145] May, "The Romance of America," 174.

[146] Grenier, *The First Way of War*, 26-29.

turned the scale in their favour and became a dominant force in the "tribal zone."[147] By adopting "extirpative war" as a part of their military culture, the Americans had what Native Americans lacked, a destructive power and the ability to strike a final blow.[148]

3.1.3 Origins of the American Ranging Tradition and Frontiersmen

After a series of wars in Virginia and Massachusetts, the British colonists finally secured their place in the New World. Now, when the settlements were established deeper inland, the British colonists were about to face a new military challenge.[149] With the British colonists as the superior power in the "tribal zone," the natives had no other option than to fight with them. To leave their villages and withdraw further west in a nod to the British colonists who had a need to expand their territory due to their increasing numbers, would necessarily mean to encounter other tribes and fight them to gain new territory.[150]

So when the King Philip's War started in 1675, the settlers were trying to protect themselves against raiding parties sent by Native Americans, who lived at the margins of the colonial settlements, by building "blockhouses" as kind of a fortresses with expectations to be sieged. However, the Native Americans did not "play" by the same rules as the colonists were used to from European wars. Instead of sieging the blockhouses, Native Americans would avoid them and attack what left unprotected, plundering farms and houses.[151]

Benjamin Church was one of the first colonists who could call himself a frontiersman.[152] As a response to raids launched by the Native Americans, and their evasive style of fighting based on "hit-and-run" tactics, Church mustered small parties of colonial men to teach them from allied natives "the Indian way of skulking."[153]

Due to adopting to the "Indian style of fighting," which was by European standards considered as "dishonourable," the British colonists did not have to be any longer dependent on "guerrilla tactics" such as "feed-fight" for their survival. By adopting the "Indian Way of War," which Church himself called "skulking everywhere in the bushes," the colonists were now able to keep the Native Americans at the distance, fighting them off

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[147] Flynn, *Settle and Conquer,* 40-45.
[148] Grenier, *The First Way of War*, 25-26.
[149] Grenier, *The First Way of War*, 29-30.
[150] Flynn, *Settle and Conquer,* 39-45.
[151] Grenier, *The First Way of War*, 29-31.
[152] Flynn, *Settle and Conquer*, 45.
[153] Grenier, *The First Way of War*, 29-33.

on the frontier line which remained uninhabited. From now on, the need to find a middle ground, was no longer necessary.[154]

In 1676, Benjamin Church was chosen as a leader of the very first "ranger force" in American history. However, this would have never been possible without help of the native allies. In the origins of American ranging, the white Americans were essentially dependent on the allied natives as their tutors and guides. But Church was not the only one who attempted to create effective ranging groups who would be able to fight off the natives. There were similar endeavours in Virginia to form forces that would be more suitable for the warfare in the North American background. Nevertheless, there was a fundamental difference, proving that Church was a founding father of "American ranging." While Church in New England endeavoured to mimic the "Indian way of war," the approach of colonists in Virginia was rather attempting to adjust the European style of warfare to the "conditions of the New World" by relying mainly on a "dragoon cavalry." This dependency of Virginians on horses was later transferred further south in Kentucky, Tennessee, etc., becoming a part of the culture in the Southern U.S states.[155]

By the end of the eighteenth century, the colonial rangers were gradually less dependent on a help of their native allies. Men like John Gorham II and Charles Frost, who were subordinates of Church himself, were by that time experienced enough to lead ranging expeditions by themselves, less relying on the assistance and guidance of natives. Then, by the mid-century, ranging became a tradition and part of the American culture. One of the most famous ranging clans were the Gorham family, and then the Lovewell lineage. However, there still were not enough rangers and frontiersmen to fight off all Native American raids. This led to a support of ranging by the colonial governments, creating a bounty system for scalps of Native Americans, luring more men to devotion to frontiersmen life.[156] This tradition of American ranging continued during the American conquest of the West. Long after the United States declared its independence in 1776, it was the frontiersmen Lewis and Clark who were responsible for "opening the West," by leading the expedition sent by President Thomas Jefferson in 1804.[157]

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[154] Flynn, *Settle and Conquer*, 45.
[155] Grenier, *The First Way of War*, 33-36.
[156] Grenier, *The First Way of War*, 35-39.
[157] Flynn, *Settle and Conquer*, 83-87.

4 JAMES FENIMORE COOPER AND *THE LEATHERSTOCKING TALES*

James Fenimore Cooper is considered to be one of the most influential writers in the early American literature. Despite that Charles Brockden Brown preceded him in the embodiment of the American values and culture in the literary form,[158] Cooper's *The Leatherstocking Tales* are still valued as the most complex and extensive piece of art in the genre of "historical romance."[159]

The first book of *The Leatherstocking Tales* cycle is *The Pioneers: Or, The Sources of the Susquehanna* of 1823. Despite being written as first, in the chronology of the whole cycle is *The Pioneers* a fourth part. Here is the main protagonist Nathanial Bumppo introduced under the appellation "the Leatherstocking," which provided the title for the whole pentalogy.[160] In the following book from 1826, *The Last of the Mohicans,* which is chronologically a second part, is Nathaniel Bumppo called "Hawkeye" by his Native American companions or "La Longue Carabine" by his French and Iroquois adversaries.[161] Then, in 1827, Cooper wrote *Prairie: A Tale,* which is chronologically the final book of the whole pentalogy. Here, at the beginning of the first chapter Natty introduces himself to the family of Ismael Bush as "the trapper."[162] Then, after almost two decades Cooper wrote *The Pathfinder: Or, the Inland Sea* in 1840. This part is chronologically the third book of the cycle. And Natty is in accordance with the title of the book called "the Pathfinder." Nevertheless, his Native American companions still call him "Hawkeye," while his sobriquet earned during the French and Indian War from *The Last of the Mohicans*, "La Longue Carabine", still strikes a fear into the hearts of his adversaries.[163] And finally in *The Deerslayer: Or, The First War-Path*, which was published in 1841 as the last book of the whole pentalogy but takes the reader to the roots of the Leatherstocking's story, is the young Nathaniel introduced as "the Deerslayer."[164]

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[158] Slotkin, *The Fatal Environment*, 81-85.

[159] Xianhgui Li, and Peng Wang, "Analysis of Cooper's Writing Style in *The Last of the Mohicans*," *Theory and Practice in Language Studies* 5, no. 3 (March,2015): 2, http://www.academypublication.com/issues2/tpls/vol05/03/24.pdf.

[160] James Fenimore Cooper, *The Complete Leatherstocking Tales, Volume II.,* (Columbia, SC: Ex Fontibus Co., 2019), 268-269.

[161] James Fenimore Cooper, *The Complete Leatherstocking Tales, Volume I.,* (Middletown, DE: Ex Fontibus Co., 2019), 302. 351-352.

[162] Cooper, *The Complete Leatherstocking Tales, Volume II., 528.*

[163] Cooper, *The Complete Leatherstocking Tales, Volume II., 12.*

[164] Cooper, *The Complete Leatherstocking Tales, Volume I., 4.*

Cooper´s main character of *The Leatherstocking Tales*, Nathanial Bumppo, had established a frontier myth of a lone, simple frontiersman who is depicted as a noble figure. Being constantly on a move with his Native American companion called Chingachgook, exploring an uncharted wilderness, and always doing what he considers to be right and according to his "white gifts." Natty Bumppo's character became a part of the American culture, being an inspiration for many, from "Melville's *Moby Dick* to Mark Twain's *Huckleberry Finn*."[165] According to Czech Professor Michal Peprník is Cooper's cycle of *The Leatherstocking Tales* considered by many as the origin of the "western genre." Furthermore, *The Last of the Mohicans* was an inspiration to more than one movie adaptations, where is the main character Nathanial Bumppo depicted as a "prototype of the western hero."[166] Other than that, Cooper and his acclaimed pentalogy influenced not only the American culture, literal fiction,[167] and the movie industry,[168] but his depiction of the American frontier during the colonial times up to the period shortly after the Louisiana Purchase had also affected eminent historians such as Bancroft and Parkman.[169]

However, opinions on the Cooper's legacy are quite diverse among the scholars. While some of them questioned Cooper's historical accuracy and accused him of a participation on the creation of the Frontier's Myth, others claim that Cooper's *Leatherstocking Tales* correspond with the issues and general topics of the nineteenth century. Nevertheless, those who advocate Cooper's historical accuracy, are at the same time those who are accusing him of the justification of the American conquest.[170]

4.1 Cooper's Background and Style of Writing

James Fenimore Cooper was born in 1789 during the period shortly after the U.S. *Declaration of Independence*, which was characterized by significantly growing patriotism, mirrored both in the culture, and the politics. Cooper grew up in "a frontier community" of Cooperstown, and as a son of "Federalist" Judge William Cooper, he received first-class education.[171] The district of Cooperstown in New York state was of a

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[165] Slotkin, *The Fatal Environment*, 81.

[166] Michal Peprník, "James Fenimore Cooper as a Western Author and the 1920 Film Adaptation of *The Last of the Mohicans*," *Moravian Journal of Literature and Film 4 (*Spring 2013), 5. https://moravianjournal.upol.cz/files/MJLF0401Peprnik.pdf.

[167] Slotkin, *The Fatal Environment*, 81.

[168] Peprník, "James Fenimore Cooper as a Western Author and the 1920 Film Adaptation of *The Last of the Mohicans*," 5.

[169] Slotkin, *The Fatal Environment*, 81.

[170] May, "The Romance of America," 167-168.

[171] Li, and Wang, "Analysis of Cooper's Writing Style in *The Last of the Mohicans*," 1-2.

democratic nature. However, the power and influence were held by men like Cooper's father, who was a self-made man by the example of Adams and Jefferson. Therefore, as a member of an influential and wealthy family, Cooper was expected to dedicate his life to service of the republic. However, after an attempt to make a career in the Navy, and several attempts to succeed in building up a business, Cooper pursued a career in the literary field.[172]

In 1820, Cooper wrote his first literary work, the *Precaution*. By writing this novel, Cooper endeavoured to "imitate, or rather to parody Jane Austin," trying to diminish the value of novels of manner. Ironically, this novel had a little success with the American readers but achieved a considerable fame among the British audience. However, as a result of Sir Walter Scott's influence,[173] Cooper eventually commence career transition from writing novels of manner to the genre of historical romance where he could capitalize on his extraordinary description skills.[174] After his first two novels, *The Spy* and *Lionel Lincoln*, Cooper became a significant figure of the American literary nationalism. Then finally in 1823, when he finished *The Pioneers*, the shift in his writing style towards the historical romance genre was completed.[175]

In his literary work is Cooper well known for his addition of unusual features. The plot, as it is most apparent in *The Last of the Mohicans*, usually revolves around three actions, "escape, pursuit, and capture." Moreover, the social and narrative roles are also often being inverted.[176] As it is in *The Last of the Mohicans*, when after the departure of Munro's daughters accompanied by an escort of soldiers led by aristocrat Heyward, and psalm singer Gamut, the roles begin to switch as the characters "cross the border between the civilization and the wilderness." Here, the soldiers, who are supposed to protect the women, are showing signs of cowardness, while the female characters along with the sentimental figure of Gamut lead the way.[177]

The influence of Sir Walter Scott on Cooper's writing style is most visible in *The Last of the Mohicans* and in *The Prairie*, where Cooper shows Scott's "art of the gradation of

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[172] Slotkin, *The Fatal Environment*, 82-83.
[173] Slotkin, *The Fatal Environment*, 86-88.
[174] Li, and Wang, "Analysis of Cooper's Writing Style in *The Last of the Mohicans*," 3.
[175] Slotkin, *The Fatal Environment*, 82-85.
[176] Peprník, "James Fenimore Cooper as a Western Author and the 1920 Film Adaptation of *The Last of the Mohicans*," 10.
[177] Slotkin, *The Fatal Environment*, 89.

conflict."[178] Cooper also has a way of a mysterious conclusion of the chapters, leaving the reader in a tension and anticipation of what is going to be the next twist in the plot. Most importantly, notwithstanding the historical background of Cooper's stories, the plots are mostly a fiction without a legitimate historical basis. However, Cooper implements the fictional plots in a legitimate historical background so smoothly, that it makes him one of the most distinguishable figures of the American Literature during the Romantic period.[179]

4.1.1 Frontier's Myth and Three Fundamental Figures of Early Colonial Literature

The predecessors of the Leatherstocking myth have origins in the early colonial and the early republic literature. The beginnings of the frontier's myth were revolving around three key figures, "the captive, the hunter, and the savage." Cooper elaborated these three figures and extended the variety of the roles they could interpret and then included them as "a narrative subtext" in his historical romance pentalogy, *The Leatherstocking Tales*. Cooper observed that these three types of "heroic figures," on which the early colonial and republic literature were based, were mirroring a pattern in American history. In other words, they were based on a legitimate historical background and experience. Furthermore, "he integrated three distinct, pre-existing plot formulae or scenarios of interaction, defining and valuing the roles of each of the three heroic figures."[180]

As first, Cooper used the "conversion formula," which had the origins in the captivity narratives of the Puritans. This formula was based on attaining a redemption through the "suffering and humiliation" of the female character held in a captivity by "savages."[181] The origins of the captivity narrative go back to the first religious records of the colonial period in American frontier history. It was originally the Puritans of New England who used captivity narrative in their religious writings as a symbol of going through a torment as a necessity to achieve spiritual redemption, the narrative then ended in a return of a female captive, symbolizing a divine mercy. One of the most recognized writers of captivity narratives was Mrs. Rowlandson who depicted her captivity stories in such a detailed manner that it was giving a sense of a personal experience, which made the captivity narratives to be perceived as a legitimate and natural part of the frontier

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[178] Peprník, "James Fenimore Cooper as a Western Author and the 1920 Film Adaptation of *The Last of the Mohicans*," 10.

[179] Li, and Wang, "Analysis of Cooper's Writing Style in *The Last of the Mohicans*," 1-3.

[180] Slotkin, *The Fatal Environment*, 86-87.

[181] Slotkin, *The Fatal Environment*, 86.

history.[182] Cooper used this formula of early colonial literature and implemented it as a "subtext" in his writings.[183]

Then Cooper implemented the "initiation story," which was based on the frontier legends and American heroes such as Benjamin Church or Lewis and Clark. In this type of the colonial narrative where is the main figure the hunter, is God represented as the nature itself. But the main difference in the hunter's narrative is that the redemption is to be reached though familiarization with "the savage and the wilderness," and eventual triumph over them.[184]

The last of the literary formula used by Cooper is the "success story." It was used during early republic period by William Phipps or Benjamin Franklin. Here is the main hero driven by his personal ambitions. Using his resourcefulness, the hero exploits both "the savage" and his companions. His main goal is not to suffer or sacrifice himself as it was with the captive or the hunter, but to adapt to the new challenging conditions, and to succeed in the new environment no matter the means.[185]

By using these three narrative forms and "heroic figures" of the early colonial and republic literature, Cooper endeavoured to interpret crucial developments in American history as well as in the society. His goal was to present different phases of the frontier and how it was connected to the evolution of American society.[186] And for a depiction of his social concepts, Cooper chose the frontier environment. For it completely served his purposes due to a nearly total "isolation" of his characters who in the most of his narratives are found in the middle of uninhabited frontier wilderness. Which creates one of the best conditions for his depiction of the social patterns represented in his characters and their social interactions.[187]

4.1.2 Mark Twain's Disenchantment with "the Frontier Myth"

Born in 1835, Mark Twain grew up a long distance from the western frontier. Therefore, during his youth he gained an image of the frontier through reading James Fenimore Cooper and local newspapers. At that time, everyone in the American society was fascinated by the development of the western railroad and spreading rumours of the

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[182] Roy Harvey Pearce, "The Significances of the Captivity Narrative," *American Literature* 19, no. 1 (Mar.,1947): 1-3, https://www.jstor.org/stable/2920438?seq=1#metadata_info_tab_contents.
[183] Slotkin, *The Fatal Environment*, 87.
[184] Slotkin, *The Fatal Environment*,86-87.
[185] Slotkin, *The Fatal Environment*, 87.
[186] Slotkin, *The Fatal Environment*, 89.
[187] Warren Motley, *The American Abraham: James Fenimore Cooper and the Frontier Patriarch* (NY: Cambridge University, 1987), 107.

frontier's promise of freedom and wealth. These rumours of the western frontier as well as the loss of his job led him to cross the borders and follow the frontier's myth.[188]

In 1872, Twain depicted his experience of the western frontier in *Roughing It*. Where he claims that due to reading Cooper's pentalogy *The Leatherstocking Tales* and other frontier romances from his successive imitators, he gained unrealistic expectations. He depicts himself as a naïve person, who ventures into the western frontier with the expectation "to behold" the unspoiled wilderness and to meet "noble savages" by the example of Chingachgook and Uncas, accompanied by the iconic frontiersman as was the Leatherstocking himself. Moreover, Twain's disenchantment with the frontier is amplified by another Frontier Myth of that period, the "gold rush myth" created by the false rumours of easily accessible wealth. However, as he arrives on the western frontier, there is an immediate disenchantment with "the literary Frontier Myth" as well as with the economical one. [189]

4.2 Cooper's Depiction of the American Frontier

According to historian Richard Slotkin, James Fenimore Cooper contributed to the Frontier's myth by analysing Native Americans and the distinctive traits of their nature and culture, while depicting the frontier environment as extremely violent and "savage." Furthermore, unlike other writers of that period, such as Crèvecoeur and Filson, in his historical depiction of the frontier, Cooper did not see in frontier´s clash of civilizations any other conclusion, than the elimination or the exclusion of one of the competing sides.[190]

The Native Americans in *The Leatherstocking Tales* are depicted as human beings in "a pre-civilized state."[191] In other words, Cooper, as well as historian Frederick Jackson Turner fifty years later in 1893, depicts the natives as "uncivilized."[192] Cooper attempts to show that even though the natives share some of the traits with whites, they still possess some distinctive features that are exclusively their own,[193] or in the words of the main protagonist Natty Bumppo who serves as advocate for Cooper' theories , "according to

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[188] Slotkin, *The Fatal Environment*, 516-517.
[189] Slotkin, *The Fatal Environment*,516-518.
[190] Slotkin, *The Fatal Environment*, 87-89.
[191] Slotkin, *The Fatal Environment*, 88.
[192] Billington, Huntington and Ridge, *Westward Expansion*, 3.
[193] Slotkin, *The Fatal Environment*, 88.

their gifts."[194] Cooper argues, that not only the natives, but every race has their own "unique gifts" that belong exclusively to their culture, customs, and nature. Meaning, when two distinctive cultures are put in the same environment, which is in this case the frontier, both will react, adapt, and evolve differently. Therefore, "the competition between them is inevitable," and a consensus practically impossible.[195]

This concept embodied in Cooper's *Leatherstocking Tales* tries to manifest why the competition between the natives and whites was "inevitable." However, the example of the clash between the Native Americans and the colonists, subsequently the Americans, is according to the historian Richard Slotkin "only the most extreme and dramatic expression of this truth."[196] But this intentional depiction of the utmost extreme example of this theory is only to design a pattern that is relevant to any two distinctive groups in a society which are competing against each other due to a different point of view, culture, ideology, religion, or just due to the being part of a different social class.[197]

4.2.1 The Significance and Symbolism in the Character of the Leatherstocking

The main protagonist Nathanial Bumppo alias the Leatherstocking is the most significant figure of Cooper's social theory. Born as a white man but reaching his maturity among the Native American tribe of Delaware, he has a "double background."[198] During his childhood he attended a church school, which provided him with a basic education and cultural background of the whites. On the other hand, as mentioned, growing up among the natives gave him a deep appreciation and a complete understanding of the Native American culture.[199] Thus, he is "a man without a cross" of the Native American blood with a church school background, who had fully adapted to the Native American ways, making him kind of a cultural "hybrid."[200]

According to Czech Professor Michal Peprník, it is the departure from Natty's roots, a white "civilization," and his subsequent encounter with the culture of Native Americans while living on the frontier, the place amid these two cultures, that "fostered the hybrid

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[194] Martin Terence, "Beginnings and Endings in the Leatherstocking Tales," Nineteenth-Century Fiction 33, no. 1(June,1978): 80, https://www.jstor.org/stable/2932927.

[195] Slotkin, *The Fatal Environment*, 86-89.

[196] Slotkin, *The Fatal Environment*, 88.

[197] Slotkin, *The Fatal Environment*, 88.

[198] Slotkin, *The Fatal Environment*, 91.

[199] Li, and Wang, "Analysis of Cooper's Writing Style in *The Last of the Mohicans*," 2-3.

[200] Slotkin, *The Fatal Environment*, 91.

identity" of the Leatherstocking.[201] With a striking resemblance to the famous frontiersman Benjamin Church,[202] the Leatherstocking is due to the adoption of the "Indian way of war" one of the most formidable and skilled warriors among the whites.[203] However, his disconnection with the white settlements did not make him forget his roots. Thus, in his values and decisions he is still fully conscious of his white ancestry, acting and making decisions according to his cultural "gifts."[204] Therefore, the Leatherstocking is due to being a hybrid of two cultures stuck amid them. He does not fully represent either whites or the natives. Therefore, he is not only the "Pathfinder" in the wilderness but also a scout of "the hidden borders" between the two cultures, determining what defines each of them.[205]

As mentioned, Cooper equipped his main hero the Leatherstocking with extraordinary skills to survive in both worlds, however, this predisposition of his as a cultural hybrid became both his blessing and a curse. For while he is being able to survive in both worlds, at the same time, he does not belong to neither of them.[206]

Therefore, Cooper's participation on the creation of the Frontier's Myth lie within his idealized depiction of the main hero. The main character, Nathanial Bumppo, is an embodiment of Cooper's myth. For through Natty Cooper attempts to depict his theory of the unavoidable outcome of the cultural clash. Natty finds himself amid two cultures. Thus, sharing customs of both, he declines to compromise any of them. And for not fully belonging to any of those two cultures, while explicitly refusing to become fully part of one of them, he is eventually doomed to an exile and a subsequent extinction, for only one culture may prevail.[207]

4.2.2 Cooper's Racial Doctrine and *The Last of the Mohicans*

In *The Last of the Mohicans* Cooper attempts to prove his social theory of unique traits that belong to each race according to their culture, customs and especially "nature" through several characters of a mixed race. This is manifested the most in the character of Cora, the daughter of Colonel Munro, who is equally descendant of "black" and Scottish forebears, while her personality is a combination of "a feminine sensibility and a masculine

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[201] Peprník, "James Fenimore Cooper as a Western Author and the 1920 Film Adaptation of *The Last of the Mohicans*," 8-9.
[202] Grenier, *The First Way of War*, 33-36.
[203] Slotkin, *The Fatal Environment*, 91.
[204]. Peprník, "James Fenimore Cooper as a Western Author and the 1920 Film Adaptation of *The Last of the Mohicans*," 7.
[205] Slotkin, *The Fatal Environment*, 91. 104.
[206] Li, and Wang, "Analysis of Cooper´s Writing Style in *The Last of the Mohicans*," 3.
[207] Slotkin, *The Fatal Environment*, 104-106.

realism."[208] Then there is the main protagonist Nathanial Bumppo who is according to his own words "a man with no cross,"[209] meaning that he is not of a mixed race, despite being raised by the Native Americans of the Delaware tribe. And on the contrary, there is the main antagonist Magua, Native American without "the cross" who endeavours to earn his place among the whites. However, both are doomed to suffer a tragic fate due to their endeavours to do what is not "according to their gifts."[210]

The story of *The Last of the Mohicans* is set in 1757 in middle of the American wilderness during the French and Indian War. And the area around which the plot revolves is the shores of Horican Lake, or, as the British call it, "Holy Lake." Cora and Alice, the daughters of Colonel Munro, accompanied by Major Duncan Heyward venture from General's Webb garrison to Fort William Henry, which is about to be attacked by French forces led by the General Montcalm.[211] The group is shortly after their departure joined by "a psalm singer, David Gamut."[212]

As the story unfolds, Cooper very delicately refers to a social paradigm of nineteenth century, "the natural repugnance between the races." This is being implied through the romantic relationships between the main characters. As mentioned, Cora is the key figure of Cooper's racial doctrine. Her fiery temperament is being associated with her mother's lineage, who was West Indian Creole. The fact, that she is partly Native American descendant, is also being linked to her attraction to Magua, and subsequently to Uncas. However, on the other hand, her demureness and conscience, that keep her reserved, are assigned to her white ancestry. This association of moral conscience to the whites is supported by the character of her sister Alice, who is white "without a cross" of a different lineage. And as a white maid with no cross, she is depicted as rather infantile and without fiery temper which would be in the Christian world considered as a sign of being uncivilized individual with no restraints and self-consciousness. Therefore, it is Cora who arouses an interest in Magua and Uncas, suggesting mutual and natural attraction between descendant of "dark lineage." While Alice and Heyward, both of white lineage with a no cross, are naturally attracted to each other, as the "whiteness appeal only to whiteness." According to Jefferson, this social concept of "natural repugnance" predominantly applies

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[208] Slotkin, *The Fatal Environment*, 88-91.
[209] Cooper, *The Complete Leatherstocking Tales, Volume I., 319.*
[210] Slotkin, *The Fatal Environment*, 88-89.
[211] Cooper, *The Complete Leatherstocking Tales, Volume I., 303-305.*
[212] Slotkin, *The Fatal Environment*, 89.

to the whites, while the descendants of nom-white ancestors were "naturally" drawn to "superior charms of whites."[213]

This theory of white superiority served two decades later as a support for the American idea of manifest of destiny, claiming that the U.S. was predestined to spread across the whole continent to enlighten and "civilize" those it conquered.[214]

4.2.3   Racial Identity in *The Last of the Mohicans*

At first, the distinctive cultural differences between Native Americans and whites are not depicted as necessarily causing a conflict. However, as the story unfolds, it reveals the consequences of attempts to cross the cultural boundaries. This is demonstrated by Magua and Nathanial Bumppo, each representing an attempt for a cultural transition from a different point of view. While Magua is a native chief and a renowned warrior, he shows a desire to earn his place among the whites for he is allured by the technological and economic advantages they possess in a comparison to his own people, the natives. However, through an incident between Magua and Colonel Munro, when Munro punishes Magua for his lack of discipline, Cooper exposes the cultural differences that have unfortunate consequences, leading towards a tragic outcome coming from a cultural encounter and mutual incomprehension. The Native Americans do not understand the way of a discipline, self-restraint, and decorum that whites acquire. Moreover, they are not even able to obtain them due to their different "gifts" that are according to their "nature." And through the characters of Heyward, Chingachgook and Uncas, Cooper subtly implicates that the most conscious individuals of each culture do not, and should not, endeavour to divert from their own cultural traits. For Cora who is of a mixed bloodline does not appeal to Heyward at all, and Chingachgook with his son Uncas, who are considered as the purest bloodline of the natives, do not share Magua's admiration of the whites. However, even here is the superiority of the whites implicated by Chingachgook and Uncas's desire to at least mingle with the whites, manifested by their friendship with the Leatherstocking.[215]

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[213] Slotkin, *The Fatal Environment*, 89-91.
[214] Miller, *Native America, Discovered and Conquered*, 83.
[215] Slotkin, *The Fatal Environment*, 91.

4.2.4 *The Pioneers* and the Entitlement defence

The Pioneers, the first of book of *The Leatherstocking Tales* pentalogy, is set shortly after the end of the American Revolutionary war.[216] The whole story revolves around "a fictional version of Cooperstown" called Templeton,[217] which lies in the state of New York.[218] Despite of being written a half century before John Gast's famous painting, *American Progress*, the setting of *The Pioneers* bears a striking resemblance of the land transition depicted on the Gast's painting.[219] The story revolves around the period when the original inhabitants of these lands were long ago evicted by American expansionism and the recently established society of Templeton lies between the eastern settlements and the western wilderness.[220] Therefore, the setting of the novel portrays a rudimentary society, the settlement and the complex structures are yet to be built, however, the frontier had already been conquered.[221] The only remnants of the frontier past are John Mohegan (Chingachgook) and our main protagonist, Nathaniel Bumppo. As it is gradually revealed, both are by their glorious deeds in the past partially responsible for the conquest of the New York frontier and for clearing the path for the "civilization" that now despises them.

As the story unfolds, one of the main characters, Judge Templeton who is a fictional version of Cooper' father, is being challenged to defend his title as a proprietor of local lands.[222] The rightful heir of the original proprietors, who were stripped of their properties for being English loyalists, Effingham, reveals himself from his disguise as a friend of the Leatherstocking and John Mohegan. Therefore, Judge Templeton must vindicate his entitlement to the ownership, which he gained though his hard work and dedication, against three previous proprietors. John Mohegan is an embodiment of the original inhabitants of these lands, the Native Americans. Then there are the conquerors of the frontier who participated on clearing a path for the colonists, personified by the Leatherstocking himself. And finally, the British "aristocrat" who claims to be rightful proprietor of the lands, represented by young Effingham. The entitlement struggle is resolved by a marriage of the British aristocrat Effingham with the Judge Templeton's daughter. The "Indian question" is resolved by extinction, indicated by the death of John

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[216] Cooper, *The Complete Leatherstocking Tales, Volume II.,* 266.
[217] Slotkin, *The Fatal Environment*, 85.
[218] Cooper, *The Complete Leatherstocking Tales, Volume II.,* 266.
[219] Chris Nesmith, "This Comes of Settling a Country!": Masculinity on the Borderlands in James Fenimore Cooper's *The Pioneers*," *A Quarterly Journal of Short Articles* 27, no. 1 (March,2014): 16, http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/0895769X.2014.880042.
[220] Slotkin, *The Fatal Environment*, 81-86.
[221] Nesmith, "This Comes of Settling a Country!", 16.
[222] Slotkin, *The Fatal Environment*, 81-86.

Mohegan who represented what was left of the natives.[223] *The Pioneers* is an embodiment of the evolution of the American society. It shows, as mentioned, that the American society went through several stages, and that the process of one stage replacing the others is unavoidable. Therefore, the main protagonist Nathanial Bumppo, who represents the previous stage of the frontier society, leaves Templeton at the end of the story, removing himself out of the way of the new successive phase. However, Cooper does not pick a side of either of the two competing cultures, his novel impartially depicts the historical course of the frontier development. For the ending of *The Pioneers* evokes a "lament" for extinction of the Native American culture represented by the moment of John Mohegan's death as well as it advocates "the government's program of Indian Removal and the national cultural project of Manifest Destiny."[224]

Cooper's *The Leatherstocking Tales* interpret a clash between two cultures as inevitable, while showing that if the defeated culture, in this case the Native American culture, does not adapt to the progress, it will be unavoidable trodden over. This resemblance, as mentioned, is to be observed in the striking parallel between *The Pioneers* and John Gast's *American Progress*.[225]

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[223] Slotkin, *The Fatal Environment*, 81-86.
[224] Nesmith, "This Comes of Settling a Country!", 17-18.
[225] Nesmith, "This Comes of Settling a Country!", 16-17.

CONCLUSION

The aim of this thesis was to analyse Cooper's depiction of the American frontier in his *The Leatherstocking Tales*. This was done through its comparison to Frederick Jackson Turner's *Frontier Thesis* and opinions of the present, acclaimed historians.

Despite being accused justification of the American conquest and a participation on the creation of the Frontier's Myth,[226] Cooper is still valued as one of the most significant authors of the American literary canon. He played a key role at the beginning of the historical romance genre in the United States of America, being an inspiration for many who devoted themselves to this genre.[227] Moreover, his historical romances, and especially his most famous frontiersman Nathanial Bumppo, became a cornerstone of the western genre.[228] Then, as implied in this thesis, Cooper's depiction of the frontier where two cultures competed due to their differences, and his indications of the white superiority, most likely served as firm grounds for the manifest destiny and later for Frederick Jackson Turner's *Frontier Thesis*. For by his depiction of the natives as humans in a "pre-civilized" state, Cooper contributed to the general perception of the natives as "savages."[229] This, as well as his depiction of the frontier as a place that forces a sense of unification upon the white colonists of different social classes against a common enemy,[230] was used nearly a half century later by Frederick Jackson Turner in his characterization of the frontier.[231]

However, it needs to be noted, that despite apparently influencing Frederick Jackson Turner and serving as a contribution to the manifest of destiny, Cooper did not justify the American conquest but neither did he condemn it. Unlike Andrew Jackson, whose presidential campaign for the "Indian removal" might be considered as an endeavour to obliterate the Native Americans from history of the U.S. and its "glorious conquest," Cooper did not attempt to omit the natives in his depiction of the frontier history. On the contrary, *The Pioneers* and *Prairie: A Tale* are pointing out this "governmental attempt at a national forgetting."[232] Furthermore, as mentioned, Cooper on a contrary to other writers of that period did not try to mitigate the grim past of both American colonialism and

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[226] May, "The Romance of America," 167-168.
[227] Slotkin, *The Fatal Environment*, 81.
[228] Peprník, "James Fenimore Cooper as a Western Author and the 1920 Film Adaptation of *The Last of the Mohicans*," 5-7.
[229] Slotkin, *The Fatal Environment*, 88.
[230] Slotkin, *The Fatal Environment*, 106.
[231] Turner, *The Frontier in American History*, 3-4.
[232] May, "The Romance of America," 169-170.

American conquest. Cooper is simply not trying to conceal the tragedy and a traumatic past of American history.[233]

Therefore, Cooper's accomplishment lies within his depiction of the frontier without any attempt to either erase or dimmish the presence of the traumatic national history that threatens the nation's celebration of the conquest. He presented the Native Americans as an integral part of the nation's history because natives as well as the frontier are aspects that made the American evolution unparalleled. *The Leatherstocking Tales* present the traumatic past that repeated itself several times through various phases of the American frontier, attempting to find a reasonable explanation or justification for it. But the outcome is always a failure, for no justification or explanation can ever be entirely acceptable.[234]

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[233] Slotkin, *The Fatal Environment*, 88.
[234] May, "The Romance of America," 168-171.

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